

## Put yourself in their shoes!

- 'Hannah Paar' immigration victims remembered  
138 years on



### INSIDE

- Myths about old age
- Ballymun conference
- Dream! Dare! Do!
- Mayo islands get €12m



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



# Thousands drown on the way to work

OUR front cover features children from King's Island in Limerick acting the part of passengers from the Norwegian emigrant ship, 'Hannah Paar'.

It's a story that Ken Loach would enjoy turning into a film in that it touches on many issues of relevance today, even though it concerns events of 138 years ago: immigration, poverty, community, discrimination.

It is also striking that the play was produced by a CDP and a professional theatre company – with local children effectively writing the play. They were guided in their acting workshops by local volunteers and by drama professionals. Remarkable!

The greatest fear for every passenger on the 'Hannah Paar' was of course that they would drown.

Their ship nearly went down in a mid-Atlantic storm, but managed to limp to safety in Ireland.

Today, the Mediterranean is the new 'Atlantic' for emigrants who are leaving Africa weekly by the thousands in an effort to sneak into 'Fortress Europe'. Some studies say up to 40% of aspiring emigrants drown or die in the Sahara.

The first week of July was 'normal': 99 drowned in three separate sinkings; one was shot dead trying to climb a barrier into EU territory; two died from falls from the same fence.

These tragedies don't make 'the news' and where does that leave us? With lessons to learn from the 'Hannah Paar' story.

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## DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author concerned. They do not, by any means, necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, the editorial team, the management committee of the Community Development Network, Moyross, Ltd., or the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

**Cover photo:** Deirdre Power

Children in the graveyard wearing costumes made by local volunteers who are members of St. Mary's CDPs women's group: Front: Shauna Cahill, Kayleigh Cahill, Kelly O'Donoghue, Tara Henkenbourg. Back: Orla Wallace, Dawn Ryan and Laura Ryan.



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# 'Island' children step into shoes of 19th century immigrants

By ALLEN MEAGHER

A DEEP understanding of immigration has been forged among local children and their families by St. Mary's CDP in Limerick working with a local theatre company. Island Theatre's headquarters happens to be located in an old church and graveyard and when it was found that immigrant children were buried in the cemetery, local children were called in to re-enact their lives:

Imagine being an emigrant child from Norway, docked for two months in Limerick city because your ship needs repairs after being hit by a mid-Atlantic storm. The year is 1868. All of you emigrants come from the same area in Norway and know each other well. The city is strange and new and the first time any of you see a banana is in Limerick.

During your stay in Ireland, two of the children among you die, though you manage to continue the voyage after burying your friends and settle successfully in the 'new' land of America.

Every Monday night for three months, 16 local children from modern times imagined

themselves in the Norwegians' shoes and acted out how they thought it might have been for the kids who 138 years ago lived and played briefly where they live and play today.

Spearheaded by volunteers from St. Mary's CDP Women's Group and staff from Island Theatre Company, the historical re-enactment of the visit by the crew and passengers of the 'Hannah Parr' has become an international success.

In the USA, descendants of those who survived the voyage emailed the group every piece of historical detail they knew, while the Norwegian Ambassador attended in June to officially open an exhibition of photographs of the children in the play. Mayor of Limerick, Diarmuid Scully, also officiated at the opening.

The children involved in the drama classes started off with poor listening skills but could now elbow a few characters out of 'Fair City' if they tried. At the same time, members of the Women's Group grew so interested and adept at drama work that they have – in a voluntary capacity – gone on to work backstage with other theatre groups in the city.

And as drama tutor, Niamh Bowen, pointed

out, the project also added to the area's oral history:

"There are the 16 children and their families and extended families who now know all about the Hannah Parr and the emigrant children buried in the graveyard. These people are up and down this road every day and they will point to the graveyard and tell the story to others, so it will be passed down as a piece of oral history."

The play was largely set in St. Munchin's Cemetery on King's Island which is next to St. Mary's Park, a local authority housing estate which was built beside the cemetery nearly a century after the 'Hannah-Paar' departed.

## First immigrants

Mayor of Limerick, Diarmuid Scully, said: "We are commemorating some of the first immigrants to come to Limerick, albeit without intending to. There are a lot of new people coming now, many from eastern Europe, so it is interesting to look back at the inter-culturalism of a previous time."



Rehearsals going on inside the Church: Kayleigh Cahill, Orla Wallace, Donna-Marie O'Donnell, Tara Henkenbourg and Kelly O'Donoghue.

## Catholics protested at 'Hannah Paar' funerals

THE issues of immigration, inter-culturalism and discrimination were never discussed openly between the young drama students and the adult tutor and facilitators during the 'Hannah Paar' workshops. But since the play was about foreigners of a Protestant denomination seeking refuge in Limerick, the children learnt more than they may realise.

"We never mentioned the word racism," said Joan Keehan of St. Mary's CDP. "The attitude towards people coming into the city was raised only in a subtle way. But the children did learn from their drama and eventually, in their play, they welcomed the people that came on the ship."

The historical truth, as Joan discovered, is harsh however.

"I read the old Limerick Journal article about their experience and they were rejected, particularly by the Catholics of Limerick. There were protests by them outside the cemetery when the burials took place," said Joan.

She said it struck a cord with her because, when she was seven, she was barred by the Catholic church from attending her grandmother's funeral on the excuse that she came from a mixed-religious family background.

# Historical re-enactment: The CDP's experience

By JOAN KEEHAN

**St. Mary's Local Arts Group was set up in 1996. It is a sub-group of St Mary's Community Development Project and aims to get people in the area involved in community arts.**

Previous projects include the Community Pride Festival marking the millennium, St. Patrick's Day Parade, christmas card competitions, art, drama and pottery workshops, an exhibition of old and new photographs of St Mary's Parish, and a Family Arts Day.

As part of developing the 2005/07 workplan, one of the main aims was to initiate a programme with youth to promote positive self-esteem using the medium of art.

In 2005 the group linked with Island Theatre Company and made an application for funding to the Arts Council for a drama project, the application was successful and thus the 'Hannah-Parr' project was born.

*The specific aims of this project were to*

- Introduce young people to drama with a view to confidence building and skills development.
- Use dramatic techniques to explore community issues.
- Engender a sense of community pride.
- Teach drama facilitation skills to community activists.

The project started in October 2005 and was based at Island Theatre Company with sessions held every Monday evening. The Drama Tutor was Niamh Bowen and four women from St. Mary's Women's Group (Carmel Duggan, Joan Keehan, Sylvia Gibbons and Cora Boland) came in to train as drama facilitators. The women trainees went on to introduce and facilitate drama exercises with the young people, putting at least a hundred volunteer hours into the project.

A photographer Deirdre Power took photos of all the sessions and

an exhibition was opened in the Belltable Arts Centre in the heart of Limerick city by the Norwegian Ambassador on June 20th.

Children aged between 10 and 12 were selected from the local youth clubs, home work clubs and from the local schools.

The main focus of the sessions with the young people were in the development of skills in the following areas: concentration, listening skills, role play, improvisation, mime and movement and character development.

The children also undertook classes on dance and movement with Helena Enright as tutor.

The performance of 'The Hannah Parr' took place in St Mary's Girls School on April 21st and a large number attended and enjoyed the performance.

There was very good media coverage for both the play and exhibition.

Carmel Duggan, a lifelong resident of St. Mary's Park and a member of the local women's group, said the children who took part were "a credit to their parents".

Carmel was one of four local women who became drama-class facilitators and worked closely with the children in putting on the play.

For more information, contact: St. Mary's CDP, Verdant Crescent, St. Mary's Park, King's Island, Limerick. Tel. 061-411076. Email: smaryscdp@eircom.net

**\* Joan Keehan is a part-time community development worker with St. Mary's CDP.**



## Your community *has* stories to tell!

NIAMH Bowen of Island Theatre hopes to do something similar to the Hannah Parr project again and is open to suggestions from community groups in the mid-west and a little beyond who have an idea for an historical re-enactment:

Part of the aim was to improve the area's reputation and all the press we got - through PR undertaken by us in Island Theatre and by the CDP - was positive. There was never a mention of the area being disadvantaged.

"I found it great working with the CDP's women's group, they took on loads of work and did all the costuming. They have gone on now to work with other theatre groups - in a voluntary capacity - doing costumes and backstage work. They gained transferable skills during the 'Hannah Parr' project.

"It's very easy to devise a play around something that happened in your area," added Niamh who is awaiting your community group's suggestions.

Contact Niamh Bowen at: Island Theatre Company, Church Street, Kings Island, Limerick. Tel: 061-410433 Fax: 061-400997. E-mail: niamh.bowen@gmail.com Website: www.islandtheatrecompany.ie



*Niamh Bowen: open to suggestions.*





# Spiritual quality to 'Hannah-Parr project

**ORIGINALLY, drama tutor Niamh Bowen was going to get the children to re-enact the funeral around the graves, but this proved impossible. Headstones were not normally erected until a year after burial and since everyone belonging to the deceased children had travelled onto America after the two-month stay in Limerick, the graves went unmarked.**

So the funeral was recreated inside the church (Island Theatre's HQ) where the indoor temperatures are often no different to outside.

"It's so cold here in winter, I usually wear a coat, scarf and gloves to rehearsals," remarked Niamh.

At least the children did not have to imagine the cold, church environment when Niamh asked them to role-play, saying: "Imagine a child is just after dying and you are there preparing for the funeral."

After three months of one-night-a-week-training, the children were able to act scenes out on the spot and Niamh recorded their conversation and the scenes they devised.

"There was a real spiritual quality to the project. Because the



graves are unmarked, the play became a remembrance for the Norwegian children, it became a commemoration of their lives," said the drama tutor.

The 'Hannah-Paar' story first came to Niamh's attention when Clair O'Haugen, aged 70, from Minnesota, USA, wrote an article in the Limerick Journal. So she emailed him.

"His great-granduncle was on the ship. Amazingly, he is also a theatre director and said to me, 'I've often thought this story should be made into a play'. Over the months that followed, we exchanged 400 emails. So the play includes a lot of indepth historic facts.

"The captain's grand-daughter also got in contact with us, as did the grandson of the guy who owned the land the people emigrated from. They are very grateful to the people of Limerick and know they wouldn't be where they are today if their predecessors hadn't made it. They sent MP3 recordings of their recollections and I played these for the children. One descendant, a woman, said the first time her great-grandmother ever saw a banana was in Limerick. So we recreated that scene at a garden party - the children devised that scene too."

Using such historical records, the children recreated the Norwegians' plight in the play they devised during their drama classes.

## Discipline issue disappeared over time

**THE Island Theatre and St. Mary's CDP Women's Group carried out evaluation as the drama-project developed.**

"There were a lot of discipline issues at the beginning - sometimes we felt we were spending 80% of our time on discipline - most of the children weren't able to stand in a circle for more than two minutes and listen to instructions," said Niamh Bowen.

"As time went on, that stopped, particularly after the three-week break for Christmas, when I think they got bored waiting to start again and began to appreciate what they were doing. They came back full of enthusiasm, they would be waiting for me at half-six when they knew the class wasn't to start until seven. Their listening skills improved 100% and their ability to learn and understand increased.

