

CHANGING IRELAND

SUMMER '04

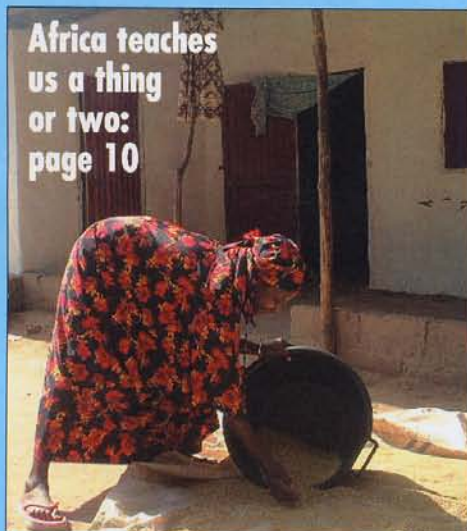
ISSUE 11

The National Newsletter of the Community Development Programme - funding 170 community projects

CLASS 'APARTHEID' IN SCHOOLS

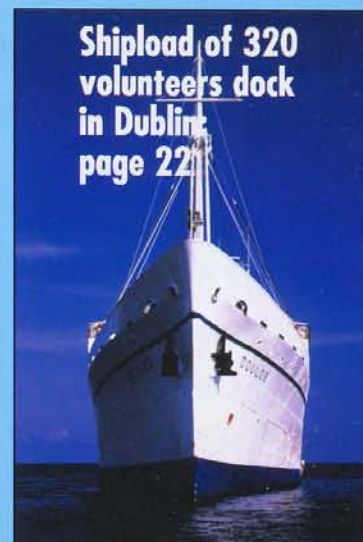
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Africa teaches
us a thing
or two:
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CDP to speak with one
voice: report & map

Shipload of 320
volunteers dock
in Dublin:
page 22



This publication and most projects featured inside are funded by the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs.

We shall have a National Forum

OVER 120 people from 93 groups representing projects and support agencies from every region and target group within the Community Development Programme attended a national conference in Limerick on April 7th to give their mandate for the establishment of a National Forum for CDPs.

This is a truly historic event and the culmination of many years of hard work and development. At long last the CDPs will have a national profile and voice for the projects spread the length and breadth of the country. They will bring together a diversity of experience, energy and skill under one umbrella organisation. It will mean the Programme can develop a national focus and act nationally on issues that affect individual CDPs in their own communities.

The CDP National Forum will give policy makers direct access to volunteers and workers at the grassroots level in the most disadvantaged areas throughout the country. Policy can therefore be directed to the people who are best placed to effect positive change in their areas.

This new organisation will elect/appoint members

to national bodies who will be truly representative of the most marginalised communities in the country.

History was made on March 4th last year when projects, galvanised into action by threatening talk of change being imposed from above, gathered in Dublin. They elected a working group and each region contributed to the formulation of a national stance by CDPs on what was special about the Community Development Programme and needed to be protected at all costs. Speaking of costs, that meeting was held without formal funding. The energy drove the movement forward.

This year's historic decision to establish a National Forum is a natural step forward. It just took 14 years from the establishment of the Programme for people to take the step. In our report on the Limerick Conference, Joe Grenell from Ringsend CDP, provides the historic background to the development. Well worth reading for those of you who like to see the bigger picture.

Thanks to Claire Casey and Maurice McConville for providing reports on the conference.

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DISCLAIMER

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Eircom bows to CDP pressure

DUE to pressure from a CDP, Eircom have re-worded an advertisement for a new service so the wording is more sensitive and can be more easily understood.

Brenda Whitley, Active Age Officer with Community Connections CDP in Co. Cavan, contacted Eircom and, as a result, the company changed an advert that had been labelling some customers as 'vulnerable' users.

Brenda showed the power of speaking up for your community and country when she succeeded in convincing Eircom that not everyone would like to be labelled in this way.

In recent years, line rental costs have increased substantially. This has meant that people who only use the phone occasionally still get large bills. However, some people, especially those living alone, need to have a telephone in case of emergency. In recognition of this, a

Does your total phone bill come to less than €10 per month?

If so, you could benefit from the **Eircom low user scheme**.*

Find out more about our range of discount packages by calling us on **freephone 1800 202 073** (Monday to Friday 9am-9pm)

*The Eircom low user scheme is known as the Eircom vulnerable user scheme in the Telecommunications Scheme. Certain terms and conditions apply. Price quoted includes VAT at 21%.



scheme was established so that certain people could be exempt from the large phone line rental bills.

These people are defined by the regulatory authority (Comreg) as 'vulnerable' users, though they may not wish to be thought of like that, or indeed may not fully understand the term.

Brenda contacted Eircom on this point when the first publicity of the 'Vulnerable User Scheme' was distributed. While Comreg still insist on retaining the original wording themselves, Eircom have re-advertised the scheme as the 'Low User Scheme'. This is a much more acceptable term and the changed advert shows that big companies do sometimes listen.

Incidentally, for full details of the 'Low User Scheme' you can call freephone 1800-202073.

Cross-border conference brings Women's Collective together

By ANN MCGOWAN

Twenty-eight women drawn from Traveller, asylum-seeker and women's groups of all and no denominations from Belfast, Longford and south Donegal attended a conference and workshop of the 'Cross-Border Women's Collective' in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal, earlier this year.

The conference was organised by Atlantic View CDP, Donegal Travellers Project (also a CDP) and Ballybeen Women's Centre, Dundonald, Belfast.

The theme of the day was 'Breaking Down Stereotypes'. This dealt with communications, looking at fears, which are often the cause of discrimination, and getting to know women from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The conference also covered equality, women's social issues and lack of inclusion of women on decision-making boards nationally and internationally.

To the organisers' relief, people were not shy to express themselves. Gemma Evans of Co-operation Ireland, who facilitated the sessions said in her

evaluation, "I was concerned that the group would be reticent to talk as many of them had not met before and also due to the personal nature of the subject. However participation during the day was excellent. The participants instantly felt comfortable in each other's company and were very open".

The group was very supportive of each other and distributed a list of names and address of their respective groups and representatives at the end of the day.

The Collective and conference came about as a result of contacts made through networking between the two CDPs in Co. Donegal and with the 'Women Educating for Transformation' project based in Belfast. The event was funded by Co-operation Ireland.

The next workshop was due to be held on May 28th with 'Sharing our Cultural Heritages' being the theme for the day.

For further information, contact: Ann at the Atlantic View CDP office, Tir Conaill St, Ballyshannon
Tel: 071-9822833.

E-mail: atlanticview_01@eircom.net

E-zine for non-profit organisations

CDPs, all of whom now have e-mail addresses, may be interested in linking in with the Centre for Nonprofit Management's based in the School of Business Studies, Trinity College, Dublin. The Centre has just produced its second email newsletter or e-zine.

The Centre supports and develops research, education and dialogue about and with the 'Third Sector' and non-profit organisations by creating and facilitating relationships across disciplines and across sectors.

The purpose of the Ezine is to keep people informed of ideas and debates within the world of non-profit management and to invite participation in these discussions.

Three issues of the e-zine will be published annually. Each e-zine has a specific theme, with articles and interviews involving 'practitioners', academics and others with an interest in the area.

Projects can add their name to the mailing listing by e-mailing: nonprofit@tcd.ie

You can also write to the Centre for Nonprofit Management at Trinity College, Dublin 2.
Tel. 01-6083850. Fax: 01-6799503.
Website: www.cnm.tcd.ie

Letterkenny youths plan for adventure

By MARGARET TONER and
SANDY HOLLAND

WITH summertime on the way, its time for development workers in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, to prepare for a soaking once more as local youths make plans for this year's adventure sports holiday which usually includes canoeing.

Forty-two local young people aged between 12 and 15 years old helped fundraise and plan their own weeklong outdoor pursuits holiday in August of last year as part of the youth programme run by Letterkenny CDP. A similar adventure holiday is being organised for this coming summer.

As Margaret Toner, the co-ordinator at Letterkenny CDP explains, "It gives the young people the opportunity to gain skills in planning, organising, fundraising, personal and group development during the preparation of this event not to mention a week of fun, excitement and enjoyment to end their summer holidays before returning



The Youth of Letterkenny C.D.P. enjoying the craic during their Youth Adventure Project.



Young people enjoying the water sports on the Letterkenny C.D.P. Youth Adventure Project.

to school."

The young people who participate in this event are involved from the beginning stages in the organising, planning and fundraising activities, which give them a sense of ownership of the whole project.

The 'Youth Adventure Project' as it is known is the highlight of their summer and is fully supported by the parents and guardians who take part in the fundraising activities and the supervision of the actual week itself. The staff of the Gartan Outdoor Pursuits Centre also make an excellent contribution to the running of the activities.

The voluntary management committee and staff of Letterkenny CDP work closely

with statutory and voluntary groups and organisations in the implementation of their programme of activities for young people in Letterkenny. As well as the young people and their families, the CDP receive support in the fundraising from the Donegal Local Development Company; the St. Vincent De Paul Society; Letterkenny Town Councillors; and local businesses. The North Western Health Board covers the cost of the insurance for the holiday.

Note: Photos of the Letterkenny adventurers on holidays were taken by Mary Roarty, newsletter staff, who is a participant on the Letterkenny CDP Community Employment Project, funded by FÁS.

Tralee CDP wins not one award, but two!

MARCH was a great month for Tralee CDP. They had barely got over their delight in winning an award for involving youth in a recycling project when they won a second competition for their work on improving social inclusion and equality in the town. The awards came one week after another.

The CDP's homework club won €1000 worth of books for their Easter Egg Installation at the Samlaoicht Chiarrai Easter Arts Festival. The young people involved were commended for their creative use of everyday recyclable household materials.

The second award came from the Kerry County Development Board which awarded €4000 to Tralee CDP for their entry under the Projects Promoting Inclusion and Equality cat-

egory. Over a dozen entries were fielded and the CDP came out on top.

Many found the opening paragraph of their written entry inspiring:

"Typically people come to our resource center looking for information. They usually leave having signed up for one of our groups or projects. By participating in a group, people take on new tasks and new skills. This leads to a new level of confidence and interest in community affairs," it stated.

The groups and support systems set up by Tralee CDP to date include a crèche and pre-school, a group called SPICE which is for one-parent family groups and SPICE Junior for the children of one-parent families. Recently, they were heavily involved in

supporting a group of volunteers to produce a town newsletter funded through the RAPID Programme. The CDP also works closely with residents in disadvantaged sectors of the town to support them in implementing an estate management and community safety plan. Tralee CDP's premises hosts many groups and hundreds of people pass through the door each week to take part in a wide variety of activities.

To put the awards in greater context, there are 470 registered community groups in County Kerry. The County Development Board's awards are designed to increase public awareness of local groups. Tralee CDP is fast becoming one of the better known groups in the county.

Men on margins give their account

A new report titled 'Young Men on the Margins' has been published, giving accounts by men aged between 18 - 30, telling of their family relationships and circumstances, economic deprivation, their experience of the education system, how they cope with homelessness and their hopes to change their lives and integrate into society.

The study should be of interest to those concerned with improving the social inclusion of children, families and communities in Ireland. It is also of interest to those concerned with the relationship between gender and social policy.

The report was commissioned and published by The Katharine Howard Foundation and was co-funded by the Dept. of Social and Family Affairs under the Families Research Programme. Research was carried out by the Social Science Research Centre, UCD,

Copies of the report and /or summary are available from: The Katharine Howard Foundation, ISFC, 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8. Tel. 01-4531861.

E-mail: kfh@eircom.net

Navan CDP opens new 'Teach na nDaoine'

Navan CDP has moved into their new premises named 'Teach na nDaoine'. Located at 96, Claremont Est, Navan, Co. Meath, the new office has numerous rooms and will provide a safe and confidential place for groups to meet.

"This has been a dream of the Project for a long time," said a spokesperson, "We feel that having our office in the heart of the community will bring benefits for us all."

The project was originally set up in 1997.

"We look forward to meeting new friends at 'Teach na nDaoine,'" added the spokesperson.

New Regional Reporter

Maria O'Dwyer has begun writing for 'Changing Ireland' covering news from the mid-west. A development worker with the Limerick Travellers Development Group, one of seven CDPs based in Ireland's sporting capital, Maria has been a member of the 'Changing Ireland' editorial team for two years. Maria's special interests include education, conflict resolution and Bulmers tasting!

Contact Maria at the LTDG on 061-418912 or e-mail her at phc@limericktravellers.com

Geraldine is new youth co-ordinator

Geraldine Dunne, a Traveller, is the new youth work co-ordinator for Southside Travellers' Action Group (STAG), a CDP based in Sandford Industrial Estate in Dublin. She is formally employed through the Whole Time Jobs Initiative with Southside Partnership and seconded to STAG as a worker.

Projects lobbied Minister over 'flawed' referendum

THE Citizenship Referendum is to go ahead on June 12th despite opposition from many corners including an appeal by nine north Dublin community groups who urged Minister for Justice Michael McDowell to abort the idea. The referendum has been condemned by opponents who feel it fuels racism.

Three Community Development Projects - in Priorswood, Kilmore West, and Kilbarrack - were among the many voices heard objecting. They spoke as part of a local umbrella group against racism that includes Pavee Point, one of the Specialist Support Agencies to the Community Development Programme. Also involved were Doras Buí Coolock, Northside Partnership, Kilbarrack Coast Community Programme, Travact, and Baldoyle Family Resource Service.

Together they expressed "major concerns" over the proposals at an event in March to mark European Week Against Racism.

The groups, which joined forces in September 2003 to become 'Communities Against Racism', urged Minister McDowell to abandon his "flawed citizenship referendum proposals" and bring before the Dáil the long-awaited Immigration and Residency Bill.

