

CHANGING IRELAND

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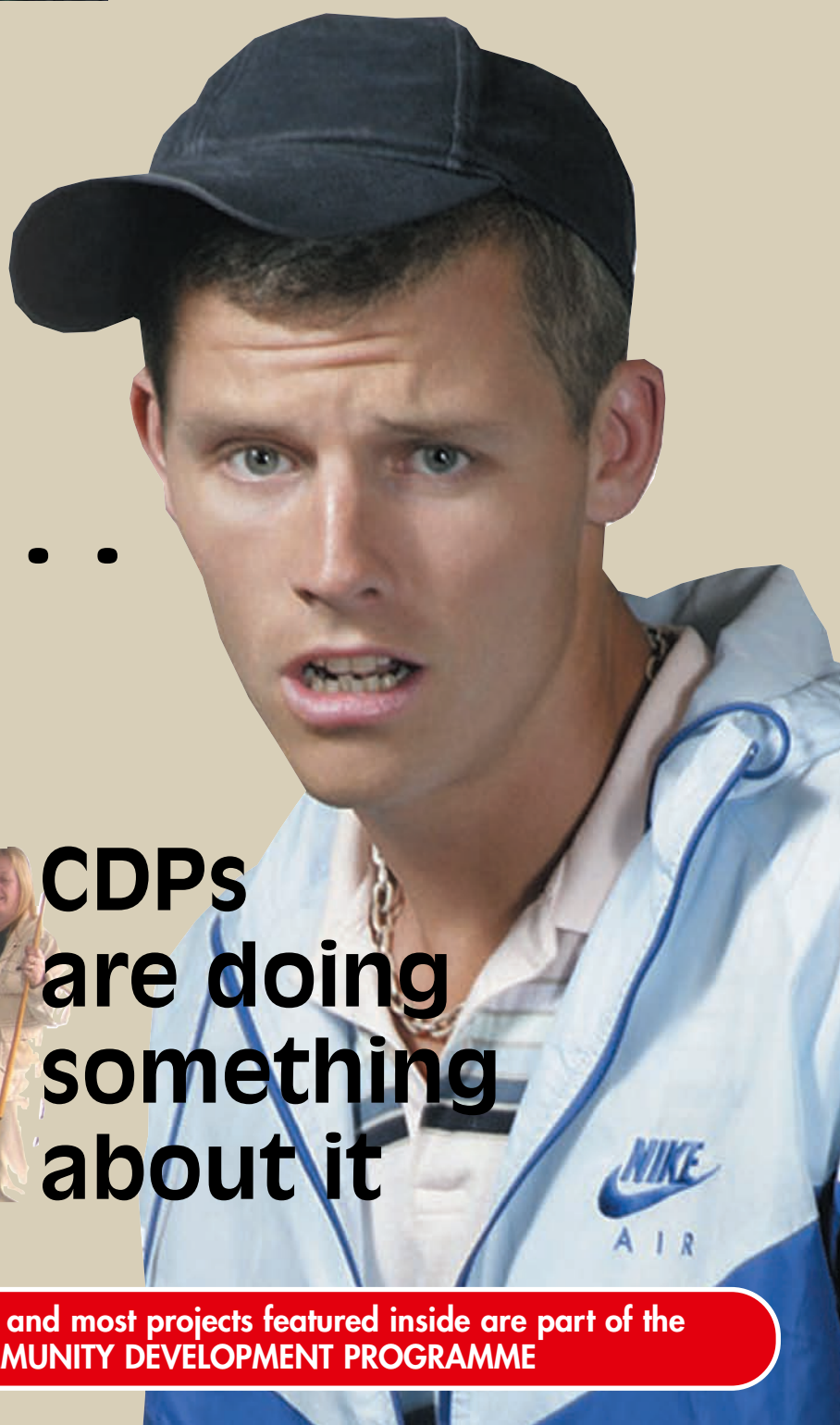


**Some moan
about it . . .**

**Des jokes
about it . . .**



**CDPs
are doing
something
about it**



**This publication and most projects featured inside are part of the
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

There are solutions to anti-social behaviour

SINCE 1922, it has been the aim of the Gardaí "to succeed not by force of arms or numbers, but on their moral authority as servants of the people."

The fact remains that if a community, as a whole, does not have respect for the Gardaí policing their area, then the Gardaí's ability to police the community properly and effectively is greatly impaired.

The recent rioting in Dublin city centre showed the Gardaí have little claim on 'moral authority' there, however, and may no longer hold the respect of many urban youths.

For decades, the police have been out of touch to the point of being anti-social, especially with residents of large urban housing estates. Riding in a patrol car or 'paddy wagon' was never conducive to chatting with the citizens.

While, strangely, the number of community gardaí in Dublin has declined since 2004, Community Policing is one of the main priorities in the Garda Síochána's plan for this year.

CDPs are there, ready and waiting, to show



community gardaí the ropes. As in Mahon CDP, in Cork, there are local volunteers and staff open to all sorts of initiatives to help cut crime and boost community spirit. They have most recently set up a Community Policing Forum.

In Dublin, CDPs are doing similar work in, for example, Clondalkin, Ballymun and Blanchardstown.

CDPs are willing to lead the way where necessary to combat anti-social behaviour at local level, but prefer to

and always aim to work in co-operation with other community interests. They have been working on the problem of anti-social behaviour for years. The only thing really new about the problem is that, at last, it has become an issue.

In this issue, we look at the situation across the country. Our aim is to (a) show the initiatives being undertaken, (b) show how the Programme has a unique impact because CDPs work through Community Development principles.

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Des Bishop: It's a good thing 'community' still exists

"I DO a lot of work non-publicly with addiction treatment centres. Over the years I have been involved in one group in Rialto in particular and that led me to doing talks in prison about addiction. I used to drink a lot myself once and don't now.

First, we had an idea to film stand-up comedy in Mountjoy. As a side-scene, we were going to follow a prisoner as he went clean and was released to the outside. Well, to make a long story short, it was possible to do the prison film but it was going to take a long time. So we decided instead to go to the communities where these guys come from. That's how 'Joy in the Hood' came about.

You go with what comes up in the group. Even your average comedian takes a very long time to work out a joke that tackles social issues. It takes a hell of a lot of time to get the right information to set the joke right and you have to be very careful how you go about criticising something.

At the end of the day, our comedians were from the same communities that our audience were from and you had to be careful.

The comedy workshops were about getting people to do something positive, to take action, to develop personal confidence and community confidence. And then we also got everybody in the community together for a night of entertainment.

When people went on stage, it gave them

confidence and self-belief. When the show went out on television, it got people in the communities to say 'Hey, if they can do that, so can I', and to feel better about their community.

Really, me and the director looked at it as if it was a community arts project. And, in the end, we were scouting for talent and we found it. There are eight of them (new comedians) touring with me at the moment.

A side-motivation for me to doing the 'Joy in the Hood' programme was that most comedians in Ireland are middle-class and that is no accident. I believe access to the media, to entertainment jobs and to communications is very exclusively held by people who can afford to make very little money for a long time in order to get established. And they tend therefore to be almost entirely middle-class people. It's the same with music.

I wanted to give people in working-class – from the underclass communities really – the access to the information and support to try comedy.

Something ground-breaking happened onstage some nights: We had a Traveller man there on stage welcoming the invention of camera-phones, saying 'At least you can have a look at the woman now before you go marry her'. And there was a Traveller woman joking about the life of women Travellers, willing to criticise her own culture in front of her own people.

I lived in The Glen, in Cork, in Comeragh Park, when I was in UCC. I lived in Fatima Mansions in Dublin for a time, so I am at ease in these sort of urban disadvantaged communities.

There are so many problems in these places, but one of the good things is that 'community' still exists, though only in the more troubled parts of urban Ireland. It is quite lost or at least watered down everywhere else, well except too for maybe some rural areas. In Southill, after a few days, everyone knew me and greeted me, it was great.

I found people in community groups were often the most resistant to my comedy workshops. One project in Knocknaheeny gave us nothing but grief.

Those people who criticised me after the Knocknaheeny show was broadcast are steeped in their own paranoid sensitivities. It is not right that burnt-out cars are let to rot and rust in the fields and it was good there was an outcry about it (being broadcast). People should not put up with that, they are right to protest. But after the show is forgotten, will anyone be around to clear up those cars for the people living there?"

- Interview by Allen Meagher.

Some moan about it, some joke about it . . . CDPs take action

By ALLEN MEAGHER

AS featured on the front page, the media and politicians moan about it... Des Bishop jokes about it...

And Community Development Projects are doing something about it... 'it' being anti-social behaviour.

Comedian Des toured disadvantaged areas of Ireland and the focus of much of the humour in his hit television show 'Joy in the Hood' zoomed in on anti-social behaviour.

Listening to the media and politicians, the public probably think that little is being done about it. However, the truth is there is a power of work underway and, in this issue, we have an 8-page special focus on practical examples of work done by CDPs to deal with anti-social behaviour, in Dublin, Cork and around the country.

Disadvantaged areas and people from such areas usually get a raw deal when in

the public spotlight, but 'Joy in the Hood' was different. In fact, comedian Des Bishop succeeded in drawing public attention to disadvantaged areas in a most unusual way – by getting people from those areas to laugh and to get the general public to laugh with them.

Settled people laughing with a Traveller, not at him/her for a change. Travellers laughing at themselves.

The shows from Limerick, Tuam and Ballymun were for the most part liked. In Knocknaheeny, Cork city, there were complaints about the tv show's negative portrayal of the area (burnt-out cars were shown).

All in all – though not everyone might have liked the show – the Irish-American comedian may even have (slightly) lessened the stigma of being a Traveller, of being poor, and/or of being from a disadvantaged area. No small achievement.

New GAA club

LIMERICK city has a new GAA club, the L.I.T. Sarsfields which is aimed at attracting youngsters to sport from the disadvantaged areas of St. Munchin's and Moyross. The L.I.T. in the title refers to the nearby third level institute of technology.

Teachers, GAA officials and local community activists helped get the club up and running and there are already over 100 members.

The club crest and colours were devised by children from the two parishes.

Among those involved in setting up the club were CDP volunteers Deirdre O'Driscoll and Beth Hickey.

East Clare parades

EAST Clare CDP received a €6000 grant from the Arts Council's Small Festival Scheme. It meant the project was able to support three Saint Patrick's Day Parades in the area, in Tulla, Feakle and Scariff.

The East Clare CDP have also started a junior youth club, a cultural exchange group, a 60+ group, a parent and toddler group, and a toy library. All of these groups helped produce a joint entry for the Scariff Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

The CDP also run a half-dozen courses in subjects ranging from 'Women in Decision-Making' to 'Drumming'.

Community Development Unit takes the road West

By SEAN DOOLEY

AS those of you involved in projects within the Community Development Programme or in Programme Support Agencies are no doubt aware, the Community Development Unit of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is due to re-locate to the West (Tubbercurry initially and Knock Airport eventually) as part of the Government's Decentralisation Programme. The initial move is scheduled for early August.

The re-location will result in numerous staff changes in the Unit prior to the move taking place and this process has already begun. As changes occur, projects and agencies will be notified in respect of the civil servant staff changes relevant to projects in specific regions.

The Unit will make every effort to ensure that the process of re-location is effected with the least possible impact on service to projects and agencies. However it needs to be acknowledged that the transfer from the Unit of a significant number of experienced staff over a short period of time will no doubt lead



Sean Dooley.

to some loss of corporate knowledge within the Unit, particularly in the short term. Therefore, the Unit would like to ask for the co-operation and understanding of all projects and agencies during this transitional

period.

As some excellent servants of the Programme in the recent past have already vacated the Unit for pastures new, I am sure all of you within the Programme will join with us in thanking Eddie Arthurs, Mags Dorney, Bernie McGowan, Ita Cully, Rory O'Rua, Breda Kiernan, Craig Ennis and Tony Finlay for their valuable contributions to the Unit and the Programme over the past number of years and in wishing each of them well in their new posts. They have all assured us that they have greatly enjoyed their time working within the Programme and they would like to extend their appreciation to the staff and volunteers of the projects and agencies they have worked with over the years for their co-operation, patience and understanding.

The new kids on the block have some hard acts to follow. Hopefully with your help, they will rise to the many challenges that lie ahead.

- Sean Dooley is a staff member of the Community Development Unit and has been part of the 'Changing Ireland' Editorial Team since the magazine was established.

Ten year celebrations for many CDPs

OUR Lady of Lourdes CDP in Limerick is among a large number of CDPs around the country celebrating ten years in action this year. The Limerick project marked the occasion recently with a 'Celebrating My Community' day.

"We feel that this is a golden opportunity to thank the local community and groups that have supported us through the last 10 years" said project co-ordinator, Ann Bourke.

Some of the highlights of the event were the launch of 4 tile-mosaics created by the local Young Women's Group and presented to the CDP. These mosaics reflect the environmental theme of the mural titled 'Sunshine in the CDP House' that the group painted on the back wall of the CDP last summer.

The Young Women's Group are aged between 12 - 16 and are run by the Rosbrien School Completion Programme and Resin/LYS and use the CDP as a resource on a weekly basis. The group, which recently completed a course in drug-awareness, also launched a poster to highlight what they had learnt.

An oil painting of a sunflower by local artist Brian Mitchell (commissioned by the CDP) was also unveiled.

"The sunflower has been a symbol used

by the CDP since the beginning" said Catherine Kirby, a member of the voluntary management committee. "For us it represents a growth process where we have had good days and bad days but with support and care we do continue to grow."

"The aim of the Community Development Project is to build a community where people are enabled to work together with confidence and pride, where resources are used by all to the

full, where there is openness to new ideas and a willingness to take risks. The attitude we want to promote is one of self help equality and respect for all," she added.

CDP chairperson John Thompson commented on the ten year anniversary: "It is important to remember that we are here as a resource for the community and we are making a difference."

A large number of today's CDPs were first established in 1996.



On the day the Our Lady of Lourdes CDP in Limerick marked their 10th birthday, members of the Young Womens Group (pictured above) launched a drugs/environment poster, having recently completed a course on drug-awareness.



