

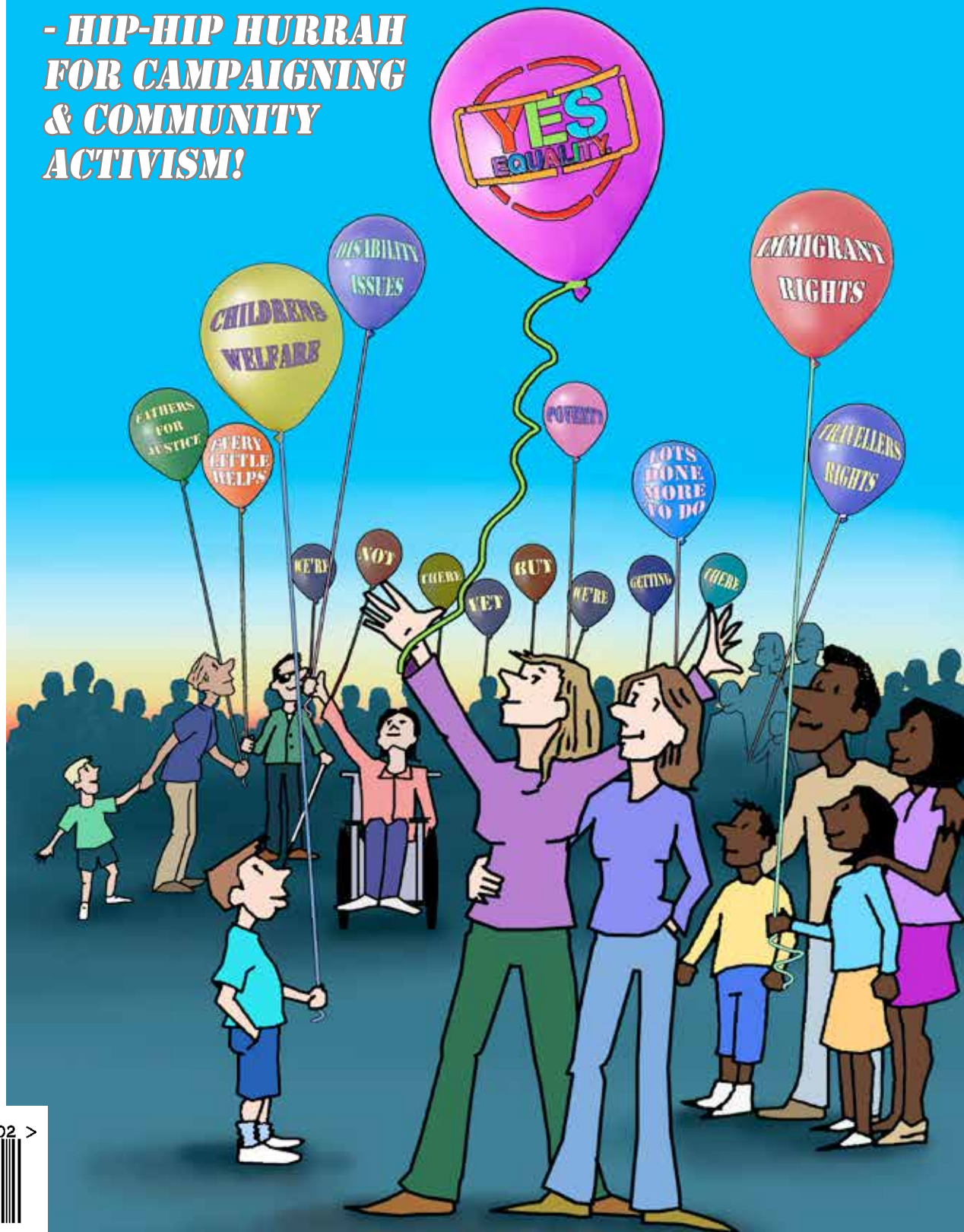
CHANGING IRELAND

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& COMMUNITY
ACTIVISM!**



THIS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This publication is produced by Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd, an independent, not-for-profit
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FRONT COVER

Our thanks to artist, community worker and art therapist Austin Creaven. for our front cover cartoon.



50th EDITION THANK YOU!

Happy 50th to everyone involved in 'Changing Ireland', most of all you, dear reader! Three cheers for Community Development! And a word of thanks to successive governments who have seen sense in continuing to fund this project. Go raibh maith agaibh!

INDEPENDENT

'Changing Ireland' is an independent publication core-funded by Government since 2001:



Comhshaoil, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION PROGRAMME

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is the main community development programme operated by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in support of the voluntary and community sector. It has a budget of €28m from April-December 2015.

The programme tackles poverty and social exclusion through partnership and constructive engagement between Government and its agencies and people in disadvantaged communities.

SICAP's aim is to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration."

The Programme is underpinned by a Community Development approach.

Most of the work on-the-ground covered by this magazine is funded through the SICAP. In this edition, we also focus on LEADER and a number of other important participatory initiatives.



SEEKING TO CHANGE IRELAND: JOIN OUR BOARD

Changing Ireland is renewing its board and seeking suitable new board members with skills and achievements in one or more of the following areas:

Marketing, publishing, financial management, new media, business development.

Potential members should have ready access to our base in Limerick.

If you think there may be a fit between our needs and the skills

and experiences you are volunteering, we invite you to look at the details of our organisation below. If you are interested, or would like to find out more, please email g.fitzg@yahoo.ie with your expression of interest and contact details.

Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd is a community-based communications organisation that promotes community development and action and challenges social and economic inequality in Ireland.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Following receipt of your details, if the board feels that your profile is a promising match, the following should happen:

- A phone conversation will be scheduled with our chairperson to for an initial introduction.
- A meeting will be scheduled with our chairperson and the editor.
- Time will be given for parties to reflect and return with an indication on whether they would have an interest in being further involved.
- If board membership is the desired outcome, this will be approved at the next Changing Ireland meeting.
- Induction process and participation in company development planning meeting.

For more information, visit: <http://bit.ly/changeireland>

If only children had the vote

Oisín Meagher.



Community Development can inspire us in how we live on this planet and can help shape our environment in all manner of positive ways.

Strengthened by the Marriage Equality win, we should now take up other causes in Ireland even more loudly.

Why not!

Child poverty was oft-mentioned after the referendum and if a new movement arises, it's not before time; the number of children in poverty has risen to 138,000 in recent months.

Ireland is not the only country where child poverty is rising. Services have been cut in many so-called developed countries.

According to figures quoted by the UN: "In recent years, more than two and a half million more children in affluent countries fell into poverty, bringing the total above 76 million."

If only children had the vote.

While many of the causes of child-poverty are deep-rooted, some can be addressed with relative ease. As a first step here in Ireland, children in direct provision and their families could be given a fresh start.

Our 50th edition is hereby dedicated to children experiencing poverty and those seeking to ensure their cause is heard.

On that note, new participatory structures are being established by the Government - at county level - for civil society groups to make themselves heard and to engage with local authorities.

If they work, great. There is an opportunity. Time will tell and this publication will keep a close eye.

A positive indication will be if groups move beyond social media and traditional campaigning to also seek to make a mark through the new Public Participation Networks (PPNs) and the Local and Community Development Committees

(LCDCs).

The establishment of the new structures in every county coincides with the launch of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme in April.

It targets the most marginalised and offers individuals training and access to jobs, while also supporting community development initiatives.

The new Programme is described as "critical" by rural development minister Ann Phelan.

Of concern, nevertheless, an article in this edition by Rape Crisis Network Ireland draws attention to what it perceives as the erosion of the NGO sector's capacity to advocate.

Clauses in State funding contracts caution against public engagement and may silence organisations wishing to advocate on behalf of the voiceless. (Cuts also impact).

Surely this can be addressed as we enter a new era of stronger local democracy and civic participation.

Allen Meagher

FILE A REPORT FOR US!

If you believe in Community Development and enjoy writing, why not file a report for us about your community initiative and what makes it unique. 300-400 words is plenty (and a photo if possible). Open to volunteers & staff. Certain criteria apply. Your first point of contact should be the editor.



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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author concerned. They do not, by any means, necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the editorial team, the voluntary management board of Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd, or the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Happiness is not something ready-made; it comes from your own actions. – Dalai Lama

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

LOCAL AUTHORITIES LEARNING TO GIVE COMMUNITIES THEIR SAY IN DEVELOPMENT

BY BEN PANTER

With the setting up of Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and Public Participation Networks (PPN's) across the country, local authorities have added responsibility to account to communities for decisions made.

Old representative structures have been replaced under 'alignment' legislation.

As the transition is so new, 'Changing Ireland' decided to hit a sample of local authorities with an on-the-spot phone survey to find out how far they have got on in implementing the changes.

Five LCDC officers were available for comment on the day; all five of the local authorities questioned had made progress at this stage.

The authorities that responded were Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown, Cavan, Donegal and Kilkenny and Kildare.

Transparency is an important theme in broadening out the local democratic process and the respondees had built it in, to varying degrees.

Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown and Kildare both published outcomes from LCDC meetings online, and Kilkenny said it "intended to do so"

None of the authorities said that LCDC meetings were open to the public but spokesperson for Donegal Donna

McGroarty, said she "couldn't see any reason why members of the public couldn't show up".

PPN's were up and running in three of the authorities; Kilkenny held elections in mid-June and Kildare had five hundred groups registered for the PPN at this stage.