At the event held in the St. Benedict's Resource Centre, Kilbarrack, on March 25th, 'Communities Against Racism' called the citizenship proposals "an appeal to racism, prejudice and bigotry".

Cathleen O'Neill of the Kilbarrack CDP, commented in a press statement, "Ireland's future is a multi-cultural, multi-racial society based on tolerance equality and respect". She appealed for a "calm and rational debate as part of a wide consultation process".

Martin Hamilton of the Kilmore CDP claimed, "The proposed citizenship referendum, if proceeded with, would make



Minister Michael McDowell

the (government) commitment to the recent NCCRI anti-racist protocol at local and European Elections, null and void."

The co-ordinator of Communities Against Racism, Richie Keane, said that if the Citizenship Referendum was to go ahead, it would be a "day of shame".

Later, CAR international party got into full swing. It included children's art, poetry and creative writing, food from around the world, world music, an anti-racism tree, story-telling and dancing.

A week earlier, also on Dublin's northside, Ballymun Intercultural Group held a plethora of multicultural events in the Central Youth Facility and AXIS Arts Centre in Ballymun.

Other CDPs around the country marked the week with various celebrations and events.

Tullamore hosts Travellers Education consultation

Tullamore Travellers Movement, in Offaly, on May 6th, hosted one of five regional consultations held in relation to access to education for Travellers.

Pavee Point, the Irish Traveller Movement and the National Traveller Women's Forum organised the consultations to ensure Traveller parents and Travellers voices are

heard and represented in the developing Traveller Education Strategy.

The last of the regional consultations was held in Kilkenny in mid-May and a national thematic workshop was scheduled to follow on May 27th, in Dublin.

For further information contact the ITM at 01-6796577. E-mail: itmtrav@indigo.ie

Interculturalism in Leitrim

Lough Allen CDP recently held an intercultural night to celebrate the wide variety of nationalities and cultures that live in the area. The evening included cuisine, both from native sources and from further a field,

along with a display of artwork by local young people. The artwork was produced at a workshop run by the CDP on the theme of inter-culturalism. Lough Allen CDP is situated in Drumkeeran, Co. Leitrim.

Poor health goes with indebtedness - Dundalk research findings

MAURICE McCONVILLE
reports

"YOU get one hundred and thirty two euro and you are broke and you have to pay your coal and your rent, your ESB... and you have to buy food and then your children have to go to school all week. You can't do it you just can't."

This was how one female respondent in Coxs Demesne, Dundalk, put it when interviewed by a marketing company about debt.

Concerned about debt and how might be linked with poor health, Le Cheile CDP commissioned a market research company to interview 100 people and facilitate a focus group into the extent and effects of debt.

Asked why they thought they were in debt, a staggering 51% of respondents quoted Christmas as the main reason.

A large minority - 29% of people - worried a lot about debts. And 21% said that it gave them poor health. The links between debt, stress and poor health were confirmed by the research. While, in this credit/consumer driven age, these facts can easily be forgotten, the pressure of being in debt is ever present.

The pressure from children was illustrated by a comment on going to the pictures:

"It is twenty euro and they are going to want popcorn and coke, ...There is no point in going and hearing them crying in you ear. 'I want coke. I want popcorn'. They all want nice clothes and things. They want new coats and new dresses..."



In the survey 13% of respondent said that being in debt affected their confidence, 10% said that it caused major family problems including breakdown in relationships and 6% cited debt as causing depression. This is not surprising as 64% viewed debt as a major problem in their life.

To borrow money 36% used credit unions, 15% used hire-purchase, 13% used family and friends, and 7% using moneylenders.

Le Cheile CDP is studying the findings and is hoping to set up group that includes volunteers and agencies such as the Money Advice and Budgeting Service, Citizen

Information Service, RAPID and Social Welfare to tackle the problem in practical ways. One of the report's recommendations is that a locally run credit union may be viable with a confidential help-line cited by 84% as a good way of alleviating the problem.

The research has certainly highlighted the main issue regarding debt and points the way forward for future action. Combat Poverty, RAPID and the Social Inclusion Unit of Louth County Council funded the research.

For more information, Tel. 042-9386704.
E-mail: lecheilecdp@eircom.net

Jailing debtors is no answer to debt crisis

Imprisoning people who are unable to pay their debts is an unjust and outdated practice and should be ended, according to the Free Legal Advice Centre (FLAC).

The organisation hosted a conference in March on consumer debt and said the huge growth in consumer debt made reform of the debt system even more urgent. Jailing people to discourage them and others from falling into debt hardly seems effective.

The problem arises because, currently, people who fall into debt can be taken to the courts by creditors and ordered to repay, even if the sums are beyond their means.

About 800 people were imprisoned for this offence between 1993 and '96. The Department of Justice has legislation in the pipeline that will end the practice of imprisoning people for non-payment of



court fines. But those with civil debts may still be jailed because there are no plans at present for civil debt settlement legislation.

In Europe, by contrast, many countries encourage both parties to work out a realistic repayment schedule. If some debt still cannot be repaid, it is written off.

However, there is hope. One exciting development involves the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) and the Irish Bankers Federation who are operating a debt settlement pilot scheme. It provides a non-judicial alternative to resolving cases of multiple consumer debt. It would be healthier if this approach was enshrined in legislation, especially at a time when figures from the Central Bank show the problem of personal debt is growing and growing.

Regional Support Agency contracts announced

THE Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs confirmed at a meeting of the Programme's National Advisory Committee recently, that, having completed the tendering process, the new Support Agencies for the enlarged Regions are to be as follows:

- North - Triskelle
- North Dublin - Tosach
- South Dublin - Draocht
- South East - Framework
- South West - South West Community Development Support Agency (formerly the Mid-West CDSA)
- West (incorporating the area formerly termed 'Midlands') - West Training

All the above will be offered 3-year contracts commencing on June 1st of this year. A number of project representatives on the NAC lamented the loss of significant expertise from within the Programme.

Our map shows the six newly enlarged regions. Until now there were 13 Regional Support Agencies. Some concern has been expressed that it will be more difficult in the future for workers and particularly volunteers to attend inter-project meetings when projects begin to meet under the geographically bigger regional structure. They'll have further to travel.



Prior to the announcement Tommy Broughan, T.D., had asked the Minister to make a statement on the new regional support structure for the Programme.

In a Dail reply, Minister of State, Noel Ahern stated: "My Department has, in the past, contracted with 13 regional support agencies to deliver training and support to projects funded under the Community

Development Support Programme. In 2003, the cost of providing this support came to some €3.4 million. That represents almost 17% of the total amount spent on the programme last year. In order to maximise the spend for communities themselves and to bring investment on training and administrative supports for the (Programme) more into line with the costs of other programmes under the remit of my Department, I embarked on a process last year of restructuring arrangements involving regional support agencies."

"One of the key issues identified in the review of local and community development structures (was) the complexity and multiplicity of structures and programmes for the provision of local and community services. In this context, the Government has decided to streamline arrangements involving Regional Support Agencies and to reduce the number of such agencies with which the Department has a contract under the (Programme)."

"The measures I have outlined will achieve the objective of refocusing investment on community development activity and improve coherence between local and community development programmes," stated Minister Ahern.

Mid-West volunteers giving the lead nationally

- as report ticks off government for 'disrespect'

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

A SENSIBLE, hard-hitting and pointed report arising from a Volunteer conference held last year has been published and launched by Limerick Mayor, Cllr. Dick Sadlier in a ceremony held at St. Mary's CDP. The launch took place in December, appropriately on International Volunteers Day.

The report was titled 'Let's Get Together' reflecting the fact that 34 volunteers attended the conference and made the decision to continue meeting. In fact, the volunteers in the Mid-West have established a volunteer network and meet regularly. They are implementing a number of pilot ideas that were recommended to government and ignored. In effect, local volunteers are showing the lead nationally.

Here's what one of the Limerick people had to say on volunteering: "Sometimes you would get fed up but the benefits far outweigh the negatives of voluntary work. It has helped me in many ways and I hope I can continue with it as long as I can."

Said another volunteer: "I have learnt a lot about myself and how to deal with situations that I have never dealt with before."

The Support Agency had previously submitted, on behalf of the projects, a

'Submission to The National Committee on Volunteering' back in 2001. That report contained recommendations regarding the supports required for the continuation of volunteer participation both within the Programme and society in general.

However, since the inclusion of these recommendations in a national report to government, little has been done to implement them. The volunteers in the Mid-West felt, as they stated in their recent report, "this inaction was merely another manifestation of disrespect and failure to acknowledge the role of the volunteer in Irish society."

"If the Programme wishes to achieve real participation of volunteers from identified target groups, then the supports available must be realistic, taking into account the significant amounts of time involved in becoming and remaining part of a Voluntary Management Committee," states the report pointedly.

In the meantime, the volunteers, not ones to lie around waiting, have begun to pilot some of their own recommendations. These actions should be of great interest to other volunteers:

- Requesting time off from employers in order to participate in voluntary activities.
- The development of a volunteer information brochure that outlines clearly the roles and responsibilities of volunteers operating within the Programme.

- A piece of research on the nature and extent of volunteering within the Programme nationally.

They also wish to begin promoting volunteering in schools, pushing for the accreditation of training undertaken by them through the Programme, and to explore different models of voluntary management.

The pilots will take place over the next three years. They also want action on developing a recruitment strategy for volunteers.

Heavily involved in the production of the conference report were: Helen Flanagan, St. Mary's CDP, Deirdre O'Driscoll, Community Development Network Moyross, and Helen Whelehan, St. Munchin's CDP and various voluntary management members. Veronica McNamara of the Mid-West Support Agency supported the work from start to finish.

Volunteers may not be taken seriously by government. In the Mid-West they have proven they are anything but nonchalant.

• Copies of the Conference Report (published on paper as weighty and expensive as any IDA report) are available through Veronica McNamara, Mid-West Support Agency, Block 1, Floor 2, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick. Tel. 061-225711. Fax: 061-225712. E-mail: veronica@mwcdsa.ie



Recycling - Travellers have the skills

By NICK MURPHY

WHAT are the skills of the Traveller man? Answering this question has launched a training programme, and an enterprise initiative, involving Traveller men, in the Blanchardstown area of Dublin.

C.J. McGuigan has been a development worker with Dublin-based CDP, Blanchardstown Traveller Support Group for about seven months. He works with the outreach project which is a pilot programme (funded by Blanchardstown Equal Initiative) to provide support to Traveller men who want to enter the work force. The project provides information on training, possible employment options, health awareness, adult education and drugs awareness.

As part of the programme a group of Traveller men began a process of skills auditing which led to the development of a 15 module training programme and a business plan.

C.J. said, "The skills base of the Traveller man has long been played down by the Traveller man and his neighbour in the settled community. For instance, if a man is involved in maintenance and topping of trees and has been for a long period of years, does that not make him a tree surgeon?"

"If a man has made a living from remov-



The skills base of the Traveller has long been played down.

ing scrap metal and other material from landfill and reusing or selling it on over a long period of years does that not make him a scrap metal consultant? Furthermore such reduction in material going to landfill is something the state is encouraging vigorously, with the reduce, reuse, recycle campaign. Traveller men have been engaged in this type of work for years. How much would the Repak scheme owe these men if payment were to be backdated?" asked C.J.

The group of men identified self-employment as their preferred route into employment and with their previous skills in the recycling industry referred to above, decided to look at the possibility of setting up an Environmental Recycling Project.

The project then moved into an educational observation and training phase. This did not take place in a classroom but consisted of visits to six environmental projects presently operating.

The men were able to bring their experience to bear, asking relevant questions and gathering information. They identified several gaps in the present provision and

areas which they felt could be streamlined.

The next phase was to develop a business plan. It covers a wide range of information such as proposed layout of such a facility, provision for retail outlet, provision of sorting station and outlets for recycled material. It also highlights skills, additional to previous experience, which will be required of people wishing to become involved. This has led to members of the group applying for a theory test for a C1 driving license and learning to use computers.

The enterprise of the Travelling Community is second to none. The project has worked closely with the enterprise department of the Blanchardstown Area Partnership in building trust with Traveller men and providing information which will assist them in developing their enterprise.

The experience of this group of men has led to the design of a training programme to be used to enhance their skills to a level to allow them to access their chosen employment options and which will also be used to train others in accessing employment.



On site at a recycling centre in Dublin.

Glen CDP still 'new' after 3 years

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

THERE are 40 community groups in The Glen, Cork city, most of whom are represented on a local networking committee called Magnet. One of the newer additions to the area and to the Magnet committee is the local CDP which was set up over three years ago. While other CDPs are running for well over a decade, The Glen CDP is still a growing infant in developmental terms. This is reflected in where they place the emphasis in their work for example.

Adult and community education is very important to Glen Leadership & Equality Network CDP (the full title).

"It is a real biggie," said Margo Hayes, project co-ordinator.

As many projects find, adult education is a way of getting people in the community involved in the community.

"Education is how we link in with people in a less intimidating way, and we run everything from computer classes to flower arranging, there are eight courses running at present involving 60 people a week. Sometimes we do ask 'Are we getting through to people at all?' You keep having to check yourself. We are trying to get people in soon to do disability-awareness training," said Margo.

She pointed out that it is accepted as fact that it can take three years to link in with people in the community.

One difficulty for the CDP is that the population in The Glen keeps changing.

Margo explained: "Eight of the ten estates in The Glen are public housing. A lot of flat units were built 25 years ago and this has resulted in a high turnover of residents coming and going, though some families are there since the very start and wouldn't live anywhere else, this is their community. Others come in for 2 to 3 years and can't wait to get out."

More positively, a regeneration is taking

place - new houses are being built. This brings unexpected benefits, one of which is that City Hall, who want to keep local people informed, now fund the 'Glen Views' newsletter which was set up by the CDP and later became an independent group. The newsletter comes out every two months and reaches every home keeping people up to date on the regeneration and on other news in the area.

