

The National Magazine of the Local and Community Development Programme
www.changingireland.ie / www.changingireland.blogspot.com

€2.25



5,000 NEW COMMUNITY JOBS (pages 6-7)

Scrum over...
***Now tackle
community
issues!***



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

Scrum Over: NOW TACKLE COMMUNITY ISSUES!



The scrum is over. Now let's see the newly elected Government tackle the tremendous challenges facing communities and let's see them do so in collaboration with people on the ground. We've published the community-related pledges made by the political parties and it'll be worth looking back in a year's time to see how many of the community initiatives were implemented.

People are dying because of the recession and everyone

knows it.

We don't have people torching themselves Tunisian-style in front of Dail Eireann. They're dying quietly of curable diseases, from preventable malnutrition, hypothermia and drug overdoses.

The new Government must take steps immediately to give people more ownership over what happens them in their lives, in their communities. It should promote real active citizenship, community activism and charitable volunteering. People want to feel involved.

The new Government should tell community organisations to speak up, to advocate, to lobby and campaign – that they have a right and duty to do so – and that they can do so without fear of losing State funding. The unequal structures in society need to be highlighted every day.

It will have to strengthen laws on equality and human rights because they're just not up to scratch. An United Nations human rights delegation visited recently and they didn't come to see the Cliffs of Moher.

Nationally, there is good news on jobs: there are 5,000 short-term community jobs coming through the Tús scheme this year. It's a drop in the ocean, but a welcome one for communities and those who will join the schemes. It's being rolled out through the Local and Community Development Programme and you can read about it on pages 6-7.

However, if I'd to recommend one page over all the others, I'd say skip straight onto page 23 – if you can't smell the coffee yet, you will after you read Davie Philip.

DEDICATION

This issue is dedicated to the memory of the late Rachel Peavoy from Ballymun.

Published By:

'Changing Ireland' is the national magazine of the Local and Community Development Programme and is managed and published by Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd. through funding from the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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

Office base: Unit 3, Sarsfield Gardens Business Centre, Sarsfield Gardens, Moyross, Limerick.

Tel Editor: 061-458011.

Tel Administrator: 061-458090.

Fax: 061-325300.

E-mail: editor@changingireland.ie and

admin@changingireland.ie

Website: www.changingireland.ie

Also check us out on Youtube, Facebook and Blogger.

ABOUT US and the Local and Community Development Programme



Every community, district and county in the Republic of Ireland is covered by the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) which employs around 3,000 workers to bring about positive change at local level using a Community Development approach.

The Programme has a budget of €63.5 million for 2011 and Forum Connemara's website gives a good flavour of the kind of work that is covered; there are over 50 development organisations like Forum involved in delivering the Programme.

The Local Development Companies aim to tackle poverty and social exclusion through partnership between Government and people in the most disadvantaged communities and it has 4 main goals:

- 1: Promote awareness, knowledge and uptake of a wide range of statutory, voluntary and community services.
- 2: Increase access to formal and informal educational, recreational and cultural activities and resources.
- 3: Improve people's work readiness and employment prospects.
- 4: Getting people from local communities involved in decision-making, in formulating policy and in pushing for the best that their communities deserve. (The official line reads - "Promote engagement with policy, practice, and decision-making processes on matters affecting local communities.")

The Programme is managed by an agency called POBAL on behalf of the Irish Government's Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs and was established in 2010 when the Department amalgamated two existing Programmes (the Community Development Programme and the Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme.).

Pobal have published a 21-page booklet that gives the A-Z on the Programme (which is now available on our website) while here in 'Changing Ireland' we're currently working on a map to connect people to the Programme area by area.

'Changing Ireland' is the Programme's national magazine, having come out of the Community Development Programme. Check us out online! If you work or volunteer with the Programme and have a story, call us!

Production:

Editor: Allen Meagher

Administrator (part-time): Tim Hourigan

Editorial team: Allen Meagher, Viv Sadd, Jim O'Brien, Gráinne NicDhonnacha, Gearoid Fitzgibbon, Juan Carlos Azzopardi and Allen Meagher.

Reporting: Articles are primarily written by Community Development workers and volunteers who have an interest in reporting.

Reporter (work placement): Brendan Meehan

Design and print by: The Print Factory, Five Alley, Birr, Co. Offaly. W: www.printfactory.ie

Thanks To . . .

'Changing Ireland' thanks everyone involved in the production of Issue 35.

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 Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd., or the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.

4 NEWS

Anti-Racism work: File goes to DPP
Projects helped during atrocious weather
Development education courses in Dublin
Shakespeare a hit in Limerick
LDCs with blogs



5 FG's PLANS FOR COMMUNITIES:

For and against

6-7 – TÚS SCHEME LAUNCHED

5000 jobs in communities
LDCs responsible for roll-out
Report from Kilkenny

8 CHANGING IRELAND:

New Board
new national contacts database
new LCDP map



9 SECTOR NEWS:

NALA's new course;
UNHCHR visits,
Jesse Jackson too!

10 MEDIATION:

- Saving money and possibly lives in Mayo

11 HORACE!:

- Shockingly Good News for Ireland!



12 OPINION:

- Citizen Action puts it up to us now!

13 RESOURCE SECTION:

- Pilot has parents queuing up



14-15 VOLUNTEER PROFILE:

- Patsy Cronin interview

16 THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME:

- National impact of 2700 workers
- Case-study: Revamp Furniture-restoration

17-21 POLITICAL PARTIES's IDEAS FOR COMMUNITIES:

Here's what you voted for (or against)!

22-23 COMMUNITY RESILIENCE:

Getting ready for peak oil
Is Community Development failing us?
Free training with Greenworks
Living in the Cloughjordan Ecovillage

24 COMMUNITY POLICING:

- How to cut crime by texting

CHANGING IRELAND



Projects to the rescue in snow and ice



2010 January - RSS Supervisor Tim Ring making deliveries on foot when the van could go no further in the snow in Kilcorney Co Cork

One of the final acts by CDP committees prior to disbanding (most have disbanded) at the end of 2010 was to help people caught out in the atrocious wintry weather.

The team at CLASP in Co. Sligo probably saved lives when they went visiting people with hot meals and a friendly hello in dangerously ice-bound rural areas.

CDPs and Local Development Companies from Dublin to Kerry did their best to help out during the big freeze.

Margaret O'Shea of Kerry Network of People with Disabilities urged projects, through our Facebook page to "Just call and visit and bring packets of soup; it's no load or big expense." She said that one of the Network's members made firewood to distribute to isolated members.

From Dublin, Patricia Whelan of Project West CDP reported: "We dropped notes in the letterboxes of the old folks who we know live alone or just can't get out of the house. We told them we would pick up some food in local shops for them and left our phone number on the notes for them to contact us."

South Kerry Development Partnership also helped out locally using vans to criss-cross the area and check in on people.

'Chew On This' course in Dublin



Lourdes Youth & Community Services are running a one-day course on March 3rd to encourage community workers to explore how what we eat affects our planet and its people.

Participants were expected to pass on what they learn to groups they are working with. The course also has a practical art dimension to it.

The course was free and was organised in conjunction with the Eco-UNESCO.

Communities taking over shops and pubs

The only pub on Inis Turk is community-owned. It's been run for many years by the voluntary management committee of the local community development project.

In Britain, they're now going further than that and communities are looking at taking over post offices and shops as well as pubs. The alternative is that villages will lose valuable community assets.

Mark Hennessy covered the story for the Irish Times on December 16th and it's worth looking up. However, he was probably unaware that a small Mayo island has already set the standard!

The story has added relevance for Ireland because the new Tús scheme, launched in December and providing 5,000 work-placements nationwide for the long-term unemployed, offers community organisations the chance to acquire staff to work in unconventional areas such as shop-management and so on. For more, read pages 6-7.

Garda investigation into racism – files go to DPP



Garda files in relation to three individuals have been lodged with the Director for Public Prosecutions in connection with online racism that targeted Travellers.

Prosecutions are being sought under Section 2 of the Incitement to Hatred Act.

The Gardai launched an investigation last summer after complaints were lodged by members of LCDP-supported groups that included Pavee Point and the Kerry Travellers Development Group.

'Changing Ireland' played a supportive role and as was pointed out in previous editions of this magazine, if the DPP proceeds to prosecute it will be the first time that people have been brought before the courts in connection to online hate crime.

Reference: 'Changing Ireland' news reports in Issues 32 and 33, available online.



Shakespeare a hit in Limerick

Shakespeare's plays are getting very popular in Limerick as local students have discovered the joy of stage drama thanks to work led by the PAUL Partnership.

During four workshops, 69 Junior Cert students from 4 Limerick schools brought two Shakespeare plays to life and such was the project's success that it is to run again this year.

Despite expecting to be bored and not having high expectations, students became enthusiastic during the workshops, reported the Partnership. Students liked acting out scenes themselves and asked for more workshops and longer ones at that.

Teachers felt it was very innovative.

The Partnership approached the work in co-ordination with Limerick City Hall, the Belltable Theatre and Limerick Regeneration Agency.

Blogs in Ballyhoura and Kilkenny

Two Local Development Companies covering Ballyhoura and Kilkenny have set up local community blogs worth checking out. They are: <http://blog.cklp.ie/> and <http://ballyhoura.wordpress.com/category/community/>

Fine Gael plans for communities are radical

By Rachael Finucane

Fine Gael has ambitious plans to reform the political and public service landscape over the next five years but what will the impact be on the community sector?

Spokesman for Community, Equality and Gael-tacht Affairs, Frank Feighan, recently commented that while there is a necessity for deficit reduction, “we intend to work in consultation with the community and voluntary sector in order to avoid a ‘slash and burn’ approach to spending.”

Fine Gael vows to “go beyond the recommendations of An Bord Snip” to stop “confusing and wasteful fragmentation in service delivery”. It proposes to abolish or merge 145 quangos and save €65 million.

Several quangos would be affected, including Pobal, which will be merged into local authorities.

ILDN'S BRIAN CARTY

Brian Carty of the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN) said “no reference” was made in the FG manifesto to the LCDP and “until we see what the new Government decides these are only proposals at this stage.”

The network is going to publish the number of jobs that have been created across all programmes, including LCDPs, LEADER and the Local Employment Service.

“We want to try and remind various parties and bodies we work with of the actual impact on the ground we have as a collective of 53 local companies. We hope that it will help inform whatever the incoming Government may be.”

FINE GAEL'S PHIL HOGAN

Fine Gael TD, Phil Hogan, said it is “essential” to develop a proper system of local Government with “accountable” local services and agencies.

When asked about potential job losses in the reforms, he said: “People that are doing a good job in communities at the moment will continue to play that role” under the structure of local Government.

