



MAKING LIFE BETTER

NEWS

ISSUE 7 - Autumn 2024

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WELCOME

CMO Foreword

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the MLB Newsletter.

I am pleased to introduce you to my All Departments Officials Group (ADOG) colleague David Polley, Director of Housing Supply Policy, Department for Communities.

Following the recent announcement of Live Better, a new place-based initiative to help address health inequalities, the Health Minister announced on 24 October 2024 that the demonstration locations will be in the Derry/Londonderry and Belfast areas. Further information on Live Better is included in the article on page 4.

ADOG met on 24 October and further information on the valuable discussions and presentations that took place are outlined in the ADOG article on page 3.

I hope you enjoy this Autumn edition of the Newsletter and remember to contact MLBNetwork@hscni.net if you wish to submit an article for inclusion in a future Newsletter.



Get In Touch

If you have any questions about the content of MLB News, have work you want to share with the Network or wish to join please email :
mlbnetwork@hscni.net

All Departments Officials Group (ADOG) - Introductions



David Polley
Director - Housing Supply Policy
Department for Communities

Housing and Health policy have long been interlinked, and indeed the motivation for government intervention in housing originated in the desire to improve public health. Changes to the standards of housing were essentially justified by the need to ensure houses are safe to live in. The need to adequately house people with specific health requirements also saw the development of the Supporting People programme. Recently there has been more focus on how health and housing can support each other in areas like homelessness and mental health. Specific areas of joint policy activity include:

- Safety of Housing (removing trip and fall hazards), Energy Efficiency;
- The Supporting People Programme, including Domestic Violence (DV) refuges and joint funding of the DV Helpline;
- Review of Disabled Facilities Grants; and
- Delivery of the Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plan and the Housing First and Complex Lives model.

Through ADOG, I hope to explore how we can better support each other. Chronic homelessness can be driven by, or exacerbate, mental health and substance issues, and we can't resolve this without cross Departmental support.

All Departments Officials Group (ADOG) October Meeting



The All Departments Officials Group (ADOG) is a key part of the structure for coordinating the implementation of MLB. A crucial function of the Group is to bring together senior officials from all NI Government Departments and other partners to identify collaborative opportunities to help combat the social determinants of health. The Group meets biannually and the last meeting was held in Castle Buildings on 24 October.

Meeting Discussions

MLB – in particular the Live Better initiative and updates on the MLB focused action plan. This is made up of a small number of collaborative actions and programmes that can be delivered across Departments and sectors to improve outcomes for our population and is delivered through existing resources and structures.

Integrated Care Service (ICS) NI - work to support the stand-up of the ICSNI model in shadow form is being progressed, with a view to having the model fully operational by early 2025.

Fuel Poverty Strategy – Fuel poverty has long been recognised as a social determinant of health. Development of a new Fuel Poverty Strategy is being led by the Department for Communities (DfC) with collaborative input across NI Departments. DfC colleagues presented on progress to date.

The Economy of Wellbeing - A Wellbeing Economy proposes to put human and planetary health and wellbeing at the core of all policy and legislation, for all members of society both now and in the future. Colleagues from the Institute of Public Health (IPH) presented on a recent report commissioned jointly by the IPH and EuroHealthNet.



The meeting generated valuable discussion and resulted in a number of actions to be taken forward. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 22 May 2025.

LIVE Better

Any queries about the LIVE BETTER should be directed to [Dolores Palmer](#)



Live Better will build on the good work developed by the Public Health Agency (PHA) and Health and Social Care (HSC) over the years and will seek to pull existing initiatives and programmes together so that they can be delivered intensively in communities to make a real and lasting difference. It will also provide targeted information and initiatives directly to specific communities, as well as signposting to existing areas of support.

Health inequalities are one of the Health Minister's main areas of focus and Live Better, a new place-based initiative, is being developed to help address this issue by bringing targeted health support to communities which need it most.

Colleagues in the PHA recently completed a selection process to identify two demonstration areas. This process included consideration of inequalities statistics and deliverability metrics and explored primary care settings, and GP practices in particular, as a hub for this activity.