Services are thin on the ground in The Glen and people must visit other neighbourhoods to call to a doctor, shop in a supermarket, post a letter and so on. Yet there is no bus service on Sundays.

Said Margo: "But there have been great improvements in the last three years, for example we got pitches and the community centre. Though there is still not everything here that should be here. Local groups meet in flats and could do with better meeting places. This includes a couple of youth projects, a literacy scheme, estate management committee, senior citizens group and so on."

Rosie Meade is the UCC lecturer and management committee member. She lectures in Community and Youth Work. The two roles combine every so often as she brings first year students who are doing the Masters in Social Science to visit the CDP.

'Changing Ireland' sat in on a meeting between Margo and a group of students who visited as part of their training.

As one student remarked, "This is my first time in a community work setting." Another student said, "I want to see the reality of how things work from day-to-day."

Margo explained the crucial role that volunteers play: "It's really the volunteers that direct the project."

She pointed out that, apart from doing development work, a lot of staff and volunteer work-time went on day-to-day issues and on ensuring both staff and volunteers get the support they need to accomplish their work.

"We have an Induction Pack for staff. Also a Charter for Volunteers working in the CDP,"

she said.

Margo also pointed out to the students that a worker living outside the area cannot be as knowledgeable as volunteers living in the area: "The volunteers are important because they keep it local, keep it going and they see things like the bus that doesn't come on Sundays."

The inadequate bus service is a big issue of course. People need public transport to get in and out of the area. The community are energised around this issue.

Geographically, The Glen is an island of sorts, in that it is circled by Collins Army Barracks and Cork Prison, Blackpool, Mayfield and the Ring Road. In an island setting, people usually work well together and, despite pressures from the isolation, there is usually a good sense of community. So it is in The Glen, and long may it continue that way.

Contact information: GLEN CDP, The Glen Resource and Sports Centre, The Glen, Cork. Tel 021-455-0519.

The Glen takes on the 'Echo' over headlines

As The Glen CDP grows, the management committee have become more concerned with how the outside world views The Glen. Rightly so, since negative stereotyping means that fine people become victims of class abuse and discrimination.

The Glen habitually experiences negative media commentary and representation and, last year, Rosie Meade organised a 6-month study of 'Evening Echo' headlines and coverage of the area and of other working class communities in Cork. Afterwards. To follow up on their findings, the CDP set up a media sub-group who meet every six weeks to issue press releases on what is happening in the area.

"We wanted to counteract the lack of coverage and also the negative media coverage," said Rosie. And more recently, Rosie was involved, along with others from the Community Development Programme, in organising the William Thompson Weekend to mark the life and times of a real innovator - the first person to use class and gender as tools for analysing divisions in society. (A report on the event is published in this edition).

Anyone interested in learning about monitoring local media coverage of their area can contact Rosie Meade at the Department of Applied Social Studies, UCC, Cork. Tel. 021-490-2991.



Volunteers and staff at GLEN CDP.

Africa teaches us to value our welfare system

By DECLAN WEIR

LOSE your job in South Africa and you're more or less on your own. Fall sick without some kind of private health insurance and you better hope that your family are able to look after you.

The people of South Africa's 'Rainbow Nation' are well used to such realities, and those I was talking with weren't looking for sympathy, they were just stating the facts. Can you imagine their disbelief, then, when I began to tell them about the Irish welfare system we take so much for granted?

'So, what you're saying is that if you've been working and then you lose your job, you might be able to get money from the state?' asked one

'Yes. That's right'

'...and even if you haven't been working and you're now unemployed you still might be able to get some support?' asked another.

'Right again.'

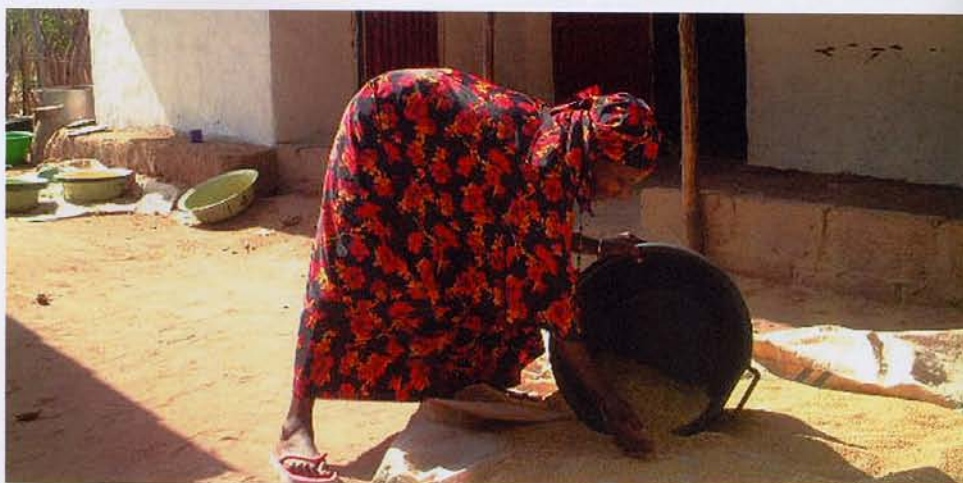
'...and if you have a disability you could get an allowance and be allowed to work part-time?' asked a third

'Absolutely.'

Silence descended, heads shook all around and there were now twice as many bewildered faces around the dinner table as they tried to picture this social utopia. They just couldn't take in the fact that the state would get involved to such an extent to look after the well being of its citizens. Concepts such as Unemployment Benefit, Supplementary Welfare Allowance, One Parent Family Payment and Invalidity Pension were as alien to them as the idea of year round balmy temperatures was to me.

Two things struck me at this point in the conversation. Firstly, I felt something I had difficulty recognising, something I eventually identified as pride in the welfare system that has evolved over recent years in Ireland. Secondly, this was the first time I was ever involved in a discussion about Ireland's welfare system where someone hadn't clambered aboard a conveniently located soapbox to rabidly denounce its inadequacies, inefficiencies and ability to be exploited by unscrupulous individuals. These people simply thought that this was the best idea ever, and would have happily paid into such a wondrous system there and then. Except that, for them, such a system was the stuff of dreams.

For me, this really was a genuine epiphany, and I couldn't help but think how lucky we are to live in Ireland. Okay, so our elected representatives and their often inept attempts at governing can drive us to the cusp of madness, but the fact that they and a



Gathering cuscus after drying it on a sheet in Africa's afternoon heat, in Bitta Village, Western Division, The Gambia. The woman in the picture is Isatou Badjie. In The Gambia, as in South Africa, people depend on their extended family in times of need. There is no dole to rely on in times of unemployment. Photo by A. Meagher.

legion of civil servants look after and administer such a wide safety net should make us all proud.

Once the South Africans had finished quietly imagining their land with such a system, our conversation turned briefly to similarities between our countries. We talked of our wild Atlantic coastlines, with waters as cold at Melkbosstrand as they are at Malin Head. Then we discovered how both countries had responded to worsening litter problems by introducing a surcharge on the use of plastic bags, resulting in a significant decrease in unsightly plastic adorning the countryside. Finally we discovered the McCarthy connection. Both countries have (or had) a national footballer called McCarthy. The South African version, however, didn't appear to be a figure of ridicule.

Having exhausted the similarities, we turned our attention once again to how our homes differed. We would describe their hills as enormous Irish mountains, and could fit our compact country countless times into their enormous South African landmass. As for their roads, let's just say it might be a good idea to send a delegation from the National Roads Authority out there to see how it should be done!

More seriously, we moved onto the matter of democracy. They were amazed at how jaded we've become with the whole process - in South Africa they're only now getting used to it. It was difficult to explain how some Irish people are too lazy or disillusioned to drag themselves to the polling booth to people who would walk for miles to join a queue of fellow citizens just to cast their hard earned vote.

Their third election in the decade since the end of apartheid recently returned the ANC to power, and a huge amount of work

confronts them as they attempt to rebuild the country and address the social problems that bedevil the people. Homelessness and unemployment are still rife and HIV/AIDS is raging through the country.

The consequences of these problems are clear to see in and around Cape Town, which, even to the inexperienced eye of the tourist, is clearly a city of contrasts. The sprawling, teeming townships of the Cape Flats lurk alongside modern roads carrying traffic towards the city's nearby high-tech business heart and the shoppers' paradise they call the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront. Whether you call them shantytowns or squatter camps or slums or eyesores, there's no escaping the extent of these settlements. The kombi driver rhymed off unfamiliar names - Guguletu, Langa, Khayelitsha - as we hurtled along, rows of shacks blurring to our sides, home, apparently, to more than half the city's population. Anyone curious enough to delve a bit deeper into the often shameful history of one of the 21st century's most attractive tourist destinations can visit these settlements.

Even among the battered streets and shacks, the visitor will discover that it's not all bad news, for there are countless examples of normal lives being lived among the chaos, crime and poverty. Artists and artisans ply their trade, neighbours carry out little local acts of goodness, and strong communities get stronger.

Amidst the squalor, hope permeates the daily lives of the people who call these places home, and that hope bodes well for South Africa's future. Combined with good fortune and patience, maybe it can help the people of South Africa look forward to building their own welfare system.

In the meantime we should make sure we cherish ours.

Who cares about children?

A REGIONAL conference titled 'Who Cares About Childcare?' was organised in April by a network of local projects, most of them CDPs, in the Tallaght/Clondalkin area. The event was in response to the increasing difficulty of providing and accessing childcare and among the attendance was Brian Lenihan, Minister of State with responsibility for children.

In asking who cares about children in Ireland today, the conference examined both the challenges and opportunities for developing an appropriate childcare policy.

Local projects (networking under the umbrella of the South Dublin Childcare Action Group) all share a deep concern about the lack of quality affordable childcare in the region and the very real difficulties that exist in trying to meet the need for childcare. Issues addressed at the conference included, for example, ADM regimentation and cuts to the Community Employment and Job Initiative schemes.

"The other aspect of the conference was to give a voice to all those who are caught up in this never ending spiral of having to juggle money, funds, work, time, family arrangements, everything, in the endless struggle of trying to provide or to secure a childcare place, it's an absolute nightmare," explained Emily Smartt, Chairperson of the South Dublin Childcare Action Group.

"We got together when we realised that the little we had going for us was being taken away with the government cutbacks in funding and the community employment scheme," said Lilly Garland, one of the organisers.

"It is extremely difficult to get good childcare, unless you want to pay through the nose, and when you try to provide it all you get are obstacles and very little support," continued Lilly.

The conference was well attended and featured a number of thematic workshops. There were many issues raised at the conference, most of which concerned inadequate resources and the absence of a clear policy to support the development of a quality childcare infrastructure.

Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children, Brian Lenihan, outlined the government's policy on childcare. In addition, Margaret Dalton, Chairperson of the South Dublin County Childcare Committee, and Francis Chance, Regional Manager of Barnardos, addressed the conference.

Naturally, children were welcome at the conference. However, due to limited resources, the organisers could not guarantee that childcare would be available to everyone and could only offer it on a first come, first served basis.

The reasoning behind a regional conference on childcare was outlined as follows by the group:

A significant degree of fragmentation and isolation exists amongst those engaged in or concerned about the provision of community based childcare. To address this fragmenta-

tion, it is necessary to build on the common experience of those concerned. The aim of the conference was to ensure that those who are marginalised by the decision making process, as it pertains to childcare policy, had an opportunity to explore, share information and raise awareness on childcare issues. The conference should lay the foundation for a more collaborative approach to the development of childcare policy.

The childcare conference objectives were to:

1. Communicate with the wider community, voluntary and statutory sectors to increase awareness of childcare issues.

2. Provide an overview of Government policy pertaining to the provision and support of community based childcare.

3. Provide an analysis of the states response to the provision and support of community based childcare.

4. Seek feedback from the community and voluntary sector, within the region, about what the next steps might be in developing the relationship between the sector and the state

on this issue.

5. To document the experience of the community and voluntary sector, within the region, and make recommendations to support the development of an adequate childcare infrastructure.

Held in Clondalkin Village, the conference was supported by Combat Poverty Agency through its 'Working Against Poverty Grants Scheme'.

Note: Area Development Management (ADM) have, for some years, run a Community Childcare Support Initiative which was aimed at 25 community childcare projects in disadvantaged areas. CDPs have been involved in the delivery of this Initiative.

For more information on the conference, contact: John Davis, Tel. 01-4146979;

E-mail: john@draiochtld.ie or

Emily Smartt, Tel. 01-4577382 or

E-mail: bwdg@eircom.net

You can write to the SDCAG, C/O Draiocht CDO Ltd., Elm Court, Kiltalown, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

The writes and wrongs of disability terminology

The following list of words and phrases are preferred words when writing about disabled people. For more on this topic see page 18.

- Disabled people NOT the disabled, the handicapped, people with disabilities.
- Non-disabled person NOT normal, able-bodied, healthy.
- Person with learning difficulties NOT mentally handicapped, retarded, thick, stupid, person with learning disabilities.
- Blind person, visually impaired person, partially sighted person NOT the blind.
- Deaf person, the deaf community, hard of hearing, partially deaf, NOT the deaf, deaf and dumb.
- Person with epilepsy NOT epileptic.
- Mental health system user/survivor, person with mental health impairment NOT mentally ill, mad, dangerous schizophrenic, mentally handicapped.
- Wheelchair user NOT wheelchair bound, the wheelchair.
- Physically disabled person, person with physical impairment NOT cripple.
- Woman/man with sickle cell NOT sickle cell sufferer.
- HIV positive, person with HIV NOT AIDS carrier.
- Person with arthritis NOT crippled with arthritis, arthritic.
- Person with Cerebral Palsy NOT spastic.
- Person with dyslexia, dyslexic NOT wordblind, can't spell.
- Unaware, does not understand the information, does not listen NOT blind to the truth, stupid, deaf to reason.
- Accessible parking space NOT disabled parking space.
- Accessible toilets NOT disabled toilets.
- Accessible entrance NOT disabled entrance.
- Accessible housing NOT disabled housing.
- Person with Down's syndrome NOT mongol, spastic.
- Carer NOT Personal assistant (unless they are employed).