Participants in the Beoirs Pathways to Progression Training Programme, organised by Bray Travellers CDP. The aim was to empower people through concentrating on developing core skills in health care, literacy and job-skills.

Bray Beoirs take the pathway together

THE word 'Beoirs' derives from the Cant word for woman. The aim of the Beoirs Pathways to Progression Training Programme, in Bray, Co. Wicklow, is to empower participants by improving their core skills such as literacy, health care and work related skills.

The course runs for 40-weeks on a part-time basis with support from Bray Travellers

CDP. As a result, 14 women are learning about everything from art & design to office procedures, healthcare, and computers.

The participants face the challenge of submitting work for FETAC certification – for some this is the first certification ever achieved in their lives.

Tutor, Majella Breen, said the course makes a real difference: "For example, several

women who have come through the course have found that they can cope better with queries from their children regarding their homework. This was formerly a source of anxiety and embarrassment."

Majella explained how one woman who did the course went on to do a Primary Healthcare Course and became involved in a national social survey of all traveller families. Meanwhile, another participant was taken on by a local community creche and aimed to progress through FETAC and become a fully qualified childcare worker.

The Beoirs programme also focuses on personal development and teamwork and the course is delivered with Traveller culture in mind.

In addition, it aims to counteract many of the barriers such as: discrimination, isolation, lack of self-esteem, childcare and numerous other barriers endured by Traveller women. This is being achieved by the development of social and interpersonal skills and improved access to information.

Bray Travellers CDP are celebrating in recent months, having acquired a new user-friendly premises. Previously, the project was housed in a couple of narrow rooms up a steep staircase. There was neither room for wheelchair-users nor people with prams.

The project's main aim is to promote community development responses to needs in the Traveller community in the Bray area and also to promote the voice of Travellers in tackling prejudice, exclusion and unequal treatment.



Staff members working with Bray Travellers CDP: Jim O'Brien, project co-ordinator, Mick Mason, outreach worker, Majella Breen, women's programme manager, Christy Moorehouse, outreach worker; Front - Helen Kinsella, project administrator, Carmel O'Brien, CE worker, Joan Moorehouse, CE worker.

Hotels may lose out to meetings over internet

- Northern projects seek to network in cyberspace

By MAURICE McCONVILLE

COMMUNITY volunteers and project staff met in Monaghan recently to discuss ways of meeting in future without actually physically meeting. Computer and broadband internet technology may help projects 'meet' without people having to clock up a single mile to get to the meeting.

The idea is to develop a virtual network for projects in the region, so meetings could take place in cyberland rather than in hotels in mid-way towns between Donegal and Louth. It would reduce the mileage costs for projects and could potentially boost attendances and the impact the projects can have regionally and nationally.

Over 50 management committee members and staff from the CDPs stretching across the Northern Region attended the networking workshop, held in The Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan, on February 26th.

A number of networking issues were discussed in detail in workshops. From these workshops new ways for strengthening networking in the Counties, in Regions and Nationally were agreed. The main items agreed were:

- To develop an online network for projects to



Networking among CDPs in the northern region.

communicate and exchange information through message boards and online conferences.

- To form a policy group for the Northern Region to feed into national policy.
- To set up a sub-group to improve communication within the Northern region.
- To set up a sub-group to support National Advisory Committee representatives
- Develop a handbook for CDPs which explains the roles of volunteers, staff, support agencies and the department within programmes. (Regional agencies in the South and Mid-West and the West and Midlands have already produced introductory packs).

Support Agency Triskele organised the event and director Susan Shaw welcomed people and thanked them for taking the time and trouble to attend.

She expressed concerns about the ability of the projects in the Community Development Programme to feed into the new National Development Plan being devised by the government for 2007 to 2013.

The Northern region runs from Louth to Donegal and Sligo and takes in the southern border counties that lie in between.

- For further information contact John Fee at Triskele Support Agency 042-9663706

Community groups offered new cheaper insurance

- though extent of cover is key

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

A NEW group insurance scheme has been developed by the 'Irish National Community and Voluntary Forum' to reduce costs for community and voluntary groups in the Republic.

The scheme – backed by private company BHP Insurances – could be of use to thousands of local groups around the country, from those that are run on a shoestring and rely entirely on volunteers to bigger projects such as CDPs.

One crucial question remains: Will BHP provide the level of cover really required by small community groups? In essence, will they cover items such as lawnmowers donated by town councils to local residents' associations?

Welcoming the joint-initiative, BHP commented, "Insurance cover is the biggest single headache for voluntary groups in this country. In fact, inability to meet insurance premium costs has put many voluntary groups out of business and prevented others from ever getting started."

The company claimed the scheme "will greatly reduce insurance premiums for all voluntary groups affiliated to their respective County/City Fora."

The scheme should also, if it proves

popular, be effective in driving up membership of the 34 community fora in the state, as groups must be affiliated to their local community fora to benefit from the cheaper insurance scheme.

Junior Minister at the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Noel Ahern, launched the scheme on March 9th.

He noted that "affordable insurance" had become a huge issue for volunteer groups and he acknowledged that a local issue had become a national one and the solution had been found by the local groups coming together to shout as one through the National Community & Voluntary Forum.

"This is something that needs to be nurtured and supported. The initiative being launched today is a practical response by the National Forum to a need that has come forward from the local community and voluntary fora," he said.

"The county and city community and voluntary fora play an important role in bringing the views of the community organisations they represent to local government. The active participation of people in community and voluntary work is something that should never be taken for granted. It is something that the Government

recognises and actively encourages, and this commitment is backed up with practical support through both Departments where I have responsibility as Minister of State", Minister of State Ahern added.

The local Community and Voluntary Fora which are represented on the National Forum, operate in each of the 34 county and city council areas across the country. The fora are elected from among local organisations within their own communities, and are accountable to them.

The fora, in turn, nominate community reps to sit on County and City Development Boards and in many cases on the local authority Strategic Policy Committees.

Minister Ahern added that he hoped the National Forum's initiative, in developing this group insurance scheme as a partnership between the private and voluntary sector, will benefit local organisations and groups.

- For information contact the BHP/Forum helpdesk at lowcall 1890 666 111 or log onto their website to fill out a contact form, at: www.bhponline.com
BHP Insurances Ltd. are based in:
Unit 7, The Courtyard, Fonthill Retail Park, Dublin 22.



Eamon Ó Cuív T.D., Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs meeting a Commissioner for the Maori language in New Zealand recently.

Ó Cuív puts €5m more into Community Services

AN additional €5 million to fund new projects in 2006 under the Community Services Programme was announced by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Éamon Ó Cuív, on February 22nd.

"The Social Economy Programme transferred to my Department from FÁS on the 1st January 2006. I have now re-named it as the 'Community Services Programme', to reflect the fact that I intend to change the nature of the programme from a labour-market training scheme to a scheme to provide support for essential community services. I am very pleased to announce that I have secured an additional €5 million to fund new projects in 2006," he said.

The Community Services Programme provides funding to over 260 projects that supply services to their local communities. The Programme aims to support local community activity which addresses disadvantage, while at the same time providing employment opportunities for people from the specific target groups such as the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, and lone parents.

The activities of the projects funded under the Community Services Programme are very varied and include: community childcare services, services for the elderly, services for people with disabilities, rural transport for isolated rural communities, managing community halls and facilities, rural tourism, community radio, recycling & environmental projects.

Although the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is responsible for overall management of the Programme, it is administered by POBAL (formerly ADM) on his behalf.

Minister Ó Cuív was speaking at the launch of the Independent Living National Advisory Group, in the National Disability Authority Offices in Dublin. He said that services for people with a disability will be expressly included within the eligibility criteria for

EU listening to Kerry's single parents

JOAN COURTNEY reports

SPICE, the Single Parent Initiative for Community & Equality, a support group for one-parent families based in Tralee, are shooting photographs of their daily lives in the community. Some of the photographs will be sent to Brussels to be presented at the 5th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty.

The theme for the May meeting is 'How do we cope with everyday life?' In general this means what is life like for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion?

Ten participants from SPICE were given disposable cameras and were asked to photograph anything that struck them as significant in terms of their own and their community's lives. They were asked to focus on issues of poverty and social exclusion and their effects on people's lives

SPICE is supported by Tralee CDP and the photo-project was organised with the assistance of the European Anti-Poverty Network.

Two representatives, the SPICE chairperson Bernie Moore and myself (as a SPICE member) will travel to Brussels to present the group's photos and a report on the main issues facing lone parents. We are both also members of the national group OPEN, the One Parent Exchange and Network.

We will be part of a five-strong group representing three local anti-poverty groups from Ireland due to attend the meeting in Brussels.

Before the meeting, the SPICE group must prepare work on what they see as the main issues that effect lone-parents in terms of poverty or social exclusion: issues such as housing, healthcare, work, transport-mobility, relationships.

The group must consider how does social exclusion effect all aspects of people's lives.

How can excluded or poor people influence decisions on the types of services they receive or have political influence at local or national level? The group is also being asked to give examples of good practice in addressing these issues for people.

Background

The Lisbon European Council (2000) agreed to put in place an EU strategy aimed at making a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty in the European Union countries by the year 2010. The Nice European Council (December 2000) agreed common objectives for this strategy. One of the agreed objectives was to mobilize all actors - including people who experience poverty - to engage with the elements of the strategy.

In response to this the Belgian Presidency (2001) took an important initiative by organising a European meeting of people who live facing poverty and exclusion. Subsequently the Greek Presidency (2003), the Irish Presidency (2004) and the Luxembourg Presidency organised similar meetings. These meetings confirmed the importance of the participation of people experiencing poverty in the policy process and demonstrated that such participation improves the standards of the decision-making and implementation processes.

The fourth European meeting of people experiencing poverty demonstrated the importance of teaming up people experiencing poverty with policy-makers and decision-makers.

An equally important part of the European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty, alongside the chance to influence policy that affects poverty and social inclusion in Ireland and the EU, is the opportunity to learn from other people's experiences and they from us.



Volunteers Joan Courtney and Bernie Moore outside Tralee CDP.



Report: SHARON BROWNE

This is a new column in 'Changing Ireland' where we explain community development by giving examples of the principles of our work in action. Having community development at the core of our work is what makes our national Programme unique and different from other models of work in the community, voluntary and local development sector.

For this edition we use the example of the award-winning Shanakill & Rahoonane Estate Management & Community Safety Group based in one of County Kerry's RAPID areas. The group is supported by Tralee CDP.

Boarded up houses are a problem in many parts of the country. These derelict bungalows – where children sometimes play – are the property of Limerick city council.



Estate management in Tralee is model

- in spite of boarded-up houses, rubbish problems and

Definition

Community development essentially aims to work with local people to identify collective needs and support them to develop their own solutions. The following principles have been core to the work of this group.

Identifying Local Needs

This is where it all began! At the end of 2002 teams of volunteers were recruited from across the three Tralee RAPID areas to carry out a community profile. The volunteers were trained by a number of local CDPs, but particularly drawing on the expertise of the Kerry Network of People with Disabilities who had carried out a similar action research project with their members.

The first quarter of 2003 was spent going door-to-door carrying out the profile. The volunteers then inputted all the data and a report was produced outlining the findings. A key to the future success of the project was feeding back these results to the community over a series of sessions. If people are researched they have a right to know the results and be part of addressing the issues that came to light.

Mandated Action

If community work is to be truly collective, open and honest then the work of community reps and activists has to be mandated by the wider community. In the case of the Shanakill & Rahoonane Estate Management & Community Safety Group the community profile was vital in providing that mandate. The results have become the blueprint for our work. The overall response rate was 73% (in one particular estate it was 100%). This has given our RAPID reps and their groups great knowledge and authority.

Collective Action

From the profile, 50 people came together to decide what the key priorities were. Finally after all the feedback meetings the community decided to focus on the following issues: boarded-up houses; waste management; community safety; amenities for young people; and community development.

Participation

Having decided the priorities the next challenge was to get residents to participate in taking action to address the issues. This was difficult. The community had a view that nothing would change. All they had heard for years was a series of broken promises from a variety of agencies, so why would this be any different.

At one point we were told that what we were trying to do was immoral, that we were only building up people's hopes and expectations and nothing would come of it.

This is where our outreach strategies had to get creative. At times this meant buying flowers for volunteers and bringing apple tarts and cream to active retired people we visited! They never forgot us. We have been very lucky that we did eventually manage to recruit a small number of very dedicated volunteers who have stayed with us.

Empowerment

The next step was to set up the Estate Management & Community Safety Group. There was a Residents Association in the area in the past. But its history was one of mobilisation for crisis management, particularly in relation to drug dealing in the area.

We wanted to have strong democratic structures and we wanted to show residents that there was a way to get better results – by strategically working with the main state agencies in the town. But first the group needed to learn some new skills.

Over time, by both modelling the required behaviour and by running training courses, the group has become excellent at chairing their own meetings, taking minutes, negotiating with agencies, planning and evaluation. Passing on the skills and the contacts is important.

Tralee CDP has always been clear that the community can develop their own skills and contacts. That way they can own their own power and develop their own relationships with agencies. We should not always be the channel or the power broker. Though the group will always need support to survive they are now much more independent than they were three years ago.

Inclusion

Inclusion is another community development principle that needs close attention. The role of Tralee CDP has been to ensure that the group pay attention to those

ment in example

d broken promises

who do not have a strong voice of their own.

For example, one of the actions in the current workplan is to make sure that residents keep the outside of their house and garden tidy and pay attention to things like maintaining their gutters. Members of the Estate Management & Community Safety Group have now identified people who genuinely cannot carryout this type of maintenance on their own. So some people are being nicely told to clean up their act while others are being supported to do so.

Another aspect of inclusion came up recently as a result of our evaluation. There was not enough direct participation by both young and older people in local decision-making structures on the estates. Now we are working with the local youth service to support the youth through their club structure to participate in the Shanakill & Rahoone Estate Management & Community Safety Group.

Accountability

Our accountability has in many ways been what has made all the difference. After each main estate management meeting an open public meeting is held within a few weeks to inform the wider community of what decisions have been made in their name. The notice and invitation to the public meeting is done by leaflet drop to every household. The leaflet summarises the decision taken at the main meeting.