"Now, the parents keep asking 'How do we keep this going? Where do we apply for funding?' All the parents want their children to continue with the drama work," added Niamh.

## Cannibal buried in Limerick

**A SIGN of how desperate life was for sailors in the 18th century is the fact that cannibalism was not unknown.**

"A cannibal is buried here," said Niamh Bowen of Island Theatre, who has been researching burials in St. Munchin's Cemetery, Limerick.

"He is the captain of a ship that ran out of food. When that happened, he and the crew ate the galley-boy, the lowliest of the ship's crew."

Not so nice having a cannibal for a neighbour, but there is relief in knowing he is long dead!

## Luckier than others

NORWEGIAN Ambassador, Tuls Hanevold, said of emigration: "The reason people emigrated from Norway in the 1800s were the same as in Ireland - poverty and unemployment. Crossing the Atlantic then, many ships never reached their destination. The 'Hannah Paar' was lucky it was able to make it back to Limerick."

He thanked the local community and theatre group for remembering the emigrants, particularly the children who died.

## Collaboration

**ALICE Kennelly, chief executive of Island Theatre Company commented, "The artistic collaboration between ourselves and our neighbours in St Mary's Local Arts Group which is a sub group of St Mary's Community Development Project, has been truly productive and rewarding for all involved."**

## Age & Opportunity

ALL of Age & Opportunity's work is designed to challenge negative attitudes to ageing and older people. They run, in conjunction with UCD, for example, a Certificate Course in Ageing and Equality.

Age & Opportunity is a national agency and delivers age equality training to a range of organisations and offers age equality workshops, entitled AgeWise - age, equality and you, and other training programmes.

For more information, contact Age & Opportunity at: Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9, Ireland. Tel. 01-805 7709. Fax: 01-8535117. E-mail: [info@olderinireland.ie](mailto:info@olderinireland.ie)  
Web site: [www.olderinireland.ie](http://www.olderinireland.ie)

## Decentralisation of the Community Development Unit

AS part of the Government's Decentralisation Programme, the Community Development Unit of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs are to relocate to Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo with effect from August 14th.

As readers will be aware there have been some changes to the personnel in the unit over the last few months. The following are details of the current staff members who are due to relocate to Tubbercurry. The current telephone numbers and address for the unit will remain in use up until August 11th and projects will be notified of new telephone and postal details prior to the move to Tubbercurry.

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Facilitators Paul Maher, Ailis Redmond and Jack Quinn from Age & Opportunity based in Dublin 9 who delivered the Age Wise Workshop, at The White House Ballinlough, on April 28th. They are pictured with NWRCDDP co-ordinator, Patricia Madden (second from left).

# Myth-defying workshops in Roscommon

**NORTH West Roscommon CDP have shocked people in the local community – older people – who mistakenly believed that up to 80% of older people in Ireland are destined to end up in nursing homes and that nearly as many become senile.**

In conjunction with Age & Opportunity, the project held an Age Equality Workshop in the White House Hotel, Ballinlough, on Friday, April 28th. It was the second of two workshops, the first of which was held in Ballaghaderreen in December.

The workshops challenged myths and stereotypes about ageing and older people. Part of the problem is that older people themselves believe in the myths.

In the workshops, the participants were asked, for example:

- What percentage of Irish people over-65 live in residential care? Some people present thought it could be as many as 80%. In fact, it's 5%.
- What percentage of older people suffer from dementia and senility? "People in our workshops rated it from 30%-70%. They were absolutely shocked at the truth. It's just 5%," said Patricia Madden, North West Roscommon CDP Co-ordinator.

"It's in our workplan to work with the elderly. People have the feeling that once you hit over-65, it's all over," she continued. "One man in our group got very upset when he passed his 65th birthday and was guided at a GAA match towards an 'OAP' stile. He didn't think of himself as 'old-

aged'. By going through the stile, people also knew his age. Similarly, why does the 'OAP' train ticket have to be a different colour?"

Patricia said the workshops were designed to identify instances of discrimination against older people. The course also gave an insight into understanding the personal, cultural and structural effects of ageism.

Take discrimination in the travel industry for example. A woman in one of the Roscommon workshops aged 72 was barred from going to the USA with her daughter for a holiday. The insurance companies were unwilling to provide her with cover because she was over-70. If you do find travel insurance, it is usually double the price for older people.

As Patricia remarked, "You can lose your baggage or miss your plane at any age!"

All who participated in both workshops found them to be enjoyable and enlightening. North West Roscommon CDP with Age and Opportunity hope to do more workshops at a later date.

And the CDP may run similar workshops for young people in our community, to challenge the myths and stereotypes about them.

• For further information from the CDP, contact:

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# Queues a healthy sign outside South-West Wexford CDP

STAFF and volunteers at South West Wexford CDP (SWWCDP) were taken-aback, though thrilled, to see long queues of women form - 450 women in all - outside their Ramsgrange Centre for a health information evening.

The Womens Health Kicks '06 event took place on Tuesday evening, May 9th, and the queues began at 6.30pm (the event was scheduled to begin at 7pm) much to the surprise of staff of the centre and up to forty volunteers who arrived to help out on the night. The CDP had been prepared for a crowd but described the level of interest as "tremendous".

The aim was to run a free evening promoting health awareness and healthy living for women of all ages in the South West Wexford Area.

"It was massive," said project co-ordinator, Sharon Kennedy. She had facilitated meetings of the CDP's women's group who organised the event.

Health activity checks were conducted and information and demonstrations held to raise awareness. The majority of women - their average age was 52 - came from Campile/Ramsgrange area but also as far afield as Foulksmills and Clongeen, most of whom heard about the event through friends, leaflets and the local newspapers.

On the day, the CDP project hosted The Marie Keating Foundation Mobile Cancer Information Unit which was parked in the grounds of the Ramsgrange Centre, and provided cancer information and awareness to up to sixty women.

A very popular activity on the evening were the cholesterol, blood checks and blood pressure health checks which were carried out by registered nurses. Fitness Instructor Rosemarie Dillon and her team carried out fitness tests on hundreds of women for Cardio-respiratory endurance, flexibility,



450 women attended a health information meeting run by the South-West Wexford CDP.

local muscle endurance, and body composition.

Well-known guest speakers on the evening included, Marie Ryan, Heath Promotion adviser from the Irish Cancer Society and Consultant physician Dr. Paddy McKiernan, who with his team of nurse specialists discussed Heart Health Advice to a very packed audience in the centre.

Ann Scanlon from The Irish Heart Foundation was also on hand for advice and information on healthy eating and physical activity as it relates to Heart Disease. Information was also available on smoking cessation and family planning advice.

Highlights of the evening included the four cookery demonstrations from celebrity chef Kevin Dundon of Dunbrody Country House Hotel who demonstrated modern contemporary cooking with a healthy flair.

In the refreshments room, staff from Wallaces Supervalu were kept very busy doing demonstrations and providing recipes for healthy and delicious smoothies and juices.

An introduction to complimentary therapies, as part of a healthy lifestyle was very well received from the Claire Auld Skincare and Wellness Centre and local beautician Ruth Lacey. Representatives for Sam McCauleys Chemist, and Catherine Erskine, a beauty consultant, provided advice and demonstrations on skin care.

At the end of the evening each participant was asked to complete a simple evaluation of the event to inform any future health evenings for the area.

"The staff and management of the CDP and all the volunteers involved in the considerable work put into organising this event hope that the evening and the programme will work to encourage all who attended to make some small steps to a healthier and happier well-being," said project co-ordinator Sharon Kennedy afterwards.

## Community arts kicks health

THE Womens Health Kicks '06 event was organized by the TATE (Taking Action Together Everyone) sub-group of SWWCDP. This group is the women's sub-group within the management structure of SWWCDP and consists of voluntary members of the PATTAR (Parents and Tiny Tots at Ramsgrange) group, the Shelbourne Women's group and the True Teens Group.

The event was funded through the Women's Health Seminars Initiative of the South East Health Service Executive.

The idea for the event came from members involvement in a creative arts and health project, run in conjunction with Blue Drum Arts support agency and the Irish Heart Foundation in 2004.

For more information, contact:  
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Website: [www.ramsgrangeproject.com](http://www.ramsgrangeproject.com) (the website has just been newly revamped).



Health checks can save lives.

## 14 CDPs to get more workers

-Minister boosts  
Programme with  
extra €250,000

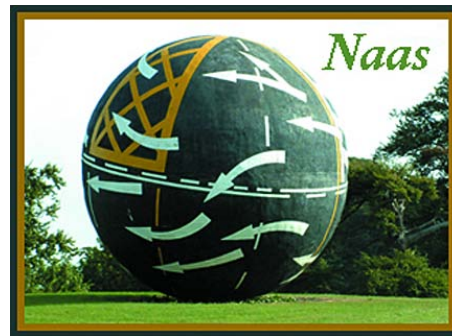
THE Community Development Programme recently received a major boost when Minister of State, Noel Ahern, approved the recruitment of additional staff for 14 CDPs throughout the country. The posts include those of Co-ordinator, Development worker and Administrator and many will be part-time although in some cases the funding allocated will allow projects to increase the hours of staff currently employed. The announcement will result in an increased investment to the Programme in the order of €250,000 per annum.

*The projects to benefit from the additional investment are:*

- Cúl le Chéile, Portarlinton, Co. Laois
- Edenderry CDP, Co. Offaly
- North West Roscommon CDP
- National Traveller Womens Forum, Galway City
- North West Kildare CDP
- The Bridge CDP, Newbridge, Co. Kildare
- Clare Women's Network
- Cork Social and Health Education Project
- East Clare CDP
- The Glen CDP, Cork city
- West Limerick CDP
- Dolphin House CDP, Dublin 8
- Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG), Dublin 18
- Southside Womens Action Network (SWAN), Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin

The funding will be released to projects as soon as the additional staff are recruited. The extra workers will facilitate the projects to expand their operations and/or to improve the level of service currently available to the communities within their catchment areas.

# New Kildare CDP has 1992 roots



*On April 26th, Minister of State, Noel Ahern, officially launched North West Kildare CDP's three-year workplan. The project – running on a shoestring since it was started up by volunteers in 1992 - is one of the newest CDPs to join the Community Development Programme.*

"The inclusion in the Community Development Programme should enable the project to continue to grow in stature into the future," said Minister Ahern.

Minister Ahern congratulated everyone involved and said their dedication was "particularly evident given that the project has been without formal funding for a number of years, yet has managed to prevail."

North West Kildare CDP's origins stretch back to 1992 when the Bog of Allen Action Group was founded to tackle spreading unemployment due to the closure of traditional employers such as Bord na Mona and the ESB. It survived from then until now without any core or long-term funding, but with support from local organisations such as Teagasc, the Robertstown Development Association and Kildare County Council.

In October, 2005, the Chairperson, Fearga Kenny, signed the contract for their project to become a CDP.

Over the years, communities and individuals turned to the project as a source of information and practical help on many different issues from insurance for community groups, to good practice in running events though to recommending and assisting with funding applications.

In addition, North West Kildare was proactive, keeping in touch with community needs and developing and running programmes to meet those needs.