More information on this topic is available at: www.presswise.org.uk

Is your project top-notch?

On May 13th, MACRO Community Development Project hosted an awareness morning on 'Disability in the Community'.

Reminding participants that the morning was aimed at community projects the chairperson Larry Byrne invited everyone to think about their projects. Readers can now do the same! In particular he asked: Do we include the needs of the disabled in our workplans? Are we aware of the wide range of disabilities? Can we make meetings more disabled friendly? Are our buildings disabled friendly? Do we provide services relevant to disabled uses?

Well, how 'top-notch' is your project?

The COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1 Programme; 170 Projects - funded through the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

GUIDE TO CDP MAP

The Community Development Programme was established 1990 in recognition of the role of community development in tackling the causes and effects of poverty and disadvantage. In 1990, there were only 15 Community Development Projects (CDPs); now there are 170. All the projects have an anti-poverty, anti-exclusion focus and work from community development principles and methods. The projects are run by local voluntary management committees and the Programme provides core-funding for project staff and activities.

The CDPs on the map are listed by region - there are six regions in total (as and from June 1st, 2004). As well as the regular CDPs, there are 8 specialist or training projects, most of whom have a national focus,

funded under the Community Development Programme and counted as CDPs in this guide. They are listed in a separate box. This brings the number of CDPs nationally to 170.

Also of interest, there are 15 pre-development projects due to come on stream at the end of this year. They are not included on the map, but are listed at the end of each of the six regional lists.

The Programme funds a Regional Support Agency in each of the six regions. The agency offices are based in Limerick, Galway, Waterford, Monaghan and Dublin where there are two. The Programme also funds a number of Specialist Support Agencies, for example DESSA which advises projects on disability issues.

NORTHERN REGION

- Donegal**
1. Action Inishowen CDP
2. Pobal Le Chéile CDP
3. The Rosses CDP
4. Letterkenny CDP
5. Donegal Women's Network
6. Lifford/Clonleigh CDP
7. South West Donegal Comm. P'ship
8. Donegal Travellers CDP
9. Atlantic View CDP
Leitrim
10. North Leitrim Women's Res. Gp.

11. Lough Allen CDP
Sligo
12. Sligo Northside Comm. P'ship
13. CLASP
Cavan
14. Community Connections
15. South West Cavan CDP
Monaghan
16. Dochas for Women
17. Blaney Blades CDP

18. Drumlin CDP
Louth
19. Ait na Daoine CDP
20. Le Chéile CDP
21. Southside CDP

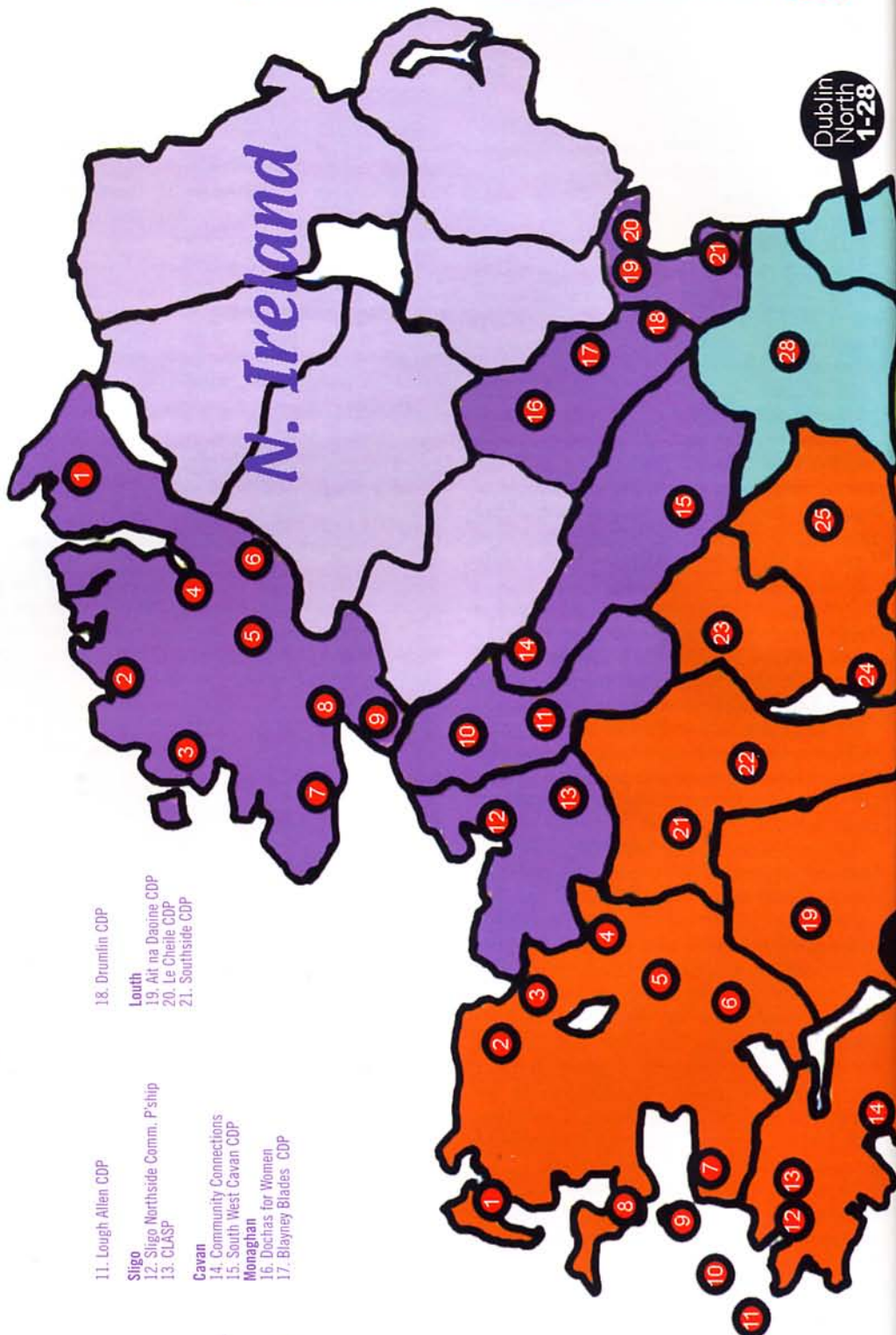
WEST AND MIDLANDS

- Mayo**
1. Erris-North Mayo CDP
2. Women of the North West
3. Parkside CDP
4. Cosgallen East Mayo CDP
5. Kiltimagh CDP
6. Claremorris Women's Group
7. Louisburgh CDP
8. Achill & Curraun CDP
9. Clare Island Comm. Co-op
10. Inishlurk CDP

- Galway**
11. Inishbofin CDP
12. Connemara Comm. Radio
13. Forum
14. Pearra Teo CDP
15 - 18 (Galway city)
Western Women's Link
Galway Travellers Support Gp.
Ballybane Mervue CDP
Westside Comm.Dev.Res.Cent.
19. Iuan Comm.Dev.Res.Cent.
20. Na Calai - South East Galway

- Roscommon**
21. North West Roscommon CDP
22. Roscommon Women's Network

Longford



DUBLIN NORTH (& MOUTH)

1. North West Inner City Women's Network
2. Kilmore West CDP
3. FARG CDP Coolock
4. CAP Ballymoun
5. Darndale/Belcamp Res. Cent.
6. Finglas South CDP
7. Kilbarack CDP
8. Ballymun Men's Cent.
9. St Margaret's Travellers Comm. Assoc.
10. Priorswood CDP
11. PGSS CDP Finglas
12. Project West Finglas
13. P.I.E.C.E., Derrinville
14. Northside Travellers, Coolock
15. An Sol CDP, Manor Street
16. Castle Na Naichum
17. Lourdes Youth & Community
18. IDRG
19. Robert Emmet CDP
20. North Wall Women's Centre
21. MACRO CDP
22. Bonmahon CDP
23. Greater Blanchardstown Dev. Proj.
24. Blanchardstown Res. Cent.
25. Blanchardstown Traveller Support Group
26. Conduit CDP
27. CAPA Ballymun
28. Navan CDP

Pre-development

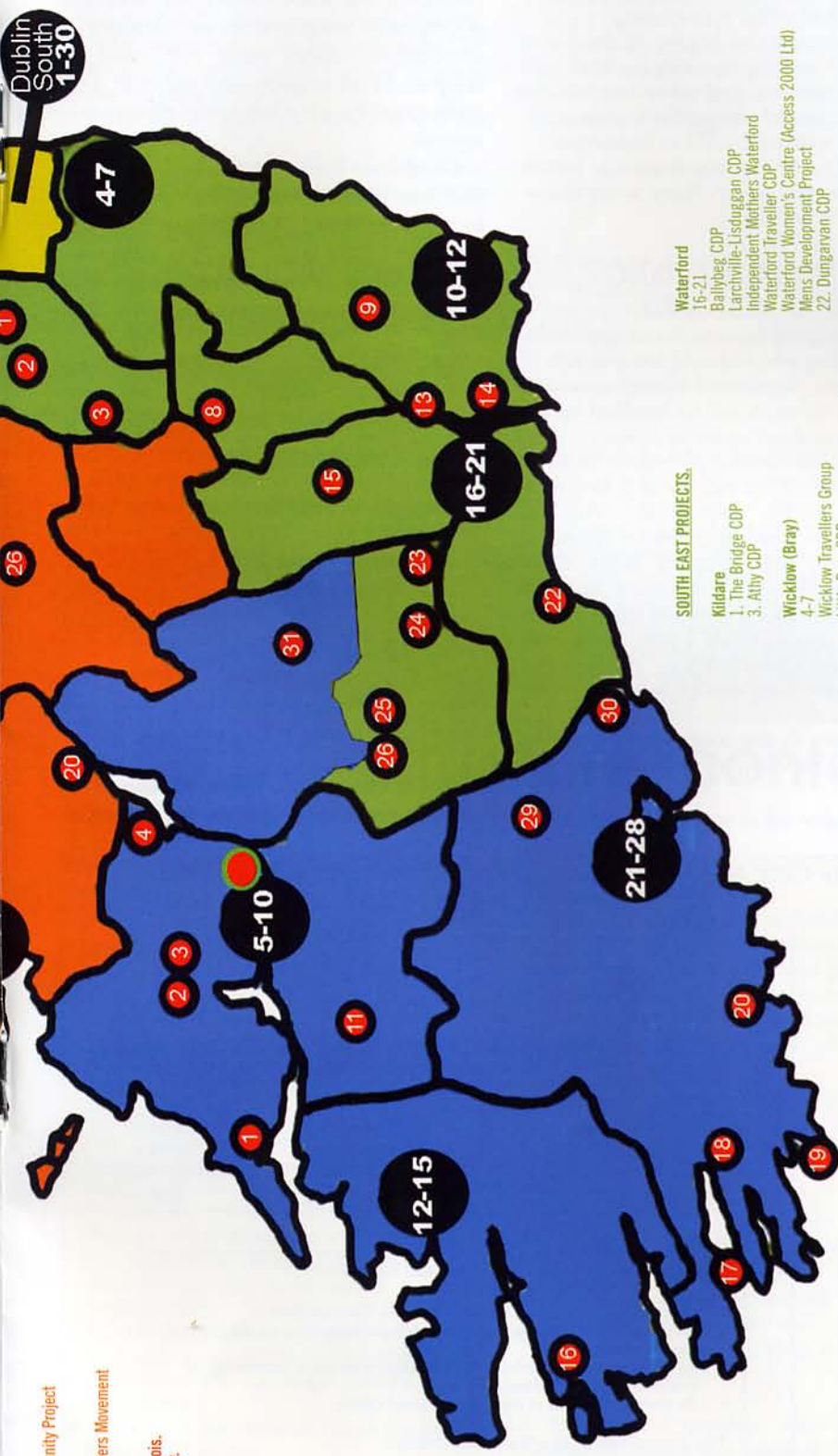
- Cabra CDP
East Wall CDP
Edenmore Raheny CDP

Dublin North
1-28

Westmeath
24. Harmony CDP
25. Women's Community Project

Offaly
26. Tuilamore Travellers Movement

Pre-development
Portlanning, Co. Laois.
Edenderry, Co. Offaly.



SOUTH-WEST

Clare
1. Rural Action Project
2. Clare Women's Network
3. Ennis CDP
4. East Clare CDP

Limerick
5-10
Limerick Adult Basic Education
Limerick Travellers Devt Proj.
Comm. Dev. Network Moyross
Southill CDP
St Mary's CDP
St. Munchin's CDP
Our Lady of Lourdes CDP
11. West Limerick CDP

Kerry
12-15
Kerry Travellers Devt Proj.
Kerry Network of People with Disabilities
Tralee Women's Forum
Tralee CDP
16. South West Kerry Women's Network

Cork
17. Bantry and District CDP
18. Bere Island CDP
19. Sherkin Island Development Society Ltd
20. Clonakilty Traveller CDP
21-28
Cork Traveller Visibility Gp.
Cork Social and Health Gp.

Malton CDP
We the People Knocknaheeny
Glen CDP
Mayfield CDP
Faranree CDP
Ballyphehane/Togher CDP
29. Fermoyle Young Mothers Gp.
30. Cumann na Daoine

Tipperary (N.R.)
31. Thurles CDP

Pre-development
Gurrabraher CDP, Cork.
Limerick Women's Network.

SOUTH EAST PROJECTS.