Online information regarding the make-up of the PPN's was available from two of the authorities with Donegal registering a "don't know" and Kildare's online presence for its PPN is still a work in progress. Kilkenny was waiting on the results of its election.

All of those surveyed said that notices of upcoming events and outcomes or decisions from the meetings were already or would be in the future be available online.

Three local authorities said the names of PPN members were available online. However, another was concerned that to do so could be "in breach of data protection".

All local authorities produced progress reports or briefings to elected representatives on a monthly basis except, so far, for Dun Laoghaire.

So there you have it – early days and councils are feeling their way into this brave new world.

Volunteer centres' funding secure

BY MARK QUINN



Nina Arwitz, CEO of Volunteer Ireland, pictured with Elena Rossi during National Volunteer Week in May.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has announced that it will maintain existing funding for volunteer services.

The Department funds 21 volunteer centres and 5 volunteer "services" around the country and they will continue to receive the funding they were previously allotted as one percent of Local Community Development Programme (LCDP) funding.

The main work of the volunteer centres is to match individuals and groups interested in volunteering with suitable opportunities.

The new funding method will see the one percent model done away with and an equivalent amount incorporated into core funding for the centres and services.

Minister of State, Ann Phelan, who has responsibility in this area, said:

"Until 2014, one percent of LCPD funding was ring-fenced for voluntary activities and administered by my Department in conjunction with Pobal. From 2015 forward, this source of funding has been incorporated into the overall Volunteer Centre budget."

Nina Arwitz, CEO of Volunteer Ireland, welcomed the Government's move and said she is "delighted" funding is to be maintained at previous funding levels.

"We're particularly happy that in addition to funding the 21 centres that the smaller 'volunteer information services' have also been funded," she added.

The volunteer information services are available in: Offaly, Leitrim, Laois, Roscommon and Waterford.

The volunteer centres and information services have almost national coverage with Kilkenny and Wexford currently the only counties not covered by either direct services or support from a neighbouring county.

EVERY COUNCIL MUST REPORT MONTHLY ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Every local authority is expected to produce a monthly report on the operations/progress of their Local and Community Development Committee.

These reports are to be "prepared" by the CEO and "furnished" to the elected members.

So the Dail was informed by Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Alan Kelly, last December.

He said "Monthly management reports are prepared by the chief executive of each local authority and furnished to the elected members on or before the seventh day of each month or on a date in each month that is set by council resolution."

The Minister pointed out that while "not prescriptive... it has been recommended that the reports should include:

- Major expenditure and income lines for each service division.
- Performance of local authority revenue collection levels.
- Recourse to overdraft facility.



- Emergency capital works not provided for in the annual budget.
- Operation/progress of the Local and Community Development Committee.
- Performance of Local Enterprise Offices.
- Progress in preparing reports/material requested by the Council."

- A. Meagher



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This project is managed by AONTAS who have been assigned the role of National Co-ordinator for the Implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL). This Project is funded with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union and co-financed by the Department of Education and Skills through SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority.

EQUALITY & COMMUNITY DEV'T

"THIS PRIDE PARADE IS GOING TO BE HUGE" - DAN LAWLESS

BY MARK QUINN

The first broadcast of 'Changing Limerick; Changing Ireland' (see below) featured an interview with Dan Lawless who runs a flower shop in Limerick City along with his civil partner Clive.

"This year's Limerick Pride (parade) is going to be huge, there'll be great energy behind it," he said in advance of the festival held on July 14-19th.

Dan spent many years as an active campaigner for the gay community and has seen many changes over the years from decriminalization in 1993 to the recent marriage equality referendum.

On air, he recalled the moment that the news first broke that "homosexual acts" had been decriminalised:

"I was driving to work with my mother along Main Patrick Street. The Nine O'Clock News came on announcing that Senator Norris had won his case and homosexuality was now decriminalised and I could have leapt out of the car with excitement. A guy was coming against me in traffic who I knew and who was then a very closeted homosexual who could not have been an out gay man because of his workplace. That man still works in the same place and now it's very acceptable to be gay."

YOUNG GAY PEOPLE

The result of the referendum is important to Dan but he believes the real reward is the message that this sends to young gay people:

"Whether it was in the nineties, the eighties, the seventies or back before then; when a man or a woman comes to accept their sexuality there is a very difficult crossover point. You need to tell yourself, your parents, your family, your friends at school or college or work that you are not what society expect you to be, you're different. It's a difficult crossover at any age; now what society has said to them is that it's okay to be gay and you can even get married if you want to."

Dan and Clive plan to renew the commitment they made during their civil partnership by getting married. They've begun planning.

"Somebody asked me recently what its like to be married and I said, 'Actually we're not married, we're civil partnered'. But in essence we're just like any other married couple: we dig the garden together, we cook the dinner together, we go to bed together – we've been living our lives together 'in sickness and in health' for quite a long time."



Dan Lawless - pictured in the Limerick Pride Parade last July - believes the referendum result delivers for young people in particular. Photo: Munster Images.

(E)QUALITY BROADCAST NEWS:

Community radio is changing Limerick

A new monthly radio show called 'Changing Limerick; Changing Ireland' had its inaugural airing on Limerick City Community Radio (LCCR) on Sunday, May 10th.

The not-for-profit station broadcasts every week to Limerick and the surrounding area and is available on 99.9FM. The new show came about after the station invited 'Changing Ireland' to participate.

Hosted by presenter and producer Raffaele Rocca, the first show featured editor Allen Meagher and journalist Mark Quinn discussing examples of best practice in Community Development around the country.

During the show Mark interviewed an LGBT activist about the long road leading to the Marriage Equality referendum win. The story features on the front cover of this edition.

"The new show is a great chance for the station to promote stories that don't get the traction they should on the national airwaves. It allows us to go into more

depth talking about stories featured in your magazine," said Raffaele.

A slot called 'Songs That Changed Ireland' provoked intense discussion. For the record, the first three songs featured were:

1. Thousands are Sailing – The Pogues
2. Hiroshima Nagasaki, Russian Roulette – Moving Hearts
3. Zombie – The Cranberries

The show returns on the first Sunday of every month so tune into 99.9FM or listen live on www.limerickcitycommunityradio.org

Have you got a suggestion for a song that changed Ireland?

Why not email us with your suggestion or tweet @changingireland with a brief explanation and we'll do our best to discuss your song and what it meant for Ireland. Perhaps you'll come on the air!

Mark swears he'll have 'Fairytale of New York' played as a song that changed Ireland before the year is out. We'll see!



Raffaele Rocca, producer, with Richard Smith, chairperson of Limerick City Community Radio.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY CAMPAIGN

- Prime concern in 2001 was confronting homophobia locally, beginning
- From 2007, adoption of National Code of Practice at community level
- By 2009, East Clare believed it was “first rural area with LGB (sic) groups

BY ALLEN MEAGHER

INTRODUCTION

‘Changing Ireland’ has reported since it was established in 2001 on work especially at community level to turn Ireland into a fairer, more equal society.

To celebrate the publication of our 50th edition, we opened our archive to look at how the magazine documented work to support people from the LGBT community down through the years.

Building from the community to the state level, the campaign for equality serves as a model for activists at home and abroad.

The campaign began in communities when repression was evident in suicide and unemployment rates among LGBT people that were many multiples of average rates.

At the finish line, the Irish electorate showed the world what was possible.

While the battle for State recognition was a long time coming, it helped that a measure of State support was forthcoming for LGBT people via the Community Development Programme (1990-2009) and the Local and Community Development Programme (2010-2014).

FROM OUR ARCHIVE

Our archives show that 14 years ago Community Development practitioners were reaching out to LGBT people offering support and solidarity.

They were doing their best to open doors in a welcoming way, so LGBT people could feel they belonged and that community settings were secure and comfortable. But homophobia had yet to be rooted out, there were no maps and the demands on community groups were many.

We highlighted their work and reported on the impact of straight society’s repression of gay people.

Our second edition, in Autumn 2001, focused heavily on pointing out - rather obviously as it may seem now - that “Homophobia bars community participation.”

The situation was stark, as Sharon Browne reported:

“The degree of homophobia in society is usually under-estimated. Intolerance can be so great, for example, that lesbian women who invest time in working for their community often feel they receive very little support or solidarity

in return.

“Such negative experiences make it difficult for people to volunteer or get involved a second time,” reported Sharon.

“To compound the problem the negative experiences of the LGBT community leads to low self-esteem which also inhibits participation,” Marie Queiry told a conference titled ‘Sexual Orientation Strategy Day’. She stressed that, “The degree of homophobic violence cannot be under-estimated.”

That event was organised by the Equality and Anti-Racism Sub-Committee (EARS) of the Community Development Support Programme.

(The CDSP was a short-lived Government programme that brought Community Development Projects and Family Resource Centres together, but Government soon had a rethink and split the formidable pairing into separate programmes once again).

Community groups are learning organisations and we published articles encouraging groups to become “pro-active on sexuality”. Further coverage catalogued “some progress” in the campaign for LGBT rights over a quarter-century.

Under the heading “Unequal Ireland and sexuality facts”, we reported for instance that:

- 33% of LGBT people had been homeless at some stage.
- 8% left school early due to homophobic bullying.

There were many brutal findings within that article (drawn from a range of referenced sources).

Over the years that followed, the campaign for equality slowly gathered momentum. However, while Community Development practitioners embraced the campaign, they were often unsure how to handle issues that arose and unaware of support they could offer.