“I would say most of the people involved would welcome the opportunity of a career move into local Government and to continue doing the very valuable work that they are doing. No role for any community group will be diluted under that plan. Fine Gael sees a strong role for community. Any suggestion to the contrary is scaremongering by people who are ill-informed.”

He added that, “the community programmes that I



FG's Phil Hogan

will speak of know exactly where they stand with FG in as far as their future funding requirements and their future role will be much more valued and retained”.

OTHER REFORMS

Other reforms include changing the Community Employment Schemes. Fine Gael commits to 5,000 CE places but with reforms to make them “more market-orientated” and with more placements in private sector businesses and cutting the duration to six months in most cases. FG will introduce a new single Payment & Entitlements Service (PES)—a ‘one stop shop’ for unemployed people that will take in “all their welfare, training and job-seeking needs”. FÁS will be dismantled.

EARLY REACTION

The manager of the Ballyfermot Partnership, Ciaran Reid, was reluctant to single out any political manifesto but had some general thoughts.

“It’s very easy to talk about ‘one stop shops’ but do you still need a level of infrastructure to enable people to access the services particularly in more disadvantaged communities who traditionally have a problem accessing services. You need intermediate bodies to support them in that, whether they are people with disabilities or members of the Travelling community etc who traditionally don’t associate themselves with services like FAS or others.”

He thinks it is helpful “have a group discussion around the unique roles that each development agency can play” and if partnerships are absorbed into local authorities “then that does present a chal-

lenge as to whether there is an independent space for the community and voluntary sector or as to whether all services just become State services and there is actually no voluntary input.”

FROM BALLYFERMOT TO KILDARE

Justin Larkin, CEO of County Kildare Leader Partnership, would object to Local Development Companies being referred to as “quangos”:

“We have 5 board members from local authorities and 6 from statutory agencies and they don’t get paid anything by us. The other members of the board are completely voluntary, we just pay them mileage costs. Any savings you’d make by disbanding the board would be very small.”

He added: “The McCarthy report didn’t do the old Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme any good, since the outcomes of the work were not easily measured. He pointed out that there were “plenty tools available now to measure outcomes” under the new Programme.

‘POWER TO THE PEOPLE’

The manifesto references Fine Gael’s Power to the People local Government reform document in 2009. Reaction to PTTP was mixed, with fears of job losses in the community sector, but it is unclear if all the proposals in the document will still stand. With any Government Ciaran Reid stressed the importance of engagement: “LCDPs, community projects and Traveller Resource Centres etc have provided a very good conduit for the [engagement] process to be enabled. I think an important principle in civil society is that there is a creative tension between citizens and the State in terms of ensuring that the best outcome is achieved.”

NOTE: FOR PARTY POLICY SUMMARIES IN RELATION TO COMMUNITIES, CHECK PAGES 16-20.

“Fine Gael sees a strong role for community. Any suggestion to the contrary is scaremongering by people who are ill-informed”

Tús getting into gear across the country

Brendan Meehan reports

The Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people.

All the work carried out by participants in the Tús scheme must benefit the community.

But is it really going to appeal to all parties?

CEO of the Kilkenny Leader Partnership, Declan Rice, told 'Changing Ireland':

"We are very interested in the idea of work placement and we have had continued interest in the Tús programme, but don't have a start as of yet. We await to hear from the department of Social Protection."

"We'd even have places within our own organisation," Declan added.

Unemployed people participating in the programme will work 19.5 hours per week with a non-profit organisation and will be paid a minimum of an extra €20 in their weekly payments. It goes directly into their bank accounts.

Geraldine Houston of the Kildare Leader

Partnership reported they've set up a committee and are preparing application forms. She said community organisations have shown "great interest."

Meanwhile, in Dublin, a Tolka Area Partnership representative said, "We have written to the community organisations and expressed our interest" suggesting that the Tús programme for them is still at the preliminary planning stage. She confirmed: "It has yet to be fully rolled out."

Justin Larkin, CEO of County Kildare Leader Partnership, reported: "We've established a working group to see how we're going to roll this out. We're getting a lot of enquires, but we have no role in the pre-selection of candidates.



They're very eager. We're now also making direct contact with the local community groups that can benefit from the scheme."

The Northside Partnership in Dublin are running a Tús pilot programme:

"We have received a list of candidates, and we are matching their skills with the job," said Cepta Dowling, enterprise and employment manager with the Northside Partnership. To find compatibility, they are conducting one to one meetings with the potential participants.

"They are referred to us by the Social Welfare, and the response from people has been great, people have a very positive attitude towards Tús"

Just recently they held a meeting involving the community organisations and the candidates. "Both sides are enthusiastic, people simply want to work," Cepta said. "We should have it up and running by March, it's just a matter of putting the nuts and bolts in place," she added.

There has been some criticism aimed at the initiative; a website run by Councillor Gino Kenny labels it as "a form of intimidation."

Cepta saw it differently: "The letter they get is quite soft, not threatening at all. There is an option to turn down an offer, but you need a valid reason."

Tús – steady stream of enquiries in Kilkenny



Kilkenny Leader Partnership (KLP) reported that by late January it had a "steady stream" of enquiries from community groups about the new Tús scheme.

The KLP blog provides a good picture of what's involved nationally for participants, for beneficiary communities and for lead organisations such as the KLP:

"Just before Christmas, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) was notified that it would be allocated 80 positions for placement on the Tús programme. The Department of Social Protection will operate Tús nationally and is availing of the services of local LEADER Partnerships such as KLP to place 5,000 people who are unemployed in non-profit companies and community organisations.

"Participants will be placed for a 12-month period, retaining their primary benefits with a small additional weekly stipend of €20.

"KLP is excited about this new initiative... but it is clear it will provide significant challenges as well as opportunities for the company.

"KLP proposes to use the new programme as a cornerstone of its Employability Strategy and will be taking a 'developmental approach' to all placements. What does that mean? Well – community and voluntary groups will be expected to demonstrate what skills they see the participant being equipped with at the end of their placement. Of course it will be a two-way street and the non-profit company can certainly expect to benefit from the placement. There is already a steady stream of communities making contact as news of Tús becomes widespread.

"It will be interesting to see how the first tranche of placements work from both sides. Given the profile of unemployed people over the last two years we can expect a very diverse group of individuals with equally varied skills.

"KLP expects that we are likely to have a mix of people with construction backgrounds, administration, and customer service skills being prominent – particularly construction! Funnily enough these are often just the types of people that communities want to drive or maintain their com-

munity projects.

"It seems that unemployed people will not be able to self-present or ask to go on Tús. The Department will select participants from the register on a randomised basis. KLP is starting to get its head around how it itself may pro-actively create developmental opportunities and believes that its expanded Housing Aid scheme and its Trail Kilkenny Walks development and maintenance programme will provide good opportunities for construction placements.

"The experience that KLP has of operating the Rural Social Scheme and the Community Services Programme has informed KLP's plans. There are also some imaginative proposals within the wider company for people with other skillsets.

"But what if you're not 12 months unemployed – are you excluded? Well you're not eligible for Tús but (you may be eligible for) other placement initiatives such as the IBEC graduate programme or FÁS's two programmes for graduate and non-graduates. KLP intend to look to those on these initiatives and to develop others to offer opportunities to as many of the unemployed as possible. That's the central principle of (our) Employability Strategy."

Source: <http://blog.cklp.ie/>

Note: There is a lot of information online about the Tús scheme. For instance, you'll find a FAQ section at: <http://www.welfare.ie>

Tús – a start for 5,000 long-term unemployed people

5,000 long-term unemployed people will this year begin working for community organisations through the Tús programme. Tús is the Irish for start.

They will get 12-months job experience and be paid between €20 and €100+ extra in their welfare payments, REPORTS ALLEN MEAGHER.

If the Local Development Companies charged with rolling out the scheme at county level do a good job there is every chance another 5,000 or more places will be added to the scheme.

The scheme was launched in December by Minister for Social Protection, Éamon Ó Cuív and is being rolled out nationwide through companies in the Local and Community Development Programme. Most counties were allocated 80 or more places on the scheme.

The scheme wasn't devised to see "hundreds of people chopping bushes", said the Minister. "Work is very important for well-being and Tús is for people aged 18 and up who've been out of work for more than a year. It's like a Community Employment scheme without a training element."

"It's to reward people with get-up-and-go and to help young people to get their feet on the

ground."

The Minister said he viewed the scheme as a stepping-stone into further employment but that remains to be seen.

There are no permanent places involved and it's for one year only.

"But it's a huge opportunity," the Minister said, "for individuals and for communities."

"From the community perspective, obviously if we spent €2 million on a sports or community facility, we want to see it open all-hours. We want to get the maximum community gain from the capital spending.

Minister Ó Cuív advised urban LDC staff who will be responsible for Tús in their areas to spend a few days with rural LDCs who run RSS schemes. The schemes are similar.

Some more points made at the launch:

The LDC is the legal employer.

The Tús Scheme costs €5,000 per person more than the cost of keeping them on social welfare.

Pobal will run a centralised payroll system for Tús.

There won't be any national monitoring committee for this. Trade unions, IBEC and others are already on the boards of LDCs.

Supervisors will be employed.

The number of Tús jobs per LDC area was capped at 180.

Communities needed to use their imaginations as to what kind of work they could offer participants.

Minister Ó Cuív gave the example of an island he knew where the only shopkeeper wished to retire and was "begging for the community to take over the shop."

TJ Fleming, principal officer with the Department of Social Protection said, "We need to respect the capacity of the Community and Voluntary Sector to take up this offer. It'll take a while for them to understand how it will operate and the benefits to them."

He pointed out that the wide spectrum of community groups can apply and that it went beyond "parish groups" and could even include Irish-based aid organisations supporting projects abroad, for instance NGOs who recycle medical equipment to send abroad, not just for locally-focussed community groups.

Ironically, 5,000 is the number of jobs the trade unions say are being lost through cutbacks to the community sector.