Kildare
1. The Bridge CDP
3. Athy CDP

Wicklow (Bray)
4-7
Wicklow Travellers Group
Little Bray CDP
St. Fergals CDP
Bray Travellers Dev. Network

Carlow
8. Carlow Open Door CDP

Wexford
9. Templeshamnon CDP, Enniscorthy
10-12
Wolfe Tone Villias CDP
Access 2000
FAB Coolcotts
13. New Ross CDP
14. Southwest Wexford CDP

Kilkenny
15. LARC CDP, Kilkenny

Waterford
16-21
Ballybeg CDP
Larchville-Lisduigan CDP
Independent Mothers Waterford
Waterford Traveller CDP
Waterford Women's Centre (Access 2000 Ltd)
Mens Development Project
22. Dungarvan CDP

Tipperary (S.R.)
23. Suir CDP
24. TACCTIC
25. Tipperary Travellers.
26. Knockanraley CDP

Pre-development projects.
Adlow CDP
2. North West Kildare CDP
Rathnew CDP

Pre-development projects.
Ballybrack CDP.
Crumlin /Drinnagh CDP
Shanganagh/Rathsalagh CDP
Loughinstown CDP
Walkinstown CDP

DUBLIN SOUTH

1. Tallaght Lone Parents Network
2. Tallaght Lone Parents Centre
3. SPLU (Tallaght)
4. West Tallaght CDP
5. Tallaght Travellers
6. Jobstown CDP
7. Bawnogue Women's, Clonsilla
8. An Casan/Shanty, Jobstown
9. North Clonsilla CDP
10. Rowlagh CDP
11. Romanstown Women
12. Clonsilla Travellers
13. Quarryvale CDP
14. Clonsilla Women's Network
15. Dalcain Project, Clonsilla
16. Ballyfermot Travellers Action Project
17. Markiewicz CDP, Ballyfermot.
18. Matt Talbot CDP, Ballyfermot.
19. LNK - Cherry Orchard CDP
20. Ringsend Action Project
21. St Michael's, Inchicore.
22. Bluebell CDP
23. Inchicore CDP
24. South Inner City Comm. Devt. Assoc.
25. Vista, 788 Donora Avenue, Dublin 8
26. Dolphin House CDP
27. Rialto Community Network Limited
28. Southside Travellers Action Group
29. Southside Women's Action Network
30. Mountwood/Fitzgerald CDP

SPECIALIST OR TRAINING PROJECTS

- Cross Border Centre, Dundalk
- National Traveller Women's Forum, Galway
- 'Changing Ireland' CDP magazine, Limerick (managed by CDN Moyross).
- Interaction Project, c/o Irish Wheelchair Association, Dublin
- Partners Training for Transformation, Dublin
- Irish Senior Citizens Parliament, Dublin
- Community Technical Aid, Dublin
- Cherry Orchard Equine Centre, Dublin

Map designed by A. Meagher,
'Changing Ireland' - the
national newsletter of the
Community Development
Programme.

National Forum Structure is agreed on by reps

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING, MAY 10, IN DUBLIN

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) and National Forum Structure proposed from the CDP seminar in Limerick has been agreed upon and should be implemented by December 1st, 2004.

The decision was reached at the NAC meeting held on May 10th at the Department's offices on Mespil Road, Dublin.

The way regions will organise their representation and networking is to be worked out locally. Additional costs associated with the Forum can be submitted to the Department for examination. Concerns were raised particularly regarding the difficulties facing voluntary representatives attending meetings.

CODE OF ETHICS

A Draft Code of Ethics for projects will be examined at the next meeting. Regions were asked to come with proposals or amendments to what is currently on the table. Potential issues which may stir debate include: the fixed term staff contract appendix, and also dismissal procedures.

AT ODDS WITH CDP AUTONOMY

Huge debate was generated over the top-down recommendation that new structures be considered for 15 projects due to join the Programme. The idea is that, in order to save resources, existing local groups such as Partnerships would take responsibility for administering the new projects and employing the workers.

Many of the NAC members argued that the government directive to share resources and to avoid new structures is, in the view of projects, support agencies and other agencies, unworkable. It is also, they stated, at odds with CDP autonomy and is effectively a new structure within a structure.

The Department are hoping to develop a contract with existing agencies (as lead host) to be the employers, and yet to maintain the CDP management committee's autonomy. Projects were asked to send in their views.

The NAC is to formally request a written rationale for this policy. There is no review documents or findings.

MULTI-ANNUAL FUNDING CONTRACTS RESTORED

There was good news on the issue of multi-annual funding which should bring a sigh of relief to many people and indeed communities. Project contracts will be finalised by the end of May and will revert to 3 years.

For about 18 months, projects have been operating without the security of a long-term contract with the Department. For the duration of the inter-departmental review of the community and voluntary sector, CDPs had to make do with 1-year contracts. This caused unease among staff and made it difficult to plan ahead. While 1-year plans were sought by the Department, in development terms, one year is not enough to work with on long-term goals.

The Minister, in any case, has been true to his word in restoring multi-annual funding contracts.

SALARY SCALE FOR WORKERS NEEDS MORE DISCUSSION

CDPs, because of their individual autonomy, pay their workers differently and efforts are being made to introduce a standardised salary scale that could be adopted by all projects who agree to it. In some cases, there is a substantial difference in salaries.

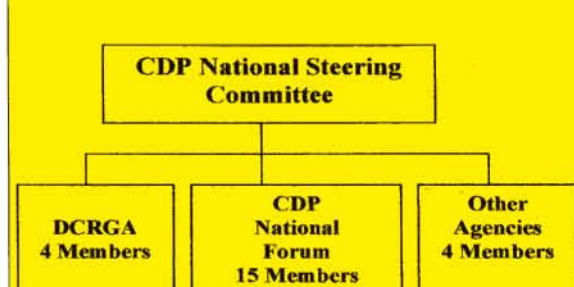
Geraldine Reidy, a worker from the Mid-West Region, attended the NAC meeting to present a Salary Scale Document that her region has been working on for some time. However, time ran short and the document needs further consideration and time at NAC level.

David Brennan, Principal Officer of the Department's Voluntary and Community Services, welcomed the document. He pointed out that the Department would welcome consistency of salary scale, although the Department's hands are somewhat tied in that they are not allowed to formally impose salary scales. However, this does not preclude CDP employers agreeing a scale or the NAC 'advising' all projects of good practice and fair payment of staff.

Some issues were raised regarding the Salary Scale proposals and the NAC will return to this matter at their next meeting.

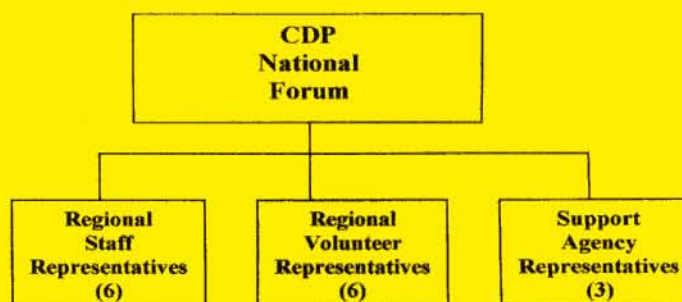
- Thanks to Juan Carlos Azzopardi for the notes he took at the NAC meeting.

Proposal from NAC Project Reps at the CDP National Seminar on 7th April 2004 in Limerick



The Functions of the CDP National Steering Committee:

- To oversee the management of the CDP
- To influence Government Departments in relation to policy relevant to community development
- To link CDP directly with the Department, Minister and other agencies with anti-poverty, social inclusion and equality agendas



The Functions of the CDP National Forum:

- Be an independent voice for the CDP at a National level
- Be a mechanism for representation and accountability on the National Steering Committee
- Be a mechanism for independent linkages with other players in the community sector nationally
- To manage to work of the CDP National Office

The Functions of the National Office:

- To implement the day-to-day work of the CDP National Forum

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME NATIONAL SEMINAR

INTRODUCTION:

The National Seminar of the Community Development Programme (CDP) took place on April 7th and was attended by people representing 93 different groups from every region and target group within the CDP.

The Seminar was organised by the project representatives to the CDP's National Advisory Committee (NAC) following agreement at the NAC to the implementation of two key goals of the CDP Strategic Plan concerning a national structure, profile and voice for the CDP.

These strategic goals (numbers 2 & 4 of the Plan) are:

"To further develop an effective infrastructure for networking, representation, decision-making and evaluation within the CDP."

And:

"To ensure that the CDP is effective in shaping and contributing to policy formation at local, regional and national levels and relevant all-island and European structures."

The implementation of these goals will provide the context within which the other goals of the Strategic Plan can be implemented, enabling the CDP to maximise its potential to eliminate poverty and inequality within communities where the projects work.

The Seminar was called to seek agreement on the establishment of a National CDP Forum and a mandate for an action group to establish both the Forum and a National CDP Office that would facilitate the work of the National Forum.

The Seminar agreed on the following decisions:

1. To establish a National CDP Forum that:

- Operates in a bottom-up fashion that guaran-

tees the autonomy of local projects.

- Is representative of each region; of workers and volunteers; of projects and support agencies; and of the range of target groups and communities of interest that comprise the CDP.
- Will provide an independent voice and identity for the CDP at National level.
- Will enable the CDP engage with other agencies and Government at a national level in order to promote the policy priorities emerging from the work of projects on the ground.
- Will be a mechanism for representation and accountability on the National Steering Committee
- Will manage the work of the CDP National Office

2. To Establish a CDP National Office that:

- Will facilitate the day-to-day work of the National Forum.
- Will be funded by an independent contribution of €500 per year per project with matching funding from the Department.

3. To set up an Action Group that:

- Will be made up of two reps from each of the regions and the Support Agency Network that include a mix of staff and voluntary management personnel. These reps will be selected at the next regional/network meetings and the NAC reps will convene the first meeting of the Action Group as soon as possible.
- Will work on setting up the National Forum and Office and will do so in consultation with the Regions.

Work Priorities that were agreed can be summarised as follows:

Short-term/Urgent:

- Return to three-year contracts. (Projects, it was announced recently, will be restored to 3-year funding in June).
- Renegotiate the Endorsement Guidelines.
- Guarantee the autonomy of projects – no political interference with membership of committees.
- Guarantee the autonomy of the next 15 projects ("pre-development groups") coming on stream.
- Representation on SIM committees for the CDP.
- Address issues arising from the order to "align" by June (needs to be done on a regional and local basis).
- Regions need to address the changes in the regional support agency structure.
- Get the National Structure set up.

Longer Term:

- We are not just service providers!
- We cannot operate in any other way than autonomously.
- Promotion of participative democracy.
- Work programme for National Forum – representation; information and communication strategies; long-term vision; profiling the work; making allies; policy work including anti-racism, childcare and equality work.
- Strengthening the regions.
- Protecting the antipoverty agenda of the CDP.

It was agreed that the NAC reps would get the report of the Seminar out to groups ASAP and would include a "motion of support" for management committees.

Forum - structure, content and resources

THE main points that came up in the Seminar's small groups sessions can be classed under three headings - structure, content and resources.

STRUCTURE:

- The autonomy of local projects cannot be undermined in any way by the establishment of the National Forum.
- Mechanisms of accountability between the National Forum and projects need to be transparent. Good information and communication systems are vital.
- The Support Agencies – new Regional and existing Specialist – must be represented on the National Forum.
- The existing regional networks need to look at the best way of organising within the context of the Department changing their management structure from eight to six regions.
- Representation from regions to the National Forum needs to ensure diversity between staff and voluntary management members as well as a diversity of target groups for the Programme.
- Meetings of the National Forum should rotate among the regions.
- The National Forum must be recognised by the Minister and Department and other relevant

agencies and groups as the national collective voice of the CDP.

CONTENT:

- A bottom-up approach to decision-making is vital i.e. the work of the National Forum must be based on the needs of local groups.
- The work of the Forum includes establishing the identity of the CDP at national level and pursuing the remaining objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- The National Forum can highlight the success of the CDP – the SPEAK system can provide a range of material for analysis and PR.

RESOURCES:

- There was some concern about the ability of projects to contribute €500 per year to the running of a national office.
- There were concerns about the time commitment involved for both staff and voluntary management in participating in regional and national structures.

A number of questions were raised in the general discussion that followed:

- In terms of the endorsement process, it was explained that the NAC reps had gotten

agreement from the Department to having the Guidelines that were issued last year re-negotiated. The project reps are working on a new set of Guidelines that will be discussed at the next NAC meeting (10th May) and when finalised, these will form the basis of negotiation with the Department of Environment.

- On the issue of boards of management, it was explained that a sub-committee of the NAC is working on a document covering both membership of management committees and a code of ethics for committees. The NAC reps will keep projects informed of developments on both of these issues.

At this stage, it was proposed that the meeting formally agree to the establishment of a National Forum and a National Office for the CDP and to the setting up of an Action Group to put these structures in place. The meeting agreed these three things unanimously.

The next piece of work was for the small groups to re-convene to discuss work priorities. Groups were asked to agree both short-term and long-term priorities. The short-term priorities will be worked on by the current NAC reps and the new Action Group; the long-term ones will be part of the work programme for the National Forum when it is established.

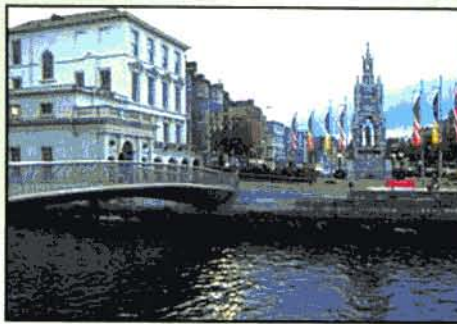
Cork volunteers to fore in class debate

GLEN CDP committee member, Rosemary Meade, helped organise the highly successful William Thompson Weekend 2004, held on the first weekend in May and centred on the theme 'Class: Politics, Agency and Identity'.