Residents are also involved in a journalism project at Tralee CDP where they are doing a FETAC course but also producing a community newsletter that keeps everyone up-to-date about RAPID developments in their area. However community accountability on it's own was not enough.

To be honest, at the outset of this process it was very difficult to achieve anything. This was mostly due to lack of engagement and accountability by the relevant state agencies. We have used the AIT (Area Implementation Team of RAPID) as a way of making the agencies accountable. There is nothing more powerful than a mandated, well prepared, community rep sitting at the decision-making table with the heads of key government departments. Teaching the community how to follow-up all their issues by being a polite but insistent broken record has really paid off.

Change

Ultimately this is what community development is all about. Addressing the immediate, visible, tangible problems can



Tralee's Lucky Horseshoe.

sometimes be like putting band aids on festering wounds. Therefore tackling the root cause is also necessary. And this is where policy work becomes so important.

Over time we have managed to drip-drip skills and knowledge in this regard to the group. They have made a number of submissions to government departments. On-going policy issues are fed up to the National Monitoring Committee of RAPID and locally to SIM (the Social Inclusion Measure Group of the Kerry County Development Board). So change is happening.

At the local estate level much has been achieved – a new playground, a sports field and basketball hoops, growth of an organic garden, refurbishment of boarded up houses, the closure of a problematic dike cutting through the Shanakill & Rahoone estates. But now we need to move to the next level.

A logical move will be to work with Tralee Town Council on a housing allocation policy. We are also going to embark on community safety work this year. Much of this will link into national policy changes such as the new Joint Policing Committees and Community Policing Fora which provide for cooperation between the community, Gardai and the local authority.

Finally, just to say that the Shanakill & Rahoone Estate Management & Community Safety Group are now recognised as a model of good practice. A number of things (other than the above!) have led to this. The most important is the use of community development principles. Staying focussed on the fact that the process is as important as the outcome is key. This is what has led to respectful working relationships across the community and state sector.

Appeal for writers!



'Changing Ireland' would be interested in hearing proposals from people working in CDPs who can show how Community Development principles were used in their work from the start to the finish of a project. In time, a series of these articles should serve to show, for instance, how community development is different to local development work.

Peace-by-piece, border communities are developing

Report: MAURICE McCONVILLE

SEVERAL decades of the conflict in the North has meant that communities are polarised and, while people want to move on, many of the causes of the conflict remain unresolved. So, what role can community development play in building peace?

Communities need peace to develop and one innovative project that is achieving results is 'Peace by Piece', backed by the Louth LEADER company and involving a range of border area groups, including CDPs.

Johdi Quinn of LEADER has brought together community organisations from County Louth, South Armagh and South Down in this cross-border and cross-community initiative.

Le Chéile CDP based in Dundalk is one of the groups engaged in this project. As a worker with Le Chéile, I joined the project along with a member of our management committee Julie Lawlor.

The so-called 'legacy of conflict' effects the region where we are based, with many victims from both sides and a high concentration of 'displaced people' picking up the pieces in the wake of the war.

Yet, through the project, volunteers and workers from Protestant and Catholic community organisations have identified the main issues and obstacles to cross border/cross community work. These include conflict management, diversity, language and communication and networking.

Dealing with the mistrust, anger and hurt left



Peace participants.

by the war means that participants in 'Peace by Piece' need to tread carefully because the issues are highly emotive.

'Peace by Piece' meets alternatively in Dundalk and in Newry and is expertly facilitated by Jacinta De Paor and Eamon Rafter from Glencree Centre for Reconciliation which was originally set up to work with refugees from the northern conflict. Ironically, Glencree is based in a former British military base in County Wicklow.

As with community development, the process itself is crucial to progress. The facilitators support participants to pick through contentious attitudes and feelings in order to find a common space where people feel safe and start to build relationships.

Johdi describes 'Peace by Piece' as opening "a space for practitioners to discuss, inform and share ideas and attitudes in relation to cross-border work. It is a place where community development, cross-border work, and peace-building come together. It is in the space, where these three processes meet, that "Peace by Piece" works."

The group work sessions challenge peoples attitudes and create an opportunity for participants to view things from the other side.

Remarking on her experience, Julie from Le Chéile said, "I am becoming aware of my own prejudice, which I did not think existed. I am learning to listen properly and think about what is being said before I give an opinion."

Gareth Porter from HURT, a victims support organisation, said participating in the project "increases your knowledge of community development in a multi-cultural multi-faith and cross community environment."

Dealing with strongly-felt and deep-seated and opposing points of view - the consequences of the conflict - is not easy. It needs to be handled with sensitivity and awareness. The community development process can play a significant role in peace-building and 'Peace by Piece' is a good model which demonstrates this.

• For further details contact Johdi Quinn at:
Louth LEADER Office, Market Street, Ardee,
County Louth. Tel. 041-685-6804.
E-mail: johdi@louthleader.com

HELP ME HORACE



Write to:

Help Me Horace, 'Changing Ireland', c/o CDN Moyross,
Community Enterprise Centre, Moyross, Limerick.

getting their activities highlighted in the media.

And how hard it normally is to get men to meet and express their feelings? Again this group are very well able to verbalise and act out their emotions (such as anger and hate) very creatively. Be proud Dave, you're doing great.

- Horace

Could be the bird flew

Dear Horace,
ONE of our staff has become a bit overwhelmed by recent health scares. Last week, he announced that he was giving up meat, tap water, and wants regular updates on the local air quality. All the staff here are encouraged to study the Health and Safety policy, but he's using a laminated copy of it to waft away 'negative energy'.

Most recently he became alarmed that there are fewer birds around the place.

He now insists that he won't come into the office until I wash the whole place down with dettol and wire brushes and find out why the pigeons aren't on the roof anymore.

What can I do?

- Fran Tickman, Witsend CDP

Dear Fran,

There is many the hypochondriac buried in the graveyard so don't dismiss his fears lightly. A foot and mouth type foot bath at the door may ease his concerns about coming into the office. As for the last pigeon gone from the roof, it sounds like a case of the bird flew!

Abbreviated

Dear Horace

A VIP plans to visit the CDP but we're told we can't go OTT because they want it kept on the QT. It could be the VP of the USA or the UK's PM which would mean the CIA, FBI or the SAS and MI5 in our HQ.

I know it's not PC but I can't put up with these SOB's so I'm going to RSVP to the DCRGA that they can F.O. Can I do that? I need advice ASAP.

Yours truly,
PJ O'Dea
KCC CDP

Dear PJ
Sounds OK!
H.McD.

Dear Horace,
I'M a youth worker in a local authority estate and despite my best efforts there are so many young lads hanging around in gangs and engaged in anti-social behaviour. It feels like all my community development work has achieved nothing.

- Disillusioned Dave

Dear Dave,

Nonsense!

Just apply the principles and analyse what's going on.

These young men come together with a unity of purpose, engage in collective action and as a group display great loyalty and camaraderie. These boys sound very social and very outgoing (they're rarely in, I believe). They are extremely active (sometimes hyper, yeah) and very good at

Dolcain shows how to set up a Community Safety Forum

- Anti-social antics demand an inter-agency and local response

By ALLEN MEAGHER

IT COULD become a best-seller in the community sector! A CDP in the capital has produced a guide-booklet for people thinking of setting up a community safety forum and wondering how to go about it.

The booklet is based on the experiences of Dolcain CDP in setting up a forum in South Clondalkin and it details the process involved from start to finish. The idea of a forum to combat anti-social behaviour in the area was first mooted in 1997 and took seven years to get up and running. The experience is described in 36 well-structured and easily

understood pages.

While South Clondalkin is not the first to set up a community safety forum in Dublin – there are already fora operating in North Clondalkin and in Ballymun for instance – the guide booklet is a first.

"It is hoped that it will act as a guide for projects or individuals interested in mobilising communities to formulate a collective response to the issue of community safety," says Bernadette Farrell, Forum Development Worker, in the foreward.

It had become clear, she said, "that anti-social behaviour in many forms had put public safety in jeopardy and the lack of necessary facilities and amenities compounded the problem."

Providing a model of good practice, the booklet shows how important it is for all stakeholders in the community – local, voluntary, agency and statutory – to have an input into the community's response to safety issues.

"Before, I felt we were isolated and neglected. It has been an eye-opener to see what can be achieved by working together," said one local resident.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The Forum has been meeting for a year-and-a-half now and had developed slowly, though nonetheless substantially.

The Safety Forum's success can be seen in the "positive effect in terms of community activism in the area," said one Forum member.

"Individuals now have a greater sense of awareness, empowerment and optimism and are more likely to become involved in community initiatives," said a member of Cairdeas, a community-based service for drug-users.

An example the person gave of this was when local youths came forward to work with the forum and to see how they could contribute to addressing the issues in their area.

According to a resident's representative, the main achievements to date have been:

- Improving communication between residents and service providers. Myths and false assumptions that groups had about each other have been put to rest (eg residents and police).
- Information has been provided and awareness increased within the community around how to access services and the procedures to follow with service-providers.

Another Forum member pointed out that now the gardai have gained a deeper understanding of the types of problems effecting local residents.

"The Forum (allows) all South West

Clondalkin

residents, in private, local authority and housing association areas, to get together and unite in addressing anti-social behaviour and related issues," said an environmental group member interviewed by the CDP.

Another benefit is that residents committees have been set up newly or re-established where they had fallen by the wayside.

Where, in the past, people in South Clondalkin often felt too intimidated to challenge those involved in anti-social behaviour, the Forum-approach has made it possible for local people to finally have a say in what happens.

However, it is being increasingly recognised by residents, gardai, council officials, health executive officials and community workers that it takes time to change policies, to lobby, to solve problems.

- For more information or for a copy of the booklet, contact Bernadette Farrell, South West Clondalkin Community Safety Forum, Bawnogue Enterprise and Community Centre, Bawnogue Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22. Tel. 01-457-6053 or 457-6055. Fax. 01-457-6293. E-mail: swccdp@iol.ie



Community development approach

NATURALLY, Dolcain CDP adopted a community development approach, which in practice means the forum work can be done through "social analysis, education, collective action, and self-advocacy in dealing with agencies and other barriers."

"This type of community development suggests that rather than the goal being focused on material products, the process of community development is in fact a goal in its own right," states the CDP.

Impact for Dolcain project

THE Community Safety Forum constitutes an integral part of the Dolcain project's work. Its role in the Forum has brought added value in terms of its other functions, and for example, Dolcain has been able to organise successful community activities as a direct result of the project worker's role in developing residents groups.

The Forum can also strengthen Dolcain's lobbying position, for example on the issue of the non-designation of the area as part of the RAPID Programme. Since the introduction of this programme, the focus of many inter-agency structures is overly centred on RAPID areas.

Likewise, the ongoing developmental and networking role of the forum project worker, while promoting the forum, also serves to compliment and connect with the community development work of Dolcain.

Forum's first concerns

AT the very first meeting of South Clondalkin Community Safety Forum – a planning meeting – the following were issues raised by community representatives:

- Under-reporting of incidents;
- Intimidation;
- A feeling of a lack of resources;
- Call-out times/lack of response;
- Implementation of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act.

Funding the Forum

THE initiative is funded by the Department of Environment, through South Dublin County Council, on the recommendation of the Clondalkin Drug Task Force. The funding is allocated through the Dolcain CDP, which is responsible for employing the project worker and covers costs relating to the Forum.

The notion that funding, especially for the forum worker, could one day be withdrawn is seen as a potential threat to the forum's development.

SUMMARY: Community development and anti-social behaviour

As part of our focus on community development and anti-social behaviour, 'Changing Ireland' talked to some CDPs to see how they felt about the problem of 'anti-social behaviour'. What issues were they facing? What responses were they coming up with? What difficulties were they encountering? Ger Fitzgibbon also interviewed a partnership worker in Kerry on the latest electronic devices designed to keep teenagers at bay.

CCTV and Neighbourhood Watch for Athy

By Ger Fitzgibbon

ANN Redmond is a development worker with Athy CDP, County Kildare, and she is also Chairperson of Woodstock Estate Resident's Association.

She said community-based CCTV had been set up in her area, as well as a Neighbourhood Watch programme. These schemes had been developed in conjunction with the Community Forum set up by the RAPID co-ordinator. The Forum is also looking at getting a Crime Prevention Officer and at having a Garda patrol the area on foot.

Ann said there are no youth facilities in the town's housing estates apart from the children's playground, although the Community Forum has applied for funds from the RAPID Dormant Accounts to set up a Youth Café. A premises is already available, all that is needed is the money. Ann enthused about a Youth Café she saw in Wales. There the youth ran the space themselves, there was a computer room, a tea room and a basketball area. She hopes to see such a versatile space developed in Athy, run by the various youth groups all working together.



The €500 youth club in Kilkenny

GER FITZGIBBON reports

SHEILA Cantwell, Manager of Loughboy Area Resource Centre (LARC) in Kilkenny feels the project's youth-focused programmes make a positive impact on the level of anti-social behaviour in the city:

"On the preventative side we have an After Schools Programme and Anger Management course. We also recently started up a Youth Group on Monday evenings that Annette Chappell looks after. Though that's the only project for youths aged 15-plus in the whole of Loughboy – the largest housing estate in Kilkenny City. We currently have 9 members and our current budget is €500, which we got from the VEC."

"There's been €1.4 million invested in childcare facilities here, but little or nothing for kids after they pass 13 years. I've seen two generations of kids grow up with no facilities. There's a chess-club and a swimming pool. That's it. There's no amenities here. And this is a RAPID area. Apart from a one-month summer camp in July, very little happens."

Sheila said a local community counselling service worked well, except that it caters for the 18-25 age group.

"That addresses the problems, not the causes," she commented.

Annette Chappell is the After Schools leader and unofficial 'youth worker' with LARC. There are about 27 kids registered with the After

Schools Club. This runs from 2-6pm and involves everything from a homework club to personal development and there is also a social element.