Our Spring ‘03 (Issue 6) edition reported briefly on a “Cork Gay/Bi-Sexual Conference” aimed at people involved in community projects. According to a spokesperson, the conference was called because “community workers are dealing with sexuality issues, but need more support and training in this area” (Issue 6).

Among the guest speakers was the country’s first openly gay county councillor Peter Kelly. Peter later emigrated with his partner, frustrated at the pace of change in Irish society’s attitudes towards minorities. (From New Zealand, he

rejoiced over the ‘Yes’ vote).

In our Summer ‘03 edition, we published an article titled “Sexual Orientation and the Community Development Support Programme”.

It reported on a new “national strategy” aimed at “including and encouraging gay and lesbian people to be involved in the community and voluntary sector”. Developed by the Equality and Anti-Racism Sub-committee (EARS) it followed on from a pilot that ran in the Republic’s North-East and in Northern Ireland.

Skip a few years forward to Winter 2007 (Issue 23) where we reported that the national Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) was “working to make Ireland a place where all LGB people can feel safe and confident about being open about their sexual orientation at home, in work and within the wider community”.

GLEN wanted to ensure that “LGB people are not discriminated against in laws and in service provision” and also, critically “where relationships and love between LGB people are seen as no different to relationships and love between heterosexual people.”



Our commemorative front cover produced on the day, May 23rd.

Our archive of 50 editions features over 1,200 pages of quality Community

EQUALITY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

GLEN BEGAN IN COMMUNITIES

g with community groups
l helped
oup”

GLEN and others called on government to place LGBT “isolation and exclusion” at the heart of any future programme to follow the Community Development Programme

Meanwhile, Community Development Projects (CDPs) in the West of Ireland, working with GLEN and West Training, devised a Code of Practice outlining how to best support gay people in local communities.

CDPs and Family Resource Centres were among those to adopt the Code in 2007. It signaled an end to any homophobia emanating from members of community-based organisations in receipt of State funding.

GLEN linked with CDPs on that occasion through EARS which had operated within the Programme for a number of years by then. (We reported on EARS for some time after).

Launching the Code, Senator David Norris remarked: “This work is not based on academic claptrap, it is informed by the genuine experiences of real people in local communities,” he said.

He paid tribute to community groups in the West and Midlands “for the work they are doing to include members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.”

Emboldened, GLEN called for a half-dozen new CDPs to be set up “immediately” to support the campaign and advocate for the LGBT community.

Our article began: “Six new CDPs in Cork, Limerick, Dundalk, Dublin and Waterford could be set up immediately if funding was forthcoming. There is ‘an immediate capacity within the (gay) community nationally’ to do so, according to GLEN.”

GLEN was “strongly of the view” that the LGBT community had “as urgent a need as the many other important communities of interest that are currently part of the Community Development Programme.”

A connected article highlighted progress under the headline: “Local communities reach out to sexual minorities”. It pointed to the isolation, stigma and social exclusion experienced.

What came was a 10% cut to the Programme budget, with spending on support agencies hit.

On the other hand, the LGBT community remained a key target group for the Programme (and the successor programme, the LCDP).

The higher suicide rate was of great concern. We reported (Issue 23):

“A Trinity College Dublin study in 2006 found they are bullied at school three times more than average and life does not necessarily get any easier as they grow older. A study (in 2004 by Youthnet) found that people whose sexuality is different to the majority of the population are:

- Five times more likely to be medicated for depression.
- Two and a half times more likely to self harm.
- At least three times more likely to attempt suicide. (Youthnet, 2004).”

However, there were grounds for encouragement too as witnessed by the push by community projects to say a loud ‘No’ to homophobia. We published a list of “Practical things a centre can do” which called for simple things like having LGBT-friendly posters on walls in community settings. The



Scariff, Co. Clare was believed to be the first rural area in Ireland to have its own “LGB” support group, in 2009.

list also included “Don’t tolerate homophobic comments or actions in your project.”

Meanwhile, Horace (resident agony uncle) lent support in responding to a confused reader who eight years ago asked:

“Why do same sex couples want their situation recognised and regularised? I’ve been having same sex with my wife for the past 30 years – same face, same place, same time, every time. Anything different wouldn’t feel right at this stage though it would be nice if it was more often.” (Horace’s advice was no less helpful than usual).

Of all the articles published regarding community level support for LGBT rights, one from Co. Clare stands out.

In the summer of 2009 (Issue 29) we reported – apparently exclusively – that “Ireland’s first ever gay rural group” had been set up. It met every Friday in Scariff.

The group’s aim was “to help the queer community and queer curious and their friends and families in rural East Clare”.

“In rural Ireland, LGBT people normally have very little if anything in the way of specific support services or social outlets,” remarked

project co-ordinator Dee Dooley, who co-founded the project while on a Community Employment Scheme. She continued on afterwards as a volunteer activist.

“I’d a 13 year old come to me last week feeling suicidal because of worries over what her family would think of her being gay... I was only able to refer her on. She is okay now,” Dee said. This was typical of the kind of work that came her way, she said.

It must be said that the support provided by paid community workers was patchy and in places non-existent.* This was not something we reported at the time.

Meanwhile, the national campaign did gain traction. We reported that then Community minister, Eamon Ó Cuív “deplored (the) exclusion of LGBT people”.

“Embracing diversity is known to have proven effects on the individual and larger community,” said the minister speaking at the launch of a report into the needs of the LGBT community that found that “70% of respondents had experienced some form of discrimination based on their sexual orientation.”

Sinn Féin supported same sex marriage back in 2003, as did Labour by 2009, but it took other political parties longer.

Homophobic attitudes will not disappear outright, no more than will sectarianism, racism, sexism, ageism and so on. However, hopes have been raised for other minorities.

Fast forward to May 22nd, 2015, when marginalisation, isolation and repression gave way to recognition, absolute joy and celebration with the passing of the Marriage Equality Referendum.

Community Development empowers people through collective action and seeks to bring about social change and create a more equal society. Community Development works best over time as seen in its contribution to this community’s campaign for equality.

ALSO SEE: For a personal account, read our interview with activist Dan Lawless on page 7.

ARCHIVE NOTE: The above account takes note of many, not all articles over 49 editions relating to work at grassroots level by LGBT people, supporters and community groups from 2001 to 2015. All back issues are available online: Click “archive” on our homepage: www.changingireland.ie. The first 14 editions can only be visually searched; the 35 that follow can be digitally searched.

* Ref: Graph 21, page 104, ‘A Pilot Survey of Community Development Workers’, 2009, published by the CPA (available online).

Community Development journalism over 14 years.

W: changingireland.ie

INTERVIEW

NEW SOCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMME

- While dominance of men in senior posts not

- Ann Phelan, Minister of State for Rural Development

BY ALLEN MEAGHER

Minister of State, Ann Phelan, who is responsible for local, community and rural economic development, told 'Changing Ireland' that the new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme is "critical" in its importance. However, she also admitted that it is not as well understood as it should be among all her Government colleagues.

The dominance of men at senior level among local authority and Local Development Company staff - is also of concern to her and she would be in favour of introducing gender quotas.

SOCIAL INCLUSION PROGRAMME IS CRITICAL

"The new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme is critical," said Minister Phelan.

"We're all results-based and want to see the numbers, but we have to build capacity year on year in the areas SICAP is operating. SICAP is a critical support. You see some great success stories."

"The Programme aims to get to the most hard-to-reach people. In some ways, it's hard to measure. The return on hard-to-reach people doesn't necessarily come quickly."

She said some ministers and TDs were more likely to appreciate the importance of SICAP than others, with deputies representing disadvantaged areas more aware.

"In pockets of the Government, it's very well understood, in others it's not. It depends on the constituency you come from."

NEW PARTICIPATORY STRUCTURES

On new structures that include Local and Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and Public Participation Networks (PPNs) in every county, she said: "We are in the early days. The local authorities have to reach out to communities, consult with all communities because every community will be doing its own economic and community plan."

Those six-year plans have to be lodged by Christmas, so the pressure is on as the structures are new.

"It absolutely has to work. There are challenges, but also opportunities, but all the development workers in these spaces need to be filtering back the needs of communities. The Local Development Companies actually do this very well, they have great expertise in how you go out and speak to a community and cohesiveness (sic) a community. Those people are also part of the LCDC structure. The Local Development Companies will be a key local development conduit to the local authorities through the LCDCs."

EU CONCERN OVER LEADER DELIVERY

Until now, Local Development Companies were the 'Local Action Groups (LAGs) to co-ordinate LEADER at local level in Ireland. Asked about concerns expressed by Brussels since LCDCs were now vying to become LAGs, the Minister acknowledged there were challenges.

A number of Local Development Companies have put in their own bids to become LAGs and the Minister has been to Brussels to meet the Commission and defend the new delivery structures in Ireland.

"The process is open and transparent. They will submit their expressions of interest and then we'll see how they're evaluated and if their strategy is good."

"We're working with everybody, we're not hammering anyone on the head to do anything... There's a bit of hurling going on definitely, but people are pragmatic," she said.

GENDER IMBALANCE & SENIOR POSTS

Minister Phelan wishes to see more women appointed to senior posts relating to local and community development.

"A gender quota is needed for local authorities. I'm not sure how many women are presenting themselves for CEO positions, but I would certainly advocate it.

"People win by their own merit, but gender quotas will make the difference, it is the springboard towards change.

"Perhaps local development companies should consider it too, although there may be a difficulty as the rules for private companies are different," she said.