Rosemary, a lecturer in UCC, was not the only CDP person involved. Sheila Lee, a life-long community activist who is currently involved in Knocknaheeny's We the People CDP and a number of other community groups, was one of the main speakers. She presented a 'A working class view' of what it is like to experience social inequality.

Other speakers included London University feminist Lynne Segal who gave the Annual William Thompson Lecture, speaking of hope and of political journeys.

She was followed by lecturer Joe Finnerty



The annual William Thompson Weekend was held in Cork recently.

who gave a talk on 'Housing and inequality in Ireland'. Phillip Crowley, a G.P., addressed the subject of 'Health inequalities and occupational class'. Sociologists Ciaran

McCullagh and Kathleen Lynch discussed 'Class and crime' and ideology in contemporary Ireland, respectively. Trade unionists Noel Murphy and Des Derwin were involved, and Huw Beynon was the last of the speakers, on the subject: 'The destruction of the working class'.

As well as workshops, there was a poetry session. And to end the weekend, the attendance adjourned to the Spailpin Fanach pub for a sing-song.

The William Thompson Weekend was held in the Firkin Crane Centre, Shandon, Cork.

Note: An attached article outlines William Thompson's achievements.

For further information on the weekend's proceedings, contact Rosemary Meade. Tel. 021-4902991 or 021-4903048 or email r.meade@ucc.ie

IF ONLY THEY HAD CDPs IN THE 18TH CENTURY!

Had CDPs been around a couple of centuries ago, William Thompson from Cork would most likely have been involved. Long before there was a UN Charter of Human Rights, Thompson was "a critic of human oppression in its many forms."

Born in 1775, he was a pioneer in his use of class and gender as a way of understanding and explaining our social, political,

economic and cultural life. He had worked out theories of class long before Marxism developed as a political force. Thompson proposed the replacement of capitalism with cooperative communism. He even planned to convert his own inherited 1,400 acre estate in West Cork into a cooperative commune but he died in March 1833 before the project could be established.

TALK ABOUT A CLASSY CITY

The debate about school places spilled onto the public airwaves, onto our tv screens and into the papers. Here are some of the 'classier' quotes associated with this disaster.

"There are one or two schools in the city who are creaming off, and picking and choosing who they'll take in. It is educational apartheid."

- Cllr John Ryan, chairman of the board of management of St Nessian's Community School, speaking on RTE's Morning Ireland in early March. (He argued that St Nessian's has taken its fair share of children from the disadvantaged areas on its doorstep).

"Limerick's reputation as a city of deep-rooted class division has been reinforced this week following revelations that 77 children from disadvantaged areas cannot find places in the city's secondary schools. The children, mostly boys, received letters of rejection from their chosen secondary schools last month despite the fact that there appears to be no shortage of school places."

- Gerard Skehan, Limerick Leader reporter, March 13th, 2004

"Forget about this notion of an inclusive society. The fact is we're living now in a very

exclusive society."

- Patricia Feehily, Limerick Leader columnist, March 20th, 2004

"The children we are dealing with have very low self esteem as it is. This has a devastating effect. It's humiliating for them. It is blatant discrimination."

- Geraldine Wallace, principal of St Mary's Boys' National School, in early March. The education system has failed to find places for a number of her students.

"The situation in Limerick is by no means unique. In most counties, and especially in Dublin, some schools operate an enrolment policy which could politely be described as socially regressive. ... (Those) from socially disadvantaged groups are excluded. It is not a coincidence that some of the most prestigious fee-paying schools in this State do not have extended special needs provision for pupils."

- Irish Times editorial, May 12th, '04

"Just weeks before the secondary schools close for the summer vacation, some 50 children and their parents are in the wilderness as to future educational provision."

- Limerick Post, May 8th, '04

Half of students in 60 schools leave early

A shocking report published in August of last year showed that half the students in some areas do not sit the Leaving Certificate exam.

Almost 60 schools in the country have Leaving Cert completion rates of only 50% or even lower.

The disadvantaged areas of Darndale and Priorswood, in Dublin, have the poorest educational record of all. A quarter of students from these parts do not even sit the Junior Cert, and only two out of five sit the Leaving. The report also identified three schools in Dublin, two in Dun Laoghaire and one in Limerick, where less than 60% of students sit the Junior Cert.

The report noted slight improvement in the numbers staying on to complete the Leaving - an average of 81% of students in Ireland go the full course. Nonetheless, Minister for Education, Noel Dempsey, admitted there were particularly serious concentrations of educational disadvantage in certain schools and in certain areas.

He told the Irish Independent last year, "These results clearly show that educational outcomes tend to be particularly poor where disadvantage clusters in specific areas and in specific schools. This highlights the need to avoid the clustering of disadvantage and the vital importance of early and effective educational interventions targeted at those whose needs are greatest."

Ironically, part of the difficulty in keeping on students is that many youngsters are attracted early to go work in the booming labour market. More boys than girls quit early. There are other more depressing reasons for early-school leaving.

Of course, taking the Limerick situation into account, it is not possible to drop out when you have not been accepted into a school in the first place. Has Irish society come up with the ultimate cure to prevent children leaving school early? By not allowing them into school in the first place.

'Class Apartheid' in Schools

- Limerick CDPs fight for children refused places

THE co-ordinator of the Community Development Network Moyross, a CDP on Limerick's northside, found himself on all the major news channels recently over the refusal of some local secondary schools to accept students into first year. The CDN Moyross and St. Munchin's CDP, both members of the Northside Local Education Committee, have been involved in a letter-writing campaign and behind-the-scenes moves to resolve the crisis.

One local politician claimed a system of 'educational apartheid' was in operation. Some schools had given places to children of middle-class families living many miles away while refusing to take children from nearby Moyross which is a disadvantaged area.

Amid calls to end the class-based discrimination which reached scandalous proportions this year when up to 80 children from working class areas were denied secondary school places, the 'Limerick Leader' interviewed school principals to find out if they were operating a policy of excluding children from disadvantaged areas.

The paper reported that two schools Árd Scoil Rís (which was implicated in the controversy) and Castletroy College "admitted they gave preference to children from their immediate surroundings - areas which are predominantly middle class."

CDP co-ordinator, Juan Carlos Azzopardi, said he had no doubt that a system of selection was happening in schools around Limerick and called it an "absolute disgrace."

Brid de Brun, principal, Árd Scoil Rís, in explaining their selection system told the surveyors that, apart from giving preference to brothers of current or past pupils and sons of staff members, "places are allocated on a random basis".

"If it's a random selection, it's amazing that it's primarily boys from disadvantaged schools who find themselves with no school places," commented Mr. Azzopardi. If it was proven to be "class discrimination" he said the Minister for Education "needs to be appalled".

A total of 17 boys in Corpus Christi primary school, Moyross, were initially told that neither of two secondary schools



Juan Carlos Azzopardi spoke out on behalf of projects about discrimination by secondary schools against children from Moyross and St. Munchin's, a disadvantaged and working class area. The education system is failing our children.

on the city's northside had room for them.

After meetings between parents, politicians and community representatives, more places were offered to the despairing children. However, not every case has been sorted and some children face into a second year without a school to go to.

Said one Moyross parent, "He's never been in trouble and I think myself that it's his address and where I'm living - I feel that's why it is."

The Northside Local Education Committee (which includes parents, school principals, the local CDPs, the health board, Bernardos, a local youth development group, gardai and probation services) had campaigned successfully for the appointment of Education Welfare Officers to Limerick. Their role was primarily to have been to encourage, support and where necessary put pressure on parents whose children had poor school-attendances. Ironically, the new welfare officers found they instead had to work as a priority on pressurising schools to accept children into their schools.

Juan Carlos dispelled the notion that many of the children were refused places because they had special needs: "The majority have no special needs, they are well-motivated, lovely children and

would be a bonus to any school who might take them. A small number of them do need extra resources, but the majority have neither behavioural problems or psychological problems, or have family-background issues. All they are carrying with them is their address."

Parents have spoken on local radio of the effects of all this on their children. While most have by now been found places, damage has been done.

"Some of these children who got letters telling them P.F.O. stopped going to primary school," explained Juan Carlos, "because they didn't want to be meeting friends who would be asking them what school they were going to next and slugging them for being refused."

The Community Development Network Moyross, which normally works away from the public spotlight, gave interviews to TV3 news, radio stations and made statements to local and national newspapers in the fight to end the discrimination. As well as attending many meetings to challenge the system, the co-ordinator estimates his name has appeared on up to 25 letters to the education minister and the National Education Welfare Board in regard to the scandal.

As 'Changing Ireland' went to press, around 10 children - of the original 80 refused places - remained without a seat in secondary school for the coming year. Meetings are continuing.

CDPs had earlier concern over 'negative stereotyping'

In a submission last year to the Forum for Educational Disadvantage, CDPs in the North-West Region recommended that Teacher Training should include "equality training and awareness on issues impacting on the lives of students such as poverty, racism, negative stereotyping."

The 9-page submission drew on the experiences of community education providers, often CDPs organising homework clubs and supports for those who are let down by the education system in this country.

How NOT to disable people with your tongue or typewriter!

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

Disabled people try to define disability in terms that point the finger at society. Disability activists believe that it is society's physical, sensory, attitudinal and behavioural barriers which make them disabled, rather than a person's particular conditions or impairments. Words flow from attitudes. If you change the words you are using, your attitudes should follow suit. And other people will hear the difference and begin to change too. That is the hope.

Eileen Carroll, DESSA's community support worker, believes it is "very useful" for projects to be aware of terminology. It can be empowering to use it correctly. However, people can get hung up on it and feel intimidated or confused as they are afraid they are not being politically correct. (DESSA is the Programme's Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency).

"We are all striving to work from an equality framework and that terminology is one aspect of this," said Eileen. "However it is a

learning process as we become accustomed to the changes in terminology and we may not get it right all the time. Fussing over terminology should not become a barrier stopping people from communicating with or consulting disabled people (should that be 'people with disabilities'? - ed)."

"Discussing language/terminology can be an especially exercise when it is presented as part of a Disability Equality Training event," noted Eileen.

Continued Eileen: "Within the disability sector there are differences over terminology, for example, do you say 'people with disabilities' or 'disabled people'. This is an individual preference which some people will happily use interchangeably and others will have very strong views about. I have copied below a section from a document written."

One person with strong views is Sinead Murtagh, equality officer with ADM. While she says that both 'disabled people' and 'people with disabilities' are acceptable, she prefers the former over the latter:

"'Disabled people' is seen as being a more

empowering way of describing what is in reality a significant percentage of our population. 'People with disabilities' portrays 350,000 separate people, all of whom happen to have some kind of disability. 'Disabled people' on the other hand gives a picture of 10% of the population who are (politically) unified by their common disability."

"The important point," stressed Sinead, and this should be come as a relief to those who are unsure, "is that concerns over terminology should not prevent projects from getting involved with disability issues."

Thanks, by the way, to Steve McNamara, who sent information on this issue to 'Changing Ireland'. See the tips on page 11. Steve is a member of the Equality and Anti-Racism Sub-committee of the National Advisory Committee and works with the Mid-West Support Agency.

For more information contact DESSA:
Eileen Carroll, Community Support Worker,
DESSA, Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane,
Dublin 8. Tel. 01-416-3548. Fax: 01-453-6861. E-mail: desa4@eircom.net
Website: www.dessa.ie

New handbook on disability rights

'On the right track - Community Projects and Disability Rights' is a new booklet which has just been distributed to CDPs around the country. The handbook outlines clearly why disability is a community development issue and shows how best to engage with the issue.

"We hope the handbook will be used by projects to start a debate, to encourage projects to seek further information from people with disabilities and to make a small start to the challenge of 'Thinking disability'," said Tracey Reddy, one of those involved.

The book distinguishes between the medical and the social models of disability, gives some background on the disability movement, looks at rights and the law and also explains why language is so important. It lists supports that enable people with disabilities to participate in society. Three of the nine chapters are devoted to employment issues, youth and disability, and models of good practice.

The handbook lists disability organisations and includes a section giving advice and support to employers hiring people with disabilities.

The handbook was produced by the Disability Equality Steering Committee (DESC) which is based in the Tallaght and Clondalkin areas of Dublin.

The handbook has just been distributed to



Caption: Back: 'On the right track' publishers - Karen O'Sullivan, Tracey Reddy, Marie Daly and, in front, Colette Dowling and Ann Pepper.

all CDPs, and to Family Resource Centres nationwide, by the Equality and Anti-Racism Sub-Committee.

"The idea of the manual is not to intimidate people regarding inaccessible buildings and the like, but to encourage and support them," said Tracey.

"One of the messages that is quite clear

from the manual is that if any project is in doubt they should contact a local organisation led by people with a disability and get assistance and advice. A lot of the issues are better understood by people with disabilities themselves," noted Tracey.

One unique aspect is that DESC also produced a shorter, plain English version. This is a rare achievement. The book is also available in large print, on disc or in Braille on request.

Funding for the initiative came from the co-ordinating committee of the European Year of People with Disabilities.

Members of the DESC collective, which includes local CDPs and the Regional Support Agency, are: Special Project on Long-Term Unemployed, Tallaght; Women Together Tallaght Network; Ronanstown CDP; Killinarden Family Resource Centre; Draiocht Support Agency. Involved in producing the handbook were: volunteers with Killinarden FRC - Ann Pepper and Colette Dowling, and development workers - Marie Daly, Molly O'Duffy, Tracey Reddy, Karen O'Sullivan and Paula O'Neill.

For more information or to get a copy of the handbook, contact: DESC, c/o An Tobar, Elm Court Kiltalown, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Tel. 01-4146979. Fax: 01-4146980. E-mail: spstu@eircom.net

Revolution happens when access to power is threatened

- Joe Grennell on the need to get organised nationally

AT the CDP National Seminar, Joe Grennell gave a stirring insight into the slowness by projects to organise nationally. Why did the CDP not get it together before now? The programme is in existence for 14 years after all. Joe had the answers. And he also communicated the dire need now to get organised nationally, for once and for all. And fast. *Editor, Allen Meagher, reports.*

"Make no mistake about it there is a train coming down the track at 90 miles an hour and we better get our acts together to influence the direction and speed of that train. Or else who knows what the result may be," he said.