From January 2005 North West Kildare carried out needs-analysis consultation meetings throughout the north-west area of County Kildare and the findings were included in their three-year workplan which was submitted to the Department for approval in September.

Various people and groups helped North West Kildare CDP become a reality, including: the voluntary management members; local community groups who participated in the Needs Analysis Consultations; and staff from Framework Support Agency.

"North West Kildare CDP, was born out of the belief that local communities networking together and supporting each other can achieve more," said the chairperson.

The Minister, during his visit, added that he was very pleased to see the level of involvement of local people in the project.

"Community development is a long-term process. It requires discipline to keep the process and enthusiasm going and there are no quick-fixes," he added.

• **For more information, contact:**  
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# Waterford minority say 'media bias' effects children the most

ALLEN MEAGHER reports

The media and the Traveller community in Waterford are not seeing eye-to-eye. Waterford Travellers CDP recently condemned the media for biased coverage while a local radio station claimed that spokespersons from the local Traveller community are so hard to find that they have to go to Dublin to get people to come on air.

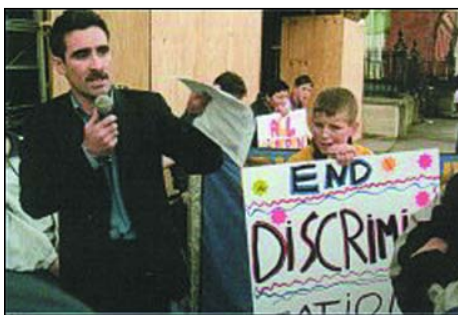
**IN May, there was extensive local media coverage of fighting at a halting site in the Ballybeg estate of Waterford city and, one week later, of misbehaviour by children at a city church ceremony.**

Waterford Traveller CDP, while condemning the violence at the halting site, said the coverage was biased and they condemned "the practice of collective blame" which only led to inciting hatred. They claimed the coverage was "sometimes racist" and said they were concerned about how it would effect children.

Though the May 12th fighting at the halting site led to the call-out of many Gardai, the second incident amounted to little more than (reported the Waterford News and Star) children using "foul language" and spilling coca-cola as they played in the church aisles. A child was also reported "hanging over the gallery balcony."

CDP joint-co-ordinator Anna Moore told 'Changing Ireland' that the media gave an exaggerated impression of what happened in the church.

Commenting on radio coverage, Waterford Local Radio (WLR) presenter Billy McCarthy said there was no way the station allowed racist views to be aired: "I don't



*Martin Collins, Pavee Point spokesperson.*

judge people by colour, class or sexual orientation, but by their behaviour. I would not tolerate racism on air."

In response to media coverage of the fighting at the site, the CDP worked to highlight "the serious negative impact that the media response to the Kilbarry Site case has had on the Waterford Traveller community."

The project issued a statement which said: "The Waterford Traveller CDP strongly condemns antisocial and criminal behaviour including the incident that happened on Tuesday, May 9th (the fighting at the halting site).

"However Waterford Travellers in general and particularly those living on Kilbarry Site have been put on trial by the media. The majority of Traveller families on the site had no part in the incident. In fact they were terrified and traumatised by the event.

"The coverage by the media has led to fears about the impact that this biased, and sometimes racist, portrayal of Waterford Travellers will have on their lives. The Waterford Traveller CDP have found that the majority of families on the site like the rest of society are law abiding and have a daily struggle to live in third world conditions.

"Local Travellers are concerned that the biased coverage will further add to their struggle to access proper living conditions, education and equality of opportunity. Local Travellers including many of the Kilbarry site residents are working hard in partnership with the settled community and statutory agencies to combat poverty and work towards integration with society.

"The Waterford Traveller CDP is particularly concerned as to how this recent media negativity will impact on Traveller children in schools. The practice of collective blame and calls for collective punishment is unjust and incites hatred.

"In addition Waterford City Council – both officials and politicians – need to show real leadership in their commitments to providing proper accommodation in meaningful consultation with the local Traveller community.

"The disgraceful living conditions in Kilbarry site contribute to bad health, depression and further marginalisation of Traveller residents living there.

"Many Travellers are involved in training, further education and are represented on several committees. We are living in a multi-cultural society. Waterford Travellers have a huge contribution to make towards this given equal opportunity, and solidarity of the settled community."

The statement from WTCDP concluded by asking the media to apply a balanced, informed and fair approach when reporting such incidents.

Commenting one month on, Anna said: "We issued that press release and it was published and we refused to be drawn further on the matter."

On that point, WLR were critical when 'Changing Ireland' discussed the issue with a station representative. Asked why the station did not report on the fact that people in Waterford are living in "third-world conditions" (as Waterford Travellers CDP describe it) and why the city council did not collect rubbish at Kilbarry site for four months, Billy McCarthy said: "How can we cover an issue without a spokesperson from the Travelling community?"

"As a media organisation, we find it difficult to get any Traveller spokesperson to come on air. They hide behind their press statements and, as you know, live radio needs voices. The Broadcasting Commission of Ireland requires us to provide balance in our coverage and that is very hard to do when there is no local spokesperson. So, we have no option but to get someone from Pavee Point in Dublin who are very good, but they are not local," said Billy.

"I am the most anti-racist person working in radio in Ireland today," he continued, adding that he would prefer go to his grave before being racist.

**Waterford Traveller CDP are based in the Parish Centre, Ballybeg, Waterford. Tel. 051- 357016.**

# On target for 100 FRCs by year's end



MINISTER for Social and Family Affairs, Seamus Brennan, has promised that the target set under the National Development Plan of funding 100 Family Resource Centres by the end of 2006 will be delivered by the Government.

There are currently 91 FRCs funded by government nine more groups have been approved for funding. Funding for the Programme increased substantially from

€317,500 in 1994 to over €12.9 million in 2006.

Minister Brennan said: "The services provided by community resource groups are often emotional and practical lifelines for those who may be going through particularly traumatic situations and experiencing a range of problems that combine to leave them feeling isolated and powerless".

## FRCs may become 'significant players' politically

"BY 2009, we expect to have strengthened our voice and role to such an extent that we will be considered as an essential player in the social partnership process," predicts Pakie Kelly, the Chairperson of the Family Resource Centres National Forum (FRCNF).

Pakie was speaking at the launch in Dublin on June 21st of the FRCNF's three-year strategy.

Over that time-frame, Family Resource Centres (FRCs) aim to become more vocal in highlighting policies and initiatives that can support families in dealing with issues such as childcare, teen services and supports for lone parents.

FRCs have had a National Forum since 1998 which grew in strength in 2002 when FRCs were given statutory recognition and the Family Support Agency was formed.

"The emergence of Family Resource Centres over the past decade is a direct response to the growth in diversity of the family unit in terms of size, structure, supports and needs. It is also a response to the pressures that face families in terms of commuting to work, accessing childcare and participating in training and education," said Pakie.

"Our three-year Strategic Plan sets out key areas of growth and policy development which will give us a much stronger voice at local and national fora. To help promote more family-friendly policies and initiatives, we will be participating on an increased number of policy-formation bodies, and seeking representation on Government advisory committees. Issues including childcare provision and support for vulnerable and disadvantaged families will be central to our work.

"Of course the future capacity of family resource centres – and the National Forum – depends on funding. The next government



*Minister Seamus Brennan TD, and Pakie Kelly, Chair, FRC National Forum, speaking at the launch of 'Supporting Families, Building Communities'*

will play a central role in ensuring we have the capacity to meet these targets.

The FRCNF strategic plan 'Supporting Families, Building Communities' was officially launched by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Seamus Brennan.

The Minister said the views of those people active on the ground at community level are clearly reflected in the Forum's key goals and strategies, including:

- the influencing of national policy on family support;
- the promotion of inclusive family support practice and provision within a community development context;
- informing the development of the Family Resource Centre Programme;
- delivering quality training and development programmes and supports to staff and volunteers and promoting the organisational, resource and communications capacity of the Forum.

He emphasised the importance of volunteers in the success of FRCs and saluted "the critically important contribution made by Resource Centres to combating disadvantage

and reaching out to the vulnerable and marginalized".

"The overriding goal of the strategy is to support Family Resource Centres in ensuring families enjoy fulfilling lives, free from poverty, neglect, discrimination and abuse. It is through a combination of local community initiatives on the ground and support from statutory agencies and other bodies that local communities can fully realise their potential and play a pivotal role in helping and empowering those in difficulties," he added.

Homework clubs, pre-school care facilities, welfare advice, counselling and parenting advice are among the diverse initiatives available at centres.

### FRCs launch online magazine

THE first edition of 'The Resource', a new online newsletter for the Family Resource Centre National Forum, (NFFRC) has been produced. It is intended to be a means for FRCs to stay in touch with each other and with the National Forum.

Also, a newly revamped website has gone online: [www.familyresource.ie](http://www.familyresource.ie). The older website address ([www.frcnf.com](http://www.frcnf.com)) will still lead people to the new site.

The launch of the newsletter coincided with the endorsement of the NFFRC's strategic plan, 'Supporting Families, Building Communities' and the document is available online

DHR Communications in Dublin, a PR company working primarily in the non-profit sector, produce the electronic newsletter on behalf of the National Forum and are seeking news, tips, advice and photographs from FRCs around Ireland. Log on to find out more.



# "Dream! Dare! Do!"

- just published by Fatima, a guidebook to regeneration

AN advice manual on regeneration called 'Dream, Dare, Do!' has been published by Fatima Groups United CDP and comes - free-of-charge to community groups - with a DVD on the experience.

Many local authority estates are built on land that developers would pay big money to take over wholesale. With regeneration schemes aimed at rejuvenating disadvantaged areas and replacing old housing stock, communities have been involved in power-struggles to retain land for local residents and not have an excessive proportion of it turned over to private use. Fatima, in particular, led by the local CDP, have succeeded against tremendous odds to ensure the regeneration process was of primary benefit to the residents.

The book includes tips on regeneration, such as how to best handle power struggles especially when in negotiations with local authorities and developers.

The publication also includes an extra section giving tips on how people can avoid falling into money traps with unscrupulous and illegal money-lenders.

June 30th marked the handing over of the final two blocks of flats by residents of Fatima Mansions. Over 100 new homes have been built as part of the regeneration (featured in



On June 30th, the people of Fatima Mansions, Dublin celebrated the handing over of the final two blocks of flats for demolition.  
Photo: Richard Whelan.

the Spring edition of 'Changing Ireland') and 13 of the 1950s-era blocks have been knocked to make way for a regenerated community.

For more information and a copy of 'Dream, Dare, Do!', contact:

Joe Donohue, Project Co-ordinator,  
Fatima Groups United CDP,  
18J Fatima Mansions, Reubens St.,  
Rialto, Dublin 8 (post is being redirected  
from this address to their temporary  
premises).  
Tel. 01-453-4722.

## CHANGING IRELAND

The National Newsletter of the COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - funding 185 community projects

### CALL 'CHANGING IRELAND' WITH YOUR STORY!

Send us your story and photos. 'Changing Ireland' regularly receives submissions from CDPs and Support Agencies around the country. Has your project been included?