Tús scheme launch

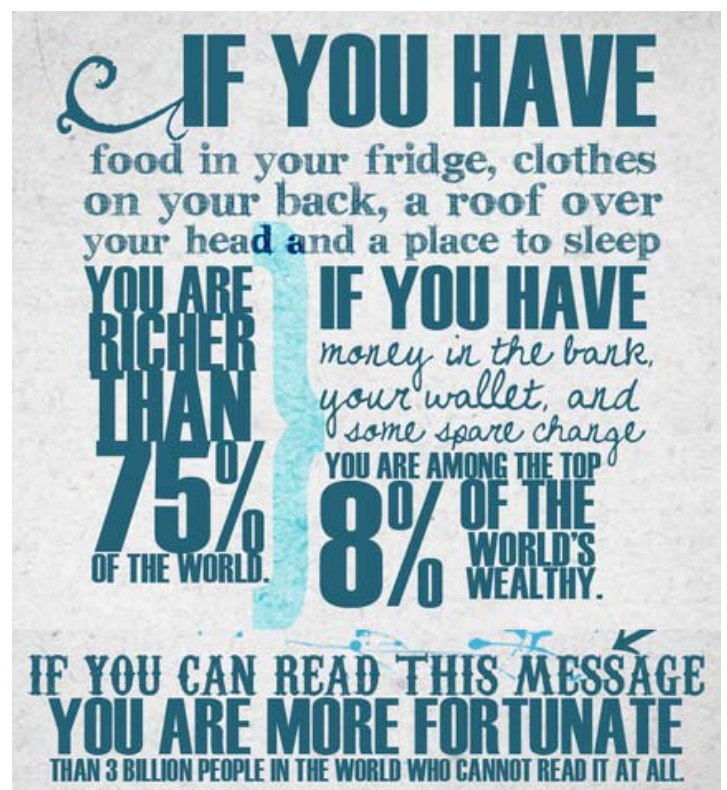


The official launch of the Tús scheme took place in snowy conditions on December 21st in Dublin.

North Tipperary representatives were among those who braved the inclement weather to attend the Tús launch and hear first hand what it

was going to deliver.

Pictured (l-to-r): TJ Fleming, principal officer at the Department of Social Protection, Celine Moore, principal officer in the Regional Support Office, Department of Social Protection, David Coyne, Rural Social Scheme supervisor based in Nenagh, Michael Murray, CEO of North Tipperary Leader Partnership (NTLP), then Minister Eamon Ó Cuív and Cllr John Carroll, chairperson of NTLP.



New board takes charge of 'Changing Ireland'



A new voluntary board of directors has taken charge of 'Changing Ireland' which is now a stand-alone company in its own right. It is registered with the companies office as Changing Ireland Community Media Limited and an application is currently being processed with regard to providing the company with charitable status.

The new chairperson of 'Changing Ireland' is Gearoid Fitzgibbon. He has written reports for the magazine for the past five years and is employed

as a community development worker with North Tipperary LEADER Partnership. Gearoid is joined on the board by Breda Lymer of West Training, journalist Jim O'Brien, adult education worker Ellen Duffy and Mahon CDP co-ordinator Viv Saddy.

'Changing Ireland' has a provisional budget allocation of €118,000 for 2011. The company employs two staff, an editor and a part-time administrator.

The change of management comes after nearly a decade of successful management under the Community Development Network Moyross Ltd which has now become part of the new Limerick City CDP.

New Programme contacts database

You can now contact anyone nationwide in the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) through a national contacts database 'Changing Ireland' has compiled the contacts database of staff and voluntary board members throughout the Programme and it is available through a link on our website, changingireland.ie

It doesn't matter who you're looking for – we've them listed: LCDP staff working with youth, jobs clubs, mediation, finance, jobs schemes, etc.

Note: If your Local Development Company's listing is incomplete please fill out the form on our website homepage and return it to us by email.

Our older database which includes CDPs that have amalgamated with Local Development Companies (or are in the process of doing so) remains accessible, again via our website.

LCDP contacts directory 2011

Google docs: LCDP contacts directory 2011 from Changing Ireland

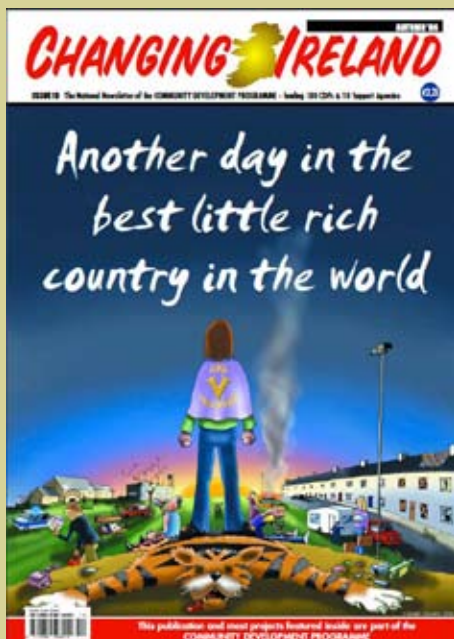
Project	County	Address	Position	Name
1. Louth Leadership Company	Louth	Workplace Centre Mayfield Street Drogheda Co. Louth		
2. Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership Co Dublin	Dublin	18 Drumfin Park, Ballyfermot, Dublin 16	Administrator + 353-1-8089163	Richard H
3. I.R.D. Duhalice	Cork	James O'Sullivan Institute, Newmarket, Co. Cork	CEO	Maura W
4. LEITRIM (ENIGATED) DEVELOPMENT	Leitrim	Church Street Drumshinga Co. Leitrim	Childcare & Family Support Worker	Patricia J
5. LEITRIM (ENIGATED) DEVELOPMENT	Leitrim	Crest Union Building, Mullin, Co. Leitrim	Community Development Officer	Deirdre G
6. CPLN AREA PARTNERSHIP	Dublin	Unit D, Rangor Road Business Park Range Community Development Board	Co-Ordinator	Carol J
7. West Limerick Resources	Limerick	36, Marys Road, Newcaste West, Co. Linc Community Development Dubre Bena OC		
8. West Limerick Resources	Limerick	36, Marys Road, Newcaste West, Co. Linc Community Development Dubre Bena OC		
9. CPLN AREA PARTNERSHIP	Dublin	Unit D, Rangor Road Business Park Range Community Development Project	Co-Ordinator	Carol J
10. West Limerick Resources	Limerick	36, Marys Road, Newcaste West, Co. Linc Enterprise and Project Officer		Brenda H
11. I.R.D. Duhalice	Cork	James O'Sullivan Institute, Newmarket, Co. Cork	Enterprise Team Leader	Esthera
12. Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership Co Dublin	Dublin	18 Drumfin Park, Ballyfermot, Dublin 16	Harper House Coordinator + 353-1-8089163	Richard H
13. Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership Co Dublin	Dublin	18 Drumfin Park, Ballyfermot, Dublin 16	Job Initiative Teamleader + 353-1-8089163	Richard H
14. Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership Co Dublin	Dublin	18 Drumfin Park, Ballyfermot, Dublin 16	Manager Ballyfermot Partners	Carol H
15. CPLN AREA PARTNERSHIP	Dublin	Unit D, Rangor Road Business Park Range	Part-time Community Developer	Ann Troy
16. West Limerick Resources	Limerick	36, Marys Road, Newcaste West, Co. Linc	Project Officer	Elisavir H
17. West Limerick Resources	Limerick	36, Marys Road, Newcaste West, Co. Linc	Project Officer	Suzanne

LCDP interactive map in production



Our website will shortly feature an interactive map for the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) with links to each of the 52 Local Development Companies and other community organisations involved in the Programme.

The plan is that every organisation's website will be accessible through a link on the map.



FOR THE RECORD: We wrote Celtic Tiger's epitaph... IN 2006

For the record, 'Changing Ireland's cartoon cover of Autumn 2006 featured a dead 'Celtic Tiger' with a 'Super-Volunteer' standing over the corpse surveying a scene of urban chaos, heroin addiction, alcoholism, crime, dereliction, suicide and emigration.

The cover was designed to point to the superhuman struggle required by volunteers in the face of near socio-economic collapse in our poorer communities.

The magazine cover took on added meaning one week after cartoonist Austin Creaven completed his work when children sitting in

a parked car in Moyross were petrol-bombed.

However, the cover was intended to be generic and the area depicted could have been any of a number of disadvantaged areas.

The greater pity is that our warning about the 'Celtic Tiger's demise wasn't listened to, no more than were warnings from the small number of smart economists at the time.

Join us on our Facebook page (there's a link on the homepage of www.changingireland.ie) and see which of our 35 covers to date is your personal favourite.



Bad boy Zumo in Fair City had a literacy difficulty until Charlie helped him out. Now Zumo is backing a service that should see more people in Ireland learn to read and write using a new easy-to-use website.

Zumo says try NALA's new online course

Patrick FitzPatrick – bad boy Zumo in Fair City – had a literacy difficulty as part of one plotline until his good neighbour Charlie helped him out.

Now Zumo, or Patrick to use his real name, is backing a campaign to get people with low literacy/numeracy difficulties to try out a new teach-yourself-online service.

The website www.writeon.ie has been devised by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and is free and open for use by community groups as much as by individuals.

Based on a new Common Awards System (announced in Oct 2010) it's the only distance learning website to offer learners Levels 2 and even Level 3 FETAC accreditation which is the equivalent to Junior Cert level in the formal education system.

The course includes the following Level 3 minor awards: computer literacy, internet skills, digital media, career preparation, health and safety awareness, maths, application of numbers, communications, personal effectiveness and personal and interpersonal skills.

It's designed to "recognise and build on participants' existing knowledge and it

supports new learning," said Inez Bailey, NALA director. "Support is also available if needed through a free distance learning tutor and individuals can work through any of the awards at their own time and pace."

People engaging in the online course can do so confidentially if they wish.

A further bonus for participants is that if they are currently getting Jobseeker's payment for more than 3 months, they may be eligible to receive €100 on finishing the course.

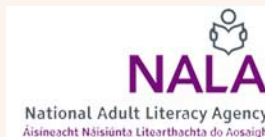
An example of one way for a community project to use the site is: where a project is putting a group through a computer literacy programme it can encourage participants to complete the digital media award online thereby adding to their qualifications and moving closer to a major Level 3 award.

The popular FETAC Level 2 option on the writeon site has, since 2009, reached over 10,000 users who have received over 1494 Level 2 certificates.

The Level 3 awards are new.

'Writeon' as a resource to the Community Sector

From Summer 2011, Community Centres and adult education providers will only be able to offer FETAC to their learners if they have a validated programme under the FETAC common Awards System. Some centres are already using www.writeon.ie to support their learners to achieve qualifications and numbers are expected to grow.



For further information, call Denise McBride, NALA's adult education and guidance co-ordinator on 087-9852233. For students, they should ring NALA directly on freephone 1800 20 20 65 or text 'LEARN' to 50050 or log on directly to www.writeon.ie



Jesse Jackson launched the Equality and Rights Alliance plan in Dublin in February

Jesse Jackson & UN visit Ireland over human rights

"You may not be responsible for being down, but you must be responsible for getting up. Don't let anything break your spirit. Forward ever, backward never," says Jesse Jackson.

He was speaking in Dublin on February 13th as he launched a new plan drawn up by the Equality and Rights Alliance which has 160 member organisations (including 'Changing Ireland').