A project co-ordinator with Ringsend Action Project, Joe is also a project rep on the National Advisory Committee, who supported the holding of the Seminar.

He said the term 'the need to get organised' is self-evident, but that people do not organise themselves into any coherent form until they really have to.

Back in 1990, said Joe, "most of the ingredients were there. A small group. Very experienced people. A willingness by the (Programme administrators) to support such networking...

...But no-one could find a real need to organise. No one took leadership. And so national networking did not take place," he said.

"This is not unique to the community development programme," he pointed out.

Joe quoted social theory, saying that poor and hungry people do not generally cause or lead revolutions. If they did the world would be constantly in a state of revolution. Theorists speculate that revolution is caused by the feeling that one's access to power is being thwarted. And the people who feel this most are the emerging or middle classes. Hence the leadership for revolutions in Russia, France and indeed Ireland, did not come from the downtrodden and poor."

NOT REPRESENTED

So, while the idea of national networking was on the CDP agenda over the years, it never took off. And without a national organisation, the CDP was not always represented, even where those representations would have been accommodated.

"We just did not have the organisational capacity to participate in these forums."

However, in recent years, the demand for a strategic plan for the CDP emerged.

"This grew into what was to become the Strategic Planning Process. It took 2 years. It consulted with every project in all of the

regions and it recognised the need for national organisation. It recognised the need to get involved in influencing policy. This did not come from a handful of intellectuals hell bent on securing their own route into power. It came from projects around the country," noted Joe.

In other words, projects recognised that the most effective way to represent their communities was through national organisation.

In the meanwhile, projects have been represented at NAC meetings, about a dozen of which took place over the last four years. However, it is the Department that calls or cancels meetings, chairs the meetings and decides on the agenda. And for all sorts of reasons (primarily due to distance and travel time) not all project reps manage to get together to discuss the agenda prior to entering the meetings.

"Invariably if decisions are made, and this is not always the case, when we sit down at an NAC meeting we almost never speak with one voice on matters. Hence our contribution is at best weakened. At worst we are completely ignored," explained Joe.

A POLITICAL DECISION

When it was announced that the Family Resource Centres would no longer be part of the Programme, there was nothing that anyone could do: "It was a political decision. And faced with no option the FRCs organised." (One of the other main speakers at the seminar was Ciara Doyle from the Family Resource Centre National Forum who explained how and why their national forum was established).

Finally, when the newly created Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, together with other departments, initiated a review last year of local development structures, the CDP sensed a mortal threat to its survival - because the review included a requirement that various local agencies and boards submit their annual work plans to city or county development boards for endorsement (in order to support greater coherence at local level).

This sent both the local development and community development sectors into a spin: "Our autonomy was being challenged. The last and final ingredient that was needed back in 1990 had finally emerged," said Joe. "Our power to determine our own work plans to determine our destiny was under threat."

In response, a national meeting was organised last year which over 200 people from projects attended. A working group was set up which produced a submission to the

review. Despite this achievement in organisational terms, Joe said the working group's submission was "questionable" and noted that the group did not, for example, "engage with the local development sector in any meaningful way."

And this year, with the support agencies being cut, a matter which some people were happy about, noted Joe, "we did not make a unified response to the fact that we were not consulted on the matter. Why? Because we do not have a national structure."

He said the result of not having a national structure is that, "Today there will be no more new community development projects. That there will be only six support agencies. That you must submit your work plan for endorsement to your City or County Development Board. That arrangements are being made to bring projects together to share resources. That money has been set aside for the CDBs to bring forward better co-ordination by, wait for it, this coming June. And finally, that some form of local political representation may very well be foisted on your project in order to ensure transparency."

He said changes were on the way and the CDP had to be organised to influence the speed and direction of those changes.

Giving an up-to-date example, he pointed to a recent document released from the Department regarding 15 new projects due to come on stream in 2004 (subject to available resources). It stated: "In this regard, there will be a requirement to look at existing local structures and local authorities for delivery of new local or community development initiatives."

THE URGENCY IS CLEAR

Joe asked suspiciously what this would mean. While welcoming other developments mentioned in the document, he also objected to a new role being given to support agencies for "facilitating regional networking between projects."

"Does this mean that we will no longer be responsible for organising our own networks?" he asked.

These were but recent examples of the need to establish a CDP national forum and a fully funded national office. The final reason why projects should get organised, added Joe, is that The Department was fully behind the idea of the projects becoming organised at a national level.

"The expertise is here to organise, the leadership is here and at last the urgency to organise is clear and evident," concluded the Ringsend man.

They're still taking from the poor and giving to the rich

INTRODUCTION

There are several Local Authority Regeneration Plans at various stages of planning and completion around the country that involve communities presently sited on valuable building land. There are signs that the Department of the Environment and some local authorities are now becoming more and more interested in public-private housing ventures.

It concerns CDPs and other groups that local authority land earmarked for regeneration may be sold off privately bringing in a cash windfall for the local authority while displacing long-time residents.

It is important that CDPs, community groups and tenants groups unite against this or the regeneration that gave hope to local authority housing residents will instead turn them into internal refugees. Unable to return to their place of birth/origin because the rich have swiped the land from the poor. Sounds familiar.

While the new 'integrated area plans' have been strongly defended by Dublin City Council, Nick Murphy, our Regional Reporter in Dublin, found that one community are aghast at what is happening:

THE people of St Michaels Estate in Inchicore in Dublin are devastated. Over a two year period between 2001 and 2003 they worked in partnership with Dublin City Council, local Community Groups, representatives of various state agencies and local politicians to develop a plan for the regeneration of their area including the demolition of 360 flats presently on the 11 acre site. It took a lot of positive energy to put together and was very detailed. According to Rita Fagan, local CDP project co-ordinator, the consultation even involved selecting the colour of roof tiles and types of fireplaces. The CDP are now part of the Saint Michaels Estate Campaign Group.

"The plan had all the elements for a complete transformation and regeneration of the estate including new resource centre, afterschools, creche and a balanced mix of housing which would have integrated the area into the rest of Inchicore," said Rita. "The plan was to deliver 170 local authority homes, 80 affordable housing units and 70 private dwellings. Then in September 2003, without consultation, the plan was thrown out by the Minister of the Environment, Martin Cullen. Since then the city planners have refused to meet with the community groups."

The new plan centres around what the department of The Environment terms a public-private partnership. This will deliver just 45 local authority homes while the rest of the area will be given over to private development.

"Yet, there are about 7000 poor people on waiting lists and in unsuitable accommodation who will never be able to afford their own homes," noted Rita.

In her opinion, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Department of the Environment has realised that poor people are living on lucrative land in this city and have made plans to sell the land to a private developer.

"Our community has suffered the neglect and disinterest of successive Governments and has survived only because the people worked and fought to keep it alive. Now it is

to be cynically destroyed because the department sees an easy way to fund regeneration. The poor have to move to allow the better off to take their places," claimed Rita.

Brendan Kenny, Assistant City Manager of Dublin City Council, says that as the process moved on it became apparent that only about 45 residents would remain to be housed when the accommodation was ready. This, and the changing financial climate, forced a rethink of the housing provision. It is no longer the policy to build huge complexes and the estates built by the city council in future will be much smaller.

He said the present financial climate is such that obtaining funding for a resource centre in addition to the housing could be extremely difficult. However, the joint venture may produce a surplus and if that is the case it will go back into the community. He denied that there would be a net loss of local authority homes.

While the actual number of local authority

homes being built anew in Inchicore has not been announced, a new plan may be put to the residents offering more than the 45 mentioned so far. Brendan said the plan would also deliver a large number of affordable houses, some of which would be within the reach of existing tenants.

City Manager, John Fitzgerald, quoted in an Irish Times report on May 18, said that while some schemes - such as those for St. Michael's Estate in Inchicore - had attracted unfavourable headlines, the aim was to end "ghettoisation" in large local authority estates and provide a better social mix of private and social housing. He made the comment while announcing that more than 40,000 new homes would be built in Dublin city by 2010.

For more information, contact: St. Michael's Estate Family Resource Centre, 70 St. Michael's Estate, Inchicore, Dublin 8. Tel. 01-453-3938. Fax 01-473-4375.

Inferiority:

*No one can make you feel inferior
without your consent.*

- Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962), social reformer and US 'First Lady'

VCS have moved

The Voluntary & Community Services (VCS) Section of the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has moved premises. The Section, which administers the Community Development Programme, can now be contacted at:

Voluntary & Community Services,
Ground Floor,
Dun Aimaghin,
43-49 Mespil Rd.,
Dublin 4,
Tel: 01-6473000

E-mail addresses for the various VCS regional contact people have not changed.

40 poems that changed a man's life

LIAM Griffin, hotelier and former Wexford hurling manager, recently opened an exhibition titled '40 Poems That Changed My Life', at Templeshannon CDP in Enniscorthy. The poet was Lorcan Brennan of the Men's Development Network (MDN). The Wexfordman already has a poetic pedigree with three books under his belt. 'Changing Ireland' readers would also be familiar with his writing as he reported for us over the last couple of years on CDP news in the south-east.

This poetry event was special in that 40 of Lorcan's poems were exhibited - on large display boards, hung around the walls - and the subject was men's issues. He thereby linked his hobby in with his work.

The event was organised with the support of his work colleagues at the MDN. It was jointly hosted by Gorey Men's Network, including David French and Peter Carton, co-ordinator Murt Flynn and management at Templeshannon CDP, the MDN and also through support from the South Eastern Health Board. Templeshannon have a newly refurbished building which made it an attractive venue.

The exhibition focused on, as Lorcan explained, "a celebration and validation of the experience of positive male role models across men's lives whether they be, partners, husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles or friends. It will draw attention to the need for men to become more aware of their crucial role as 'mentors' in the lives of younger men and younger people generally."

Lorcan said the event will also be used to highlight how important it is that all men take more responsibility for their physical and emotional health.

The idea for the event came through discussion within The Gorey Men's Network, regarding men and change. The idea also came about when the author realised that turning 40 put him into a higher health risk category. Reflecting on this fact and on the death of his father motivated him to do something to mark his own 40 years and celebrate his father's life positively.

What better way then, than to exhibit 40 poems from across the mixture of experiences that made up his life!

"Poetry for me", said Lorcan at the launch, "has always been an excellent emotional support. I have drawn on writing across the years through many challenges and difficulties. What's hanging on the walls are written snapshots of some of those interesting times. I know for me these are 40 poems that helped change my life. It would be my wish that all of us as men would continue to find relevant supports to live from a richer emotional centre through positive, personal initiatives."

To give a tiny example, here's a few lines from Lorcan's 'Townlands' which is in remembrance of his late father, Ray Brennan:

*The hidden histories of
your life surround this hill.
For years around these roads
you travelled, back and front
to small cottages, farmers lanes,
building futures, brick on brick.
The hardening plaster of a days
work done, drying to evening light.*

*...Sliabh Bhui. This is my father's place. This
view I see from the greatest height. I see
roads he travelled. Day in, day out. I see
his life spread out across tiny home-spreads
surrounding our village. Carnew.
Rarely he left. Rarely wishing to travel beyond.*

The exhibition ran for one week from April 27th at the Templeshannon project. It is now being made available to run in

schools in conjunction with a workshop focusing on younger men, caring for physical and emotional health. The workshop will be linked to relevant modules within the Relationships, Health & Sexuality Programme and use relevant Health Promotion materials. Finally the exhibition will be made available to run in other community venues across the southeast region into the autumn.

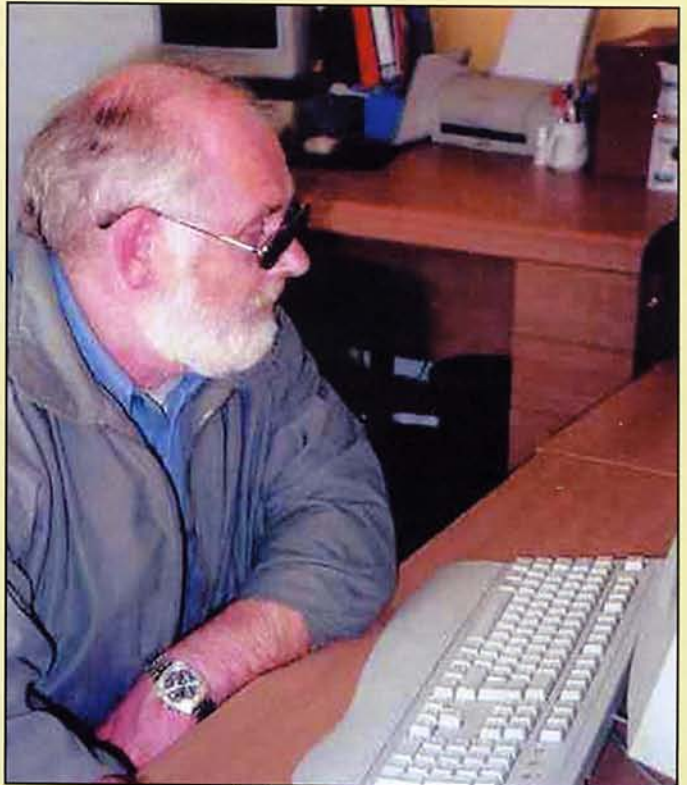
For more information, contact Lorcan on 051-844260 or 086-361 9884.