Annette tries to ensure that the kids have a sense of ownership of the club, and encourages them to suggest activities:

"We're really at a loss on where to get money for youth projects. The kids would like to go on a trip together to Wales, but €500 (the club's only funding for the year) won't get you far! They're already planning on fundraising to raise the money. The kids are really enthusiastic about the club. What they really want is a space to call their own. They're already dreaming of decorating the place. You could implement a whole youth programme around a space like that..."

"The kids come here on Monday Nights and the top three reasons they say they come are for: 'fun', 'something to do' and 'it's somewhere to go where we won't be seen as being trouble.' They would love to have their youth club run a few nights per week."

Annette runs the club on a semi-voluntary basis, helped by another LARC management committee volunteer. She says the youth club is caught for space as well as time:

"In the LARC building, once we pull the pool table out there's not much room for anything else. The local councillors are unwilling to unlock the necessary green spaces to build proper facilities for the youth. These same green spaces end up being used by youths for drink and drugs."



Sirens blaring now a rarity in Fatima

TIM HOURIGAN reports

ANTI-SOCIAL behaviour is less of a problem than before in Fatima Mansions and local CDP, Fatima Groups United (FGU), claim their success comes from working together with residents, the gardai and the council through the Rialto policing forum.

The issue was discussed recently when community representatives from Limerick and Sligo visited Fatima.

According to FGU team leader Joe Donohue, residents groups try to familiarise the locally-stationed and community gardai with the situation in the estate. The aim is that rather than coming in with sirens blaring – which causes crowds of excited children to gather – the gardai and community will develop a smarter approach to dealing with anti-social problems. A Garda

superintendent has been invited to take a seat on the regeneration board.

Joe explained that recent changes in the law had made it easier to evict people for such things as drug dealing. With residents who develop a history of anti-social behaviour, FGU speak to the resident and their neighbours to remind everyone that anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated in the community.

According to Joe, the key is "to be careful, fair but firm with people and create a very strong sense of ownership of the community, and have local knowledge and local people involved".

FGU recently organised a tenancy training programme for residents, explaining the rights and responsibilities of tenants as community members, and encouraged them to see themselves as owning the community and to take

an active interest in how it fares.

Dorothy Walker, of Fatima Residents Forum said that, after all the hard work and changes that people had gone through (regarding the public battle with city council over regeneration) morale was now higher, and people were more determined not to let things slide back to the way things were.

Over time, through work done by the CDP and by residents associations, there has been an increase in the levels of confidence and solidarity among residents, so people feel less intimidated or reluctant to make complaints to the police.

Marie Brennan, resident support worker with the Cranmore group in Sligo explained that they had found it helpful for written complaints to be made in the name of residents associations.

Sarah aghast at new sonic youth deterrent

- A partnership youth officer's view

FOR Sarah O'Brien, youth officer at the Kilorglin office of South Kerry Development Partnership, the focus on anti-social behaviour is a knee-jerk reaction often exploited at election time by politicians looking for easy votes, aware that the people getting the blame cannot vote, reports GER FITZGIBBON.

She has warned people to watch out for the latest cure-all invention, the so-called 'Sonic Teenager Deterrent' which is being tested abroad.

"It's an alarm that emits an annoying high frequency noise, only heard by younger people. It's being fitted in shopping centres in England to stop young people from congregating," explained Sarah.

The Sonic Teenager Deterrent is being tested by shopkeepers in Staffordshire, with local police support, in a bid to stop youths gathering outside shops. The device costs £622 and can supposedly be heard only by 16-22 year olds. The participating shopkeepers can turn the volume up if they want a crowd gathered outside to disperse.

Already, however, there is resistance. In Wales, the Newport Community Safety Partnership banned the device in case it infringes on human rights.

Sarah pointed out: "In Britain, there is an emphasis on punishment, law and order, CCTV, and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. ASBOs are just a sticking plaster on a more serious problem. Why not invest in proper facilities, in new social and civic spaces?"

"There is only one cinema in the whole of South Kerry," she continued. "Young people need both physical and mental space in which to grow. Attractive alcohol-free spaces like properly run youth cafés and drop-in centres



Kerry youths at an event organised by the South Kerry Development Partnership.

would go a long way to addressing youth needs of South Kerry, and would be a positive way of engaging with them."

"We did have a drop-in centre at a local hall, staffed by CE volunteers. Unfortunately the hall committee closed it down because a chair was damaged."

Sarah felt there was a need for more intergenerational projects: "Many problems have to do with a lack of understanding between generations. A lot of the time, anti-social behaviour can simply mean: young people

hanging around!"

"One Intergenerational programme we ran was the 'My Community' Photo Project between the Youth Club and the Active Retirement Group. We put on an exhibition of photos that both groups took of the locality."

Isolation affects rural youth as well as older people, especially where there is a lack of proper transport to urban centres. Many rural teenagers only get to socialise on the school bus, at home, or for 2 or 3 hours at the youth club, if there is one, she pointed out.

Kilmore West has multiple solutions

IN Kilmore West CDP, Dublin 5, some of the anti-social behaviour is inter-generational.

"Local kids are urinating in elderly peoples gardens and in through their letter boxes," said a local youth worker who preferred not to be named.

"There is also drinking going on inside the school area at night. A janitor went around cleaning up after them recently and collected all the teenagers' drink-receipts - they had spent €600 on drink," he added.

The area also has problems with joyriding, burglaries and graffiti.

Commented the youth worker, "We have

By STEPHANIE LEAMY

two Community Gardai, but we really need about 200 of them."

While there is a youth club, only 20 children can go at a time because they only have 1.5 staff members to manage the club.

The CDP is heavily involved in the following to help combat anti-social behaviour:

- Neighbourhood Watch Scheme - the project meets every two months with Gardai to discuss anti-social behaviour and to agree on what can be done;

- After-School Programme for 5-13 years, though numbers are limited to 20 children;
- Second-chance education where the courses are free, for example self-development and computers;
- The CDP also set up a project and employed a worker to help families that have issues with drugs.

* Stephanie Leamy is a student with Limerick Youth Service who was on work placement with 'Changing Ireland' recently.

Joyriding report calls for new approach

Gerry McKeever and Allen Meagher report

THE success of the Priorswood Joyriding Task Force in north Dublin in reducing the number of cars reported stolen in the area means there are practical solutions for other areas experiencing similar problems, according to a recent report.

The report, carried out by Michael Rush, Paula Brudell and Aogán Mulcahy of UCD points to the success of the Joyriding Task Force and calls for a joint approach by Dublin City Council, gardai and local community groups in tackling the problem.

It draws on the views and experiences of young people – including joy-riders and non-joy-riders – in the area, as well as adult residents.

Priorswood CDP and **TravAct CDP** are among the local groups that have been involved in the taskforce that commissioned the report.

Joyriding is almost uniquely carried out by young males from working class estates with 'risk' forming a major part of the attraction. For many it is a reassertion of their identity and status as 'risk takers'. While the activity is

universally seen as anti-social activity in the estates where the joy-riders live, it is seen by the joy-riders themselves as asserting their own identity. For the joyrider, there is no prospect of material gain and the 'payback' is in the form of 'thrill' and local notoriety.

The report also links habitual alcohol and drug use, depression and school absenteeism to incidents of joy-riding while it distinguishes between what it calls 'joy-riding', 'boy-racing' and 'lunatic driving'. Of the three, only 'lunatic driving' poses a widespread social threat according to the report.

Among the recommendations – a community policing forum, similar to the 'Safer Ballymun' initiative and a major overhaul of roads, pavements and fields in conjunction with discussions with local youth on the provision of facilities – all practical steps that can be taken through an inter-agency approach.

Copies of the report are available from Priorswood CDP. Tel. 01-8486458. E-mail: mary.outreach@oceanfree.net



Unemployment at 10% in Priorswood

PRIORSWOOD is considered a relatively new residential area within the greater Coolock area on Dublin's northside. Building development began about 35 years ago and the area is still expanding. It is situated about seven miles north of the city centre and just south of Dublin Airport. Priorswood consists of four housing estates: Clonsaugh, Darndale, Moatview and Ferrycarrig.

The area as a whole is characterised by high levels of socio-economic disadvantage, relatively high unemployment rates (10%), a very large youth population and a consequential range of youth-related social problems including joy-riding, illegal drug use and early school leaving.

Dublin City Council estimate the average

cost per month for removing abandoned cars from the Priorswood area at €1,200.

Children under 14 constitute 27.6% of the local population. Few residents (8%) have progressed to third level education.

The Priorswood area falls under the remit of the North East Drugs Task Force, the Northside Partnership and is designated as an area of socio-economic disadvantage under the RAPID (Revitalising Areas through Planning Investment and Development) programme.

Priorswood CDP is situated in the Outreach centre on Clonsaugh Drive. The project's strategic plan included most of the information mentioned above in terms of profile.

Joy-riding not 'worst' problem

WHILE illegal drugs emerged as the unanimous first choice of all concerned as the worst problem facing the area, some residents stated that 'violence' now challenges alcohol for second place.

One resident stated categorically that joy-riding was the third most important social issue: "Third. The more important issues are drugs and alcoholism. That's right across the population (not just young people)."

By contrast, members of the Joy-riding Task Force viewed joy-riding as "way down the league table" of social problems.

Youths lost between 13 to 16 years

PRIORSWOOD residents referred to amenities that have shut down and stressed the importance of paying particular attention to the 13-16 year olds who are not catered for by many of the existing policy initiatives:

"They don't belong anywhere," said one community worker, adding: "There are thousands of kids in the area. They're building a youth service with fancy office, but where are the things that young people have asked for during a meeting with all the young people in the area – a cyber café, an auto project, a horse project – none of which transpired. They're lost between 13 to 16... there's nothing for them."

She gave the example of a young man who enquired about joining a woodwork project but who was unable to unless and until he had some criminal charges against him (thereby qualifying him for project work).

One answer

YOUNG people's interest in equine activities is strongly evident in Priorswood, Dublin.

Despite being a hobby that is usually depicted as 'out of the ordinary', the report on joy-riding emphasised just how culturally embedded this interest in horses has become:

"Interviews confirmed that, as one person phrased it, 'Kids are mad into horses... most of the kids have horses and it is illegal because we haven't got fields... We tried to get a project set

Recommendations of joy-riding taskforce report

THE following are some of the key recommendations made in the report titled: 'The Nature and Impact of Joy-riding in Priorswood – A Report to the Priorswood Task Force on Joy-riding'. Copies of the full report are available through Priorswood CDP.

- **An audit of the broad economic and social costs associated with joy-riding should be undertaken.** This would truly establish the severity of the problem, and serve as the basis for allocating due resources
- **A sustained evaluation of the motor project in Priorswood and other motor projects should be undertaken.** Throughout Britain, youngsters tempted to engage in joy-riding are encouraged to divert their energies into attending motor-car workshops. However, some residents in Priorswood say the motor project only serves as a training course for further joy-riding.
- **A local forum should be established where all are welcome to come and discuss issues.** It could, for example, provide a space for young people to air grievances over having their horses impounded. Questions could be asked as to why some residents are passively supporting joy-riding by acting as spectators anytime joy-riding takes place.
By raising issues in a sustained way, the discussions could, in turn, feed into the policy development.
- Research conducted for the report confirmed the key links between crime and marginalisation. Correspondingly, the report recommends that **youth diversion measures and recreational facilities for young people must be developed independently of labour market concerns. Furthermore, the focus of such measures should specifically include younger children and teenagers.**
- Given that unemployment rates in Priorswood generally are twice the national average, the report recommends that **job training and job provision – especially for**



young men – be given the highest priority.

- Life on large-scale labyrinthine public housing estates often brings a sense of physical vulnerability and insecurity, say the authors, adding:

"The joy-riding issue (should) be considered within a concerted approach by local government and local development agencies, and the RAPID programme, and this (should) be done within a wider context of developing local anti-poverty and social inclusion measures.

"We further recommend the development of a strong institutional link between the community policing/safety forum and social inclusion initiatives and family support initiatives."

Continued support for youth clubs is also a key recommendation.

- The report recommends that **the Task Force (who commissioned the report) should itself be wound up.** While there has been a decline in the level of joy-riding, the Task Force was often criticised by local residents. Further, since the establishment of the Task Force in 1998, there has also been a pronounced shift in policy strategies towards public housing management and community policing, developments that to some extent have superseded the Task Force's remit.

The report suggests that, in its place, a community policing/safety forum be established.

National forum on joy-riding proposed

"THE Priorswood Task Force on Joy-riding has suffered through its isolation from other initiatives to address joy-riding. Furthermore," noted the report, "its status as the only such Task Force has given it an unwanted prominence in joy-riding debates nationally, despite the occurrence of joy-riding in numerous urban centres."

The report recommends that a new national forum be established, comprising a network of organisations concerned with joy-riding.

This would greatly facilitate the sharing of information and best practice – through newsletters, conferences and workshops – and would provide scope for developing coordinated approaches to joy-riding across Ireland.

It suggested that Priorswood Task-Force on Joy-riding could organise a conference on this networking idea as part of its winding down activities.

Long v short-term solutions

"WE believe no full account of joy-riding can avoid the fact that the area in which it is most concentrated is one of the most deprived areas in Dublin," say the report's authors. "Recent criminal justice initiatives to address crime and disorder – particularly that associated with young males – has focused on punitive rather than preventative solutions (even though restorative justice schemes and other measures, have been provided for in the Children's Act for a number of years). While a reliance on such measures reinforces public opinion that joy-riders are outcasts who are inherently dangerous, the interviews reported here suggest that joy-riders often share many of the same dreams found among the public at large: a home, a family, a decent job.

Moreover, such measures often serve to individualise a problem which has a clear social/structural component."

"We note that while preventative measures are often politically unpopular in the short term, they are likely in the longer term to prove more cost-effective in terms of financial expenditure, and more successful in terms of addressing the nature, causes and impact of such behaviour," adds the report.

has four legs and a tail

up, the community was fully behind it.. but they weren't able to get premises."

After the horse-project failed to materialize, most of the horses were rounded up by the authorities and taken away.

Children and teenagers then took to joy-riding because the horses they had the love and passion for were gone away.

Certainly, young people persistently link the local authorities' efforts to remove horses from

the area with an increase in joy-riding. Although most local authority action in this regard occurred some years ago, accounts of horses continue to feature prominently in local youth culture.