Be proactive - let us know about your achievements, your pilot projects, your learning, your challenges, your community's experience?

Have you an interesting example of community development principles at work in your area, thanks to the work of your CDP volunteers and staff?

How is your work helping to influence regional and national policy change?

Our 'Changing Ireland' office is located in a residential community setting in Moyross, Limerick, and is managed by the CDN Moyross (the local CDP) on behalf of the Community Development Programme. An editorial team guides the magazine's direction and focus. (They suggested this notice calling for stories and photos).

Visitors are welcome to call to our office. You can also phone, fax, email or write to 'Changing Ireland', as follows:

'Changing Ireland', c/o Community Enterprise Centre, Moyross, Limerick.

Tel. 061-458011 (editor) 458090 (administrator).

Fax: 061-325300.

E-mail: allenmeagher@eircom.net

Thank you!

- Allen Meagher, Editor

### LETTERS SECTION

South Kerry Development Partnership Ltd,  
An tSean-Scoil,  
Killorglin,  
Co. Kerry

Tue, 6 Jun 2006

Dear Editor,

Thank you for sending Changing Ireland. It's a great magazine that I'd never come across before and I have passed it on to my co-workers in the community development department. I'm also very pleased with the article ('New Sonic Youth Deterrent', by Ger Fitzgibbon, Issue 17) and how it reflects my views - well done!

It's always reassuring to read of other communities facing similar issues and creating effective responses. We'll definitely be subscribing in future! Take care and thanks again.

Sarah O' Brien,  
Youth Officer,  
SKDP,  
An tSean-Scoil,  
Killorglin,  
Co. Kerry

# Organic heart to Knockanrawley CDP

By ALLEN MEAGHER

"LOOK!" cried Lea. "Look at this plant, its all hairy!"

The child was amazed and kept stroking the leaves of an unusual four-foot high feathery plant resident in Knockanrawley CDP's Organic Garden.

Lea's mother, community development co-ordinator Ruth Smith, looked on in amusement and asked Lea and her sister Megan to give me a tour of the garden.

Megan had an understanding of the garden's set-up: "Loads of people own it," she said.

Ruth took over: "We are, as far as we know, the only CDP in the country with an organic garden attached to the centre. There might be another one, but we haven't heard of it. It is the jewel of our centre."

The garden – over a half-acre of cultivated land – was the brainchild of the late Sister Joan Madden whose work led to the setting up of the community centre in Knockanrawley.

## Patchy beginnings

"Joan wanted an organic garden from the very beginning. It started as a small patch at the back of the community centre many years ago and expanded patch-by-patch," explained Maria Finn, CDP support worker.

The garden was formally established in 1997 and is governed by ecological and organic principles.

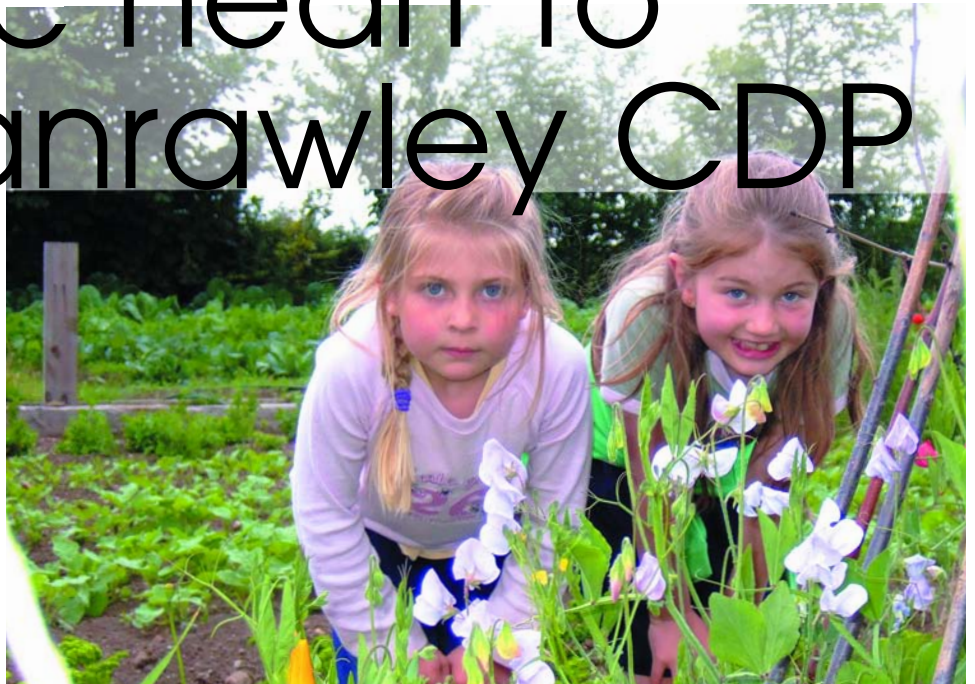
"Every Friday, we sell €10 and €20 boxes of fruit and vegetables, whatever's in season," said Maria. "A training project is run in the community centre's kitchen and all the produce they use comes from the garden. They serve up high-nutrition and tasty food, rather than your old burgers and chips."

"We just got our fourth extension – I think that's it now, no-one will want to hear of us looking for an extension grant ever again!"

The extension – involving a range of funders – includes building an eco-building in the garden. It is being built by participants on training schemes and is near completion.

## Training all-comers

The Organic Garden is very suitable for people on training courses and Knockanrawley's Training and Education Section supports people in long-term unemployment to learn new skills. Course



Lea and Megan Smith in the organic garden.

participants, for instance, learn the Safepass enabling them to work on building sites.

Ruth explained: "The training is one day a week and we negotiated with the Department of Social and Family Affairs for those on the dole to get a top-up payment – it's less than €20 a week extra, but it's something."

"They learn skills that increase their employability: plastering, block-laying, floor-laying, woodwork (Level 1 FETAC) and stonework."

"In the garden, we have women and men, Travellers and settled people, people who come here through the probation system to do community service (time in a the garden beats doing time in prison). And we have volunteer gardeners too."

Currently, two men on Community Employment, Tony Ryan and Coimin Keating-Kelleher, and Paul Clarke, who is a FAS link worker, are responsible for managing the garden.

## Environmental awareness

Ruth continued: "There is a Community Compost Centre here and people come from Pearse Park, not many of them, but some, with their organic waste."

That anyone at all, from any part of the town would go to the trouble of bringing small smelly bins of going-off household food waste all the way to a community centre – as against turfing it into the regular bin – is testament to a heightened environmental awareness in the area.

## Visitors & courses

St. Joseph's Primary School and the local

Gaelscoil have, class-by-class, visited the garden to learn about composting and recycling.

Knockanrawley also run horticultural classes to attract people from the neighbourhood. Gardening classes are either certified, like FETAC, or non-certified like the monthly 'Basic Gardening Classes'. Courses run for residents' groups have an emphasis on how to make hanging baskets and containers.

The centre holds a couple of open days each year where the general public is invited and given tips on how to, for example, kill weeds without using fertilizer (do you know how?).

## Hippies hugging trees?

The garden also has other uses, explained Ruth: "Various local groups, on completing their work or course, have planted a tree here in memory of their group so that the energy of the group can still flourish."

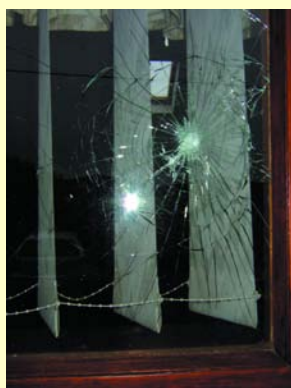
Do they ever get labeled as a bunch of wishy-washy hippies?

Maureen Tobin, who certainly didn't have a hippy look, shot in: "Trees have got a great energy, you know!"

Added the Chairperson, Catherine Sharpe, "Other CDPs are awful jealous of us with our garden, wishing they had one. It is lovely to come out here for 10 to 15 minutes for a break."

• For more information, contact  
Knockanrawley Resource Centre,  
Tipperary Town, Co. Tipperary.  
Tel. 062-52688. Fax: 062-52206.  
Email: knockanrawley@eircom.net





## Vandalism an issue

THERE are two tunnels in Knockanrawley Organic Garden, one built of willow specifically for children to play in, the other a plastic tunnel under which plants grow in heat.

Unfortunately, children sometimes sneak in and choose to play with the wrong tunnel.

Said the Chairperson, Catherine Sharpe: "Four youngsters – they couldn't have been much higher than my knee – climbed up onto the plastic tunnel (a greenhouse) and ran along the roof of it. Look at the holes where they ran along."

The holes were wide enough to stick your head through and feel the heat inside billowing out. Lettuces and other greens were now susceptible to cold and temperatures were due to drop to an unseasonably low 7 degrees celsius the night I visited in June.

"Usually people living around are good to keep an eye on the gardens. 99.9% of the people in the area are fantastic," said the Chairperson.

The Willow Tunnel, and an arch, which most children play in, were constructed by men's and women's groups attached to the Knockanrawley project.

# CDP in Tipp Town has 5 sections

IN 1988, the Pearse Park Community Association was formed by an election of the residents under the leadership of the late Sister Joan Madden of the Sisters of Mercy Order.

The biggest project the association undertook was to build Knockanrawley Resource Centre. Following a major fundraising campaign and with the help of a FAS youth community-training scheme, the centre was started. It aimed to meet the unmet needs of the local community in Tipperary town and surrounding areas.

**Knockanrawley Resource Centre divides its work into five sections:**

**Community Development** – Knockanrawley has worked out of a community development model of practice since it first opened and has been part of the Community Development Programme since it started in 1994. Achieving real change in individual's lives and within their

community is a core aim.

**Organic Garden** – the aim is to raise awareness about environmental issues and sustainable development and to train people.

**Training and Education** – provides affordable, accessible community-based education and training for individuals and groups. Say the management: "We work with people to break down barriers to participation, such as family responsibilities, distance, isolation, etc."

**Psychotherapy and Family Therapy** – going since 1991, dealing with everything from eating disorders to gambling problems to relationships difficulties and a dozen other issues.

**Daisychain Childcare Centre** – providing affordable childcare for up to 100 children (babies to 12-year-olds).

## 5 steps to Community Development

**COMMUNITY Development Principles are followed by CDPs throughout the country. This is how Knockanrawley Resource Centre, one of the two CDPs based in Tipperary town, describe their work.**

1. We focus our work on the needs of those in the community who experience social exclusion.
2. We support and encourage the community to be involved in all aspects of the process of identifying and addressing their needs.

3. We value the diverse contribution of all members of our society and oppose unfair discrimination.

4. We work in partnership with other groups and organizations, believing that by people coming together we can challenge the causes of poverty and disadvantage and bring about positive change.

5. No group or individual will have the right to impose an agenda or pursue a personal or political stance that is contrary to these principles.

## No panic for now

**DURING our tour of Knockanrawley Organic Garden, chairperson, Catherine Sharpe, remarked: "The local authority gave us a 99 year lease."**

With some concern in her voice, support worker Maria Finn piped up: "What will we

do when that is up?"

"Well," laughed Catherine, "I'll be long gone anyway!"

In fairness, Knockanrawley CDP management committee have 87 years left to figure out that move.