Navan activist was a true volunteer

Andy Connolly Community Development Worker with Navan CDP died on 7th March aged 57. Andy had a lifelong involvement with people and community in a wide variety of roles. Andy was a true volunteer and activist giving his time and energy to making things better for his fellow man. He worked within the trade union movement and with numerous community organisations in Navan including: The Youth Federation, Citizen Information Service, Springboard, Navan Travellers Workshop and Navan Community Development Project. While Andy was a volunteer on Navan CDP the group had difficulty recruiting a worker. Andy was encouraged to take on the job by the rest of the committee.

The present worker, Joe Reilly, who knew Andy for many years, said, "Andy was central to setting up the Navan CDP. He gave and gave. He would try and help anyone who came to him and would go that extra mile. He was a great font of knowledge."

Andy's commitment is an inspiration to us all. Through his work as a volunteer and paid worker he embodied all of the qualities that the community development process is built on. He will be a loss to all the people he worked for and a loss to the Community Development Programme.



The late Andy Connolly.

Think you're having a bad day?

READERS having a tough day at work found solace in a recent edition of 'Changing Ireland' that featured an amazing photograph of a helicopter winchman narrowly escaping the jaws of a great white shark. In case any of you are still having a tough day at work, read on, give a thought for those having a really tough day and count yourselves lucky!

Note: Horace McDermott will return to writing his diary in the next edition. He is currently at the dentist.

A man in California was working on his motorcycle on the patio, his wife nearby in the kitchen. While racing the engine, the motorcycle accidentally slipped into gear. The man, still holding onto the handlebars, was dragged along as it burst through the glass patio doors.

His wife, hearing the crash, ran in the room to find her husband cut and bleeding, the motorcycle, and the shattered patio door. She called for an ambulance and, because the house sat on a fairly large hill, went down the several flights of stairs to meet the paramedics and escort them to her husband.

While the attendants were loading her husband, the wife managed to right the motorcycle and push it outside. She also quickly blotted up the spilled gasoline with some paper towels and tossed them into the toilet.

After being treated and released, the man returned home, looked at the shattered patio door and the damage done to his motorcycle. He went into the bathroom and consoled himself with a cigarette while attending to his business. About to stand, he flipped the butt between his legs.

The wife, who was in the kitchen, heard a



EDDIE ROCKET!! Eddie O'Donnell from Killacluig, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, a careful biker - unlike the Californian man in our 'You think you are having a bad day' report.

loud explosion and her husband screaming. Finding him lying on the bathroom floor with his trousers blown away and burns on his buttocks, legs and groin, she once again phoned for an ambulance. The same paramedic crew was dispatched.

As the paramedics carried the man down the stairs to the ambulance they asked the

wife how he had come to burn himself. She told them.

They started laughing so hard, one slipped, the stretcher and dumping the husband out. He fell down the remaining stairs, breaking his arm.

Still having a bad day?
Just remember,
it could be worse...

The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000. At a special ceremony, two of the most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild amid cheers and applause from onlookers. A minute later, in full view, a killer whale ate them both.

Still think you are
having a bad day?

A woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen shaking frantically, almost in a dancing frenzy, with some kind of wire running from his waist towards the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she whacked him with a handy plank of wood, breaking his arm in two places. Up to that moment, he had been happily listening to his Walkman.

What?!
STILL having a bad day??

Terrorist Badboy Jim didn't pay enough postage on a letter bomb. It came back with "return to sender" stamped on it. Forgetting it was the bomb, he opened it and was blown up.

There now, feeling better?!



The M.V. Doulos.

Ahoy! Volunteers dock in Dublin

A volunteer crew of 320 Christians from about 45 different countries berthed in Dublin earlier this month for a 10-day visit to assist community groups.

They sailed into Dublin Bay in Doulos, the oldest ocean-going passenger liner active in the world today. Built in 1914, two years after the Titanic, the ship is now kitted out as a big floating bookshop with more than 7000 different booktitles for sale. One of the organisation's ethos is that they believe good literature is key in any society.

This was the first ever visit of the Doulos to Ireland. The ship travels the world and wherever the crew dock, they try to find areas where they can involve themselves in community work. The ship runs various community-orientated programmes. They also despatch teams of people to do community work.

The ship was open daily to the public to visit.

For those who may be interested in their volunteer programmes and in sailing away with community in mind and the salty, sea-breeze in their face - check the websites: www.mvdoulos.org or www.DoulosinDublin.org

Mentoring with children has lasting good impact

By Declan Weir

An internationally established programme in mentoring with children is coming to Galway and Mayo thanks to the Western Health Board and 4 CDPs in the region that have employed Family Support Workers as part of a pilot programme (see adjoining report). 'Big Brothers Big Sisters' is the oldest and the largest mentoring programme in the world and celebrates its 100th birthday this year.

The programme has proved its worth abroad. For example, research in the US has shown that children who receive mentoring are less likely to turn to illegal drugs and alcohol, miss school or engage in acts of violence. They also benefit from greater self-esteem and get along better with their friends and families. The impact is lasting. Indeed the 'Big Brothers Big Sisters' programme may interest CDPs in other counties also.

"It's all about developing friendships and being there as an extra support anyone can be a mentor," Patty Boyle commented before listing the great variety of volunteer adults who have offered their mentoring services in Galway, where she works as the Big Brothers Big Sisters Programme co-ordinator.

Youth workers, housewives, business directors, IT consultants and speech therapists are just some examples of those who have volunteered as mentors, giving a couple of hours each week for a year.

Each of these volunteers shares one thing in common - they're all willing to be a friend to a young person. Each potential volunteer is carefully screened, trained, supervised and supported by profes-

sional staff to ensure the relationship will be enjoyable and safe for everyone. Most volunteers find this is a rewarding experience and feel they get just as much out of it as the young person. The mentoring is aimed at children in the West who are at risk of not reaching their potential because of family or environmental constraints or limitations.

Patty is enthusiastic about how the American model has been adopted and adapted to work in Ireland. Brought to Ireland by the Western Health Board and Foróige, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ireland has been operating as a pilot in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon since March 2002. Some 30 young people between the ages of 10 and 18 are currently matched with a mentor in the three western counties.

The volunteers and young people are matched based on their interests, hobbies and personalities. It is a one-to-one relationship and is flexible in that they decide when to get together and what to do. The idea is that a positive friendship will develop and in turn reinforce the positive development of the young person. One-to-one activities are as much a part of the developing friendship as group outings and activities.

For more information, contact: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ireland, C/O Foróige, Irish Farm Center, Bluebell, Dublin 12.

Phone: 01-4501122. Fax: 01-4501941. To contact Big Brothers Big Sisters Programme regional co-ordinators: Patty Boyle, Galway, Tel. 091-535375; Peter Duffy, Mayo, Tel. 09490-28674; Siobhan Boughen, Roscommon, Tel. 09496-22952.

Health Board and CDPs pilot new programme in West

DECLAN WEIR reports

A NEW family support service is up and running in the west. Working closely with a number of CDPs in Mayo and Galway, the Western Health Board (WHB) is providing hands-on practical support to children and their families in rural areas and towns such as Ballina, Kiltimagh, Letterfrack and Louisburgh.

The ultimate plan is to ensure that the new pilot programme is both relevant and effective in a rural setting before extending it to other rural areas in the West of Ireland.

The work of the service is still very much in its infancy. As 'Changing Ireland' went to press, four family support project workers had been appointed and were completing their induction programmes. The plan is for them to be available to work with families before the end of May, and we expect to have more details about how they got on in the next issue.

While the Department of Health and Children and the WHB fund the posts, it is CDPs who employ the workers. The provision of intensive support in rural areas has previously been a challenge for the Health Board and they hope that enhanced co-

operation with the Community Development Programme will offer a more accessible service to those families who need to use it.

Sue Kane, the WHB's project leader, explained that the initiative has its roots in the Springboard model, a national initiative that has developed 21 community based projects around Ireland. The programme will reflect many of the components of the Springboard programme which works from a strengths-based philosophy that aims to build on the families own resources to resolve any difficulties that may arise.

Springboard is a family support programme designed to improve the well-being of children and families in Ireland and to improve the organisation and delivery of services more generally. It was first introduced in 1998, and is open and available to all families, parents and children in their communities. Springboard works intensively with those who are most in need. As with other family support programmes, it offers a range of interventions including individual work, group work, peer support, family work, advocacy and practical help.

The idea behind Springboard is that families have, within themselves, the resources to make positive changes and the

intervention is there to help the family make those changes themselves.

Now, the WHB's new rural-based pilot programme will offer parental support, information, advice, parenting skills programmes, individual work with children and young people or their parents. The pilot will also develop the 'Big Brothers Big Sisters' mentoring programme in the Galway and Mayo areas that are targeted. (Note: See attached article about 'Big Brothers Big Sisters' mentoring).

The CDPs' role in conjunction with the WHB is the key to the success of the initiative, and the family support workers will offer support to families through:

- Community based interventions
- Working in partnership with local services
- Working in partnership with the families themselves

• The newly appointed Family Support Workers are: Siobhan O'Brien, employed by Louisburgh CDP, Tel. 098-66218; Mairead Kearney, employed by Kiltimagh CDP, Tel. 094-9382806; Riona Kilcullen, employed by Parkside CDP, Tel. 096-72258; Noel Murphy, employed by Forum Project, Letterfrack, Co. Galway. Tel. 095-21741.

'Taking Liberties'

- a new look at gender inequality

GENDER inequality is explored in a 23-minute 'educational video programme' scripted and produced by a dozen Sligo and Leitrim women working with the North Leitrim Women's Centre, reports Martin Reading.

Following training in Women's Studies and in video and drama/movement techniques, the participants collectively devised and produced the programme under the watchful eye of film-maker Maria Gibbons, who facilitated the project.

"For a lot of the women it brought up a lot of things, questions that they wouldn't have thought about before," said Maria. "There was a lot of discussion of the issues to be

covered, but women's equality was a given".

The process of producing the programme was designed to foster a sense of ownership among the participating women, so that they themselves determined the message and the style of the piece. They also contributed to the programme content as interviewees, performers and technicians. Two of the themes covered (read the attached review here) arose out of the direct experiences of two women in the group.

"It was a big step to make themselves vulnerable" observed Maria, "That they did reflects the support and safety of the group".

It is hoped that the programme will raise a fresh awareness about how women are still

disadvantaged compared to men even though modern society has changed in many ways. Any group exploring issues of gender inequality can use the completed video programme. It is particularly designed to be viewed in a situation where facilitated discussion on the topics can follow. Members of the group have been presenting showings of the video, another valuable aspect of the project.

The video was funded under the Equality for Women Measure of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

Copies of the video and accompanying brochure can be obtained by contacting the North Leitrim Women's Centre at 071 9856220.

Candid and brave filming

Video review: by MARTIN READING

Disturbing, personal responses to the issue of continuing gender inequalities make up a recently completed video from the North Leitrim Women's Centre. This is a truly 'hands-on' production by a group of women brought together for the project.

Without previous experience, the group has produced an engaging and powerful 'new perspective'.

Three themes are dealt with - firstly, the church. With a clarity and sincerity that still comes with a surprising freshness, even in these changed times, traces the course of the gross discrimination against women in the Roman Catholic Church, right through to the present. Still feeling a deep sense of exclusion, Marie Finlay makes a plea for true equality in an institution that she nonetheless holds dear.

Domestic violence, particularly the descent of her own relationship from a poignantly-remembered hopeful courtship, through the bitter humiliation of a first public assault and final escape from her marriage, is the second theme, through the eyes and heart of another of the women.

Her evocation of broken dreams, of a whole lifetime's expectations shattered, is both candid and brave, leaving an overwhelming sense of injustice. This new perspective underlines the blinkered attitudes of only 20 years ago. A culture where this unbalanced relationship was, if not acceptable, then unremarkable.

Opening with vicariously painful shots of hair removal, the third part of the film looks at images and assumptions of 'beauty'. The lengths to which women feel expected to go to conform to a notional ideal are graphically portrayed. And the indictment is not just of the 'fashion industry' or even 'men' but of our whole culture of expectation and contrived dissatisfaction.

This then is the underlying theme of this short, powerful exposition of prevailing attitudes: that as a culture, this is created. And as such it can be changed. Yes, changes have been made but these interviewees have been allowed to show, and show with great dignity, that many more scales must fall from our eyes before we can balance the scales of gender inequality.

The video is recommended viewing for any group working with these issues. It is a fabulous production that should provoke a lot of emotion, discussion and learning.

Historic first national Traveller art competition

THE first ever National Traveller Art Competition was held in May and culminated in an exhibition that proved too big even for the Dublin Civic Offices opposite Christchurch. Over 500 entries, including some from CDPs, were received and the organisers are already planning for next year's event, reports Allen Meagher.

The competition was organised by the National Association of Travellers Training Centres (NATC) with the support of Navan Traveller Training Centre who made the exhibition boards. The event was open to all Travellers in Ireland and aimed to promote the creative talents of Travellers and in turn have the effect of raising self-esteem.

Travellers involved in CDPs in Ballina, Co. Mayo, Tullamore, Co. Offaly and Clondalkin in Dublin submitted entries.

Martina Brennan, communications officer with the NATC said, "We got a huge response from schools, health care projects and CDPs. There were lots of arts and crafts entered which we do not even have the space to display at the exhibition. We will look into that for next year."

On the political side, she said, "We need for more positive images of Traveller work and culture to be portrayed here in the country."

Travellers are, she noted, "the most



discriminated, marginalised ethnic minority in Irish society today."

The competition adjudicators were Robert Ballagh, Derek Speirs, Bernadette Burns and David Joyce.

The NATC is the representative body for 35 Traveller Training Centres making it the largest provider of youth services to young Travellers. It is funded by the Department of Education and Science.

The Awards Ceremony was held on Thursday May 20th in Dublin.

For further information, contact: Martina Breen, Communications Officer, National Association of Travellers Centres (NATC), Unit 1, Nestors Complex Monksland, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Tel: 090-6498016/7. Fax: 090-6498201. Email: natc1@eircom.net