At present, 17 out of 50 LDCs (34%) have female CEOs (Source: Pobal).

TREBLE-UNEMPLOYMENT

She said rural people do not always have "equality of access."

"It's a big issue for me regarding rural Ireland. I spend long hours thinking about how do we crack generational unemployment? What were their experiences, what did they come up against?

"The area I come from has always had about treble the unemployment rate. If you come from a disadvantaged area in rural Ireland, transport is a barrier to accessing training, jobs and services.

"I believe that education is the great equalizer. But the incentive has to be greater for people to participate than it often is," she said. "You may not have that stigmatization by address (as in some urban areas) but the geography physically prevents you from participating."

TAPPING RURAL IRELAND'S POTENTIAL

"People talk about the demise of rural Ireland. Yet, I see what people are doing for themselves - and it's not on the radar - I sense that communities are fighting back. They have potential and don't want to be overlooked. They want to be part of the recovering economy."

Today, the unemployment rate is 9.8%.

"But even at the height of the boom, we had five per cent unemployment. What were the barriers? This is what I'm trying to do acting on the CEDRA* recommendations. We're asking why some towns did not do well and want to target resources into those towns (listed in the CEDRA report).

"Can we get those towns to lift their game to become authors of their own destiny. It's an exciting opportunity. Outside people will come in, do an audit of all the skills and potential and with the people there come up with an economic plan for the area."

The Minister points out that there are 2.2 million people living outside urban areas and not involved in farming in the State:

"I would love huge amounts of money, but I have to work with what I'm given."

She added: "It is incumbent on any administration to come that they have a minister for rural affairs," she said.

TRAVELLERS & IMMIGRANTS

Asked if discrimination against any one group in society appalled her in particular, she said: "I'd be torn between Travellers and immigrants. We need to realise that we're all living in the same society."

She is very supportive of Traveller Horse Projects, having a background in vetinarian medicine.

(This is a subject we will return to with Minister Phelan in the Autumn edition).

* CEDRA = Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas.

FRAME IS "CRITICAL"

needs to be addressed



Minister of State Ann Phelan in her office in Kilkenny.
Photo: Changing Ireland.

New civil society participatory structures

Public Participation Networks (PPNs) are being set up by government in every county and are intended to become the main link for local authorities to connect easily with four sectors - the community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors.

Each local authority hopes through PPN membership to register all community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental groups in their county.

Sign-up will be improved as groups realise they need to be registered with their local PPN

to qualify for some State grants.

Groups that join can also have an input into local policy-making and have some oversight of the local authority's work. PPNs are also to feed views into meetings of the LCDC in their county.

PPNs nominate reps to sit on their county's new Local and Community Development Committee (LCDC).

Groups can join their local PPN anytime but will not have voting rights right away.

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLANS

A major task for each new Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) across the country is to deliver a plan by Christmas to last the next six years.

The 'Local Economic and Community Plan' must be drawn up in co-operation with the local authority and in consultation with the public.

LCDCs have six months to complete the plans.

The main aim of the committees is to "develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development".

About the new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme



The Government's new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) was launched on April 1st and replaces the Local and Community Development Programme.

SICAP aims to "reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and equality through local, regional and national engagement and collaboration."

There are three main goals. (see below) while the Programme's vision is "to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are marginalised in society, living in poverty or in unemployment through community development approaches, targeted supports and interagency collaboration where the values of equality and inclusion are promoted and human rights are respected."

The Programme is underpinned by a Community Development approach and seeks to support communities, groups and individuals.

GOAL 1

To support and resource disadvantaged communities and marginalised target groups to engage with relevant local and national stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues.

GOAL 2

To support individuals and marginalised target groups experiencing educational disadvantage so they can participate fully, engage with and progress through life-long learning opportunities through the use of community development approaches.

GOAL 3

To engage with marginalised target groups/ individuals and residents of disadvantaged communities who are unemployed but who do not fall within mainstream employment service provision, or who are referred to SICAP, to move them closer to the labour market and improve work readiness, and support them in accessing employment and self-employment and creating social enterprise opportunities.

COVERING
CLONDALKIN

The people behind each of the projects featured here have received community development support or funding from South Dublin County Partnership and/or South Dublin County Council.

Not a lot mind, but it helped.

Clondalkin has a great community spirit and journalist Ben Panter met people on the ground to see how they are leading change. He reports on:

- A new boxing club in Bawnogue (it opened on May 25th).
- People agitating for urban land for a social horse project who have turned to art while their campaign continues.
- Volunteers responsible for bringing affordable counselling to the area.
- And he met some of the people behind an extraordinary movie.
- From this year, such community projects will continue to be supported directly and indirectly through the national Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.
- However, it is - as readers will see - due in the main to the volunteerism, activism and dedication of local people on the ground. We hope to return at a later date.

Social Horse Project

-Youths turn to graffiti while waiting on council

BY BEN PANTER REPORTS
FROM CLONDALKIN

To an outsider Urban Equestrianism is one of those strange Irish cultural quirks – an oddity to people who grew up in Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham or indeed London, where urban horses are part of history.

Clondalkin Equine Club is taking the Urban/Equine juxtaposition further by its future, hoped-for facilities in the hip-hop art of graffiti.

While eager youngsters are chomping at the bit to be able to keep their beloved horses in a social horse project, the process of acquiring land is being held up by local authority red tape.

In the meantime, to quell frustration, members young and old have turned to graffiti while they maintain a patient resolve.

Clondalkin has always had horses, but the Club hopes to change establishment attitudes and have them embrace urban-horse keeping as a legitimate pursuit.

Roisin Kearney explains, “While waiting for land, we were able to secure some arts funding.

“We organised workshops and targeted the youth, the people we hope will be involved with the equine project when it is up and running.

“We’ve designed a logo for the club and the young people produced paintworks that show how much horses mean to them. It’s been a powerful exercise.

“Since it was successful, we’re going to run it again in Neilstown to keep people linked up.

“When we have all the art pieces done



we will put them around the land (which they hope to acquire) to give the youngsters ownership of the place.”

This story of Clondalkin Equine Club has featured in our coverage since the Autumn of 2013. While the youngsters are growing up, their passion for horses will not diminish - it is handed down from one generation to the next.

Roisin, meanwhile, has been so politicised by campaigning for the social horse project that she is now studying community development in NUI Maynooth and works in a Community Employment position with a local development company.

“The land for an urban horse project is long overdue to the people in our community,” said Roisin, “and we will persevere, we’re not going away.”



‘The Bakery

• Acting gave lads “a break

• Going to shoot 2nd film

BY BEN PANTER

“Is that Jimmy?” I ask.

“Yep, Jimmy Smallhorne, luckily I wasn’t called after my uncle Mickey”.

And we were off, his enthusiasm for his work becoming immediately obvious.

You may recognise him as Git from ‘Love/Hates’, Season 3, and he is the director of ‘The Bakery Job’.

Passionate, politicized and at times outspoken, the first man to direct an

Irish film accepted at the renowned Sundance festival pulls no punches as he tells of his experience working with the cast of ‘The Bakery Job’.

How did you get involved with the project?

“I was approached by a mutual connection. Initially they wanted me to teach an acting class - I was well up for it - it was such an unusual group to be asked to work with.

“But instead of just acting I thought it would be more exciting for the lads to get involved with filmmaking and the practice. The guys have extraordinary lives and I felt this would give them a break from it.”

Where did inspiration for ‘The Bakery Job’ come from?

Middle class filmmakers often come into these peoples lives looking to exploit their situations such as is the case with ‘Benefit Street’ (Channel 4) – they pretend to be compassionate with a pseudo-liberal point of view, but really they just focus on the negative. I come from a very strong working class background and wanted the project to move away from that sort of stuff which I think ‘The Bakery Job’ does.

It was the actors first experience, so how did they respond?

HOLLYWOOD COME

- Talent scouts form an c

A new short film is giving a voice to people on the fringes, showing how much acting talent there is within overlooked communities.

‘The Bakery Job’ written and directed by Jimmy Smallhorne is a tale of need and redemption succinctly told in just seven minutes.

Its high production values could fool viewers into thinking it was a trailer for a big budget movie but in reality it was made by a team of volunteers from the Service Users Developing Solidarity group (S.U.D.S)

S.U.D.S brings users or those who have a history of drug use together to build solidarity and face issues together. It is funded by the HSE through the Drugs Taskforce.

It is a low threshold service built on the pragmatism that inclusion does not necessarily mean quitting drugs.

As the films director, Jim Smallhorne said, “Look,

'The Bakery Job': a first in Irish film

"...from their 'extraordinary lives'"

on bigger budget

People who live on the edge have an amazing capacity for creativity; they often have to think on the spot, it was amazing to work with them.

It took us six weeks to put it together. A professional film crew including up and coming cameraman Duncan McKenna did it for little or nothing. The whole process was a complete eye opener for these guys - the respect they were treated with from the crew was a highlight for them. 'Something we will never forget', they said.

For everyone watching us film, it was a powerful experience and the acting was of a high standard. I tell the lads not to get carried away. They should take it one step at a time. One week at a time or even less. It takes a lot of work to get into this business... a lot of time. It took me ages and I knew a bit about it starting off.

Is this the end for them?

No, we have a new script set around the anniversary of the Easter Rising. It will take around twelve weeks of writing, they have been amazing, they are having all the input into developing the characters, the back-stories and the plot.