## Main aim is not sales, but development

"OUR main aim is to train people in organic gardening and for them to see how health-wise it is better to eat organic," said volunteer gardener and sub-group member, Maureen Tobin.

"We work to raise awareness about good food and nutrition. Selling the produce comes after that. You work with the people, not for them, for them to help themselves and to do it themselves."

Maureen listed off everything they grew,

a what's what of the Irish gardening world. Besides the predictable spuds, turnips, carrots, onions and cabbage, they grow mint, artichokes, garlic, green beans. Fruits grown include gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes and cucumbers.

On sales, she said, "It's hard to compete with the normal fertilized products, but we try to be cheaper than the supermarkets. People say they can't taste the difference between the organic and the chemically-

fertilized produce, but I can!"

This reporter can personally vouch for the superiority of Knockanrawley's organic lettuce and rhubarb, having been given samples to test.

One patch contains a square of poppies.

"Don't worry, Irish poppies are no good for making heroin," laughed Maureen.

"They just add a bit of colour."

# Doolough famine walk



© D. Speirs.

**EACH May, Louisburgh CDP co-organises the Doolough Commemorative Famine Walk with Dublin-based campaign group, Action From Ireland (Afri). This year, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Michael Davitt, several hundred people were drawn to Louisburgh by the theme of the walk: Land for People, not for Profit.**

They gathered at the lakeside in the spectacular Delphi valley to listen to walk leaders Christy Moore, Owens Wiwa (brother of the late Ken Saro Wiwa) and Rossport Five activist Vincent McGrath, before setting off on the eleven-mile walk back to Louisburgh. The route is the same one taken by starving people in March 1849 when they were turned away from the doors of Delphi Lodge

and forced to walk back to the town through wind and snow. Many people perished on that journey.

As an integral part of its involvement in organising the Famine Walk, Louisburgh CDP works each year with three local primary schools in the weeks leading up to the walk.

The children explore the year's chosen theme through drama, music and art and give a performance of their work to both visitors and the local community on the eve of the walk. Local children also play music for the walkers as they assemble at the starting point.

To round off the weekend's event, a Céilí brings visitors and Louisburgh people together for a great session of traditional music, song and dance.

If you missed the opportunity to take part this year, mark it into your diary for 2007. The walk takes place on the last Saturday in May each year. As an act of solidarity with oppressed people, or simply as an act of remembrance, it is a venture that leaves a marked impression on every walker.

**For more information, contact: Louisburgh CDP, The Pastoral Centre, Long Street, Louisburgh, Co. Mayo. Tel.No.:098-66218. Fax.No.:098-66412. E-mail:LCP1@anu.ie**

**Contact Afri at: 134 Phibsborough Road, Dublin 7. Tel: 01-882 7563/7581. Fax: 01-882-7576. E-mail: afri@iol.ie**

## Clare youth learn of local choices, global impact

By ANA FLYNN

**THE Every Moment Counts (EMC) Youth Club in Scariff, set up by East Clare CDP, has learnt how to strike back at companies who underpay and exploit employees in developing countries; by choosing as consumers to buy only Fairtrade Products.**

Ana Flynn is a teenager with the club and wrote this report:

On the morning of March 11th last, myself and seven other emclings (members of EMC youth group) headed up to Dublin with two of our club leaders, Tracey Doyle and Katie McGough to partake in an art-based workshop on fair-trade organised by the National Youth Council of Ireland.

There were two other groups there, both from Dublin.

Once we had been introduced to the workshop leaders we talked about how currencies work and what happens when money becomes worthless.

We were then put into groups and each of us had to come up with our own currency.

Then within our groups we had to discuss each currency and decide which one was strongest.

Once that agreement had been made each member of each group got 100 units of the chosen currency, then we each got cards with products on them. So by buying and selling the cards you had to end up with one card of each product and as much money as you could.

But there was a catch, the leader in each group made up the rules and of course they wanted to win so they made them up to suit themselves.

This game is similar to the way things go when rich countries trade with poorer third world countries. The rich countries make the rules to suit themselves leaving the poor countries with the bad end of the deal.

When the World Trade Organisation (WTO) meets to set the trading regulations, wealthier countries can afford to send 3-4 representatives each whereas poorer countries can only just afford to send one.

The WTO have approximately 350 meetings a year but the third world countries can only afford to attend 3-4 of these.

This is what prevents third world countries from moving up and breaking free of poverty.

We also looked at labour issues and

underpayment.

Can you imagine waking up at 6am every morning, going to work in a filthy factory or a plantation and working until 6pm that evening without a lunch or toilet break, and then getting an extremely poor wage?

It just doesn't seem right!

When buying fair-trade produce you can be sure that the farmers and workers are getting the money that they have so rightfully earned.

This is why fair-trade is just one step we can take to make this a better poverty free world.

Overall the workshop was very interesting and opened our eyes to just some of the problems happening in third world countries.

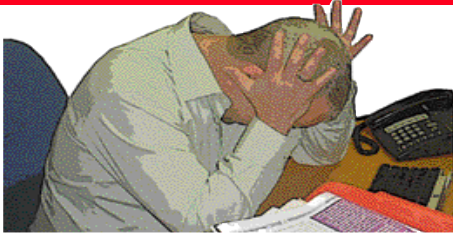
It also helped us to realise that you can start to fix these problems in your own home; you don't have to be there to make a difference!

**\* EMC youth club was set up by volunteers and staff of East Clare CDP. The EMC have just completed a camping trip are next off on cross-border exchange programme in Carlingford, Co. Louth.**



# HELP ME HORACE

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



## I feel unread

Dear Horace,  
 THERE'S a man on my road and he reads the telephone directory (he says you can't beat it for the number of characters in the story, though the plot sucks) but he still won't read our CDP annual report.

Well, in desperation, this year I stapled our annual report to my head in the hope that the doctor would read it while removing it. He was rather busy however.

Do you think the newcomers in the Department might read it?

Annie Reading,  
 Co-ordinator  
 'We Never Fail' CDP,  
 Hilloffeckinnettes,  
 Mid-South-East Region West  
*Horace Helps*

Dear Annie,  
 Thank you for your recent correspondence. I have passed it onto the appropriate person who will take note of its contents. If I can be of any further assistance in the future please don't hesitate to contact me. Yawn!  
 Yours sincerely  
 Horace

## Bored games

Help me Horace!

MY name is Minister O'Peeved. I am bored. I have nearly put all my toys into one box, so things are nice and tidy and easy to find. My problem is I may have damaged some of them trying to squeeze everything into the one box. My "See The Pea" puzzle game has nearly 200 pieces could I join up some or get rid of a few to make it easier even if the bigger picture would be lost?

M. N. O'Peeved

Horace Helps  
 Dear M. N.,  
 As they say "Toys will be toys" but maybe you should watch the film 'Toy Story' because you would learn to be kind to your toys - they may bite back.

## Should I stay or should I go?

Help me Horace!

I AM chairperson of my CDP and I am very confused by the new directives from the Department of CRAGGY. It seems we have to get rid of everyone on the management committee and replace them. Basically if we have any volunteer there for six years or more they have to go.

We're trying to write the job spec for new members? The ideal candidates must have no previous experience, and have shown no prior interest in community initiatives. Is this right?

Chairio!

Dear Chairio,  
 No previous experience - why not get Ray D'Arcy down to do auditions? Your recruitment drive could become a hit tv series and give the Community Development Programme a major boost.

You could have a parallel series following the statutory personnel who are put on the committees called "I'm a Civil Servant Get Me Out of Here!"

Horace and Dec

## President visits CDP in Letterfrack

A COUPLE of hundred Connemara people crammed into Ellis Hall in Letterfrack to hear Mary Gannon of FORUM CDP welcome President Mary McAleese recently.

The President was there to meet staff and representatives of FORUM, now well into its second decade of work in the area.

She highlighted the work of FORUM in using its local eye to improve the lives of individuals, to make their lives less problematic, to

include them and ensure they are part of a real rural community.

"It would be very easy to live life as strangers in a scattered community, and to lose sight of the fact that people can live quite lonely lives," she remarked. "It's the right way to live, isn't it, keeping an eye out for one and other, making Ireland a nicer, better, more decent, hope-filled place to live."

FORUM director, John Coyne, thanked the President on behalf of the community.

## Volunteers at Louth asylum-seekers show

VOLUNTEERS from CDPs in Co. Louth were among over 150 women, who attended a cultural celebration on Friday, June 16th, at Mosney Accommodation Centre, Julianstown, Co. Meath.

The event - called 'Weaving Cultural Threads' - was organised by women asylum-seekers from over 12 countries living in the Mosney centre. The idea: to promote cultural empowerment.

The organisers were reportedly overwhelmed with the level of interest the celebration generated and glad to see that people cared about their plight more than they may have realised.

Women presented the culture, traditions, landscapes, history, economy and tourist spots of their countries to an avid audience. Many worked very hard on their English language skills to deliver the presentation and demonstrate the cultural wealth existing among the asylum-seeking community, throughout the country.

Weaving Cultural Threads aimed to raise awareness of the positive impact that asylum-seekers can have on society and to counteract the negative attitudes too often appearing in our media.

The event was an example of collaboration between The Mosney Accommodation Centre, cross-border project Communities Connect and a victims group working in Northern Ireland. Countries represented included Kosovo, Nigeria, Malawi, Somalia and Pakistan.

**INTRODUCTION:**

## Ballymun conference raises timely questions

TWO of the main speakers at a conference held on May 25th at the Axis Centre, Ballymun, Dublin, questioned how best CDPs can work with their communities when various changes to the way CDPs operate have been pushed politically from the top-down.

There was much emphasis on the promotion by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs of a service-delivery model for CDPs. How, asked the speakers, does this square with the projects' community development aims?

Joan Byrne (Community Action Programme CDP, Ballymun) and Cathleen O'Neill (Kilbarrack CDP) addressed the importance of community development and service provision. And they examined the key differences between the two.

Cathleen also reported that her community's general health is in a worse condition now than before the 'Celtic Tiger' arrived, though the CDP is working to improve matters. Joan, meanwhile, examined Ballymun's activist history and its needs now.

The conference was organised by the Ballymun Community Organisations Network (BCON) and the theme was: 'From Capacity-Building to Building Capacity to Influence'.

# Are CDPs being asked to change too much?

**ONE of the key reasons for holding the recent Ballymun conference, according to Cathleen O'Neill, project co-ordinator with Kilbarrack CDP, was to alert community and voluntary groups "to be vigilant" about the future of the Community Development Programme.**

This has been a continual theme throughout the Programme's history, partly because it does not have statutory basis and usually runs from one three-year phase to another. In 2007, the Programme enters a new phase. The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs administers and funds the Programme.

Though the Programme is running successfully for over 15 years, projects are forever concerned with retaining autonomy and independence and with continuing to operate from community development principles. However, they must also follow, from time-to-time, top-down policy decisions.

Cathleen's points raise the question – Are CDPs being asked to change too much?

"In the recent past community development groups in the Clondalkin area have been told to merge their groups because too many groups were deemed to be working with women," noted Cathleen. "They were left to sort this problem out themselves."