The report recommends that future policy proposals should consider ways of addressing this interest in the care of animals that seems prominent among children generally, and particularly so in the case of young urban males.

Mahon develops Community Policing Forum

PEOPLE in Mahon, in Cork city, have set up a community policing forum involving local residents, community groups, state agencies and community gardaí.

Simply, conventional wisdom says that if an area has an effective forum in operation then major problems can be avoided or at least prevented when identified in their infancy.

The Forum, when fully operational will operate on two tiers, as follows.

Tier 1:

- The Residents of Mahon, representatives from the many streets/estates in Mahon will come together once monthly/bimonthly.
 - Community Gardai will attend.
 - Problems within the area can be raised.
 - Issues directly pertaining to the Gardai e.g. public order, criminal damage, public drinking will be addressed, commitments will be made and a localised policing plan put in place if necessary.
 - Information on issues where Gardai are not directly responsible will be fed onto other agencies (eg, the ESB).
- Assessment of the problem will occur at the following month's meeting as regards the effectiveness of solutions previously proposed.

Tier 2:

Major problems not resolved by Tier 1 meetings will be raised at larger meetings which will take place 3-4 times a year.

They will be attended by the residents from Tier 1 and also representatives from community associations, existing neighbourhood watch schemes, city council officials, elected representatives, local reps from state agencies and the voluntary sector within Mahon.

Again commitments will be made and plans put in place. The benefits of the Forum when it is running successfully will include: accountability, improved service, better service/use of resources, and closer links with the community.

The idea of a Community Policing Forum in itself is not new. Often, it has been a threat to the community that has been the main driver. For example the inner-city heroin epidemic in Dublin in the 1980's and early 90's eventually led some communities to take action and form committees with local Gardai.

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes have largely fallen by the wayside in recent years.



Community policing now a national priority

COMMUNITY Policing is now one of the main policing priorities in the Policing Plan of An Garda Síochána for 2006.

Strategic Goal Number 5 of the Policing Plan is "to improve confidence in An Garda Síochána" through "enhancing our engagement with the community". Community Policing has long been recognised as one of the most effective

ways in which a police force can develop and foster strong links with the Community it serves.

At the core of the concept of Community Policing is the idea of cultivating links with the various facets of the community in a meaningful way in order that the Gardai can respond to the policing requirements of that community.

Unjust media eroding pride in Cork

- a wealth of positives ignored by press

says CIARÁN CLEARY, Community Garda

I HAVE worked as a Community Garda in the Mahon area for the past year and a half. In my opinion the problems affecting the Mahon area are no different to any other area of similar size and composition in Cork City or in Ireland for that matter.

I was amazed to discover the wealth of positive community-oriented initiatives in place in the Mahon area but unfortunately I have to say that the area receives a lot of unjustified 'negative press'.

There is an 'anti-social behaviour mania' in the media at present across the board. Too often the spotlight is focused on a negative incident to the detriment of the many positive initiatives within the community that receive negligible coverage if any and too often are relegated to a few column inches in a community bulletin.

I guess good news doesn't sell papers. I often wonder at the impact of this high level of negative coverage that can distort people's perception of an area.

Working in the primary and secondary schools I deal with various topics - for example - road and personal safety, the dangers of substance abuse, bullying, vandalism and community spirit. When discussing the latter two topics in classes I am often astounded by the poor self-image of the pupils as regards the community in which they live.

I sometimes wonder is it a case of the self-fulfilling prophecy whereby if you hear something often enough you start believing it. If I encounter this phenomenon amongst some young people then it has to be present in some of the adult population as well. In other words if an area receives repeated negative publicity this leads to an erosion of the community spirit of an area, an erosion of the pride in belonging.

Currently we need to keep highlighting the many positive initiatives within Mahon to counteract the negative publicity.

Also, the provision of more youth clubs is definitely something that the area needs urgently. The weekend 'open' youth club night and the 'Late Night Basketball' are definitely steps in the right direction.

I feel the proposed dedicated youth centre needs to be fast-tracked in order to provide a permanent infrastructure to put the services in place.

We are lucky in Mahon to have a long-established CDP in the area. My job as a Community Garda has certainly been greatly facilitated by the knowledge and support of the local CDP and I would link with the Project Co-ordinator, Viv Sadd, on a regular basis. The CDP has a strong role in establishing and supporting local networks and community events.

**Garda Ciarán Cleary is a Community Garda based in Blackrock Garda Station, Cork city. The Blackrock station covers suburbs in Cork's southside including Mahon.*

Mahon Gardaí train in youth leadership

FOUR Gardai who operate out of Mahon/Blackrock Garda Station in Cork City recently completed a Youth Leadership Training Programme along with eleven local adults from the Mahon area.

The purpose of the training was to develop a pool of trained youth leaders to support a new local 'open to all' youth initiative in Mahon Youth Centre on Friday nights. Training was delivered by Katrine Holland of the Foroige-managed Mahon Youth Development Project (MYDP).

Viv Sadd, project co-ordinator of Mahon CDP, said "This is yet another example in Mahon of gardai and community working together, and it gathered momentum out of a Community Policing Forum meeting in Mahon."

"The reasoning behind the Friday night 'open to all' club was, firstly, there are limited activities for young people on weekend nights. Secondly, while there are extremely important local youth initiatives targeting young people involved in crime, drugs/alcohol or early school leavers there are limited youth initiatives which have an 'open to all' approach," explained Viv.

The Gardai who attended the training -

Ciaran Cleary, Pat Barrett, Roisin Ni Chathain and Marie O'Neil - were not all from the Community Policing Unit.

Jenny Florish, a local adult volunteer who also undertook the youth leadership training, said: "I was very wary at the start of the training with the Gardai involved, but now after the training when I meet them on the road we chat away like I have known them for years. It is good for us and it is definitely good for the young people to see Garda involved in this project."

Katrine remarked, "On the first night of training you sensed the apprehension from the volunteers, but now that they have developed relationships they are all working for the benefit of the community".

The participants covered things like child protection, first aid, role of leader, and communications during their five weeks of training.

The Friday night club is up and running now.

Mahon CDP, MYDP, Community Garda and the Yew Tree Project formed the organising committee to make this initiative happen.

For further information, telephone Viv Sadd, Mahon CDP, on 021-4359070.



Community work in Mahon, from left to right: Florish (local volunteer), Viv Sadd, (Mahon CDP project co-ordinator), Ciaran Cleary (community garda), Ciara Long, Trisha O'Brien and Geraldine Long (local volunteers). All are involved with Mahon Friday night youth club.

Policing Forum in action

A LOCAL green space that was previously a haven for late night anti-social behaviour was transformed by the City Council into a children's playground and amenity area. Sounds good so far.

However the anti-social behaviour that had affected the area prior to the transformation continued once the park gates were closed each evening.

Local residents directly affected came together with City Council officials, the Gardai, representatives from the youth network and community associations. Mahon CDP facilitated this process.

There were a number of facets to the problem that none of the agencies could solve alone, but together they had a combined effect:

- Fencing and lighting in the park needed to be improved in order to help prevent access.
- The Gardaí needed to give the area a higher level of policing in the short term in order to deter those intent on causing disruption.
- Mahon Youth Development Project began to interact with teenagers using the park after hours to provide them with a more positive outlet (through sports and other activities).

The multi-agency approach alleviated the problem to a large extent.

'Late-night basketball' yields amazing results

RESPONDING to a need to provide some activities for young people on weekend nights in Mahon, Cork, a number of groups and organisations examined the 'Midnight basketball' model as a possible option. The concept hails from the U.S.A. where it has got young people off the street.

In Mahon the decision was made to use a variation of this and offer 'Late-night' basketball for local young people on Saturday nights.

"The results have been amazing," pointed out Declan Cassidy, the Youth Officer with Mahon Youth Development Project (MYDP). "We were not sure in the beginning whether this initiative would work out. There is very little history of basketball in the area to start with. However the enthusiasm and commitment shown by the young people has been extraordinary and the whole thing has turned out to be a real success."

A sports co-ordinator and two basketball coaches were contracted to run the weekly sessions. One of the youth workers from the local committee and the community garda also join in the sessions.

The basketball is held on Saturday nights in the sports hall of the local boys secondary school in Mahon - Nagle Community College.

Viv Sadd, Project Co ordinator with Mahon CDP, said, "This initiative came together relatively quickly and has been successful because of the willingness of local and outside groups and agencies to work together collectively."

The organising committee consisted of local groups Mahon CDP, the MYDP, the Yew Tree Project (from the Local Drugs Task Force), the Community Gardaí. Outside agencies that are involved include Cork City Council (through its Sports Officer), City of Cork VEC and RAPID.

Funding for the initiative comes from the latter two mentioned bodies and from the Irish Youth Foundation.

The 'Midnight Basketball' idea has also proven a great success in Mayfield, Cork.

Dublin's Community Garda numbers down

DEPARTMENT of Justice figures released in mid-March showed that stations across the city now have 23 fewer community gardai than before.

The south inner city (there are CDPs in Fatima Mansions and in St Michael's Estate in Inchicore) lost five of its 27 community officers.

Tallaght (which is home to a number of CDPs) is down from 24 to 20. Since 2004, Finglas lost one of its 12 community gardai. Blanchardstown has 17, two fewer than in 2001.

Other reductions since 2004 include: Ronanstown down 16 to 13; Dun Laoghaire down 5 to 4; Dundrum down 6 to 5.

The figures were extracted from the Department of Justice by Labour TD, Joe Costello, who commented: "It has been proven that a well-resourced Community Garda team contributes hugely to reducing crime."

Arty approach to working with teenagers

THE arts have still a somewhat marginal role in youth and community development work, writes GER FITZGIBBON. But the attitude that sees arts and creativity as a fluffy indulgence in the otherwise serious business of youthwork ignores the benefits of arts. It energises and interests young people, helps develop their social skills and involve them in activities with positive social outcomes.

In larger urban areas, youth groups are beginning to realise the positive potential of community arts, yet most rural towns and villages suffer from a serious lack of facilities for young people in the 14-23 age bracket. Is it time CDPs began to look at arty ways of filling this gap?

The Youth Services and Facilities Fund already funds a mass of work across the country, including, for example in Limerick city.

Damien Landy is a youth worker with **Limerick Youth Services (LYS)**. One of Damien's current projects is LYS's innovative 'Massive Music' programme. This involves staging music workshops and concerts for young musicians and bands. The concerts are currently held several times per year during school breaks.

LYS is looking to expand Massive Music to a full-time drop in place with rehearsal and performance spaces in conjunction with a health café. This is in recognition of the wider social benefits that come from providing young people with a supervised space in which to congregate.

A similar type space already up and running is 'Elmo's Attic' provided by Clare Youth Services in Ennis. This space is run by young people and local bands have a space to perform every Saturday evening.

Q: What's the use of arts and music in youth/community development?

Replied Damien: "The art or music is often



No wonder Limerick has a thriving live music scene. These young musicians will be appearing at a venue near you shortly.

incidental. It's a means for youth workers to pursue skills central to values of youth work. Creative activities give you something positive to channel your energies into. Arts can offer informal education and a sense of community develops when young people are working creatively together. It's healthy in a whole number of ways"

Q: What's the advantage of the creative approach to youth development work?

Damien: "This approach sees youth as having a lot to offer. Art-work is a positive way of engaging with young people, and for them to engage with each other. In traditional youth work, sports tends to dominate, but - with arts and music - there can be more variety.

And you can reach more people from more diverse backgrounds. For example the music community we deal with is spread out right

across the city and county. From these contacts you can often bring them into drugs and alcohol awareness or other programmes. Arts is more developmental. For example we're recently done some photography and film projects where we got young people to reflect on their communities."

Q: Do you feel public policy should be more favourable to community arts projects?

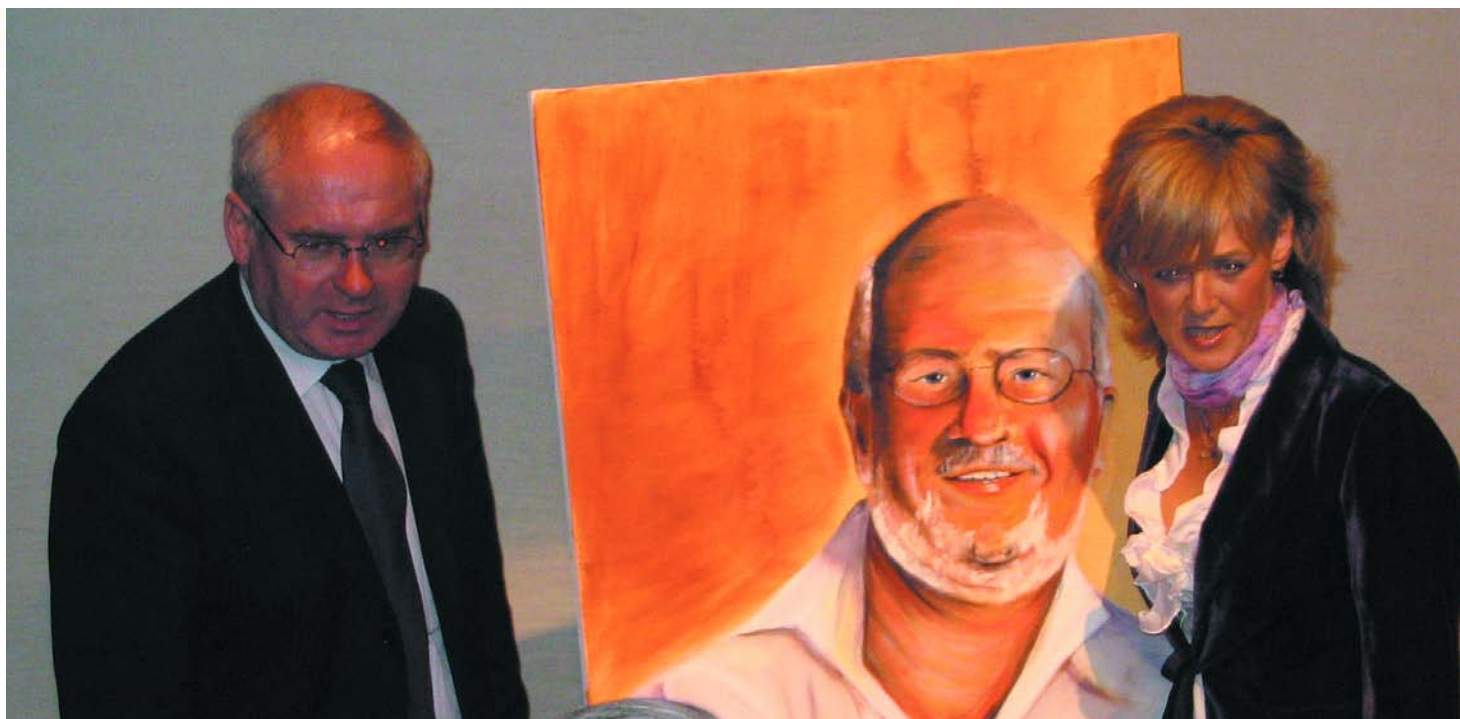
Damien: "Creative forms of youth work are always more interesting...and they will happen on the ground anyway, whether policy is that way inclined or not, because that is where many youth workers' interest tends to lie and because they are very effective forms of intervention."