Also in Ireland recently were a team from the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights for their first visit in over a decade. They will release their findings shortly.



Allegra Franchetti and Lydia Rabinovich, human rights officers with the UNHCHR, visited Ireland in January.

Mediation service launched in Mayo



At the launch of Mayo Community Mediation: Tricia Hayes, Geoffrey Corry, Tomás Lally (Chairperson of Mayo Community Mediation) and to the front Teresa Carney, Cllr. Ger Deere and Frances Stephenson.

Mayo has a new mediation service that can help in neighbourhood rows, family conflict and other areas before situations escalate. A team of 12 trained mediators have been deployed and the new service is free, easily accessible and serves the whole county.

"Our initial focus has been on a community mediation cases, neighbourhood disputes, and assisting separating couples with parenting plans," said Tomás Lally, chairperson of Mayo Community Mediation. "However we hope to become involved in other areas like conflict within families, community groups, at work or at school."

The service was launched in December by Geoffrey Corry of Athena Mediation who talked about the humanising moment in the mediation process when disputing parties relate to each other on a level beyond their animosity towards each other.

He pointed out that mediation services can also play a role in restorative justice whereby offenders meet victims and work to repair the harm done.

The launch was attended by transition year students, Gardaí, local councillors, mediators, representatives of community group reps from across the county and staff from agencies backing the new service.

Mary Healy, who runs an innovative Peer Mediation Programme with transition year students in the Christian Brother's Secondary School in Roscommon talked about the importance of involving young people.

Mayor of Castlebar, Cllr. Ger Deere, spoke of the local need that existed for the service and his views were echoed by Cllr. Therese Ruane.

Tomás Lally said the project's unique selling point was that while it was a new service it uses existing resources such as accommodation and trained volunteers in an imaginative way, thereby cutting down on administration and rental costs.

He explained how the service has secured small amounts of funding from a number of agencies and pointed out that the service's 12 mediators received certified training which was accredited by the Mediators Institute of Ireland.

The service is receiving support through the Mayo North East LEADER Partnership Company and South West Mayo Development Company. Clodagh McDonnell principal officer at the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs attended the launch and joined Frances Stephenson of the Mediators Institute of Ireland in congratulating those involved and pledging support for the future.

Other agencies providing support include: Le Cheile Family Resource Centre Castlebar, Mayo County Development Board and Mayo Citizens Information Service Ltd.

The service can be accessed through local Citizens Information Centres, Le Cheile Family Resource Centre, Castlebar, online at www.mayocommunitymediation.ie, email HYPERLINKmailto:mayocm@eircom.net mayocm@eircom.net or by phoning 087-7994122.

Why mediation works!



By Tomás Lally *

The experience of one of the founding agencies, Mayo Citizens Information Service, which often supports clients through dispute resolution is that formal processes can take a very long time and they don't always provide medium or long term solutions.

Community disputes can end up in court or go through a long drawn out adversarial experience but the disputing parties still have to live beside one another.

In general the solutions arrived at through a voluntary mediation process provide a far better opportunity for the parties to settle their differences and find a way of moving on.

* Tomás Lally is chairperson of Mayo Community Mediation



Sometimes a third party intervention is required.

How mediation works!

Typically the mediation process takes place over two meetings: (1) an initial meeting with both parties separately and (2) a follow-up meeting with both parties together.

The process gives both sides the chance to tell their side of the story, identify the issues, and then work with an impartial third party to arrive at a solution.

In Clare, a mediator was hired last summer by Ennis Town Council to help resolve a dispute that had led to violent feuding among Travellers in the town. There followed a three-month period during which no violence took place as the mediator worked on the issues. More than one councilor considered the cost of mediation as "money well spent."

Judge says to avoid court!

The State should make actively promote mediation services, as an alternative to the courts, according to Chief Justice John Murray.

He spoke out in November at the launch of a report by the Law Reform Commission that promotes alternative dispute resolution, mediation and conciliation in particular.

He suggested the State should establish an official register of approved mediators, as many other states have done.



Horace McDermott our good news correspondent



The EU has been in contact with officials in the Canaries and the Caribbean to see if there have been sightings of Ireland in warmer climes.

IRELAND: NEVER GIVE UP TRYING!

Missing: One Emerald Isle, population approx 5 million

Horace has only one good news story for readers in this issue, and it's very good news indeed for most of us:

Ireland has disappeared from the western fringes of Europe and a full sea and air search by EU reps has failed to locate the missing State.

It is thought the island might have pushed off for warmer equatorial waters after two bad winters. If this is the case, it is unlikely to return soon.

The Emerald Isle had fallen into full EU ownership in recent months due to a banking and political crisis and had been lent considerable sums of money before going missing. EU countries (excepting Greece) are reported to be raging.

All that's been found so far in the spot where Ireland used to be are a few election posters floating around.

One read: Vote for change you believe in!

Yesterday officials in Brussels called on Interpol to find out what's happened.

MET EIREANN LINK

Police suspect Met Eireann officials were involved; they regularly complained about the weather and their reports were among the most avidly watched television broadcasts. Fianna Fail is also in the frame.

EU DUPED

"It seems far-fetched but one line we're investigating is that Fianna Fail has duped the EU by signing up to Nice twice to show what good boys they were, then spending like there was no tomorrow, breaking the banks and pushing Europe into giving them a hefty loan before legging it with the loot."

US MILITARY INVOLVEMENT

The US is also being asked questions as its military recently learned how to make paper clips invisible and its air force is known to have been using Shannon Airport for some years.

"It's just possible that a plane full of that new invisible stuff either jet-tisoned a load over Ireland or crash-landed causing the country to disappear. Anything is possible at this stage," said Angela Merkel.

TOURISTS ANGRY

Meanwhile, tourism companies have also been caught short. A tourism company rep from Germany has promised to compensate clients who had booked inland fishing holidays in Ireland this summer, although the company was negotiating to see if they could bring them sea-fishing instead in the same spot.

BRITISH RELIEF

Officially, British diplomats say they are enraged that Northern Ireland seems to have vanished with the Republic although a small number were seen celebrating wildly in Travalgar Square.

COMMUNITY SECTOR REACTION

European Community Sector interests issued an official statement: "We hope this is the result of genuine collective action, that the people of Ireland consulted each other prior to lifting anchor, that the most marginalised were given a say in where they went. Finally, so far as we can gather, we're glad to see that nobody appears to have been left behind."



Satellite imagery provided definite proof that Ireland has scooted off.

Citizen Action in Ireland today - Give it up for the amateurs!

By Gearoid Fitzgibbon*

For an election that arrived two years too late, a sense of sameness remains and deep political change seems far off. There are no new parties. Those newly in power seem unlikely to reverse the most controversial act of the ancien regime: the imf/eu deal and the principle of Irish tax payers taking the full hit for the banks.

Yet, look at the wide range of people-led civic groupings which sprouted up over the last 2 years!

2nd Republic,
National Platform,
New Vision,
New Beginnings,
Fis Nua,
New Ireland,
People's Convention,
Direct Democracy,
Claiming Our Future,
People's Economy.... All rejecting the last government's claim to have a mandate for its actions.

What impact have these groups had? Most of these groups pointed to the need for deep political reform, beyond mere change of government, and campaigned for the repudiation of the IMF/EU deal.

And are they likely to fade away now that there's a new Government claiming to have a mandate from the people?

The current system has corrupted the political class, and CORRODED any sense of civic involvement among the electorate. These new civic groupings are a re-engagement of the Irish people with its own democracy, along with a growing sense that, if the people are sovereign, if power percolates UP from the citizens, then CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE GROUND RULES.

There have been a multitude of national and international reports calling for political reform and greater citizen participation. These have been largely ignored. "Turkeys don't vote for Christmas," leaving it to independent citizen action to forge change.

And what of community development in all this? Isn't it remarkable that mainstream community development organisations have taken a largely spectator role of in this time of deep crisis



Leitrim Claiming Our Future demo in December

and dissatisfaction? Ordinary citizens have stepped into the breach, becoming community workers, and organisers, and leaders. Witness Claiming Our Future!

And so, as managers and community workers who begin to write up their Annual and Strategic Plans for the Local and Community Development Programme, we may be humbled to reflect on how the ground has shifted.

As we draw up new actions, it's worth asking, are we serving the People, or serving the people who pay our wages? And if the two diverge, what can we do?

** Gearoid Fitzgibbon volunteers with Limerick Claiming Our Future. An initial sceptic, it has, he says "begun to show potential as a positive new force in Irish civil society." He works under the Local and Community Development Programme for North Tipperary Leader Partnership. He is on the board of Changing Ireland Community Media Limited where he was recently elected Chairperson.*

Are you
unemployed?

Do you want a
qualification?

Free

"Distance learning takes less time because you can learn at home. No travel time or expense."

Our new course will help you with:

- writing CVs
- reading job adverts
- using the computer to apply for work

Ring Freephone 1800 20 20 65
Free Text 'Learn' to 50050

If you are getting job seeker's allowance for more than 3 months, you will receive one payment of €100 when you get an award

Organisers have to turn people away - parents' club a hit after a rethink



Time Out group

Mums have been escaping the pressures of life for a couple of hours a week thanks to a 'Time Out Club' set up by a community worker in Limerick city and now run by the club members themselves.

The club - in a disadvantaged area of the city - has a queue of women wanting to join and the model for attracting participants could work in any community.

"Everyone's asking when it's back on," said Helen Ring, a participant who became a volunteer helping to run the club.

The Time Out Club is a parenting programme which began life as a pilot project two years ago, is now on its third run and the idea is spreading to other parts of the city.

Parents were not answering the call to attend advertised courses; they didn't want to sign up to attending for 10 weeks in a row and weren't pushed about certification.

A new approach was needed.

The Time Out Club was advertised, not as a course, but as a drop-in club once a week where parents could relax. Word spread, the places filled up quickly and the participants engaged in a series of educational classes and with only a few exceptions showed up from start to finish.

"Someone would text me if they had to miss a morning," said community worker Ca O'Neill who wants to spread word about how the pilot worked. "The drop in model really worked for this group, it created a welcoming environment for parents, and if they missed a morning they

felt comfortable coming back when they had the time."

Ca is a drugs worker in Our Lady of Lourdes community employed through the Limerick City CDP.

"We found text messaging a good way to keep in touch with parents on a weekly basis. Parents appreciated that," said Ca.

In the final evaluation, the participants wanted more - for example more drugs education to be able to help their children and more sexual health awareness talks.

Not to mention more pampering.

"The first three weeks of the programme was a pampering programme, we brought in a beautician and the local hairdresser and looked at skin care, make up and hair styles that parents could do with the children's hair.