She mentioned the directive to projects a

couple of years ago from the Department that instructed CDPs (among other local groups and agencies) to submit their workplans to City / County Development Boards for approval.

"More chaos ensued when another directive told us to give the work-plans to these agencies for comment only. Amidst all the chaos though, a clear line is developing that is threatening to community development practise.

"More recent directives from the same department relate to the board make-up of CDP voluntary management committees. We are basically being told who to have on our boards – and more importantly, telling community workers what boards they can or cannot be on.

"We need to be careful folks that we retain all the skills in the community, that we protect the careful and equality-ensuring processes and practises that have been built up. We need to guard against being seduced into service provision agreements that run counter to what we know works well and is sustainable.

"Service led agreements have their part to play – and there are very good people working in this area who also need to be supported. But we should not confuse the two," she warned.

## Minister - CDPs funding "is safe"

**COMMUNITY Development Projects will continue to receive funding "to 2007 and beyond" according to Minister of State, Noel Ahern.**

"As Minister of State responsible for this area, I want to assure everyone...that funding for the Community Development Projects will continue to 2007 and beyond.

"Voluntary and community groups, over the years, have pioneered many creative approaches to tackling the most profound social problems, in ways that Governments alone cannot do. It is my belief that it is only through a combination of local community initiatives on the ground and support from statutory agencies that we can achieve the best outcomes for communities."

He was speaking in April at the official launch of North West Kildare CDP's three-year workplan.

He added, complimenting North West Kildare CDP: "Only by having your



*Minister of State, Noel Ahern.*

**community on board can you ensure that you are genuinely meeting their needs."**





## Is community development being "neutered to pure service delivery?"

**JOAN BYRNE**, chairperson of Community Action Programme CDP, in Ballymun, believes that more and more community development is being "neutered down to pure service delivery". She told the conference audience in Ballymun recently:

"Many missives and directives have been handed down by the policy makers over the years. Directives telling us how to do our work, telling us what work we should be doing, how many people we should be targeting, how many people should be on our committees, who those people should be, what committees we cannot sit on (I kid you not!) .....

"None of those directives ever took cognisance of the fact that a community is a dynamic, pulsating, ever changing force and needs to be given the space to breathe so that it can determine its own needs and how best to manage its affairs.

"These structures have made it next to impossible for local people to engage in community development," she continued. She pointed, in evidence, to "the complexities of the current structures" and

"the demands of partnership, the conditions of funding, the demands for service plans (and) the demand for action plans to be approved at local authority and government level."

She said, "These have all served to ensure that more and more community development is being neutered down to pure service delivery.

"Don't get me wrong – service delivery is critical for an area like Ballymun – but service delivery in the absence of development work and capacity building (which enables a community to keep developing, keep responding to emerging needs and keep its sense of ownership around what happens) will eventually mean that the community no longer has a say in its future.

"If we simply go down the road of service delivery and don't dedicate resources to empower community members to respond to emerging needs, we will strangle the very process that we fought long and hard to establish," she added.

Joan said that the accumulated impact of the various directives, instructions, "barriers" and policies may overwhelm communities.

## Community Development v Community Work

- they mean different things

**CATHLEEN O'Neill**, project co-ordinator of Kilbarrack CDP says: "The terms community development and community work are for example frequently used interchangeably, although they mean different things.

"Community development is best used to refer to a process, or a way of doing something, which entails the mobilisation, participation and involvement of local people on common issues important to them.

"Community work or service provision, on the other hand, is often used as a general term and refers to initiatives or activities that are delivered at a local level that may not actively involve members of the community as participants but merely as users of services.

"It is important to stress that both options have an important role to play and have made an important contribution – but they should not be confused as one and the same," she says.

## Most responses ever

THE Department received the biggest number of submissions and responses ever from CDPs after issuing a directive to projects telling them how their boards should be set up and who should and should not be on the boards.

A response to the directives was compiled by CDPs in the various regions as well as by the Community Workers' Co-operative, Combat Poverty Agency and the Support Agency Network.

## The challenge to local groups

The challenge to local groups and organisations is:

- to retain their autonomy,
- their right to disagree,
- their right to say no,
- to protect their ability to respond quickly and fight the fires,
- their right to define their own world, what their community needs are and how best to go about getting the best for every tenant and resident in their area

The alternative is that we end up administering our own poverty. In short Community Development is true active citizenship.

*Joan Byrne*

# Kilbarrack volunteers have the skills of a UN leader

**PROJECT co-ordinator, Cathleen O'Neill has a very clear picture of the talent that enters a room when there is a meeting of the volunteer management committee of Kilbarrack CDP, Dublin. She sees local Kofi Annans and Mary Robinsons walking into the room.**

"Our voluntary board of management are expert employers, wizards at labour law and legislation, top class at understanding European Funding, they have the negotiation skills of Kofi Annan or our own Mary Robinson – and they are at the beck and call of project staff any time we need them – all in all making them good value for money as a voluntary group," she said in her recent conference address.

Cathleen's summary of a good management board's skills, know-how and abilities bears testament to the amount and variety of work volunteers in CDPs can get involved in:

"Our voluntary board also bear the legal burden for the project and the community. They obtained these skills and experiences

through their work at a community level – and on a nationwide basis people like them have helped to make their own world and our world a better place for all."

"Our community numbers 12,500 people, who, despite the Celtic Tiger, still live in an area of designated disadvantage. We have high numbers of young people, high levels of lone parents, high levels of early school leavers and extremely high levels of ill health. We know all of this because we consult and communicate with our target population very frequently. And because they come and tell us anyway!

"We hold regular community suppers and coffee mornings as a way of keeping in touch with people and hearing their views on a broad range of issues. And we are also charged with consulting our local community about changes they wish to make or capacities they wish to build.

"We work in a particular way, with a particular process and a particular set of community development principles and ethos. Working from the ground up and doing it

with communities, not for communities," Cathleen continued.

"The people (we are concerned with) are our local community and target population, our local voluntary management group, our staff team, our regular funders and anyone else we can get to throw us a few bob. We are networked to all the key agencies such as Women's Aid, Children's Rights Alliance, Cadic, Banulacht, etc."

She recalled her project's definition of community development. It was defined 30 years ago and has never needed to be changed:

"To establish, promote and operate a community development programme, which will act as a focus and catalyst for community development for the community of Kilbarrack and surrounding areas, with a view to promoting their economic and cultural welfare – and particularly to empower specific disadvantaged groups to effectively participate in a programme of personal and social development."

## CDP approach to health issues will save lives

- where health service failed to respond

CATHLEEN O'Neill highlighted how service delivery can sometimes be best approached from a community development viewpoint. It can even save lives.

In Kilbarrack, Dublin, the local CDP introduced a new model for providing local health services after the Health Board had shown they were unable to respond effectively.

Cathleen told the Ballymun conference: "In 1992 a report was published by the Combat Poverty Agency based on a random survey in Kilbarrack where 68% of the local community were found to have serious health problems that local people directly related to unemployment and intergenerational poverty.

"Then along came the economic boom and the rising tide lifts all boats etcetera, except in Kilbarrack where health problems increased during the boom – with less access to medical and hospital services. In a small neighbourhood of 500 homes more than 90 people died from cancer and heart disease. Other illnesses also increased.

"Local health service providers failed to make a response despite several calls to do so. I worked for three years with the local

community in an effort to obtain funding to set up a Primary Health Care Training Initiative. Local Health boards and health promotion groups were unable to help.

"It was a community development initiative that finally brought about a result. Kilbarrack CDP set up a women's health group and worked with them for two years to build up capacity and expertise. This finally enabled them to obtain funding for 25 women who will eventually set up a local respite centre to offer a range of therapies and massage and other treatments to families who are dealing with long term illness.

"Each woman who is getting training will eventually be able to create a job for herself – and they have all made a commitment to work in the local community as a way of giving back something to the community, thus demonstrating a big difference between a community development process and a service provision process.

"The community development process enabled people to own the process and to be active agents of change. Whereas the service provision process made people passive recipients," concluded Cathleen.



# Ballymun then . . .

- despite problems, our community had huge energy

By Joan Byrne

Chair, Community Action Programme,  
Ballymun

**JOAN Byrne outlined a potted history of top-down policy disasters, and successes, as they impacted on the Ballymun community and on the Community Action Programme CDP which she currently chairs.**

There had been massive changes in Community Development in Ballymun over the last 20 years, she said:

"Back in the late 80's and early 90's Ballymun was a poor, struggling community. We had enormous social and economic problems. We had the highest levels of unemployment in the country, chronic housing conditions with little or no housing maintenance, and poor educational achievements. We had an emerging and ever-growing drug problem, serious community mental health issues and very little local services and facilities.

"Many community activists who formed action groups to protest against the wrongs in our community."

She recalled, as an example, the hardship caused by the almost-year-long lift maintenance workers strike when the community rose up by blocking the roads in protest.

To such problems, Joan argued, the State did nothing.

"Well maybe that's not quite true," she continued critically. "Here are just two

examples of their insightful, well thought out policies which had a major impact on our community:

"Firstly, they introduced the £5000 housing grant scheme which gave everyone £5000 if they handed back their key to Dublin Corporation. This gave many working families the opportunity to put a deposit on their own home and move out of the area which they did in their droves.

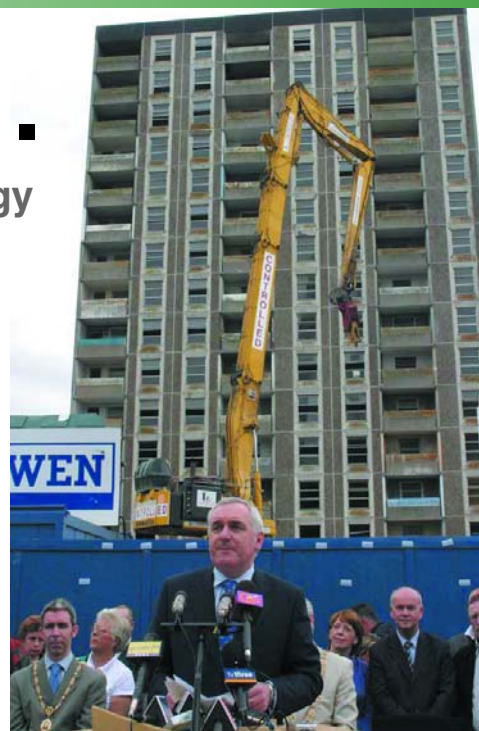
"Another policy which I remember at the time having a huge impact on the community was the Care in the Community Policy whereby many mental health patients were released from institutions back into the community with abysmal supports. Many of these people came to live here in Ballymun with no supports and very little resources to fend for themselves. At one time Dublin Corporation even introduced a policy of subletting one flat to two people who had been in mental institutions," noted Joan.

She recalled the community response at the time. The community got together in ever increasing numbers, tenants associations were formed, networking began, public meetings were called and plans formulated.

"The Community hosted its first Community Leadership Training Programme and many positive initiatives came out of that first programme. Just to mention a few:

- The Suss Centre (the first welfare rights centre in the area),

- Aobhneas Womens Refuge - initially established in a three bedroomed flat in Sillogue Road - they now have a purpose



built refuge in Coolock,

- The Ballymun Enterprise - a second hand clothes shop that operated from the basement of one of the Towers. I remember it as a life saver for people like myself on low incomes at the time.