Q: How can we deal with the lack of non-sporting activities in rural areas? Should the CDPs address this or leave it to the likes of LYS?

Damien: "We would see it as more of a partnership-type approach. In Limerick we work hand in hand with the Partnership and LEADER groups. The new Youth Act proposes that youth organisations be the service providers but allows much scope for local initiative on the ground. The nature of youth work is also changing, the old style youth club is not the answer to everything. There's also a change in the nature of volunteerism. People who come forward now often offer specific skills or expertise, for a specific project. Youth work also occurs in the context of wider social problems they can't themselves address. ASBOs are not the answer."



The Limerick Youth Service on Glentworth Street in Limerick city.



Minister of State at the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Noel Ahern, and artist Edith Poole, at the gathering to mark the contribution made to Ballymun by the late Len Commins.

Ballymun honours late Len Commins

- men's centre is tribute to his struggle

Ballymun Men's Centre organised a commemorative event over the winter to mark the passing, nearly three years ago now, of their organisation's founder, Len Commins. Over 150 people turned out for the occasion which was held in the Axis Theatre in Ballymun. It culminated in the hanging of a portrait of Len painted by local artist, Edith Poole.

Noel Ahern, Minister of State at the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs opened the proceedings and unveiled the portrait, watched on by Len's family.

Len is famous locally for having founded the Ballymun Men's Centre (BMC) in 1991. He was a dedicated community worker who believed strongly in the principles and values of community development and worked tirelessly in organisations which supported people to manage their own lives.

Len wanted the Men's Centre to address issues facing men in the Ballymun area such as unemployment, isolation, depression, family breakdown, separation and alcohol and drug abuse. It was established in the context of men increasingly feeling lost and isolated within the community and has become a focal point for the promotion of men's wellbeing in a non-intrusive and friendly manner.

Minister of State Ahern, in his speech,

praised the Centre for its open door policy in assisting and supporting local men. The Centre now runs accredited courses in computers, communications, self development, art, drama and music, and has recently begun to open its doors to women also.

Len's involvement in Ballymun was not confined to the Men's Centre. He was also a member of the management board of the Community and Family Training Agency (CAFTA) which he helped to establish. Furthermore he set up the STAR project which promotes the inclusion of stabilised women drug users in their community. Len was also a facilitator with both adult learners and tutors and worked with the National College of Ireland, NUI Maynooth, the VEC and many other community organisations.

Professor Joyce O'Connor, President of the National College of Ireland delivered the keynote lecture to honour Len's work. She stated, "Len worked tirelessly in developing flexible, responsive and pro-active organisations where people took charge of their own lives."

She praised Len's work with the NCI where he often facilitated and delivered courses on their off-campus facilities. The Men's Centre is a powerful piece of evidence of Len's

vision becoming a reality, she said.

Breeda, wife of Len Commins who was present with her children Niamh, Eoin and Saibeamh thanked the Ballymun Men's Centre for honouring her husband's memory in such style and said that Len would have been very proud of the tribute.

All the contributors were thanked by Christy Moran, Chairperson of the BMC voluntary management committee.

The gathering proved to be a great social occasion with the voluntary management committee, staff, members of the Centre and friends, family and students of Len enjoying some festive fare and entertainment in celebration of Len and his work. A group of guitarists from the music class at the Ballymun Men's Centre under the direction of their tutor Paddy Lynch provided the entertainment.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Matt Cosgrave a longstanding member of the management committee who organised the event on behalf of the BMC. The event was kindly sponsored by Ballymun Regeneration Limited, Dublin City Council, and Rom Massey and Sons Funeral Directors.

Len Commins died in June 2003, aged 58 years.

Dublin's Fatima attracting faraway interest

- as community centre is officially wrecked

Report: TIM HOURIGAN

DUBLIN'S Fatima area has almost become a tourist attraction, among community projects and residents groups at any rate who are eager to learn how to rebuild and regenerate a community.

And Monday, 13th March, saw the last official visitors to Fatima's community centre before it faced the wrecking ball. Delegations from Sligo town and Limerick city travelled to Dublin to learn from local CDP, Fatima Groups United, about how it engaged in a major redevelopment that has become a model for other disadvantaged urban areas.

The visiting groups - from Cranmore and Moyross respectively - were taken on a walk-around tour of the old blocks and the new neighbourhood springing to life around it.

The old flat complexes, - four stories high, with no lifts - are grim and a bit claustrophobic, with narrow stairwells and balconies. The common areas in between have spaces for a small playground and communal washing lines, but not a blade of



FGU's CDP centre - now demolished.

grass.

Dorothy Walker, a community worker and member of the residents association, showed us her new house that has a few things the flats never had, for example, gas-fired heating and a garden and kerbside parking. The rent includes €11 a week for the €3,000 worth of new furniture that came with each new house or apartment.

Dorothy was asked what effect it had on people to see so much positive change around them, while knowing that it was led by the community.

"You can feel the pride and the morale from seeing all this. We're very proud of it," she said.

The residents insisted on being involved in the design of their own neighbourhood from

the start. They choose the new street names, for instance, and they insisted that everyone had separate front doors, and that the houses faced out onto the streets instead of inwards to a courtyard. It was made possible for people who had been neighbours for years in the old flats to opt to be neighbours again in the new houses so that community links would not be broken.

While most of the new houses are already occupied, the CDP is moving temporarily into portakabins until the new purpose-built community centre is ready in about 18 months.

Work is still in progress at Fatima, and as we left the diggers were rolling in on the future site of two astro-turf pitches and a green park area. When the old flats come down, the developer has plans to put in 369 private apartments (including some at affordable housing rates, and an allocation policy to prevent overcrowding), underground car-parking for the private blocks, and a retail centre, a swimming pool, and 3000sq metre neighbourhood centre.

The folks at FGU say that they plan to see this through, and end up with an integrated and sustainable community with participation from the current Fatima residents, and the new neighbours who will move into the private apartments.

Near the community centre, a miniature house perches atop a signpost, pointing out the CDP, the regeneration office and another place marked 'The Future'.

It is the one place everyone visiting Fatima wants a squint at.

Step-by-step to successful regeneration

THE following is a holistic plan for regenerating your community. It is presented to visitors by Fatima Groups United and represents the key steps on their successful road to regenerating their community. Each of the following headings form part of the community's Social Agenda Plan:

1 Safe Sustainable Community

- Community Policing Strategy
- Citizens Charter
- Supporting vulnerable Families

2 Education

- Co-ordination of Education for all ages
- Pre-school services
- Fatima Homework Club for 5-15 yr olds
- Digital Community Project - computer skills

3 Health & Well Being

- Health promotion strategy - with HSE

- Develop Health & Well Being Centre
- Integration of Services

4 Sport & Recreation

- Develop Recreational Sports Programme
- Link to Sports Development Agencies

5 Enterprise Training & Development

- Local labour clause
- Pre-apprenticeship training
- Community Enterprise Development

6 Arts & culture

- Allocation for Public Art
- Arts facilities & culture programmes

7 Environment

- Improving physical appearance
- Waste management
- Relationship with linear park

8 Planning & Design

- Community Services & Facilities
- Fit out of New Neighbourhood Centre.

Youngsters involved

Novel ways were adopted to get younger residents involved and enthusiastic about the community-backed regeneration programme for Fatima: Small groups of local kids (5-10-year-olds, 11-15-year-olds and 15-plus) were invited to see the plans and to see some of the first new houses. The children then presented what they saw back to their peers.

Project teaches benefits of activism

AFTER the walkabout tour, Fatima Groups United (FGU) put on a presentation explaining the story of Fatima Mansions from 1950 to the present, the decline, and the hard work to change things around again.

When an urban regeneration plan was announced by Dublin City Council (DCC), Joe Donohue spoke about how the FGU staff knocked on every single door (over 360). They explained to residents that the only way they would achieve anything was by getting as many people as possible involved in changing the community.

FGU went to the city council, at first just asking for a few changes to the regeneration plan, but after twice pulling out of negotiations with the council, they eventually realised that simply demolishing the flats and re-housing the people was not enough to create a safe and sustainable community.

So, they found out what the residents wanted, physically and for the social agenda. They then took the initiative by commissioning a report

from Dr. Mary Corcoran of Maynooth and got architects and planners to draw up their own master plan for Fatima "11 acres - 10 steps" which the Council then incorporated into the plans for redeveloping the community. It gave the community influence on how the project would proceed and established the Fatima Regeneration Board, with the residents having 6 of the 11 seats on the board, and the remaining 5 going to the council, the developer, Gardai, and the Health Board.

The community now has a well-being centre (which provides health services beyond the bad old days of issuing methadone to heroin addicts) a crèche, and a homework club to help kids stay in education.

The residents also negotiated a local labour clause to ensure that some of the residents could find employment in the demolition and construction involved, while others would get pre-apprenticeship training so they could apply for construction work in the future.



Gone but not forgotten

Know what you want - don't be afraid to dream.

Have an independent legal structure - an executive and independent chair.

Set up a strategic advisory group.

Insist on resources from the beginning.

Don't forget the community's ongoing needs.

Ensure that the Social Plans have equal importance as the Physical Plans.

Develop Communications Strategy - local/national.

Know the timeframe - don't build false hopes.

Have a united community front.

Develop alliances/ supports for your vision.

'Not used to heating'

ONE long-time Fatima resident told us there was no central heating in the old flats and the people on the top floor had to bring coal bags up the three flights of stairs.

She is happy in her new house, but there are some things she's not quite used to yet: "I turn off the central heating, cos I never had it in the flats and I'm not used to it."

Blending in

MOST of the new houses (with apartments overhead) are built with yellow brick, but the ones on St. Anthony's road are redbrick, to fit in with the older houses. Rather than towering over the neighbourhood, like the old flats, the new houses have been designed to blend in with pre-existing houses in neighbouring streets.

Mind your gables!

A regeneration tip: Instead of having gable ends as part of the public space, enclose the gables with a small wall or fence so people cannot congregate as easily at the side of anyone's house.



Dorothy Walker from Fatima Groups United CDP showing members of Moyross Resident's Group from Limerick around the regenerated area. Among those pictured outside Dorothy's new house are (l.to r.): John Flannery, Nuala O'Connell, Peggy Quin, Liz Ronan, all from Moyross, Dorothy herself, Breda Curry (almost hidden), Tracy McElligott and Paddy Flannery from Moyross.

CCTV does not always appeal

IN Dublin, Fatima residents voted recently not to install a CCTV system in their new neighbourhood, reports **TIM HOURIGAN**.

They hoped that it will not be needed, but they also were not very impressed with the usefulness of CCTV, complaining that the CCTV system in the old flats complex was not actively monitored, and was generally only used by the council and the Gardai during evictions or raids.

As visitor **Paddy Flannery** from Moyross, Limerick, pointed out, an unmonitored system is of little use in deterring anti-social behaviour.

In Moyross, where Paddy is manager of the Community Enterprise Centre, it is community members, not the Gardai or the council who monitor the CCTV, and it is monitored on a 24-hour basis, and the footage has been used in several successful prosecutions.

Both the Fatima and Cranmore groups

expressed an interest in visiting Moyross to see how this system works.

On the subject of viable residents groups, **Tracy McElligott**, a development worker with Moyross Residents' Forum (and a member of the local CDP) outlined that since there were 1100 houses in the area, it was decided to break the estate up into 11 more manageable parks. Each park now has a residents association and each has two delegates who sit on the main Residents Forum along with representatives from the community centre, local council, gardai, Bus Eireann, and other groups working in the community.

This approach gives residents more involvement in and awareness of issues such as public lighting, the management of green areas, and protecting the bus service, claims Tracy.

Being rural and disabled no longer spells 'isolation'

- Mayo work being blue-printed for other projects

RECENTLY Cosgallen CDP in Charlestown, Co. Mayo ran a ten-week course for disabled people called 'Making Choices'. Before going on the course, a lot of the participants did not even know they had choices.

Many did not know, for example, that there was a free money-advice service or that there was an organisation devoted to finding them employment.

Now the course is being blue-printed so other communities can adopt it. Throughout the country, disabled people suffer isolation, social exclusion and marginalisation.

The course marked the first step by Cosgallen CDP to enable disabled people to participate in a more inclusive way in social, cultural and economic activities and to be more equal members of society. One member of the CDP's management committee is a wheelchair-user, a factor which has helped the others to understand disability better.

"People with disabilities have difficulty here in Mayo finding out about training opportunities and nobody seemed to be telling them what services are out there," said Claire Forrestal.

"There are services that are open to everyone - for example, social welfare rights and entitlements - but a lot of people with disabilities live in isolation and don't know," said the CDP co-ordinator.

The first challenge was to get contact information for disabled people in the area.

"We got names from the church, by word-of-mouth, from the Cheshire Homes and from the Centre for Independent Living in Castlebar. Then we sent a mail-shot out about the course," continued Claire.

The CDP invited local disabled people to attend an open morning to let the project know what subjects interested them.