As a result of the selection process, one demonstration area will be in Derry/Londonderry (*right*) - The Moor DEA (Fountain, Bogside, Brandywell and Creggan) and the second area will be in Belfast (*below*) - Court DEA (Lower Shankill, Lower Falls and Grosvenor Road).



Live Better is also being considered in terms of its alignment with other HSC developments, such as the Integrated Care System (ICS) NI and multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs), and with other Departments, including the Test and Learn initiative, in the longer term to embed and mainstream this approach.

The PHA are now working to operationalise the initiative, including local stakeholder engagement events in the two demonstration sites. Although the two demonstration sites are urban areas, the Live Better approach can apply to both rural and urban areas in the future. Within the chosen demonstration sites, activities will focus on three core outcomes – Starting Well, Living Well, and Ageing Well. Primary Care and other data will be used to choose the issues we are seeking to improve in these core themes.

Did you know?



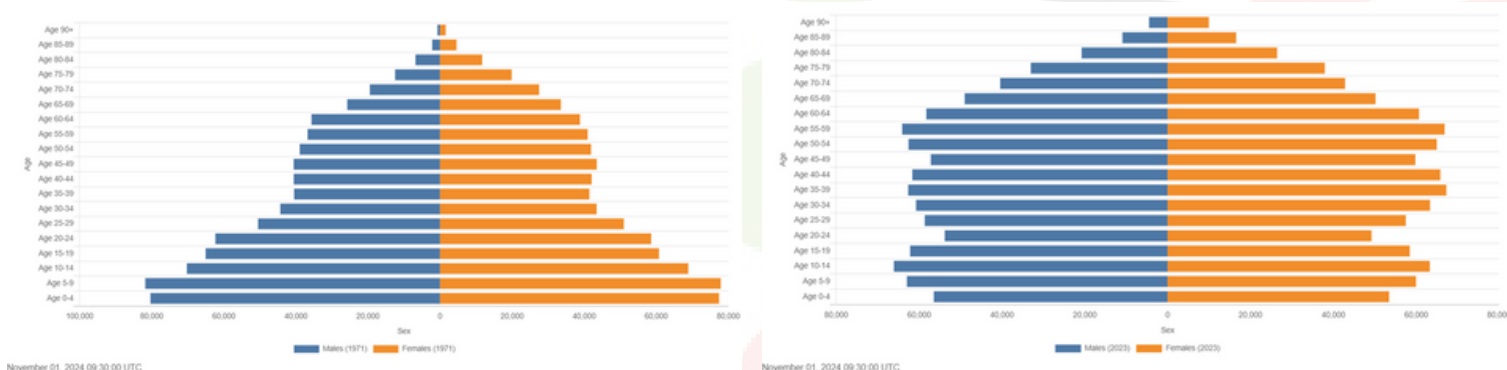
NISRA
Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency
Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

DataPortal

A dedicated section has been developed on the NISRA Data Portal website at data.nisra.gov.uk to facilitate the high-level monitoring of progress on the key Making Life Better indicators. This is the third article in a series which highlights the data and tools available on the NISRA Data Portal.

Changing Age Profile of NI

There are a number of tables which sit under the MLB Key Overarching Indicators – Population, which demonstrate the mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland from 1971-2023 by different age breakdowns. The pyramid chart on the left (created using the chart function on the portal) shows the Northern Ireland population by 5-year age bands and sex in 1971, while the chart on the right illustrates how the age profile of residents there has changed by 2023.



You can use the Data Portal to view, filter and download data or save tables to a favourites list; you can also build your own chart and download as a png, like the ones above, or you can use the widget function in the system to create an html version of the chart which can be saved to your desktop, website, blog etc. and will automatically update when new data is added to the corresponding table on the Portal. Using the save queries option you can create and save your output from tables/charts/maps, which can then be quickly accessed at a later stage.

To find out more about widgets, why not check out [the user guide and instructional video](#) on the [NISRA Data Portal FAQs and training materials page](#).

On-line training sessions will also be available. Please contact mlbnetwork@hscni.net to register your interest.

If you need further information or assistance relating to the NISRA Data Portal, contact us at info@nisra.gov.uk

NICS staff requiring statistical input and advice should continue to contact their departmental statistics colleagues in the first instance.