- The Web - a youth group operating out of another tower basement."

Joan went on to list nearly 20 more initiatives started by locals.

"All of these initiatives came from the community. There was huge energy around the place at the time - despite its negative image and problems. Nearly everyone wanted to do something. There were more action groups than you could shake a stick at," she added.

# . . . and in the future

- self-governance and self-determination are crucial

By JOAN BYRNE

**"TODAY we have a very different economy than we did 20 years ago. Jobs are not the main issue on the agenda although Ballymun still has a higher than national average rate of unemployed people," said Joan Byrne.**

"There is no doubt that there are more jobs around than there were before. But what about the quality of these jobs? What about job protection for our sons and daughters?

"Health in our community is still a major issue - more so now than in the 80's. Drugs and stress and mental health related illnesses are rising all the time. But the social services in our area are completely overworked and under-resourced. There are children in our

community who are at risk now because there are not enough resources to help.

"It is true that there has been a significant improvement in the numbers of young people accessing third level education from our community - testimony to a community initiative. But why do large numbers of young people in Ballymun still leave school with literacy problems?

"We have new emerging communities within our area - new neighbours who need support. The latest directive from on high is that we should be supporting anti-racism work and developing anti-racism charters. Yet there is no funding to do any active anti-racism work in our communities.

"So can we leave all these problems to be sorted out by Government or to the ever

growing Service Level Agreement Ethos? If we learn anything from our past and take it into our future, it is that the people of Ballymun were the ones who had the ideas, who put in the responses, who still fight daily for every penny to keep their organisations afloat, who still have to deal with imbecilic directives sucking away our energy....

"At some level we have to strip Community Development back to the simplicities. We have to start talking again about the essence of what it means. We have to start having community conversations again. We have to start meeting again.

"We have to retain the absolute right to meet on our own and make our own plans. We have to retain the right to self-governance and self-determination," concluded Joan.

# Have your say on future anti-poverty policies

AN excellent new resource for influencing policy direction in this country is being promoted by the Combat Poverty Agency. It offers those affected by poverty the opportunity to influence the policies.

The *Having Your Say* Programme is aimed at bridging the gap between the theory and practice of anti-poverty policy.

**"The best policies are made when people who are affected by them state their needs and are heard,"** says the CPA's head, Helen Johnston.

The programme is open to anti-poverty groups and projects, including CDPs, Family Resources Centres, and Local Development Social Inclusion projects. It is also open to third-level colleges involved in community development education, community education and anti-poverty interests, and for government departments and policymakers.

While the Social Inclusion Measures committees attached to local authorities throughout the state offer the most effective way for small communities to influence big decisions, the CPA's *Having Your Say* programme offers an alternative route.



CPA director Helen Johnston.

The CPA Programme runs to the end of 2007. Key activities to be completed by the end of this year include undertaking research "to map the policy learning experiences, needs and supports within and across the Community Development Programme, the Family Resource Centres' Programme and the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme."

Other activities to be completed in the coming months include:

- An annual conference in Croke Park on October 17th.
- Publication of three new resources.
- Research to establish baseline information on policy learning opportunities within third level community development education.
- A literature review of the role of community development in tackling poverty.

By the end of the Programme, in 2007, there should be greater participation in national and local policymaking by socially excluded groups.

An introductory brochure, *Having Your Say*, and full information in *Having Your Say*, strengthening the voices of excluded people - a 3-year programme 2005-2007, are available from the agency. The address is: CPA, Bridgewater Centre, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8 (located just before the junction with the South Circular Road at Islandbridge).

Tel. Joan on 01-602-6632.

E-mail: joan.offynn@combatpoverty.ie or

barbara.walsh@combatpoverty.ie

Website: www.combatpoverty.ie

## Our programme and the 'Welfare State'

- a key influence on the new NDP

By GERRY McKEEVER

**SOCIAL inclusion programmes for the next National Development Plan will be newly based around the Developmental Welfare State model, according to Rory O'Donnell of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC).**

He was speaking at a conference on June 8th in Croke Park organised by the 'Wheel', a network that seeks to co-ordinate activities in the community and voluntary sector.

The Developmental Welfare State consists of three interlocking elements, according to Rory: Income Support; Services; and Innovation.

Rory said the unique value of the community organisation is, "They are responsive to emerging local issues and can respond flexibly and quickly. Projects piloted by community groups can then be mainstreamed by state agencies."

The 'Developmental Welfare State' is something CDPs should be well advised to get their heads around as it is the basis for the new Social Partnership agreement and therefore will greatly influence the future social inclusion programmes.

We don't often think of the Community Development Programme as part of 'the Welfare State' and that's because for long periods of our history a 'Welfare State' similar to most European countries did not exist and indeed faced opposition from influential sectors including the Catholic Church.

But from about 1974 our Welfare provision

has become more and more enshrined in law and more akin to mainstream European models. But like a lot of other aspects of social policy this has developed in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner. Also, the social inclusion programmes (of which the Community Programme Programme is one) developed at a time in the early 1990s when the economic situation was very different.

In the 'Developmental Welfare State' model proposed by Rory, there are criticisms of policy making and partnership which would strike a chord with many CDPs.

"Strategic decisions have been delayed or reversed," he said, while implementation and 'joined up government' have generally been poor.

However there may well be significant challenges posed by this new 'Developmental State' model. Under 'disadvantage', this model proposes "to rely less on targeted programmes and more on the responsiveness of publicly-funded services and 'participation packages'". What does this mean?

These are some of the questions CDPs need to pose and engage with. They need to familiarise themselves with the language and concepts of the new model. A good start would be to download Rory O'Donnell's powerpoint presentation which is called 'NESC Strategy 2006 People, Productivity and Purpose'. It is available, half-way down the page, at: [www.policyinstitute.tcd.ie/reshapingirishinstitutions20052006.php](http://www.policyinstitute.tcd.ie/reshapingirishinstitutions20052006.php)

## Meeting called over poor relations with local authorities

A CDP and Family Resource Centre (FRC) have called a meeting for July 27th to discuss common difficulties that community groups have in their dealings with local authorities. The meeting is open to CDPs and FRCs nationwide who have an interest in this issue.

The projects who called the meeting, Mountwood/Fitzgerald Park CDP and Ballyoghen FRC, are in the area covered by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

Recently, Ballyoghen FRC voted to ask the local authority to recall its representative from their management committee.

The board of Mountwood/Fitzgerald Park CDP have also experienced problems in their relationship with the local authority and are seeking a way forward.

The meeting will take place on Thursday, July 27th, at the Stillorgan Park Hotel, Dublin, from 9.30am - 12.30pm.

For further details contact Marion White, project co-ordinator, Mountwood / Fitzgerald Park CDP, 71/73 Maple House, Mounttown, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Tel. 01-2845722.



# Projects planning for October 17th

## - UN Day for Eradication of Poverty

STUART Williams of ATD Fourth World has confirmed that CDP's in Wexford, Cork, and Blanchardstown will be involved in marking the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 17th.



"We want to build up momentum around the country for this day of solidarity and particularly hope that people in groups and communities through out the country can take ownership of it," he said.

Central to the day are the voices of courage of people and communities who are struggling throughout the year to establish a better world for themselves and for others.

"On the 17th October UN Day, we feel we are together, settled people, homeless people, Travellers, workers in different organisations, politicians, ordinary people from different

backgrounds and people from other countries, all standing together against poverty," added Stuart.

He encouraged community groups to mark the UN Day in whatever way they can and to get in touch if they want more information.

ATD Fourth World works in partnership with governments and NGOs to create the conditions necessary for people in extreme poverty to become active partners in the development of society.

The address is: ATD Fourth World, 27 Mountjoy Sq, Dublin 1. Tel. 01-8558191. E-mail: 17october@eircom.net

Websites worth checking are:

[www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/poverty\\_link3.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/poverty_link3.htm)

[www.oct17.org](http://www.oct17.org)

[www.atd-fourthworld.org](http://www.atd-fourthworld.org)

[www.combatpoverty.ie](http://www.combatpoverty.ie)

# Start your own UN Fact Finding Mission

SO your CDP or community group has a human rights issue that needs addressing. You've formed a group to campaign and raise awareness. Your march is planned and you've stuck posters around the town. You know your issue inside and out but dread crossfire questioning and being left speechless.



Find your facts. Talk rights and obligations. Use documentary evidence that is linked to the UN. Do your research and you'll have the answers.

There are nine human rights treaties that make up the United Nations Human Rights Treaty System. They are:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
- The International Bill of Human Rights.
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- The Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
- The Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- The International Convention on the

Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

States who sign these treaties are bound by them. The UN have treaty bodies to monitor their implementation. The main role of these bodies is to consider State Reports and make

recommendations.

Read the Irish state's report that covers the issue you are addressing. Look at both where it is fulfilling its role and where it doesn't.

Read Shadow Reports prepared by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that give an alternative view to the Irish state's accomplishments and failures.

Both of these reports will give you facts and figures. They will also point to the relevant articles in the conventions that you need to be aware of. For example, article 12 of CEDAW requires steps to eliminate discrimination from the field of health care, including access to services such as family planning. Article 12 of the ICESCR recognises the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

After the treaty body has read the State reports, it issues general recommendations and/ or concluding comments. These are also a tool for you to use when fighting for your issue. If the UN has recommended change, then you definitely have a point to make!

## Top Ten Tips

SARAH-BETH Watkins – Templeshannon CDP project co-ordinator – gives some resource tips below on what CDPs need to do if they wish to highlight an abuse of human rights.

She will report further in the Autumn edition of 'Changing Ireland' on how the community development approach and human rights approach do not always work easily together. She will explore what is possible for communities to do and examine the difficulties to be surmounted in having your human rights respected.

Also, in the Autumn edition, Joan Courtney from Tralee will look at Ireland's rising immigrant population and the human rights issues that effect them.

### - How to address human rights issues effecting your community

- 1) Raise awareness of the issue. People won't know it's an issue if they don't know anything about it.
- 2) Research your facts. Make sure everything you use to promote your issue has been checked and double-checked. Facts hit hard but they will completely discredit you if you get them wrong.
- 3) Use the UN and its conventions. Check that Ireland has signed to the relevant treaty (eg The Convention on the Elimination against All Forms of Discrimination against Women). Then read up on the convention's general recommendations and concluding comments.
- 4) Check the State reports to find out how the Irish governments meets these obligations and then read any shadow reports available on your issue to see where these obligations fail.
- 5) Use all this information! Formulate a campaign. Think strategy and plan ahead. Remember this takes huge commitment and time.
- 6) Use the media to get the word out. Use newspapers, magazines, radio, even television if you can. Don't ignore the free press sheets or local newsletters who are often happy to take contributions.
- 7) Demonstrate. You don't have to chain yourself to the railings but it's a possibility! Think creatively about how you can let people know of your issue and what can be done about it.
- 8) Form a coalition. There is strength in numbers. Link with like-minded people to form a group to specifically challenge the issue and raise awareness.
- 9) Write your own shadow report. This can be done as an organisation or as a coalition. Respond to the Irish government using a formal document that will be read by others.
- 10) General Election 2007. It's a good time to start talking to the politicians.