The people who came on the course all happened to have physical disabilities. Of the group of ten, two were born with their disability, the others got their disability later in life through, for example, strokes and car accidents.

Cosgallen workers co-ordinated the course, but it was the participants who decided on the modules they would do.

Sessions included team building, communication, personal development and stress management. Peter Kearns, Development and Policy Worker with the Forum of People with Disabilities facilitated sessions on historical disability and equality and disability.

Also, a number of agencies held sessions, including: Workweb West (who help disabled people find employment), the local Vocational Education Committee (who run courses), the Money Advice and Budgeting Service, the National Learning Network (formerly the National Training and Development Institute), Comhairle, and the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

The final session was a celebration of the course and participants got to reflect and talk about their experience of Making Choices.

The 'Making Choices' course was organised in partnership with Specialist Support Agency DESSA and the Forum of People with Disabilities and was funded by the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

A similar course was run previously by Ballymote Family Resource Centre in County Sligo and the management and staff of Cosgallen CDP decided to try a similar approach.

Now, those who completed the course in Cosgallen have formed a group and are developing long-term aims.

"They want to follow up their work by working on their skills and lobbying on disability issues," explained Claire. "Some of the participants have also become involved in other CDP work such as the healthy lifestyles programme."

Two workers from DESSA and the Forum of People with Disabilities are currently completing case studies from the course's success in Ballymote FRC and Cosgallen CDP and the case studies will shortly be made available in toolkit format and will lay out the

steps involved in organising 'Making Choices'.

• If you would like more information about the 'Making Choices' programme, call Claire Forrestal at Cosgallen CDP, Airport Road, Charlestown, Co Mayo. Tel: 094-9255070. Fax: 094-9255071. E-mail: info@cosgallen.com
Or contact DESSA at Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8. Tel 01-4163548. Fax 01-4536861. E-mail: info@dessa.ie Many other useful organisations, particularly in the West, are listed on DESSA's website (www.dessa.ie).

* Thanks to Padraig Kelly and Claire Forrestal for their assistance in bringing this story to 'Changing Ireland' readers.

Blue Drum: 'Art is not just a product!'

By Ger Fitzgibbon

"THERE is little government policy in relation to Community Arts in Ireland. In the UK and Scotland there is more recognition that Arts can have a social/community as well as aesthetic value," according to Blue Drum's Jim Cathcart.

"Community and socially-oriented arts needs to be looked at and valued differently. It's not just a corner of the art world. In many ways this is a discussion that hasn't happened yet. There is a need to build a consensus around what Art and Community Development is, in order to produce policy. It's a different approach altogether.

"At the moment there is a problem with funding routes for community and social arts practice. In Ireland the Arts Council's criteria for funding remains solidly 'the production of quality, innovative art.' But art is not just a product, it can also be an effective process with positive social and community outcomes. The Combat Poverty Agency report that led to Blue Drum being established also recommended making a specific fund available for 'Developmental Community Arts'. Thus far there has been no follow-through on this," noted Jim.

Blue Drum supports the community development sector, for example, in the use of creative methodologies in working towards social inclusion. It provides a range of direct supports and developmental initiatives, particularly to CDPs and Family Resource Centres.



'Making Choices' course participants.

Arts agency double-launch: website & action plan

BLUE Drum has a new website to promote the work it does and the support it can offer to CDPs and Family Resource Centres (FRCs).

The launch was dramatic, as befitted an agency promoting community arts. It was held in a castle, the walls were decked out with Mayo children's paintings, the first African theatre company in Ireland staged a show and the launch was conducted by two VIPs.

The website - simply named www.bluedrum.ie - was launched in Dublin Castle on February 28th by John O'Donoghue, Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism and Mary Cloake, Director of the Arts Council of Ireland. They also launched Blue Drum's programme of activities for 2006.

Mick Daly, Chairperson of Bluedrum said he was excited about the website and the programme of work.

"We hope that both will assist community development projects, family resource centres and other groups active in the community sector to use the creative arts as a means of addressing poverty and inequality," he said.

Two community projects exhibited at the launch, each focusing on political themes.

An arts project called 'We Had To Flee!' featuring 18 large canvasses painted by Mayo children went on display at the launch to show the kind of work being done around the country.



Painted by 5th and 6th year pupils from Killeen National School, Co. Mayo and organised by Louisburgh CDP, the 'We Had To Flee!' project deals with the trauma of displacement for families.

CDP co-ordinator, Breda Ruane, said displacement is "suffered by millions of families around the world when they are forced to flee their homes and start a new life elsewhere."

A second community-driven exhibition was also featured at the launch - 'Wishes and Choices' explores Traveller Women's experiences of childbirth and maternity services.

Also at the launch, Arambe Productions - Ireland's first African Theatre company - staged a performance, while music was provided by community musicians Mary Begley on concertina and Junshy Myrakami

on harp.

Blue Drum is a specialist support agency working with the community development sector in Ireland, particularly CDPs and FRCs. The Agency was established in 2001 in response to the growing involvement of the community development and anti-poverty sector in using arts based methodologies and addressing issues of access to arts and cultural provision. Blue Drum is currently based in Dublin and Letterkenny and is active nationally. It is a not-for-profit company and a registered charity.

Check out the new website at: www.bluedrum.ie

To contact Blue Drum directly, telephone 01-8771446 or email info@bluedrum.ie
Address: Blue Drum, The Outreach Centre, Clonsaugh Drive, Priorswood, Dublin 17.

Keep 'Arts in Mind' with five workshops

BLUE Drum are running an 'Arts in Mind' course in venues in Dublin, Donegal and Limerick over April and May.

Community workers and volunteers can choose to attend from one to five workshops, each of which is geared towards providing people with community-based arts training.

For example, foundation workshops will be provided in Drama, Dance/Movement, Visual Arts, Vocal and Percussion. Blue Drum say this is part of their "ongoing commitment to providing quality arts-based training" wherever they go.

As the organisers say, the workshops are: "practical and experiential in nature and focused on a range of community-based arts."

Blue Drum, through this work, aim to demonstrate practically how the arts can engage with communities and address a range of social issues. It should, it is hoped, lead at local level to new and exciting projects and/or campaigns being launched.

The workshops cost €15 per group, or €50 per group for five workshops. There is no charge for the unwaged.

- For a full list of dates, facilitators and venues, log onto the new website (www.bluedrum.ie) and download the brochure/application form by clicking the link. Or contact Gillian Keogan, Information Officer, Blue Drum on



Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism, John O'Donoghue, officially launched Blue Drum's website and workplan. He is pictured here looking at artwork produced by Mayo students under the guidance of Louisburgh CDP.

Global learning can effect local change

LOURDES Youth and Community Services (LYCS) has been using the approach of linking local with global for over 10 years. This allows learners, while studying the lives of distant communities, to think about their own lives and the pressures on their communities and the causes of exclusion locally as well as globally. The following are two examples demonstrating the LYCS experience.

E.G. I: Understanding debt, global and personal

In exploring the causes and consequences of debt, participants (who had felt that their indebtedness was down to their own bad money management) discovered that it is a global problem for individuals and countries. They concluded that the cycle of debt was rooted in inequality. They took action by getting in touch with the Money Advice and Budgeting Service and by participating in a Jubilee Ireland event held to highlight the issue of 'third-world' debt.

E.G. II: Empathised with immigrants

Meanwhile, women attending LYCS meetings began to analyse the arrival of ethnic minorities in their community. They soon drew parallels between the experiences of these groups and their own experiences of exclusion, isolation and discrimination as (a) women from the inner city, as (b) women living in poverty and as (c) lone parents. They developed a sense of solidarity with others and especially groups such as migrants, refugees and Travellers.

The local/global approach to group-work gives an understanding of the causes of problems and how to work out ways to deal with them. In practice this often means that people feel less isolated both as individuals and as members of a community and more able to take action on issues that affect their lives and the lives of others. This empowerment spurs people into action and lies at the heart of community development and of active citizenship, locally and globally.

Offering local groups a global view

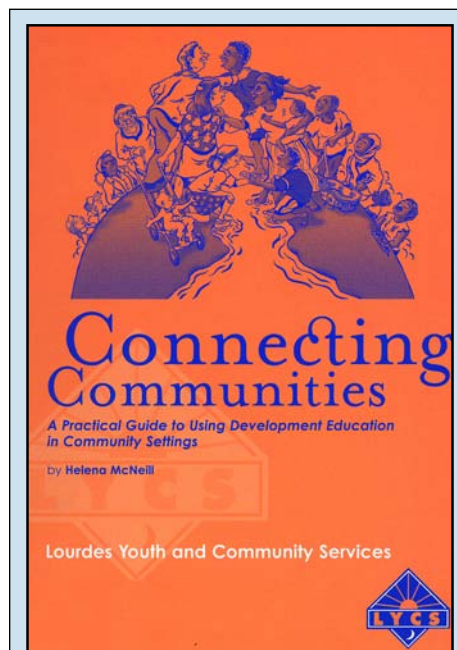
LOURDES Youth and Community Services (LYCS) CDP has expanded its development education project. A website will be up and running by late summer and a national development education worker has been employed to work with local projects around the country.

"She will help sell it nationally, promoting Development Education through the

Community Development Programme," said project co-ordinator, Sarah Kelleher, of her new work colleague Riona Rochford.

Riona and Helena McNeill are available to advise and support groups wanting to hold Development Education events.

Much of the financial backing for LYCS work comes through Development Co-operation Ireland.



For sale
priced €10

'CONNECTING Communities – A Practical Guide to Using Development Education in Community Settings' by Helena McNeill is available through LYCS, priced €10, plus €2.75 for p&p. For more information, contact Riona (national) or Helena (Dublin) at LYCS, Lower Sean McDermott St.,

Power lies

"When you really begin to challenge the status quo, you quickly learn where the power really lies."

- Kathleen Lynch, author, activist and Professor of Equality Studies, UCD, at the launch of LYCS's 'Connecting Communities' development education guidebook.

Three myths about development education

DEVELOPMENT Education is only about the 'Third World'. It is just one subject. And people who feel they have enough problems of their own may end up feeling powerless and fed-up after studying Development Education.

None of the above are true. Yet they are all common myths that development educator Helena McNeill is anxious to dispel:

- Development Education aims to enable people to see issues and experiences as shared. Though problems are not necessarily always shared to the same extent of difficulty, they are shared nonetheless.
- The aim is also to show that change is always possible. For

example, a group experiencing debt learnt about the Money Advice Budgetary Service locally, and joined in the global campaign to cancel 3rd-world debt. Said Helena: "The cycle of debt is rooted in inequality, more than in personal failings. The inequalities exist at local and global levels."

- Development Education is a celebratory thing too, believes Helena McNeill. "It is not only about injustice and problems. It also draws attention to diversity, common humanity, and the creativity and adaptability of the world's people," said Helena.

Development Education RESOURCE SECTION – INTRO:

'Connecting Communities', the 184-page guidebook launched recently contains ten workshops on issues such as housing, work, drugs, gender, debt etc., and it also contains background information, factsheets and handouts on the various topics.

The following is part of one of the workshops taken from 'Connecting Communities – A Practical Guide to Using Development Education in Community Settings' by Helena McNeill of the Lourdes Youth and Community Services CDP in Dublin: Workshop 8: People on the Move (Part 1).

Part 1 in summary

PART 1 in Summary from the 2-part workshop (Part 2 of the 'People on the Move' workshop focuses on the issue of forced migration, in particular the global refugee crisis). In the actual book, there is considerably more guidance provided, but here is a taster:

1. Introduction and opening exercise: what's in a name? (10 mins)
2. Brainstorm: migration (10 mins)
3. Music: Christy Moore, Missing You (10 mins)
Before playing the song give people paper and pen and ask them to listen closely to the words and to note what type of migration they think the song is referring to and to jot down or draw anything that strikes them. Play the song and ask participants for their responses.
4. Handout 17: songs our exiles sang (15 mins)
5. Migration and your community (20 mins)
6. Timeline exercise: migration from Ireland (25 mins)
7. Break (30 mins)
8. Timeline: migration into Ireland (15 mins)
How to create a timeline (see Facilitator Sheet 19 for sample):
 - You will need a very long sheet of paper or several sheets stuck together.
 - You can create the timeline horizontally or vertically. Simply draw a line and enter the dates where you want to begin and end.
 - There is no need to include all the data here. Include some dates and detail that will prompt your group, for example the Famine and the 1980s. The group can add details as they discuss times when people came or went from Ireland.
 - It would be useful to enter immigration and emigration on different sides of the line, or to colour code them.
 - Lay your timeline sheet on the floor or pin it along the wall. Ask people to mark times when Irish people left in big numbers.

The discussion should focus on the following:

 - What were the effects of emigration on



- communities in Ireland?
 - What might have been the effects on people who left/how do you think they felt in the new country (remember the song we listened to earlier)?
 - What did these migrants contribute to their adopted countries?
9. Input: recent immigration into Ireland (15 mins)
 10. Reasons for migration exercise (15 mins)
Photocopy, cut out and prepare a set of cards from Facilitator Sheet 21 for each small group beforehand. The aim of the activity is to examine the different reasons that cause people to migrate. Divide participants into groups of three and give each group a set of cards. Ask the groups to sort their cards into two categories: (a) forced and (b) voluntary migrants. Ask the groups to feedback their choices to the wider group.
 - Why did they designate people as forced or voluntary migrants?
 - How do they think people feel about being forced to migrate?

It would be useful to point out that according to the UN 175 million people each year migrate for economic reasons.
 11. Handout 18: reading from the Grapes of Wrath (10 mins)
 12. Closing round: 'one thing I love about my home country...' (5 mins)
- (Total time: 3 hours).**

Facilitator Sheet 21*: Reasons for migration - disucss

MUSTAFA is a doctor and worked in a hospital in Turkey. He was an activist who campaigned for greater rights for the Kurdish people, a minority group in Turkey. In 1994 he was arrested, imprisoned and tortured, but was later released. Fearing that this could happen again, he came to Ireland.

