

Commemoration

Proposal: All groups and organisations organising potentially contentious commemorative events or activities in the public space should ensure that they are run according to their own publicly available Code of Conduct.

Guiding principles & values

- Recognition of the value in developing a Code of Conduct to ensure the safe and respectful running of public commemorative events or activities.
- The Code of Conduct should be accessible and publicly available.
- The Code of Conduct should be devised and written by those organising or taking part in the event or activity.
- An understanding of views of other groups, communities and organisations should be factored into the Code of Conduct.
- Where possible there should be a consultation with those potentially affected by the event or activity.
- A commitment to urging all those taking part in the commemorative event or activity to follow the Code of Conduct.
- Recognition of the need for more inclusive commemorative practises.
- Respect for the shared nature of public space and recognition of the rights and responsibilities associated with using public space.
- An understanding of the particular needs and sensitivities of those most directly affected by the conflict.
- Recognition of the diversity in all residential areas (even so-called single-identity areas).
- Adherence to the rule of law.

Benefits & Challenges

Benefits

- Responsibility is self-managed, not externally imposed.
- Can allow for safer and more respectful commemoration.

Challenges

- Takes time and effort to create and agree the code.
- Difficulties in establishing acceptable and appropriate means to ensure application



Benefits

- Recognises sharing of public space.
- Appreciation of the underlying values and aspirations in others commemorative events and practices.
- Possibility of later engagement with others on the content and execution of the Code of Conduct.

Challenges

- Risk of leaving groups open to criticism by others.
- The changing or unstable contexts in which commemorative events take place necessitate ongoing review.

Rationale

This approach offers a self-managed way of regulating activities in the public space, leading to the creation of more respectful and inclusive methods of commemoration.

What is needed?

- Outreach to interested groups and individuals organising commemorative events or activities.
- Opportunities to develop meaningful exploratory and collaborative discussions with key commemorative bodies.
- Spaces for critical discussion.
- Sensitivity to role of victims/survivors.
- Examples of more inclusive and respectful commemorative practices.
- Recognition of the diversity in all residential areas (even so-called single-identity areas).
- Political and community leadership.
- An understanding of the parameters of the rule of law.

This is one of a set of HTR proposals on dealing with the past relating to the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. HTR believes these proposals would be best implemented as a comprehensive response to ensure that a range of complex but interrelated needs are met.



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