## Traveller women's work

TRAVELLER Women's Network  
Templeshannon CDP is currently host to a new county-wide network of Traveller women working towards awareness and change in Co. Wexford. The network will provide support and information to the Travelling communities of Co. Wexford.

The TWN is managed by a steering group of six women; Margaret Kelly – Enniscorthy, Helen Berry – New Ross, Mary Connors – Waterford, Mary Connors – Wexford and Mary Connors – Bunclogh.

Wexford has the second highest Traveller population in the country. The women aim to develop their own centre as a resource and focal point for the counties communities. At present, the women are formulating their long-term workplan and strategy for involvement at a regional level.

They can be contacted at  
Templeshannon CDP on 054-37511.

## Wexford women's festival

THIS July, women are celebrating on the quays of Wexford! A collaboration of women from various groups and the Wexford Equality for Women Measure have joined forces to host a fun-filled two days with guest speakers, musicians, artists and much much more.

On day one, July 21st, a conference is scheduled for the Riverbank Hotel with four workshops covering Women's Health, Domestic Violence, Minority Groups and Women in Leadership. Confirmed speakers included Noreen Clancy from CEDAW, Niall Crowley from The Equality Authority, Yvonne Pimm - Rape Crisis Centre, Betty Doyle – Wexford Women's Refuge. The Marie Keating Bus will also be in attendance.

Day two is a family event on the quays in Wexford from 12noon to 4pm and will consist of childrens entertainment as well as arts and crafts demonstrations, dance and music.

Both events are free. For more information, contact the Wexford Equality for Women Measure on 053-26477.

# St. Margaret's show importance of open days

THERE'S no point in volunteers putting in all those hours and staff working year-in and year-out if nobody knows what a project is up to. And St. Margaret's Traveller Community Association in Dublin appreciate that.

Open days have probably been around since Cuchalainn, yet they remain an effective way to promoting a project's activities and, on June 28th, St. Margaret's CDP held theirs.

Among the highlights was the presentation of an illustrated children's book produced by the project's women's group to teachers from the local pre-school. The group are very active and recently completed FETAC-level courses in maths, food and nutrition, caring for children and child development and play and other subjects.

Certificates were on display to show the women's group had completed first aid courses, a home-made quilt marked their completion of health courses and a mosaic they made depicting different aspects of Travellers lives greeted visitors at the entrance to the community centre. During the year, the women also took part in an active citizenship course.

The aim of the Open Day – common among CDPs and other community organisations – was **to promote the positive actions which take place on a daily basis in the community centre and to show the range of work the project is doing.**

The Men's Group ran a similar display illustrating all the activities and courses that they are involved in: computers, theatre visits, truck driving lessons, driver theory test, safe pass course, deep sea fishing, snooker, darts, pitch and putt, hill walking, paintball, clay pigeon shooting and quad biking.

The work of the Primary Healthcare Team (PHC) since their graduation (attended by



President Mc Aleese in June 2005) includes **encouraging and facilitating mothers to attend the local Health Centre in Ballymun for primary immunisations and boosters.**

Visitors – from other local community groups, national agencies and

government departments – were invited to listen to 'Voices: Traveller Women'. The interviews were recorded by artist Michael McLoughlin and focus on Traveller culture and the work of the PHC team.

The team also provide information and support to Traveller women in Ballymun in accessing sexual health services. **A photography project that highlighted environmental health issues was displayed. Photographer Derek Speirs was involved.**

Exchange House Traveller Youth Service also had a display on their work. They are the main provider of Youth Services to the Travelling community in the greater Dublin area. In co-operation with the CDP they deliver a holistic programme of work with young people on the site from ages 10-25 years. Traveller Youth Service has improved the personal and community development skills of many young Travellers.

And, participants in the senior and junior homework club showed off their work.

A report published by the CDP entitled 'Traveller Accommodation in St. Margaret's Park, Ballymun' was distributed to those who attended the open day. It is available to anyone interested and comes with a DVD.

**For more information, contact Damien Smyth, Project Co-ordinator, St. Margaret's Travellers Community Association, St. Margaret's Road, St. Margaret's Park, Ballymun, Dublin 1. Tel. 01-8622144. Fax: 01-8623639. Email: saintmargarets@eircom.net**

## Principles at work

ST. Margaret's CDP is a coming together of Travellers and settled people and aims to promote the recognition of Travellers as a nomadic ethnic group with its own distinctive culture.

It aims to promote Traveller self-determination to work for real change in improving Traveller's health, accommodation and education. Therefore equality, participation, consultation and community development principles are central to the work of the organisation.

The open day reflected these aspects of the organisation in a very positive way:





Members of the Voluntary Management Committee of Iorras Le Chéile CDP at the launch of their report 'Growing Up In Erris 2006'.

# What is it like growing up in Erris in 2006?

IN a report titled 'Growing Up In Erris 2006' by Iorras Le Chéile CDP in Belmullet, Co. Mayo, 160 young people were asked 77 questions on what it is like growing up in Erris in the early 21st century.

Young people said the main issues facing them are drugs, alcohol, crime, family problems/family breakdown and suicide. Young people felt that they had no say in decisions being made in their local communities.

The most popular club to which young people were affiliated was the GAA. Soccer clubs and a church choir/group also featured highly.

When asked what was the most important thing in their lives, family, a social life, friends and good health were rated very highly.

The report recommendations include:

- The establishment of an Erris Youth Interagency Network to include youth representatives and representatives from voluntary organizations

- The setting up of an Erris Youth Information Centre. Currently, young people who need information on sensitive issues

have great difficulty in accessing this information in a place where they can feel safe. They need to know their queries will be treated in strict confidence.

- Identifying a building that for use as a designated Youth Café or meeting place. Young people need a place to meet.

- The extension of The Rural Transport Initiative to meet the transport needs of young people living in an area the size of Erris. Lack of transport excludes many young people from participating in activities and attending events.

Local athlete Nicole Geraghty launched "Growing Up In Erris 2006", a study of the challenges and opportunities facing young people in Erris. It was compiled by Iorras Le Chéile with funding from The Irish Youth Foundation and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The co-operation and participation of local agencies and organisations added greatly to the report. The author was Mary Geever. Tá leagan Gaeilge den Tuairisc ar fáil.

For more information contact Rose Walsh on 097-20828

## Kerry estate vies for award

THE Shanakill and Rahoonane estates in one of Tralee's RAPID areas has been nominated by Kerry County Council for the prestigious Pride of Place 32-County Ireland Community Award. Tralee CDP supports this group as part of its RAPID work.

The CDP and the Shanakill and Rahoonane Estate Management & Community Safety group (EMCS) put out fliers to all residents about a final clean up the day before the judges visited.

In an innovative move, young people who came out to do a litter pick up and some weeding were promised two hours of internet access in return for their help.

Residents on the EMCS are busy worked with the CDP's Outreach Worker, June Moynihan, on a 30 minute presentation for the judges who walked the area with the residents to see the community as it stood. The judges talked to local people about their role as active community volunteers. They wanted the residents to show them what they are proud of.

The Shanakill and Rahoonane group are optimistic about this award as they can demonstrate excellent community participation: in their estate management group, at public meetings (held in the interest of openness and accountability to update the wider community on what decisions the committee has made on their behalf) and in their involvement in the RAPID Review Community Newsletter coordinated by Tralee CDP.

Recently the CDP brought together two youth groups in the area to encourage young people to participate at committee level. At the last estate management meeting, youth representatives made a presentation about the needs and concerns of young people in the area. This forms the basis of a joint community development workplan for both adults and youth in these estates.

## Study visit at Tralee CDP

TRALEE CDP recently hosted a group of 25 people from Knockanrawley CDP (Tipperary) and St. Mary's CDP (Limerick) as well as residents from Shanakill and Rahoonane (Tralee) and members of the CDP's Management Committee.

Some of the contacts were made following publication in 'Changing Ireland' of an article by Sharon Browne, Tralee CDP co-ordinator, which demonstrated the use of community development principles in estate management work.

During the visit, Sharon made a presentation on the work and development of Tralee CDP. The focus was on the CDP's RAPID work, Voter Education and Social Inclusion Measures. Ann O'Dwyer, the Tralee RAPID Coordinator, made a presentation about our learning from RAPID. Residents gave a tour of their estates, the family resource centre, organic garden and playground.

It turns out that there are very different approaches to community participation in other RAPID areas. The visitors said the process in Tralee is very open and accountable. The outcome was that the gathering agreed to organise a regional seminar next year with CDPs and RAPID Coordinators. Also, the visitors invited Tralee CDP to their projects on a return trip.



## Mayo islands get piers worth €12m

A NEW 110 metre pier for Clare Island and a 25 metre extension to the existing pier at Inishturk Island, both off Co. Mayo, were officially opened on Friday 30th June, by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Éamon Ó Cuív.

At a combined total cost of over €12 million, these piers represents the largest ever investment in islands infrastructure. Both CDPs on Clare Island and Inishturk were involved in the development.

A further mark of progress for Ireland's offshore islands is that there are now 17 state-assisted island ferry and air services compared to just five in 1997. The photograph shows Minister Ó Cuív travelling by more traditional means during summer-time last year.

## A diary of anti-social behaviour

- From an urban estate in Ireland . . .  
 . . . a resident writes

**INTRODUCTION:** The author of this Diary is known to the editor but wishes to remain anonymous. For readers who missed our Spring edition of 'Changing Ireland', it featured a 10-page special report on Community Development responses to anti-social behaviour in Ireland. A limited number of copies of the magazine are still available (at no charge) – see page 2 for details on contacting us. To see what residents of some communities are struggling with on a daily basis, read on:



**I'D** heard that there was a bit of a problem with anti-social behaviour in the area I was moving into, but seeing as I keep to myself, I thought that if I kept my head down then I'd be left alone.

*Here's how it went:*

- First day, as I moved in, a stoned adolescent fired rocks and called me "a black refugee bastard". Found out later he was on heroin, must have effected his eyesight (I'm about as black as Bertie Ahern).
- Later, a Traveller child called me a "dirty buffer" just because I didn't know any of the local Traveller

families.

- I get regular verbal abuse from kids at the corner. I think it is because I stand out for not wearing a tracksuit or having a local accent.
- Because my house is end-terrace, my garden was used as landfill.
- The empty house at the back was petrol-bombed and is now derelict.
- Someone stole the oil from my central heating tank.
- Someone stole tiles from my garage roof.
- One night, I found 5 teenagers trying to prise open the garage-door. They got tired, rang the doorbell and

asked for the contents. No!

- Gardai stopped me cycling home with my girlfriend. They said, "Because ye are well dressed and have lights on your bikes, we thought ye were lost tourists."
  - This week, a 12-year old stole my wallet on my way to work.
- One of my neighbours finally advised, "If you're not from here, you have to make friends quickly with good neighbours and let people see that you're part of the neighbourhood. Otherwise, you become a target."

I guess the ostrich approach wasn't the smartest idea.