"We discussed different make-up and hair products. Some of the products were expensive especially the make-up. I contacted Brown Thomas to get some samples. No luck there, but we did get vouchers from them for free makeovers for all the participants. Some of the parent's children had graduations and first communions and used them for that.

The participants had asked to know "What is Bebo? What's Facebook?" when encouraged to shape the activities themselves. They also wanted to know "What different drugs look like": Internet-awareness-training and drugs education were therefore covered. One of the most popular events was when the group spent a morning in the Red Ribbon Project in Limerick doing a workshop on

"The club was set up to offer parents (female) the opportunity to meet up in a safe, friendly environment to discuss issues affecting their daily lives and it did that and much more,"

Sexual Health.

The breakfast element of the programme was important.

"We bought a toaster, kettle and smoothie maker and soon parents were making their own smoothies at home for their kids," said Ca. "But the most important part of the Tim-Out Club was the parents themselves, their participation, their respect and support they had for each other and the crack."

"The club was set up to offer parents (female) the opportunity to meet up in a safe, friendly environment to discuss issues affecting their daily lives and it did that and much more," she added.

There's no activism involved in the programme.

"No," says community worker Ca O'Neill.

Parents have stressed lives and just want the solace the Time Out Club provides.

The group even suffered for a while from consultation fatigue as one after another agency sought their views, on drugs, community policing and more. While they didn't mind helping out, they had to start saying no to constant consultation.

"The parents said they just want time out. Life is tough and enough and it's just good to have a break for 2 hours one day a week during the months the Time Out Club meets."

The model is being 'borrowed' for use by community workers in other parts of the city, for instance in St Mary's where a similar model is now running successfully, with support coming from Limerick City CDP. It could work anywhere.

Ca says the model should work in attracting Dads too, but it has proven more popular among women.

The Time-Out club is funded and supported by the Rosbrien Education and Substance Information Network (RESIN) and Our Lady of Lourdes CDP (now part of Limerick City CDP).

For more information, contact drugs worker Ca O'Neill on 087-6540664; E: ololresin@gmail.com or club member Helen Ring: M. 085-7191052; E: helenring17@gmail.com

WE NEED JOBS AND A *says Patsy Cronin*

by Allen Meagher

Patsy Cronin from Killorglin, Co. Kerry, gives two to three days a week as the voluntary chairperson of the Irish Local Development Network.

Officially retired, the Killorglin native enjoys the role and is optimistic, despite all, about the future.

"Yes, I give a lot of time to it, but to be honest I'm enjoying it. You get great satisfaction when you succeed in getting something through and I've made a lot of friends at local and at national level.

"Look at the people involved in Local Development Companies and the commitment they give, it's extraordinary! In South Kerry Development Partnership we have eight voluntary people on the board from each of the four regions in the area. Nationally, on the ILDN board, nearly half the people are volunteers.

"There's a great spirit of community involvement in Ireland and to volunteers, including former CDP volunteers, I'd say stick with it, the country can't afford to lose you. There's always need for volunteers."

OPTIMISM

Patsy recognises Ireland is in a worse situation than the 1980s but keeps a positive outlook. "I remember people in the 1980s saying there'd never be a company come to Ireland again with more than 100 jobs. How wrong they were!"

"Killorglin isn't too badly hit by the recession yet - fortunately, there's a few good industries there. But our biggest challenge across South Kerry is of course unemployment and emigration and Killarney has been badly hit. There's been a total lack of commitment to Kerry by the IDA, but this country will come back one day."

PROGRAMME HOPES

Patsy believes that, "We should be using the Local and Community Development Programme to put people in jobs. We're working very closely with the Department and I believe working with the people in the Department will only be for the good in the long term."



JOBS & THE PROGRAMME

He thinks that ideally there be a Community Development approach to job creation and Local Development Companies should be given a mandate to get even more involved in job creation. *

"A job is a job but I'd favour social enterprise job. I met Duncan Stewart recently and he showed how thousands of jobs could be created in the food industry and the green economy."

Patsy hopes that, in time, some of the restrictions imposed on the Rural Development Programme might be lifted in the interest of job creation.

Tús SCHEME

The ILDN is providing people to help implement the new Tús scheme nationally.

"We'll make the Tús jobs work, we'll improve them," said Patsy. "This scheme has to be for the good of society."

THE DECLINE OF THE TIGER

Patsy saw the economic crash coming: "We lost our way completely. It was obvious the working people were being forced into buying huge homes when it was clear it couldn't last."

"... How many volunteers do you get in county councils? Look at the cost of it!"

POSITIVE OUTLOOK

They'll never do the work as cheap as they're getting it now... We're volunteers, that's the difference. How many volunteers do you get in county councils?

ON 'COHESION' AND CDPs

On the Cohesion process (when national programmes were merged) he said he'd have only gone "half-way with O'Cuiv on it" adding that it was "all over the place the way it was rolled out and his handling of it left a lot to be desired and I said that to him at the time. He should have offered a voluntary redundancy package and then he'd have got results way quicker, there would have been more camaraderie and people who wanted to move on would have."

"However, we'd hope to see a bedding down period now at this stage. It's been similar for the CDPs – they're now in a place they didn't chose to be."

He said we must make the most efficient use of our scarce resources now, but we should also learn lessons from past experience.

ILDN PROGRESS

The ILDN is over a year old and it's been very busy time for Patsy, the board and the staff and the 52 member organisations.

"The ILDN worked with Pobal to increase the level of flexibility surrounding the 10% cut to LDCs for 2010. There was no flexibility at first but in the end we got a broader range of things included in the list of what could be cut.

"With regard to the Rural Development Programme, we've a working group dealing with that. We also have formal interaction between the ILDN and the Department every two months, covering both LDCP and RDP issues."

VERY STRONG FORCE

Asked what was the brightest part of last year for the ILDN, Patsy said: "Achieving the merger with CDPs and working and rebuilding the relationship with the Department and seeing the potential of the Network to be a very strong force for the membership as well as for Government in terms of dealing with issues of national relevance."

LOCAL AUTHORITY DIFFERENT

He recognises challenges ahead, but hopes to see "an increased level of commitment to the work of the ILDN and its' member organisations."

"The Fine Gael proposal (which potentially includes getting local authorities to take over the work done by LDCs) will never work as well as LDCs do now and they'll never do the work as cheap as they're getting it now. County councils by their nature can't do the work as well.

'WE'RE VOLUNTEERS!'

"The ILDN met with opposition parties before Christmas. We met Fine Gael and Labour and we've been given commitments by both parties. We had arranged to meet with Sinn Féin, but the meeting had to be postponed for personal reasons.

"Fine Gael's Jimmy Deenihan was very positive towards our RDP proposals, but (his colleague) Phil Hogan's policy document 'Power to the People' is misguided: local authorities won't deliver in the same way as LDCs do. We're volunteers, that's the difference and there's a huge amount of voluntary work in each LDC. How many volunteers do you get in county councils? Look at the cost of it!"

ILDN HAS NO PUBLIC VOICE

The ILDN works behind the scenes, in meeting rooms and at committee level, in preference to campaigning through the media or on the streets. The stronger CDPs used to do employ all four strategies. Would Patsy like to see the ILDN issuing press releases, speaking on behalf of the voiceless in communities and the vulnerable?

Patsy was sympathetic although you could see it was something that the ILDN wasn't rushing into.

"It's a good point," he said, promising to bring it up with the board. He has often spoken on Radio Kerry but no-one on the ILDN board has spoken nationally about their work to support people facing unemployment, suicide, emigration, poverty.

"We mainly lobby on behalf of the members

over how to deliver the programmes more effectively."

Meanwhile, the ILDN's long-awaited website should be up and running this Spring and, recently the ILDN has begun to produce a bi-monthly online newsletter for members.

PATSY CRONIN IN PERSON

Patsy is married to Mary Joe – she accompanied him to Nenagh the day I met him for the interview.

When he's got time to himself he loves nothing better than watching the CSI detective series. And he likes reading – he'd just bought a copy of "John A. Costello" by David McCullough.

He's an easygoing character: "Nothing really annoys me, although I don't like people backbiting."

He sees for and against new technology - with a son living in Canada, he and Mary Joe are grateful for Skype.

All his adult life, he's been a member of the Labour Party. He worked for 35 years in trade unions (SIPTU and the ITGWU before that). Throughout that time, he did as much voluntary work as he could, following the lead his father set. Patsy's also done his share of amateur acting.

After he retired, he was nominated for the voluntary post of ILDN chairperson. He's taken to the role with gusto and he'd like to see more volunteers get involved: "The country needs volunteerism now like it never did before and I'd see a big role for the Programme in promoting volunteering."

FINAL NOTE

* I met Patsy Cronin in Nenagh where he had a scheduled meeting with ILDN co-ordinator Brian Carty, who stayed for the interview and elaborated on a couple of key points. Brian stressed, "The Programme is very outcomes-focused and this helps in looking at the value for money and the ILDN is currently working with the Department and Pobal to ensure the Programme is calibrated correctly to see we're serving communities' needs properly."

You can tell Brian is dedicated to his work, but his occasional effort to steer Patsy clear of commenting publicly on things such as the IDA, cohesion and so on came to nought!

Furniture-restoration is back in fashion



Brendan Meehan
reports

Furniture-revamping projects are now open in Dublin and Longford and another is planning to open in Kerry shortly. It's the type of project backed by the national Community Services Programme (CSP). Longford's Revamp Furniture project was set up in 2002 and has progressed to become one of Leinster's most highly regarded social enterprises.

It offers a repair and restoration service for people with used furniture that in other counties is destined for landfill, while providing training and direction for young people out of work and finished with school.

Winner of the prestigious Star Award in 2010, the Longford-town-based project saw 70% of their workers going on to full time employment,

apprenticeships, or further education courses. This percentage has declined slightly during the recession but the project is going strong with increased demand for its products.

Project manager, Tom Chapman, said it is very much a community-driven business: "We take in local lads and the calibre of their work is great; these are fellas that have previously been working on sites but were let go."

He said that 70% of the candidates taken on are members of the Travelling community.

The project operates out of a 7,000 square foot premises and is funded through the CSP.

"Four of the five full time members of staff have come through the Revamp Program," said Tom.

The only other established project of its kind are Sunflower Recycling's 'Busybees' shops in Dublin, set up with support from the Community Employment and Jobs Initiative schemes.

It is to be expected that more projects of this nature are on the horizon.

North East Kerry Development (NEKD) began recruiting in recent months for a similar social enterprise in Castleisland, Co. Kerry. The new social enterprise – called the Revamp Furniture Recycling Project – is funded through the Community Services Programme and managed locally via the LCDP.

Studies show that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds reap lifelong rewards from this kind of work.