Siobhan is from Northern Ireland and is a Catholic. She married a Protestant and went to live with her new husband's parents in a part of Belfast where the population is mostly Protestant. Siobhan and her husband were sent threatening letters saying that Protestants and Catholics should not marry. They were continually harassed and in the end decided to move to London.

Donal is a carpenter. He left Ireland with his wife and children in 1991 after being unemployed for three years. The family travelled to the United States where they had friends who would help them find accommodation and work. In 2002, the family decided to move back to Ireland.

Sade is 13 years old and from Nigeria. Her father was an outspoken journalist who regularly criticised the military rulers. Her mother was shot dead in an attempt on her father's life outside their home. When this happened, Sade was sent with an escort to safety in London where a cousin had agreed to look after her.

Martin is a Traveller. He and his family are traders who move from town to town during the spring and summer selling carpets and tools. They used to trade horses but farmers no longer use horses so much so the business isn't there. The family usually stays in one place for the winter so that the children can go to school.

Maria is from the Philippines. She and her family used to live in the rich woodlands of Butuan where her husband worked for a logging company. After a few years the logging company had felled all the trees but had not replaced them. The family's livelihood was destroyed and they and hundreds of their neighbours moved to the capital Manila in search of work.

Aisling used to live in a small village in Co. Tipperary. Two years ago she moved to study in a college in Dublin.

Chol and a group of his friends fled after a group of Sudanese soldiers attacked his village. He and thousands of other boys walked hundreds of kilometers after they got separated from their families. Today Chol lives in a refugee camp in Kenya where over half of the 40,000 residents are children. Most of the children are Sudanese boys under the age of 15 who ran away to avoid being forced to become child soldiers in the decade long war.

* Adapted from 'Refugees: We left Because We Had To', Refugee Council, 1996.

So, where exactly does advocacy fit into community development?

By DECLAN WEIR

ADVOCACY is increasingly being put forward as a means to ensure that we live in a more equal and inclusive society. Undoubtedly, that's something that appeals to all of us involved in community development, but how can we make sure that we use advocacy properly, that we fit it effectively into what we do on a daily basis?

We need to focus on what advocacy is and what advocacy does:

Advocacy is a process of empowerment. It is a way of enabling those who may have difficulty speaking up for themselves to do so and thus can be key to involving people in decision-making. It means representing the view of a person or supporting them to exercise or secure their rights.

That is a definition we have used before in 'Changing Ireland' and it comes from 'The Jigsaw of Advocacy', a 2003 research report published by Comhairle. Much of Comhairle's work around advocacy to date has been through their funding and support for the work of Citizens Information Centres (CICs) around



the country. This advocacy work can vary from something as simple as making a phone call or writing a letter to giving people representation or assistance at a Social Welfare appeal.

Recently, there has been much progress in the development of advocacy outside the CICs. In 2004, Comhairle commissioned a study, 'Developing an Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities' that set out three strands:

- 1) A Personal Advocacy Service (PAS) where professional advocates deal with complex

issues around assessment of need, access to services and complaints.

- 2) Community and Voluntary Sector advocacy
- 3) A Community Visitors Programme focusing on individuals in residential settings

Government funding has already been allocated to develop the second strand, and in September of last year Comhairle published an 'Advocacy Project Resource Pack' to support the delivery of these services. A wealth of expertise exists in the community and voluntary sector, and Comhairle wants the pack to assist further by identifying good practice elements, casework models and possible job duties and person specifications. The pack also provides details of actual advocacy processes and presents guidelines in relation to Steering Committees and Human Resources.

Another Comhairle publication which aims to help organisations develop high quality, effective advocacy services is titled: 'Guiding Principles and Operating Procedures for the Delivery of Advocacy Services through Community and Voluntary Organisations'.

- For more information, check the website: www.comhairle.ie

From sceptic to fan of 'advocacy'

THE last time I wrote about advocacy ('Changing Ireland', Autumn 2004), it was as a member of a steering group working on the development of an advocacy course in the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

At that point I asked what exactly advocacy was, where it fits into community development, and even wondered if it was just another buzzword.

In September 2005, the Higher Certificate in Arts, Advocacy Studies Course welcomed its second intake of students along with the old hands who were embarking on their second year. I am still involved with the steering group, and in a somewhat upside down version of poacher turned gamekeeper, I now find myself among the students.

My chosen modules for first semester were Introduction to Advocacy and Equality, both of which complement each other well. The subject matter is firmly based in reality - everything in the modules could be connected back to my everyday work in the CIC, and all the theories and concepts have a direct and undeniable bearing on the lives of people in 21st century Ireland.

The idea of equality - and the various degrees of equality and inequality are considered in accessible language, so it is easy to see how they affect those involved in community development.

SOCIAL SYSTEMS ENCOURAGE INEQUALITIES

Examples of inequalities facing older people, people with disabilities, migrant workers, families in financial difficulty, early school leavers and countless other groups are used to

By DECLAN WEIR

explain how social systems encourage inequalities. These inequalities affect us politically, economically, culturally, across all the dimensions of our lives.

It is not always the most cheerful of subject matters, but if we do not learn to recognise inequality, then we stand even less of a chance of being able to deal with it.

The advocacy module reveals much fascinating information. One thing I have learned is that, as advocates we can actually do more harm than good if we are not properly informed about what we are doing and the consequences of our actions as advocates. The desire to help and do good is noble, but it must be backed up with knowledge, training and expertise.

We're now into the second semester, and I've taken on another two modules, the Principles of Law and Disability Studies to add to the first semester's tally.

Disability studies offers an in-depth look at disability issues today, and considers the social

and medical models of disability as well as providing an historical perspective.

As part of the Law Module, we had to visit the Circuit Court to observe a civil case. It was like entering a different world or time, with wig and gown-clad barristers using their knowledge and experience to tweak things in their client's favour. Looming large over all the proceedings was the figure of the judge, a man who made sure that, on the day, common sense prevailed.

Even if you're not studying law, a visit to the Circuit Court provides a valuable insight into what goes on in the courtroom, and, for me anyway, helped to remove a lot of the mystery normally attached to such proceedings.

As for the big questions I asked back in '04, regarding advocacy's relevance:

Advocacy is all about empowerment, leading us to the betterment of Irish society as a whole; it fits into community development like a hand in a glove; and it is much, much more than just a buzzword.

- For further information, contact: Department of Humanities, Institute of Technology, Ballinode, Sligo. Website www.itsligo.ie/advocacy



Advocacy Studies Course participants in Sligo.

The facts of the case:

IN October 2004, John Ward a 42-year-old man, father of 11 and Traveller, was beaten 20 times and shot twice resulting in his death. Pádraig Nally, a 61-year-old farmer from Mayo, was tried for his murder and found guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter. On 11th November 2005, he was sentenced to six years in prison.

No immunity for CDPs

TERRY Battles, information officer with Pavee Point remarked: "Members of CDPs are not immune to these negative influences and on-going work is required to ensure a Traveller perspective is articulated and understood both within and outside the CDP programme."

NCCRI's media review

A MEDIA Review of the Pádraig Nally case was also produced by Fiona McGaughey, who is a Policy Officer with the National Consultative Committee on Racism in Ireland (NCCRI). The full-length version of her article appeared in the NCCRI's December 2005 issue of Spectrum magazine (available online at: www.nccri.ie).

Media comment on the case:

"Justice RIP – Outrage as terrified farmer gets 6yrs for killing Traveller burglar."

- the front page of the Daily Mirror after the six-year sentence was handed down.

"A massive 83% of those who responded believed that Mayo farmer Pádraig Nally should not have been jailed for killing Traveller John 'Frog' Ward."

- according to an Irish Examiner poll

"The Nally case has turned an issue on its head - the farmer who is still alive rather than the Traveller who is dead is regarded as the victim".

- Liam Collins, The Sunday Independent



Nally-case: racist fallout still a concern

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

PAVEE Point remains "concerned at the issues arising in the fallout from the Pádraig Nally case and their adverse effect on Travellers in Irish society."

Despite it being some months since a verdict was reached in the trial, Pavee say, "There is no getting away from the fact that the case has contributed in a significant way to the continued demonisation of Travellers in Ireland in general and in rural Ireland in particular."

Referring to the racist discourse whereby politicians "equated Travellers with crime", the agency said this (combined with other anti-Traveller reaction to the deadly attack and subsequent trial) "exposed and exacerbated the fault-line that exists in relations between the Traveller and settled communities."

Martin Collins, assistant director of Pavee Point, said: "Traveller organisations acknowledge and have consistently challenged anti-social and criminal behaviour by Travellers and will continue to do so."

Pavee Point, a Specialist Support Agency to the Community Development Programme, drew up a position paper on the matter and identified the following as issues:

1. The disturbing nature of the homicide of John Ward

Law lecturer, Conor Hanly of NUI Galway, said that, "Pádraig Nally committed a homicide, not because he did not have the right to defend himself or his home, but because he employed lethal force when John Ward no longer posed a threat."

He said Pádraig Nally was fortunate to avoid a murder sentence.

2. Unanswered questions about the court proceedings

Pavee found there were a number of worrying aspects in terms of the court proceedings. For example, why was the case the first trial of its kind to be held in Mayo in a hundred years, particularly when there was strong local support for Pádraig Nally?

3. The disturbing initial response to Pádraig Nally's conviction

The response to the conviction for

manslaughter from Pádraig Nally's supporters, some sections of the media and from some politicians was disturbing. It is notable to recall that, at the time of the court verdict, in November, a call was made for a public anti-Traveller rally.

"It is to the credit of the GAA and the Irish Farmers Association that they did not provide official support for the proposed rally," remarked Pavee.

The rally was eventually called off.

The agency criticized politicians, in particular, Senator Jim Higgins of Fine Gael who made what it describes as "inflammatory statements about Travellers and their responsibility for rural crime." It said the lack of overall political leadership in challenging the anti-Traveller discourse is both worrying and disappointing.

Pavee abhorred the work of one paper in particular – the Daily Mirror which ran a campaign for the release of Pádraig Nally.

There was no effort of impartiality from this paper which **has a long track record of printing stories that label minority ethnic groups as criminals,** it remarked.

Other newspapers provided a balanced picture of the case, including said a surprised Pavee Point, the Sunday Independent.

4. The demonisation of Travellers

The scapegoating of Travellers for all rural crime will no doubt remain in the minds of many as a consequence of this case. Other cases where Travellers come before the law will likely be seized upon as further proof of this hypothesis.

Yet, as **Criminologist Dr. Paul O'Mahony has pointed out, the statistics show that there has been no massive increase in crime in the Irish Republic in the last twenty years.**

Experience from Ireland and elsewhere shows that the incessant labelling and demonisation of a vulnerable minority contributes to the conditions where attacks and discrimination of that community becomes more accepted and more possible.

In conclusion, Pavee Point highlighted the need to build greater relations between the Traveller and settled communities and said it is "interested in creating a just society for all citizens of Ireland but we cannot do this alone."

This article is condensed - for the full length position paper, contact Pavee Point directly.

Online: 'Nally is the victim'

THE following was typical of the viewpoint expressed by 'pro-Nally' people:

"I think Pádraig Nally is the victim of the system, How can a judge put an innocent man behind bars for protecting himself. Mr

Ward broke into his home in the middle of the night 'hardly for tea and a chat.'"

- A comment on the indymedia.ie public discussion board from P Jones, Tues, Nov 22nd, 2005.



Anyone for a cold shower outdoors?

STEPHANIE LEAMY reports*

ST. MARGARET'S Traveller Community Association (SMTCA) held an open forum meeting in St. Margaret's Park Halting site on March 22nd. The aim was to raise awareness about the dire accommodation situation facing Travellers in Ballymun.

February 2006 saw 15 families left for 10 days without electricity in freezing conditions.

Among the 100-strong attendance were residents, community groups, health workers, and local politicians including Pat Carey, T.D., who has been very supportive of the Traveller community.

There are a few problems on the site, such as the landlord is not supplying enough electricity. As a result, 'normal' activities such as washing have become a challenge. There are showers, but they are outdoors and everyone on the site uses them.

"They are broken - not physically - just the water is not coming out of them and when it does come out, it comes out cold or just in drips and draps," explained Siobhan Curran, Accommodation Worker with SMTCA. She supports the Travellers 100% all the way.

Siobhan wants to see an improvement in the accommodation standards and the electricity supply.

"I want to make the site easier to live on," she said.

Asked why the Travellers do not buy their own site or move into houses if they are unhappy living on the current site, she replied: "There are a few families moving into houses but some of them have their

names down for local authority housing but it's going very slowly. Some Travellers prefer to stay on the site because it's their culture."

"If they want to buy land for themselves, they would have to get planning permission and that takes awhile. They can't easily afford to buy land of their own.

"A few of the Travellers have left the site and left Dublin but the ones that are still there have to put up with the issues on the site. There is no safe play area for the children because there is a busy road and an industrial warehouse near their living space," she added.

St. Margaret's Halting Site is a 30 bay halting site built in 1997. It is home to 63 families. While 20 families are moving into standard housing in the next few months, the site will still remain overcrowded.

At the open forum meeting, a number of suggestions for action were agreed. Dublin City Council were urged to engage with the residents as a matter of urgency. It was suggested that generators be provided until the electricity problem is overcome.

Besides the issues facing the community, there have been notable local achievements such as with the men's group whose members are learning how to drive lorries. The St. Margaret's CDP also run a healthcare project and the women involved were recently presented with certificates for their work.

Approximately ten CDPs in the Programme belong to local Traveller communities. For these CDPs, particularly because of the failure by local authorities to provide proper halting sites and

housing as legally required, the fight for accommodation takes up a lot of project time and resources.

- **For more information, contact:**
St. Margaret's Traveller Community Association, St. Margaret's Road, Dublin 11. Tel. 01-8622144.
Fax: 01-8623639.
E-mail: saintmargarets@eircom.net
* *Stephanie Leamy was on work placement with 'Changing Ireland'.*



'Father's embrace'

Pavee Point now runs an annual National Traveller Photo Competition. In the latest round of awards, second prize went to Julien Behal for a photograph titled 'Father's Embrace' (pictured here). The winner of first prize was Jacki Hehir. Pavee Point is one of the four Specialist Support Agencies working with the Community Development Programme.