Initially, we thought this next film would be about half-an-hour long, but it is now more like an hour.

It involves different characters at different bus-stops, but they all get on the same bus. I can't give too much away, but something mad happens on the bus. It revolves around the promises in the proclamation and how the working class of Ireland have been let down by that.

The script is funny and out there. It deals with all kind of issues - sexual reproduction, money,

SUDS stands for Service Users Developing Solidarity'.

- It is a HSE-funded Clondalkin advocacy group for people availing of addiction services.

- It aims to create a voice for people who use drugs within the community, by way of participation, education, support and promotion of harm reduction.

- W: sudsclondalkin.com

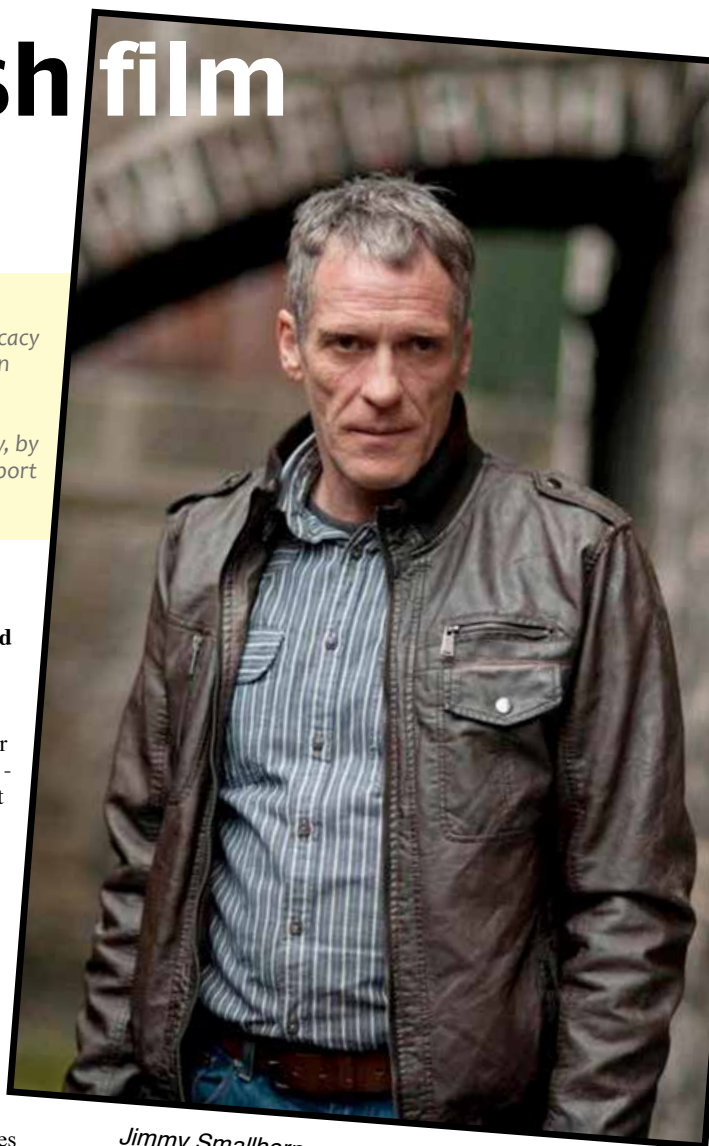
religion, jobs, politics and republicanism.

Is this new project going to be aimed at a wider audience?

If it is decent enough we'll submit it to film festivals. It's all speculation at this stage. We are going to apply for Arts Council and Film Board funding - the last one was done on a tiny budget and people got involved out of love. We're hoping to have a much higher budget for this one.

How has being involved benefitted the actors of the bakery job?

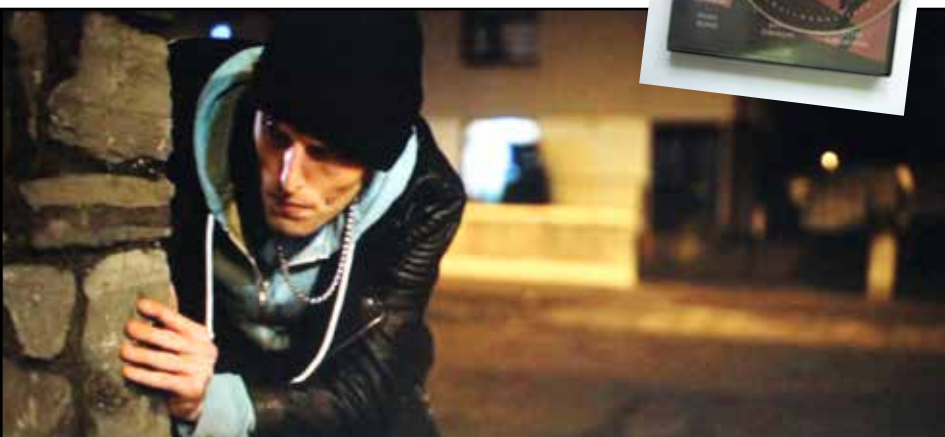
People have modified their behaviour as a result; they come to me and tell me that. Whatever is going on in their lives - and it can be pretty heavy stuff - they showed up every week. It offered them balance, positivity, a way of viewing themselves differently. At the end of it all, they have the DVD, something in their hand to be proud of.



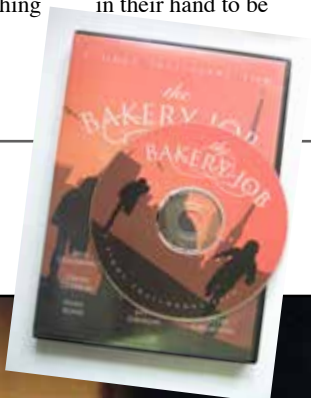
Jimmy Smallhorne saw people change their behaviour after becoming film-makers.

IN - YOUR TIME IS UP

orderly queue



'The Bakery Job' is remarkable as a film on a range of levels.



not everyone who took part in the film gets clean, not everybody does - that doesn't mean they should be excluded from the project or life."

RTE could do worse than audition these guys who certainly know a thing or two about Dublin's Fair City.

Families of the actors and project workers got the full red carpet treatment at the film's premiere in the Liffey Cinema.

Rising screen star, Tara Peavoy - who plays Susie - said her family "kept asking if they could watch the film again".

"I loved making it, drama gives you confidence and gives us a way to be heard," Tara said.

Talent scouts form an orderly queue.

S.U.D.S can be contacted as follows:

T: 01-4573515.

E: sudsolidarity@gmail.com

LOCAL FOCUS

IT'S A KNOCKOUT!

353 SIGN UP FOR BAWNOGUE'S NEWEST CLUB

BEN PANTER REPORTS

Three-hundred people attended the official opening of Bawnogue Boxing Club on May 23 - "a phenomenal success", according to club secretary Shane Lynch.

"Then three-hundred and fifty-three young people turned up to our first training session the following Monday night," he said.

The opening day had all the fun of the fair as face painting, bouncy castles and music kept families amused.

According to Shane, clubs like this are vital to a communities well-being: "The club offers an alternative to anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. It gives kids the opportunity to get off the streets for one hour three days a week.

"Our ethos is to be open to everyone and be affordable; our target group is from what would be considered disadvantaged areas so we offer good family rates.

"I'm from a Traveller background so I have an understanding of how people can be excluded."

The boxing club was head coach Patrick Jennings's idea; he asked Shane who works with the Clondalkin Traveller Development Group for help getting the project off the ground.

A committee was established to secure premises, obtain funding and make sure the right people had the right coaching qualifications.

In total the club was set-up at a cost €2,700, which it received from South Dublin Council and the local credit union: "We equipped the whole club for that - talk about value for money," said Shane.

"The ACE enterprise centre in Bawnogue gave us use of their premises for nominal rent, the money saved will help us get a ring in future as we had to borrow one for a while and that is the most important piece of equipment for a boxing club."

The club is open three evenings a week to start with (Mon, Tues & Thurs) and is fully Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA) accredited.

Fees are €8 for one child, €6 each for two and €5 each after that.

If you wish to join - or to find out how to set up a boxing club on a tight budget in a short time - contact Patrick Jennings on 085-7440543 (after 5pm). Also check out the Club's Facebook page.



It's a knockout!



COMMUNITY-FOCUSED MEDIA SKILLS TRAINING



Two media skills workshops were recently facilitated by 'Changing Ireland' in conjunction with South Dublin County Partnership. In Tallaght (above) the group was joined by guest speaker David Kennedy (top-left) owner of the Echo newspaper group. Allen Meagher is pictured bottom-left.

Changing Ireland Community Media Ltd has provided professional and affordable media skills training, tailored for community staff and volunteers since 2001.

We run half-day, one-day and longer-duration courses in the following, including masterclass workshops featuring three of the following in one day:

- Writing news and press releases (print/broadcast).
- Interview skills/Preparing for radio.
- Producing Social Media.
- Publishing Community News (eg newsletters).
- Handling the media and negative publicity.

We tailor our delivery to the needs and capacity of any given group and enjoy diversity.

Training is provided by editor Allen Meagher who 19 years ago began tutoring and teaching working journalists in The Gambia.

He co-ordinated for three years a City & Guilds diploma-level journalism course and has taught in UL, UCC and Mary I.

Training has in the past been delivered in conjunction with Family Resource Centres, Local Development Companies and Local Authorities. Workshops have been held in Galway, Dublin, Donegal, Cork, Longford and Wexford and beyond.

