

## Building bridges

**DERRY boasts the highest number of under 16s in the UK, according to the latest census.**

But having been brought up in a city sometimes separated along sectarian lines by the River Foyle, will the new Peace Bridge being built for pedestrians and cyclists bring the young people of the Cityside and Waterside together or be seen as another interface in a divided city?

As the bridge increasingly takes shape - work is expected to be completed by the end of the year - the future generation of the city have their say on the £13 million piece of infrastructure from Ilex, Derry's urban regeneration organisation - we find out if they think it is wonderful, or a waste!



Sarah (14) is hopeful for the benefits the bridge will bring. She said: "I thought it would be good because then you could walk to the town. Also, it will bring the two communities closer together because there is a connection between them."

The building of the bridge - between the former army base at Ebrington on the Waterside and the historic Guildhall at the heart of the Cityside - has become an attraction in its own right, with spectators gathering day by day to witness each stage in the bridge's construction. Seventeen-year-old Jennifer Maguire believes the Peace Bridge will boost interest in the city. Jennifer said: "I think it is a really good idea and it will bring a lot of people from the Waterside to the Cityside and from the Cityside to the Waterside. I think it will bring attraction to Derry and bring the community together and will make things more convenient."

"I think it's a really, really good idea and whoever thought of it, is really creative. I don't know if there's a need for it but it will be a good feature for the town," she added. Joshua Anderson echoed this view. "It will increase tourism in Derry. It is a good idea. It will bring people together," said the 16-year-old. But while many hope that the Peace Bridge will be a way of uniting the city's citizens, not all the young people we spoke to were convinced.

Both Sharon Hemphill, aged 17, and Rachel Hurley, 16, branded the bridge as 'pointless'. Rachel said: "There's no need for one when there's already two other bridges with sidewalks. It won't have any effect because the city's too small."

Seventeen-year-old Ryan Doherty had mixed feelings. He said: "They could probably have used [the funding] for something else for children in the city, but it is handy."

The people behind the Peace Bridge see it as a symbol of the future - a shared future. Time will tell if it lives up to expectations.

### About this article

This story was written by Saorla Boyle and Emma O'Deorain.

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