Meanwhile if you live in Dublin and wish to buy pre-loved furniture or dispose of some furniture you've fallen out of love with, check out: www.sunflowerrecycling.ie

2700 workers changing lives in 445 communities ***- The Community Services Programme***

Around 455 projects are supported nationwide through the Community Services Programme supporting a wide variety of often very important local services that otherwise might not be delivered.

The CSP now supports the employment of approximately 2,700 people nationwide.

It covers everything from community radio to enterprises on offshore islands and the projects employ people on the margins, from Travellers to people with disabilities to ex-prisoners and recovering drug abusers.

Everything the Programme funds aims to help alleviate hardship in disadvantaged areas and the projects have, since 2010, been funded for three-year periods.

In 2011, it is helping fund community services and community businesses (not-for-profits) including services for older people and those with disabilities, rural transport initiatives and environmental projects.

CORE ELEMENTS

"Each project must have the potential to generate non-public sources of income such as charges for services, fees, trading income, and fundraising. This is a key requirement that underpins the social economy/community business model of the Programme," said T.J. Fleming, principal officer at the Department of Social Protection, outlining the core elements of a typical project.

"The level of Programme supports varies from project to project and typically falls within a range of 15% to 80% of the total resources needed to operate and deliver the services," he added.

Ideally, CSP project workers are paid the going market rate for the work they are doing.

Two-thirds of the CSP-supported projects, the bigger ones, are also part-funded to employ a manager.

While the benefits of CSP projects are glaringly obvious at local level, TJ says, "Given the diverse nature of the services delivered by the

projects supported by the Programme, the benefits generated are difficult to aggregate."

CLEVER USAGE

As 'Changing Ireland' highlighted after a visit to Inishboffin Island (See 'Changing Ireland', Issue 27, in our online archive at: www.changingireland.ie) the projects have wide benefits for each area.

The Programme's design is clever in seeking to make use of existing community facilities and community-based services that were developed with other streams of grant support.

"This ensures that earlier investments undertaken by the community and the State, either centrally or through local authorities or other agencies, can be fully realised," added TJ.

You probably know a CSP-project or two in your area, but you just don't know it's CSP-backed.

For more info, including a list of all the funded projects, visit: www.pobal.ie

Jobs and training in communities: Here's what you voted for (or against!)

By Rachel Finucanne

INTRODUCTION

All the five main political parties planned to build on community work schemes and improve job-training. Here's a share of the ideas suggested by the various parties, some of which are sure to see the light of day in the coming months and years. Others will never be heard of again; doesn't mean they were bad ideas though. The United Left Alliance proposed nothing like the other parties. Their plans involved radical change whereby the State takes control of its resources and people share out the work they have while thousands more would be recruited for national infrastructural projects.

FINE GAEL



single point of contact for the unemployed.

Community Employment (CE) schemes would provide 5,000 places but it would "make it more market-orientated with many more placements in private sector businesses" and in most cases, would cut the length of the standard CE Scheme to six months.

Unemployment would be targeted through a National Internship Programme (23,000 places); Second Chance Education (17,000 places); and an Apprenticeship Guarantee (700 places) better training opportunities for the over 25s—thereby replacing the FÁS structure. FG would support training by re-allocating money from FÁS into 'training vouchers' to allow the unemployed to acquire their own re-skilling needs.

SINN FEIN



which would see it providing an individual plan for the long-term prospects of every person under 25 on the live register; and a 'National Development Scheme' to employ people on public works projects.

SF proposed to increase and modernise CE schemes and all schemes should fit into the FE-

SF wanted a youth jobs fund to create 20,000 new jobs; an overhaul of FÁS,

TAC or HETAC awards scheme.

"In addition, we [SF] would target extra resources and tailor programs for the high percentage of unemployed young people concentrated in unemployment hot spots and disadvantaged areas," it said.

Further education projects would make more 'second chance secondary' places available through Youthreach and SF wanted to introduce "a G.I. type bill where education, training or upskilling identified as required under individual plans would be provided free of charge".

LABOUR ROUND-UP



employment and benefit support services including the Local Employment Service Network. The majority of FÁS funds for direct training, and all of the FÁS training centres, would be transferred to the further education and Institute of Technology sectors.

Labour's Jobs Fund would fund 60,000 new training, education and internship places. Initiatives would include 'Bridge the GAP', a Graduate and Apprentice Work Placement Scheme and an 'Earn and Learn' scheme to allow people to combine a shorter working week with training or education.

Labour would develop mechanisms for Community Supported Agriculture Models for farmers to invest in "a local co-operative farm partnership".

Labour wanted to replace FÁS with a new National Employment Service, integrating all em-

GREEN PARTY



The GP planned to create 100,000 jobs in the Green sector—areas such as green energy and sustainable food. The Web Activate Programme, for example, would impact on unemployment and local enterprise, by providing training for 20,000 people on the Live Register, who would then work with 100,000 businesses to make their products and services available online.

The party also wanted to implement a system of accreditation for jobseekers undertaking work experience or volunteering.

FIANNA Fáil



FF would fund 23,200 Community Employment Scheme places and an additional 5,000 places on the Rural Social Scheme and Community Services Programme.

It would expand the places available on the Work Placement Programme to 7,500 and provide 15,000 places for short-term working opportunities in the community for unemployed people through the Tús initiative.

Fianna Fáil's manifesto stated that "over 100,000 FÁS training places are being provided in 2011" and it aimed to create jobs in industries such as agri-food, green energy and tourism.

ULA ON COMMUNITIES

The ULA proposed using State companies as "the vehicle for job creation" and wanted to use "democratic public ownership of wealth and natural resources and the banks to provide jobs by launching a state programme of industrial development and innovation."

It wanted to reduce the working week without loss of pay and create "tens of thousands of jobs by sharing out the work."

It called "for a real social development programme that could create jobs, building necessary infrastructure like public transport, green energy projects, health centres and other community facilities."

These are the community-related and civil society-related policies of the parties that fought for your votes on March 25th. Obviously, the policies of those who form the next Government are the only ones likely to be implemented; however there was agreement between the parties on some ideas such as establishing a national citizen's forum. And Governments have often been known to rob the better ideas of their opponents. No bad thing that, if communities, volunteers, equality and human rights are to benefit. The following are summaries compiled by journalist Rachel Finucanne.

Equality, community Here's what you

FINE GAEL

FG wanted reform and engagement
Reform made up a sizeable portion of Fine Gael's election manifesto:

Equality

FG would make key equality and rights bodies, such as the Equality Authority, answerable to the Dáil.

Community policing
FG wanted to give "local communities a greater say by shifting more resources into community policing" through local policing forums.

Education

Building on existing pilot projects in Dublin (e.g. 'Preparing for Life') FG would allocate a proportion of the reform savings to finance a national roll-out of pre-school programmes for disadvantaged children.

FG would give "school principals more discretion as to how the school's budget is deployed."

Facilities

Fine Gael would publish a national audit of all sports facilities.

Reform

FG wanted to build a stronger local Government "that is accountable to local citizens and their communities" and develop "greater flexibility in how it spends and raises money".

It planned to save up to €65 million by abolishing quangos and merging others, aiming to end "the confusing and wasteful fragmentation in service delivery."

This would include the discontinuation of the Dormant Accounts; Fund; abolishing county/city development boards and the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency; merging Pobal and city/county enterprise boards into the local authority structure and merging the Limerick Northside and Southside regeneration agencies into a single agency.

Engagement

Fine Gael believes that local communities should have the final say for their areas in terms of planning—becoming a 'plan-led' system rather than 'developer-led'. It planned to introduce a Public Petition system so that citizens can raise concerns directly with the Dáil. Recent restrictions to the Freedom of Information Act should be reversed.

Service Delivery

It planned to set up a website, www.fixmystreet.ie, that would allow residents to report local problems with street lighting and drainage, for example—guaranteeing that an official would respond quickly.

The party aimed to pursue a new model of financing social interventions, Social Impact Bonds, to "share audited exchequer savings with charitable and voluntary organisations."

Health

Fine Gael's FairCare policy "would transfer the governance and management of... HSE Hospitals to Hospital Trusts. Fixed HSE budgets would be replaced by a 'money follows the patient' system—each hospital would determine its staff mix and find ways to incentivise tasks such as productivity.

Disability Rights

The party would "re-allocate money from the HSE's budget to give adults and children with disabilities and their families the option of needs-based Personal Care Budgets to choose the services they want and need."

W: www.finegael.ie.



FINE GAEL

SINN FEIN

SF opposed cuts, emphasised equality
Sinn Féin's election manifesto aimed to put an end to 'jobs for the boys' in favour of jobs for the unemployed, including the creation of 10,000 new Community Employment places.

As we went to press, the party launched its 'Commitment to Community' document, much of which matches with earlier SF policy documents and statements as summarised here:

Equality

SF wanted to introduce a range of equality initiatives including publishing the National Positive Ageing Strategy and the National Carers' Strategy; revising the Disability Act and appointing an Ombudsman for older people and another one for those with disabilities. The party wanted an all-Ireland 'Strategy for Women's Equality' and favoured having gender targets for State boards.

Community Policing

In community policing, Sinn Féin proposed to boost Garda numbers by ending current embargoes on recruitment and to free-up fully trained Gardaí from administrative duties.

The party wanted to increase funding for Garda Drugs Units "with enhanced community input" and guarantee the future of the 'Dial to Stop Drug Dealing'.

Civic Forum

Spokesman, TD Aengus O'Snodaigh, recently referred to plans for an all-Ireland civic forum and advocated an annual increase in the amount of money available under the Dormant Accounts fund to allow beneficiaries to plan ahead.

Education

Education infrastructure would be improved through increased resources for the school-building programme and restoring "special needs assistants, resource hours, and language resource teachers and Traveller education supports".

Community Facilities

SF wanted to make recreational facilities more avail-

Community policing and civic participation you voted for (or against!)

able by getting young construction workers building youth centres, cafes and recreational facilities in their local areas and get young people working in them, for example.

Community Funding / Activism

SF documents advocated multi-annual funding being made available to community and voluntary sector organisations. It planned to introduce a VAT refund scheme for charities and protect the community and voluntary sectors' "right to engage in advocacy."

Regeneration

Sinn Féin vows to finish "the stalled regeneration projects" in Dublin and Limerick.

Rural Enterprise

In rural development, SF wanted to establish a Rural Enterprise Fund to support new micro enterprises and co-operatives being set up in rural areas.

Reversing Cuts

The extension of breakfast clubs, homework clubs and school meals to all schools in disadvantaged areas is a target as well as reversing cuts to the Disadvantaged Area Scheme and the Early Retirement Scheme.