Feedback is consistently high. Limited number of workshops per annum.

For more information, email: editor@changingireland.ie or phone 061-458011.

50th edition - vox-pop

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Two camps hold different views
writes Paul Keating

LIT Tipperary Lecturer Paul Keating wrote at length in reply to the questions we put to him. He said there is no doubt that Community Development is, and has long been, a contested concept:

There are two principal fault lines, the first is ideological, dividing those who believe that development is about growth and service provision from those who see it as primarily being about justice and equality.

These positions are not necessarily mutually exclusive. However, individual community workers and organisations tend to locate themselves in one "camp" and see the other as being secondary or even contrary.

The second fault line relates to the values associated with the ownership of the development process.

Development can be seen as being driven from within the community itself or as something directed from outside. Again practice is often a combination of both - however people and organisations tend to position themselves depending on how much they believe in the principle of development starting inside (endogenous) or development starting from outside (exogenous).

While many community development initiatives try to integrate two or more of these positions in their approach, they can become serious points of contention between individual community workers and organisations. Oh yeah!

So in answer to the question 'What is Community Development?', it means different things to different people and organisations and this is its strength and its weakness.

My personal commitment is to Community Development as a process whereby communities become aware of the causes of injustice, they mobilise and organise into movements and they act to change the social, economic and political causes of oppression.

I also accept that there are development practitioners who believe that the political and economic system is just and they see their role as supporting people to access services and to secure employment.

"Government needs to learn that a vibrant challenging, innovative, participatory, civil society adds legitimacy, vibrancy and resilience to local democracy."

I have seen very good examples of development in each of the categories of community work described above.

I have seen LEADER work very well in nurturing community based enterprise and services in rural areas.

There are some very good initiatives promoting 'Participation' and the practice of a grassroots, rights-based approach to community development, and there are many organisations doing courageous work advocating on behalf of those who are most marginalised.

The introduction of standards by the

Community Workers' Co-op (CWC) is very useful as it requires individuals and organisations to take an ideological and a political position on community development.

The standards are clearly rooted in justice and equality. The adoption by local government of the language of community development makes it critical that the divisions in ideological position and approach to community development are clarified.

We need to be sure that policy addressing one type of community development does not claim to be dealing with all community development.

I see the recent process of alignment and the moves by local government to usurp the language and the space occupied by community development as an attempt to increase its legitimacy and power within communities at the expense of civil society.

Government needs to learn that a vibrant challenging, innovative, participatory, civil society adds legitimacy, vibrancy and resilience to local democracy.

I believe that the community development sector needs to take on a strong advocacy and participatory human rights approach to addressing social inclusion. We need to use creative methods to facilitate the emergence of new spaces for young people to engage in community development.

Paul Keating teaches at the Limerick Institute of Technology (Tipperary) on the degree programme in Social and Community Studies.



Students and staff, including Paul Keating, from the Limerick Institute of Technology (Thurles) on a visit two years ago to meet community development workers, teachers and activists in Moyross.

VOX-POP

We spoke to six people with an interest in community development (*here and pages 18-19*): a Dublin footballer and 'legend' to local kids, a social inclusion manager employed by the HSE in Donegal, a lecturer from LITT Thurles, a researcher from NUI Maynooth, a community worker from Inchicore and the CEO of a development company in Coolock.

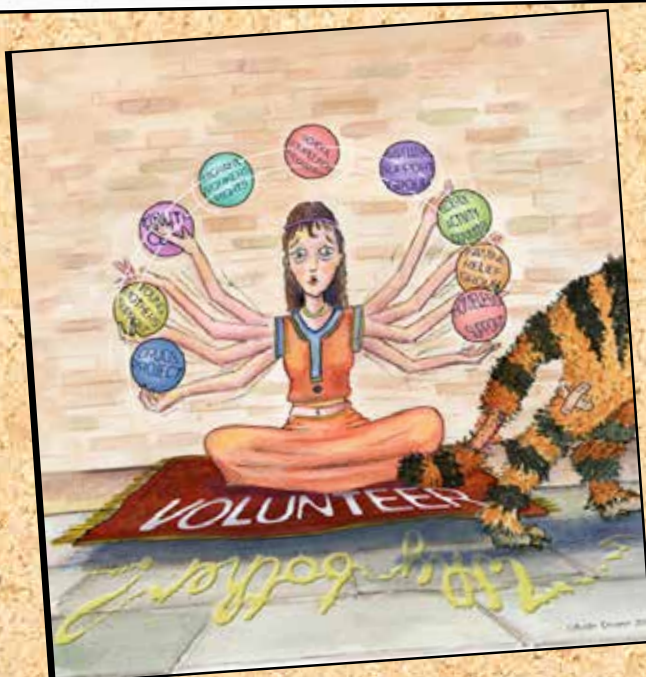
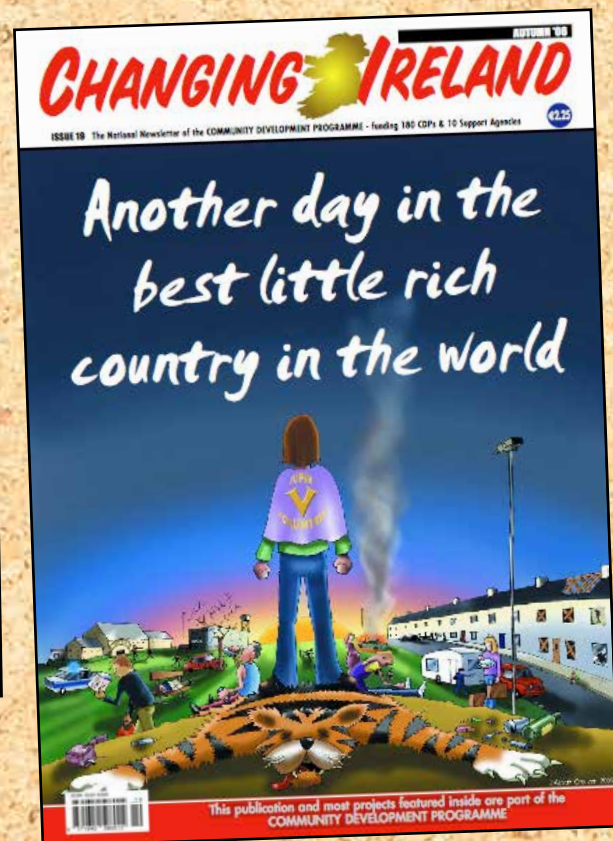
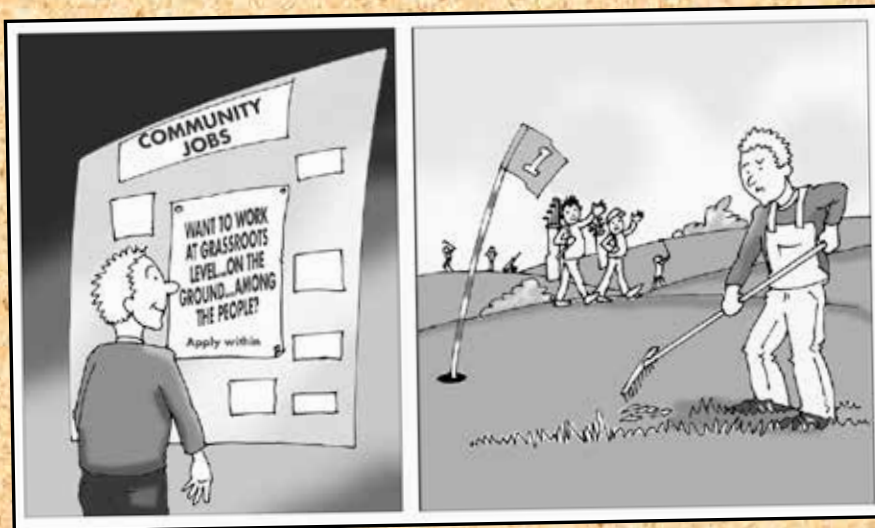
We asked each person three questions:

- What is Community Development?
- What's the best example you've seen?
- Where do you see it going in the future?

We gave the academics more space to elaborate, as is their wont.

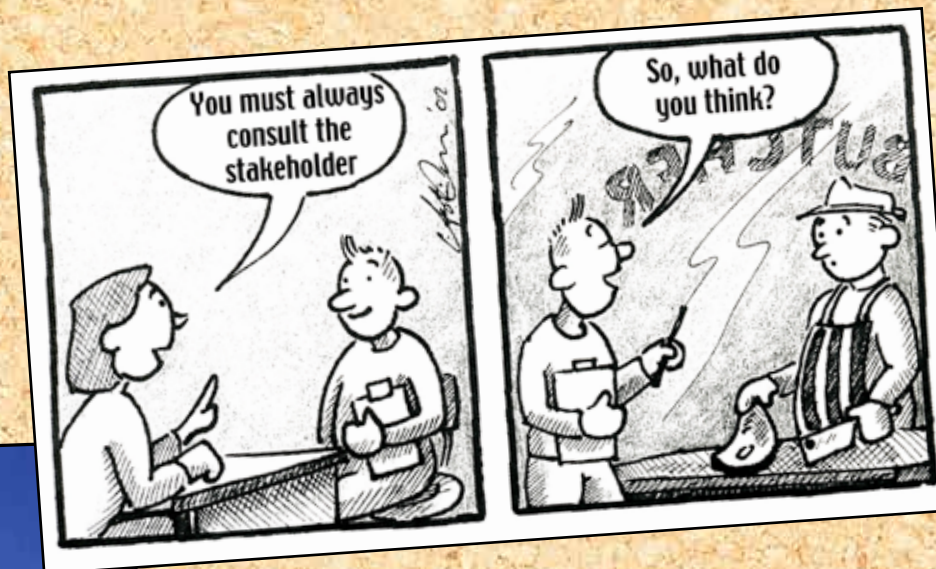
Alongside these views, we included a definition of Community Development as outlined in a recent Departmental policy discussion paper relating to Local and Community Development in Ireland today.

