

## Teens show community film



**Georgie Devine, Jeanette Duff, James Woods and Gareth Shields in the Museum of Science, Boston, USA**

FOUR teenagers from a west Belfast cross-community group with centres on both sides of the peace line have presented a video about bringing down barriers at a global summit for their organisation in America.

Two teenagers from each centre were chosen for the one week trip to Boston for the meeting of the global network for disadvantaged young people.

The Belfast Computer Clubhouse (BCCH), open since August 2005, is part of the Intel Computer Clubhouse Network, founded in Boston.

Belfast is the only city that has two centres - because of the divide - one on the Shankill Road and one on the Springfield Road.

The teenagers, Georgie Devine, Jeanette Duff, James Woods and Gareth Shields, made an impression at the summit.

The video they produced, ReImagine Your World, was chosen for the summit's opening ceremony, and was presented before an audience of more than 300 people from clubhouses around the world

including groups from Russia, Jordan and New Zealand.

In the video the four teens talk about their cross community experiences and hopes for change in Belfast and the greater community.

Jeanette Duff, from Shankill Road's clubhouse, said: "I had a lot of fun meeting new people and learning different languages. It was the best experience of my life."

James Woods, from the Springfield Road clubhouse, said: "It was amazing, meeting different people from all over the world. I made lots of new friends. I have benefited a lot from going to Boston because I have experienced different cultures and people. It has encouraged me to do well in life."

The BCCH said it is a creative, multimedia learning environment where young people aged 8-18 can use technology to become confident learners.

If you live in the Greater Shankill or West Belfast areas and would like to join the BCCH, contact Louise Feeney on 02890 242362.

## Interface group's new peace strategy

A GROUP set up to improve relations at a west Belfast interface has this week released research showing 91 percent of those questioned from the two communities support peacebuilding efforts between them.

The figures were revealed on Monday by Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG), a partnership between Suffolk Community Forum and Lenadoon Community Forum, at the launch of its new peace building strategy to further develop the once troubled interface into a genuinely shared space over the next five years.

SLIG said it has been working to build strong, positive relationships between the Suffolk and Lenadoon communities since 1996, taking practical action to address shared social issues and promoting dialogue.

SLIG chairwoman Jean Brown, speaking at the group's shared facilities on the Stewartstown Road, said that building trust and relationships is central to its work. "In the 12 years since the first discussions between Suffolk and Lenadoon's Community Fora took place we have come a long way - we are standing today in a building which is shared by both communities, which has brought jobs, childcare and retail services into the area, and which has changed the physical appearance of the interface beyond all recognition.

"Ultimately this strategy is rooted in our learnings from recent years to move



**Jean Brown and René Crawford announce new peacebuilding strategy for Suffolk/Lenadoon**

conflict areas forward and aims to involve people at all levels within the Suffolk Lenadoon communities and wider society."

She said SLIG hopes to share their experiences, both good and bad, with the many other groups that are still working to ease tensions and promote sharing in interface areas in Northern Ireland.

"We aim to support the development of shared projects such as sports, health, youth, culture, childcare and education while also sharing our experiences of the recent past with others who may benefit. While we acknowledge the progress we have made SLIG is not complacent and recognise that a number of challenges remain which we are committed to overcoming," she added.

The event opened with cross-community entertainment from Ghleann Chol-

lain (Colin Glen) Irish Pipe Band and the Upper Falls Protestant Boys Flute Band. Brian Maguire, Ghleann Chollain Irish band secretary, said of SLIG's work: "It's absolutely fantastic. It's about shared space. It's about recognising and appreciating each other's culture and concentrating on what brings us together rather than what divides us."

Jean Brown added: "There are other communities that may not yet have engaged - perhaps we can offer encouragement to them."

The survey of 400 residents, commissioned by SLIG and conducted by Millward Brown Ulster, also found 90 percent of respondents from the area would like to see shared facilities that could be used by both communities and 55 percent would prefer to live in a mixed-religion neighbourhood.

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