Mental Health

The party wanted health reforms and improved community care facilities. The party also planned "to combat social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination against people with mental health problems"; develop suicide prevention strategies and ensure provision of child/adolescent community-based mental health services.

W: www.sinnfein.ie.



LABOUR

Labour's community focus on policing and health. The Labour Party would ideally like to inject a stronger community element into areas such as policing and health.

Equality

Labour commits to work to vindicate the rights of people with disabilities to education, health, housing and work; to advance implementation of the National Disability Strategy and supports the 'Conversation on Democracy in Ireland' project.

Community Policing

Labour aimed to reform the Garda to prioritise community policing including getting more gardai/local people from the Garda Reserve on patrol in communities in need; a strategy to deal with anti-social behaviour in authority-funded accommodation and build on existing community policing partnerships and forums.

Reform

The party also aimed to compile a Comprehensive Spending Review of all areas of Government spending and this "would provide the basis for a coherent policy framework governing the State's partnership with community and voluntary organisations".

Education

Its educational policy would give principals more freedom and responsibility to raise the educational standards in their schools and the "community should also have a say in the patronage of existing and future schools, for example by direct ballot". Labour wanted to "make literacy a national cause."

Community facilities

Its sports policy document includes a commitment to establish a Community Development fund for amenities.

Volunteering

The party is advocating "a community response to the everyday needs of people" where people of all ages volunteer their time, which is lodged in a

'time bank'.

Through the Give n' Take Social Exchange Network, the Local Development Companies would build up a register of skilled craftspeople willing to volunteer to do minor maintenance and repairs for the elderly.

Drug Strategy

The party supports the principles and objectives of the National Drugs Strategy. This includes expanding rehabilitation services and integrating drug and alcohol abuse strategies at local level.

Health

Labour's health strategy is to invest additional funds in community and 'step down' care; strengthen the role of GPs; focus on treating mental health in the community and a "radical, area-based approach to tackling child poverty".

Older people

Labour planned to "expand the community care sector, to enable older people to be discharged from hospital and cared for in their communities." Retired people with mentoring skills can volunteer in "services provided by the Local Development Partnership (sic) or County Enterprise Boards."

Credit Unions

Labour wanted to do an impartial review of current credit union regulation and support modernisation of the movement.

For more information, see www.labour.ie.



C&V sector had a full basket of election demands

The Wheel provided excellent pre-election coverage from a Community and Voluntary perspective. It got each party to record a summary of their plans on video.

The Community Worker's Co-op, Claiming Our Future and other organisations produced 'manifestos which they published on their websites. The Wheel went a step further and asked organisations to submit their election wish-lists to them in summary form. The result – you can visit their site and see what each organisation demanded.

See what the following are seeking by visiting www.wheel.ie: Irish Rural Link, Aontas, Educate Together, the Carers' Association and the European Anti-Poverty Network to NALA and the Disability Federation of Ireland, among others.

Claiming Our Future organised a series of 'Meet the Politicians' events around the country.

Tackling Community Issues

Equality, community Here's what you

UNITED LEFT ALLIANCE

ULA sought a community-based democratic alternative

The United Left Alliance (ULA) aimed “to provide a real alternative to the establishment parties, as well as Labour and Sinn Féin” and favours democratic and public control over resources so that social need is prioritised over profit.”

The ULA is made up of left wing groups and individuals, including the People Before Profit Alliance, the Socialist Party and the South Tipperary Workers and Unemployed Action Group. The ULA “rejects so-called solutions to the economic crises based on slashing public expenditure, welfare payments and workers' pay. There can be no just or sustainable solution to the crisis based on the capitalist market.”

Equality

It supports “a campaign by the trade unions to unionise all workers and for the legal right to trade union recognition”; wanted to allow asylum seekers the right to work and ensure that both that group and migrant workers have the same rights as others.

The ULA supports “full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, including the right to marry for same sex couples.”

Education

The manifesto wanted State “funding for a democratically run and secular education system, free for all from early childhood to university. It wanted more teachers to reduce class sizes and special needs and language support.”

Community facilities and housing for all
The ULA advocates scrapping the National Assets Management Agency (NAMA) and instead, taking “the banks, finance houses, major construction companies and development land into democratic public ownership and use them

for the benefit of people.”

It proposed to “use resources, including the huge numbers of vacant properties, to provide facilities and affordable homes for all.”

It called for major investment in community facilities, waste management, recycling facilities and public transport.

Reform

The manifesto called for reform of public services: “It's time to stop copying failed private sector practices...Public services should be run democratically with the full involvement of the workers, the service users and the wider community.”

It encouraged a mass campaign “by the trade union movement and the communities to reverse the cuts in public services.”

Disadvantage

The alliance supports the principle “tax the greedy not the needy”—rejecting the idea that “all this wealth has suddenly disappeared”. It calls for a taxation system where corporation tax would be increased and “a steeply progressive income tax” would shift the tax burden to the rich. It opposes bin charges, water charges, and “household taxes.”

Health

The ULA wanted “a properly funded and resourced public health system, free at the point of access and paid for through a progressive tax system”.

For further information on the manifesto and individual candidates' platforms: www.unit-leftalliance.org.



FIANNA Fáil

Fianna Fáil called for reform and a referendum
Fianna Fáil's manifesto singled out Community Employment Schemes as “an essential activation measure that also provides a significant benefit to local communities.”

Equality

The manifesto states that it “support the introduction of measures to favour gender balance within the national list”. According to the election statement on health and children, it would continue to roll out the National Disability Strategy and support the voluntary disability organisations “within the context of the difficult times that we are now experiencing”. It would reconfigure mental health services in line with the recommendations in ‘A Vision for Change’ and develop services to reduce levels of suicide and deliberate self harm.

Citizens' Assembly / Reform

FF proposed electoral reform but emphasised that it “would require significant public engagement in the development of proposals as well as passage in a referendum. We therefore intend to submit these proposals to a Citizens Assembly.”

Local Authorities would be required to improve their efficiency.

Adult education

Fianna Fáil wanted to provide over 173,000 further education places. It would provide over 40,000 full time places through Youthreach, the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, the Senior Traveler Training Centre, and PLC programmes. It also wanted to facilitate 125,000 learners to avail of part time provision in adult literacy, community education and the back to education initiative.

Community facilities

A number of commitments have already been made in the Towards 2016 Agreement, published last year and recently Minister Pat Carey stated that Fianna Fáil would seek to build on those.

He said that there is a “huge amount of local com-

Community policing and civic participation You voted for (or against!)

community involvement taking place across the country”; that frontline services should take priority and funding has already been cut as much as possible and “any further cuts would make it very difficult for organisations to continue to exist”.

Regeneration

FF would support the regeneration projects in Ballymun and Limerick as well sustain the school building programme, and progress high priority health projects.

Health

The election statement on health and children reiterates “the key objective in primary care policy” and at the end of 2010, there were 394 teams operating with plans to increase this to 527 by the end of this year.

W: www.fiannafail.ie



GREEN PARTY

Green Party wanted social inclusion

The Green Party manifesto announced ambitious plans to introduce a range of equality and social inclusion measures:

Equality

The party wanted to enforce gender quotas by linking it to State funding for political parties. It would publish the National Carers Strategy and the Positive Ageing Strategy—providing time-tables for implementation; maintain current levels of respite/home help care and continue to support the Rural Transport Programme.

It wanted to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and work towards the full implementation of the National Women's Strategy. Along with recognising Travellers as a minority ethnic group, it would ensure that Travellers have greater access to services to “tackle the extremely high rate of suicide among young men.”

Community policing

The Green's policy favours an expansion of the Garda Juvenile Diversion Programme as well as the continuation of the over 100 Garda Youth Diversion Projects nationwide.

Citizens' Assembly/Reform

Within six months of entering Government, it aimed to hold a referendum on establishing a Citizens' Assembly to draw up a new draft constitution. It wanted to increase the power of the citizen through “local plebiscites and participatory budgeting.”

Adult education

It aimed to make local schools ‘community campuses’; to invest in adult education including measurable accreditations; remove the cap on numbers in PLCs and promote accredited community education.

Youth facilities

The party would explore the feasibility of allowing vacant buildings to be made available to Youth Sector organisations for provision of services and amenities to young people.

Social Inclusion

The Green Party wanted more resources for the Office for Social Inclusion and wanted public policies for social inclusion integrated into the wider policy framework. It aimed to measure poverty levels properly.

Drugs Prevention

GP would target drug prevention programmes specifically to ‘at risk’ groups.

Health

It wanted to carry out “root and branch reform of the HSE” to ensure it permits a reasonable measure of autonomy to local healthcare service delivery agencies, allowing local communities “to have an important role in deciding local priorities for health”.

The party wanted to provide for free visits to GPs and other health professionals at a local level.

Mental health

It also wanted to introduce a range of mental health measures, for instance “legislation to ensure that mental health services move from institutional settings to the community”.

W: www.greenparty.ie



Getting ready for peak oil

Communities and individuals are readying themselves for future scarcities of food, energy and transport, training up on what to expect and how to deal with it.

The new buzzword is 'Community Resilience' and you can now do a short course to learn what your community needs to do.

'Cultivate' has provided much of the training and it's been promoted locally through the Local Development Companies, with funding for the training coming in many instances from the Rural Development Programme.

Community Resilience courses have really taken off over the past 12 months, they're free and the aim is to help communities respond to the social and environmental issues of peak oil and climate change at local level.

"These courses have taken wings, it's capturing the imaginations of younger people and it's very cost-effective to run," said Ann Goodwin, CEO of Laois Partnership. "People who you wouldn't ever see at community consultations are now seeing they have a part to play in their communities."

Fergal Conlon, social inclusion manager of West Cork Development Partnership, attended one such course: "As a professional in the community sector for 15 years, I was surprised to see some new formats I hadn't come across before. I'd recommend it be made available to local communities everywhere as a way to (prepare) for the future sustainability of communities."

Here's a sample of what's been happening around the country, some of it happening through LCDP companies, some through other agencies. People seem more aware that the clock is ticking now:

More info: www.cultivate.ie & www.greenworks.ie

WEST CORK

West Cork Development Partnership ran a Community Powerdown Course which provided training in leadership, livelihoods and local resilience at the Dunmanyway Family Resource Centre in October.

LAOIS

Laois Partnership in conjunction with Abbeyleix Business and Community Forum organised an 8-module Community Resilience Course to run from January through to March. The course also ran in Mountmellick and Portarlington.

CAVAN

Community Resilience Cavan's first project is working with the Cavan County Council to create a new park. Email Daniel Downey on: Daniel.a.downey@gmail.com

MEATH

Meath Community Partnership (MCP) has already run two free courses on heritage and biodiversity which were aimed at environmental enthusiasts who want to volunteer, new graduates and those seeking fulfilling ways of making a green income locally.