2001-'15 CARTOONS FROM **CHANGING IRELAND**

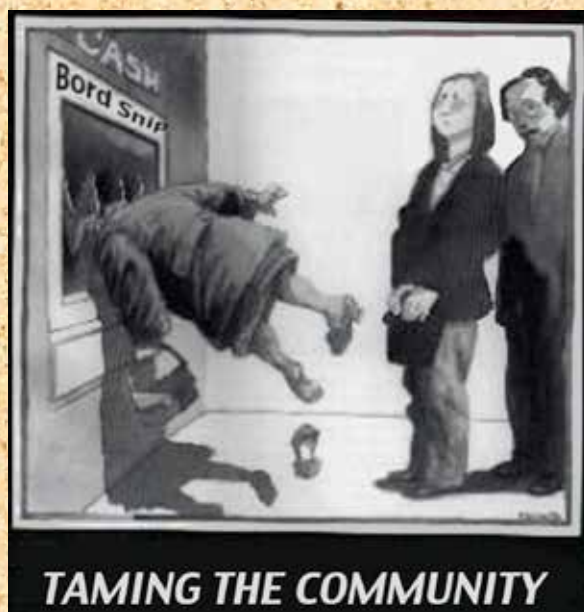


SOUVENIR

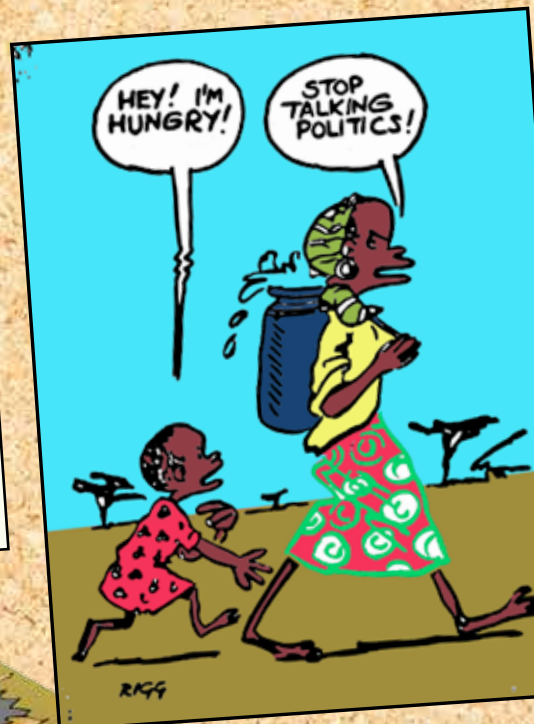
Through 50 editions of 'Changing Ireland' we bring you our favourite cartoons courtesy of Austin Creaven, Peter Rigg and Juan Carlos Azzopardi among others.



Changing Ireland's low-cost stress test for community workers
- If you can see 2 dolphins, you're fine!



Leading the nation...



A bloody good question to ask on our 50th

WHAT IS COMMUNITY

Philly McMahon

Dublin footballer, gym-owner & activist



For me Community Development is having influence on a generation and giving people the opportunity to develop through employment and education.

Name a good example of Community Development?

The 'Youth Guarantee' scheme was good. I only recently plugged into it, it was money well spent.

How would you like to see the future of Community Development?

In my community of Ballymun it is getting more modernised, so it is important that we keep the community tight. Community Development should be about making sure resources are used correctly, building a community with a focus on education and employment.

Note: Philly's work with young people in Ballymun made the front cover of our Spring 2014 edition (Issue 45).

Rita Fagan

Development Worker, Inchicore



To me Community Development is challenging structures that keep people oppressed. People might consider it radical, but if we don't talk like that we are not practicing Community Development. Decisions are made at the top for communities but the decision makers don't care, they really don't.

Name a Good Example of Community Development?

I believe through the campaign for the regeneration of St Michaels Estate we achieved collective action and participation. We fought very hard so residents could be involved.

How would you like to see the future of Community Development?

I don't know how this is going to happen, but I would like to see Community Development find its own funding stream. Community Development is about the pre-work, the organising work, the valuing of communities. When we had alignment forced upon us we were just ticking boxes and that is not Community Development.

Marian Vickers

CEO of Northside Partnership



Community Development is empowering communities to represent the issues that pertain to those communities, whether they be communities of interest such as Travellers or single parents or geographic communities such as urban estates.

Name a good example of Community Development?

That's a hard question to answer - there are projects all over the country that are brilliant at Community Development.

Doras Bui is a wonderful example of community development. It offers support for lone parents.

How would you like to see the future of Community Development?

I would like to see it go back to where it was a few years ago. I hope the good practice of Community Development, respected (by) the sector, has been very much squeezed recently - we need some protection.

SICAP - PROGRAMME GOAL 1:

Empowering Disadvantaged Communities

Published recently by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, the 'Draft Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland' defines Community Development as follows:

"The term 'community development' refers to both a sector within the overall voluntary and community sector and a distinctive approach to working for social and economic development and change. This approach involves enabling and supporting members of a community (of place, identity or interest) to work collectively to improve the quality of their lives, their community and their society."

Separate documentation from the Department outlines in detail, across 82 pages, how the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) will be implemented:

"The Programme has three goals (see page 11) each underpinned by community development approaches.

Goal 1 consists of four objectives which reflect the key dimensions of a community development approach. These are:

1: To support and promote the community engagement of disadvantaged target groups across the life-cycle;

2: To support the development of local community groups which promote equality and social inclusion in a local, regional or national context;

3: To support disadvantaged communities and individuals to enhance their participation in local, regional and national decision-making structures;

4: To develop and facilitate strategic collaborative frameworks and networks as part of a dialogue for developing solutions to social exclusion."

...

"Supported community groups should be:

a) focussed on and inclusive of the target groups of the programme,

b) committed to the achievement of social inclusion and equality,

c) composed of the target group and, as appropriate, those working in solidarity with the target group,

d) engaged in collective analysis and action, and

e) committed to the empowerment of the target group."

For more information visit: pobal.ie

INDIVIDUALS

Fragmented, Marginalised

First Stage:
Pre-
Development

The above
development
processes

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Maire O'Leary

Social Inclusion Manager (HSE)



Community Development is a process whereby people engage in collective action to achieve a better life and equality for themselves and others.

Can you name a good example of Community Development?

There are a lot of good community development projects, it's hard to pick one. I do however particularly admire Lifford-Clonleigh Resource Centre here in County Donegal; when they were asked to integrate with partnerships they decided to remain independent.

How would you like to see the future of Community Development?

It needs to remain independent and needs adequate funding. I don't think it should be under authority. The sector itself needs to work with a range of partners.

W: www.liffordclonleighresourcecentre.com

The conundrum at the heart of it all

By Camilla Fitzsimons, NUIM

We put questions to Camilla Fitzsimons and she wrote as follows in reply:

What is Community Development?

Community Development means different things to different people. In practise the liberal approach has been the strongest. While academic literature leans towards the more radical view, the practitioners of Community Development take a more humanistic approach.

Community Development is a social movement distinct from the government's broad policies and this is where the tensions lie. Since 2002 there has been a definite attempt by government to quash politicisation of Community Development.

Community Development in Ireland is rooted in principles of participation and collective action – essentially this has gone since it has been co-opted by SICAP.

The principles can't be taken away, but the infrastructure has been.

It is very hard for a government led by neo-liberal principles to see the advantages of Community development principles. We need to demonstrate that we want a more equitable Ireland.

Community development is a way of working led by certain principles separate from the political system: We can see examples in anti-racism and womens rights campaigns, as well as the water rates movement.

We need to remind ourselves what Community Development's principles are – it is about more than providing services, we need to be making the connections and asking why these services are not there in the first place."



Camilla Fitzsimons, NUIM

I think we need to grow as a movement outside the co-opted spaces – we need to grow as a movement outside of the limitations of structures no one asked for.

The pre-2002 model was the best – projects managed their own funding.

Communities



ve matrix provides a benchmark against which the of groups supported under SICAP's Goal 1 can be used. Source: SICAP Programme Requirements 2015.

So do you think that by accepting funding from the political system the sector is compromised?

It is impossible to see how community-based companies could survive without government funding.

This is the conundrum at the heart of Community Development – when push comes to shove they (the Government) have used their economic power to stop funding. Even though they talked about a partnership approach it was never a partnership because there was next to no consultation about changes made, it was just cuts.

Niall Crowley (equality & rights campaigner) talked about Community Development going into survival mode – people were afraid to open their mouths in case they were shut down – they were shut down anyway.

ABOUT CAMILLA:

Camilla Fitzsimons is an academic at the National University of Maynooth and the author of a report entitled 'Social Change Community Education – Where are we now'.

Is that bit in quote marks the full quote – it doesn't read right, is it full or not? Use the full quote.