WESTMEATH

Last Spring, Westmeath Community Development ran free Rural Resilience Training courses in Ballinahown, Kibbegan and two other centres. The facilitators were trained up by Irish Rural Link and Cultivate. The course was funded through the Rural Development Programme.

ROSCOMMON

Davie Philips from Cloughjordan Eco-Village delivered a Community Resilience Course in October at the Enterprise Hub, Castlereagh, Co. Roscommon.

Life expectancy up from 59 to 70 globally

In the last 40 years, across 135 countries, life expectancy has increased from 59 to 70, according to the 2010 UNDP Human Development Report. The world's economic growth model gives rise to greater inequality, not to mention environmental degradation, but economic growth is also largely credited with having led to the rise in the average life expectancy.

Now, in 2011, we're in the midst of the worst food price crisis in global history. If you're interested in topics such as these, check out this news website which is designed for journalists covering development issues: www.worldandmedia.com/



Living in the Cloughjordan Ecovillage

By Davie Philip

For the last year I have lived in an innovative neighborhood where resilience and community development are working hand in glove. Integrating with the existing town of Cloughjordan, we are striving to create a fresh blueprint for modern sustainable living in rural North Tipperary.

With 15 houses built, and another 40 in progress, 15 families are now living in the eco-neighborhood, while another 50 families have re-located to Cloughjordan.

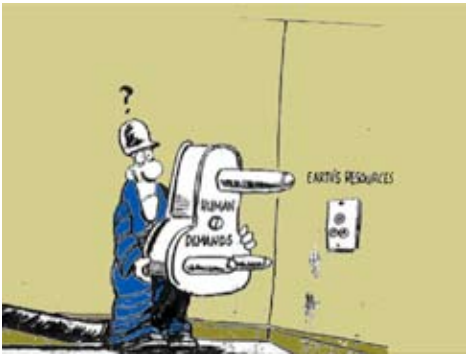
The development is managed by a community owned educational charity, Sustainable Projects Ireland.

This is not just an eco-housing estate. It has many elements that will nurture community resilience in Cloughjordan, Tipperary and beyond.

The Ecovillage is also part of the Global Ecovillage Network.

For more information see www.thevillage.ie

"Both sustainable development and community development risk becoming meaningless concepts"



Community Development is failing us!

Our reliance on oil has led to an unprecedented time of individualism. Our global economy is designed to work without any need for community. Our food and energy come from halfway around the world, and we have no relationship with the people who produce it. Just when we need to depend a lot more on our neighbours, we are actually doing less and less together.

Both sustainable development and community development risk becoming meaningless concepts in the context of resource shortages, climate change and the upheaval that follows.

Community development is often over focused on addressing a shopping list of people's needs, led by the grants available from central government.

As a theory and method, it often ignores the broader issues of resource depletion and climate change which are set to transform our lives in the coming years.

Today, the key question for environmental and community workers is how do we make communities better prepared for the predicted changes.

CRITICISM OF ENVIRONMENTALISTS

It is a criticism made that the environmental sector often doesn't look outside its' own sphere. The environmental and community sectors can both benefit from taking a more "whole systems view" in facing present and future challenges. Added to the current economic crisis, and the impact of climate change, a further crisis looms as oil runs out faster than was ever predicted.

"Sustainable development" is often seen as having three elements of equal importance: environment, economy and society. This view however ignores the dependence of economy and society on the environment.

After 14 years of working in the area of sustainability education, I have begun to focus more and more on the concept of resilience from a community point of view. Resilience sees economy and society as within the environment.

W: www.thevillage.ie

The Resilience Approach

A community resilience approach, has a lot to add to community development work. Community resilience wants to arm people to manage changes coming down the line. It looks at making changes so that the places we live may get by in times of abrupt change, eg fuel shortages or new weather patterns; so that the places we live can provide livelihoods that sustain us.

Towards the end of his life, John Seymour, the "father of self-sufficiency" who established the School of Self-Sufficiency in Wexford, told me that he was actually wrong about self-sufficiency. He called his new thinking "co-sufficiency". Seymour predicted that we would need strong, connected communities in order to make the transition to a post-industrial economy, not dependent on fossil fuel.

Underpinning the community resilience approach is a belief that life with less energy and fewer resources is inevitable, and that it's better to plan for it than be taken by surprise.



Examples of community resilience initiatives include starting community gardens and allotments, energy conservation schemes, localizing energy production, introducing local currencies to keep money circulating in the local area.

MORE INFORMATION

For more on community resilience, Carnegie Trust UK, which funds projects in the UK and Ireland, is supporting a website called www.fierspirits.com which connects people from diverse backgrounds in order to encourage "urgent action in the face of climate change, financial turbulence and accelerating global resource depletion."

For the Transition Network in Ireland, see www.transitiontownsireland.ning.com

Free courses for job seekers - Training with Green Works

Green Works is a nationwide training programme, offering free courses to jobseekers, with a focus on upskilling the workforce for the growing opportunities within Ireland's Green Economy. As part of Green Works you can avail of a large variety of themed courses, FE-TAC certificates, workshops, work placements, lectures, networking and much more.

Green Works aims to demystify the green economy and orientate jobseekers to local jobs that are sustainable. That means exploring opportunities in renewable energy, capitalising on the need to improve the performance of our buildings, developing local markets for local producers, attracting visitors to our areas and setting up new enterprises to service them. The

green economy is more like the local economy of the past with massive opportunities for the future of rural Ireland.

Green Works have hubs in Tipperary, Cork, Sligo and Dublin that offer courses on green building, renewable energy, eco tourism, community resilience, artisan food production, sustainable agriculture and green business. Green Works is a collaborative project of Cultivate, Nicer Training, Syspro, and Woodrow Sustainable Solutions, funded by The Department of Education and Skills, through the Labour Activation Fund with support from The European Social Fund.

See www.green-works.ie for full details

Author



The floods, freezing temperatures and snowfalls of 2010 highlighted how unprepared we in Ireland are for sudden changes in the environment, even temporary ones. Globally, people are becoming nervous about the rising prices of oil, petrol and food. We are entering 'Peak Oil' territory and Community Development is failing us, argues David Philip. Davie is a member of Cultivate, a national co-operative, with 10 years' experience in education and training on sustainability. Davie runs the Community Resilience programme at Cultivate and is Communication Manager with the Tipperary Green Works Hub. He lives in the Cloughjordan Ecovillage and also coordinates the Irish Transition Towns Network. He wrote this page.

ADVERTISE WITH US!

IN THE COUNTRY'S MOST WIDELY
READ COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY
SECTOR MAGAZINE

'Changing Ireland's is the most popular magazine in Ireland's Community and Voluntary Sector and has a readership of up to 15,000 people for its printed quarterly publication. 'Changing Ireland' has also built up a considerable online following via youtube (13,000 views and rising), facebook, blogger and its website: www.changingireland.ie The project is 9 years old and is now taking advertising.

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATES

NB: Not-for-profits get a discount of up to 35% on the following rates:

1/6th page €189

1/4 page €309

1/2 page €599

CHANGING IRELAND

Contact info: T 061-458090 (admin,
Mon-Wed). T: 061-458011 (editor).
E: admin@changingireland.ie or
editor@changingireland.ie

NOTE: Our readers are drawn from – to name some, but not all – Local Development Companies (aka Partnership or Leader companies), Family Resource Centres, community policing units, elected TDs, Senators and MEPs, students of community development and related courses (eg youthwork, drugs work), university libraries, city and county enterprise boards, disability organisations, NGOs, UN agencies, trade unions, national umbrella bodies, state agencies including Pobal and others, the mainstream media, RAPID, CLAR, and other programmes.

The magazine also goes directly to the homes of hundreds of Community Development workers and volunteers who have subscribed independently over the years.



Garda Fitzgerald said people had no reservations about giving out their contact details: "No not at all, there is no sensitive information given out or anything like that. People see it's working in practice and pass the word on to their friends and family."

Community Garda cuts crime by texting



By Brendan Meehan

ATM cardholders in County Cork had a lucky escape in early February when a card skimming device was recovered from an ATM machine at a Supervalu store in Glanmire.

However, the ATM-fraudsters may have looted many more accounts had it not been for 600 text messages that alerted vulnerable local residents.

The official Garda text-alert message service was the brainchild of Glanmire community Garda Noel Fitzgerald and entails quickly block-texting people when criminals are at large.

"It was almost two years ago when I came up with the idea and decided to put it to use," Garda Fitzgerald said.

It may come as a surprise to some that this scheme is only being implemented in Glanmire, and not nationwide.

Garda Fitzgerald said people had no reservations about giving out their contact details: "No not at all, there is no sensitive information given out or anything like that. People see it's working in practice and pass the word on to their friends and family."

People can opt in or out of the service.

He gathered the phone numbers through a series of neighbourhood watch meetings.

COMMUNITY VIEWS

Richard Monaghan, administrator with the Ballyfermot Partnership in Dublin, felt it was a service well worth rolling out nationwide. He said, "Anything at all that would help secure people's money or belongings is a great idea."

Others were unaware of the crime-text-alert scheme. Ronan Gleeson, a development officer for North Tipperary LEADER Partnership told us, "I was unaware of it completely. It should become a nationwide thing for obvious security reasons."

Garda Fitzgerald's service has evolved in recent times with the advent of a business watch text alert scheme which is up and running.

For more information, contact Garda Fitzgerald Glanmire Garda Station on 021-482-1002.

Block-texting 600: How Noel did it!

Garda Noel Fitzgerald sends out text alerts with the assistance of a private company called Grapevine Communications which specialises in delivering group texts.

For a typical local sports club, the average cost varies between €50 and €100 per month and somewhat less for Community Alerts.

To use the service, you send on your list of phone numbers to be texted and the name of the person in charge of your group and your own phone number.

With your password to hand, you can phone in, email in or text in your message to be sent out, and the group text will be sent out within 3 to 5 minutes.

The company's service is already widely used by church groups and is available seven days a week.

Block-texting in 5 simple steps

Register online at <http://www.grapevine.com/>
You will be contacted shortly thereafter.

Send your list of recipients, your name/group name and number.

You'll be given password.

Phone, email or text in your message to be sent, and away you go!

There are plenty of companies online that supply a similar service, some better suited to your needs and budget than others. Two we found user-friendly were:

www.webtext.com/

www.bulktxt.ie/

Over 50,000 people are employed full-time in the Community & Voluntary Sector

'Changing Ireland', c/o Community Enterprise Centre, Moyross, Limerick
T: 061-458011 (editorial) / 458090 (admin). E: editor@changingireland.ie W: www.changingireland.ie