The report argues, amongst other things that the Community Workers Co-operative (CWC) 'Towards Standards in Quality Community Work' committed "the sector to a consensus model... leaving little room for radical models of practice, marginalising from within their own sector." (2012).

Camillia has had work featured in Issue 44 of Changing Ireland.

FUNDING: €2.5M FOR PUBLIC NETWORKS

- Statement by Kelly & Phelan

Funding of €2.48million is being made available for Public Participation Networks, according to a statement made on June 11th by Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Alan Kelly, and Minister of State, Ann Phelan.

"In 2014, the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government, made recommendations on more extensive and diverse input by citizens into the decision-making processes at local government level as part of the Local Government Reform programme and recommended the setting up of Public Participation Networks (PPN's) across the local government sector," they said in a statement.

"These Networks will be the main link through which the local authority connects with the community and voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors without prejudice to other community consultation processes.

"Where community representation is to be provided on appropriate committees of the Local Authority, such as Strategic Policy Committees or Local Community Development Committees, it will be sourced through the Public Participation Networks."

GREATER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROMISED

Both Minister Kelly and Minister of State Phelan emphasised "the critical role that Public Participation Networks will play in facilitating greater engagement between citizens, communities and local government."

Minister Kelly confirmed that €1.55million central funding will be available for all 31 Local Authorities, with €930,000 more being sourced locally, giving an overall total allocation of €2.48 million for this purpose.

"I am committed to the development of Public Participation Networks in each local authority area and am delighted to assist in whatever way I can with this process", Minister Kelly stated.

"The funding will enhance community development and engagement arrangements in place across the country.

Minister Phelan added: "I am confident that the new Public Participation Network structures will empower and enable citizens to play a greater role in the communities they live in."

Local authorities have had to explain at local level that despite the name, individual members of the public cannot join a PPN however. The mechanism is open to groups only.

TIDY TOWNS & SOCIAL INC

MINISTER KELLY LAUNCHES LOCAL DIVERSITY AWARDS



Martin Kelleher, MD, Supervalu, Eileen Doherty of Roscrea - who came up with the idea for one of the two awards - and Minister Alan Kelly.

ALLEN MEAGHER REPORTS FROM ROSCREA

The annual Tidy Towns Competition is associated with sparkling clean streets, picture-postcard villages and armies of volunteers who put in the spadework to earn those precious points.

However, as people involved will tell you, Tidy Towns is about much more than that and in recognition of the competition's role in bringing communities together, two new awards were announced at a ceremony in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, on May 8th.

One promotes diversity, the other youth.

The importance of embracing diversity was shown by a choir from the local Sacred Heart Secondary School which performed at the launch and happened to include students from eight cultures. They sang in three languages.

"These awards fit very well with the wider work of my Department, taking in aspects of community participation, sustainable living and climate change," said Minister Alan Kelly. He joined Supervalu managing director, Martin Kelleher, in officially launching the awards.

Minister Kelly spoke of embracing age, ethnicity and ability and said the Government wished to reward groups who strive for inclusivity and participation.

"The strength of a community lies in how it works together to establish a place where all are welcome, where all are encouraged to participate and where all feel at home," he said.

"It's amazing what Tidy Towns delivers.

Some of the projects are worthy of professionals and that is a fact."

Noting that "climate change is the world's biggest challenge," the Minister predicted: "Within five years, there will be households in this country selling their waste (for energy). It's happening all over the world."

He said the Tidy Towns Competition fits in very well alongside programmes the Department supports including the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and the Rural Development Programme.

Mr Kelleher, whose company has sponsored the competition for almost a quarter-century, said the new awards "encourage, recognise and reward the intergenerational and intercultural aspects of Tidy Towns committees".

A total prize fund of over €40,000 is now available for winning entries across eleven special Tidy Towns categories. This year, for the first time, a local Tidy Towns group will receive the Diversity Award worth €2,000.

While the closing date for the competition has passed, there is no better time than now for communities to begin planning for 2016.

W: tidytowns.ie

T: 096-24309 (Department's Tidy Towns Unit).

YOUTH AWARDS ALSO LAUNCHED IN ROSCREA

A new Tidy Towns Youth Award announced at the ceremony in Roscrea (see opposite) will see €5,000 in prizes shared among four groups nationally.

The Supervalu-sponsored Youth Award recognises the importance of getting more young people involved.

"As Supervalu might say, some of us are going a bit past our sell-by-date and we need to get more young people on board," said Denis Ryan, chairperson of Roscrea Tidy Towns.

The Youth Award was the brainchild of Roscrea's Eileen Doherty who first approached Minister Kelly with the idea last August.

"Last year Roscrea Stands Up was launched and I was at one of the public meetings. I'd always been thinking of a junior tidy towns competition and the time was right," said Eileen.

The award is for under-18 year olds who have had substantial input into local Tidy Towns projects.



Children helping to clean up Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.

"It will celebrate how the youth in communities use their interest, enthusiasm and curiosity to carry out innovative and exciting projects," said Minister Kelly.

Four regional Youth Award winners will each receive €1,000 while the overall national winner will receive an additional €1,000 (bringing the total to €5,000).



Pictured at the launch were Deputy Noel Coonan, Minister Alan Kelly, Martin Kelleher from sponsor Supervalu, Eileen Doherty and fellow volunteers from Roscrea involved in Tidy Towns. The scheme is administered nationally by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.



Pictured at the launch: Clodagh McDonnell, Principal Officer, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Eileen Doherty and Mary Hurley, Assistant Secretary (Community) with the Department.

The world's biggest exporter of roasted coffee is Germany.
Source: Trade Mark Southern Africa.

NEWS BRIEFS

MOST YOUTHFUL COUNTRY IN EU

22% are under-15

Ireland is the most youthful country in the EU with 22% of its population under-15, according to statistics for 2014.

The next nearest is France with 19%. The countries with the lowest proportion of youths were Germany, Bulgaria and Italy.

Four in every ten people in Ireland are aged under-30.

30TH 'VIEW' MAGAZINE

Social Affairs for C&V Sector

Congratulations to Brian Pelan and Una Murphy, publishers of 'View' which celebrated its 30th edition recently.

The magazine is published in Belfast and is an independent social affairs magazine for the community and voluntary sector.

Highly relevant to anyone interested in the Community & Voluntary Sector and in issues affecting ordinary people.

W: viewdigital.org

ELDER CARE CO-OPS

National Seminar

In April, the Society for Co-operative Studies in Ireland hosted a national seminar on elder care co-operatives with speakers including guests from Canada, the UK and Italy.

1ST NATIONAL COMMUNITY RADIO DAY

Organised by CRAOL

The first ever National Community Radio Day took place this year, on June 19th.

Co-ordinated by Craol, Community Radio Stations across the country held events to make June 19th a "national celebration of Community Radio".

W: craol.ie

CWC NEWSLETTER

Available online

The Spring edition of the Community Workers Co-op's online newsletter is out - featuring campaign news, research and updates. Keep up to date also via the website.

W: cwc.ie

INTERFACE JOURNAL

Social Movements

The Interface Journal is a comprehensive international publication for and about social movements.

The latest edition carries no less than 402 pages of content, all available free online.

W: interfacejournal.net

DISAPPEARING VOICES

Independence of NGO sector is at stake

Dr. Clíona Saidléar, Acting Director, Rape Crisis Network Ireland



The importance of independence and autonomy for third sector organisations is vital to their work.

Yet, challenges are emerging in the State's interaction with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

For us since the introduction of the new Child and Family Agency, Tusla, increasingly we are seeing amendments to contracts, with paragraphs added placing restrictions on our advocacy capacity.

In Rape Crisis work, unfortunately, independence from the State is vital, particularly when as many as 65% of survivors of sexual violence who come to Rape Crisis Centres (RCCs) choose not to report to the Gardaí.

One particular contractual clause stands to silence Rape Crisis Centres from advocating for change. It reads:

"The Organisation must not use the grant for... campaigns whose primary purpose is to obtain changes in the law or related Government policies, or campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade people to adopt a particular view on a question of law or public policy."

"This subsection is not intended to affect the Organisation's right to utilise other sources of funding to raise awareness of issues or to run campaigns on issues of public policy directly related to the Organisation's work or which is in conflict (as determined by the Agency) with the stated policy of the Agency."

Our understanding is that such clauses are becoming largely standard in statutory contracts with the third sector, but is it one we should accept without protests?

Such clauses severely threaten the capacity to do the survivor advocacy and transformation work that is the core of the RCC mission.

Ultimately our capacity to bring an informed and specialist analysis to bear on government decision making in this much neglected area is being eroded.

In a society where 1-in-5 girls, and 1-in-6 boys experience sexual abuse and 80% of survivors do not seek professional support or report to the State, the independent voice of the Sector remains vital.

The lack of engagement of the majority of victims with government means that government simply cannot do this work on its own or in-house.

Any government acting in a legitimate manner on this question must seek to transform society towards prevention. That cannot happen if the independence, scope and range of the activities undertaken by the Sector is subsumed into the State.

They should not treat NGOs merely as extensions of the State whose service provisions are funded purely on the basis of 'delivering the funder's agenda'. For this risks emptying the Third Sector of the vital role of listening to the silenced, learning and translating and engaging and challenging policy and practice to create change.



FOLLOW-UP

'Changing Ireland' took RCNI's concerns to Minister of State Ann Phelan with whom we had an interview scheduled.

She called for anyone with concerns over advocacy, clauses in contracts or any other issues to meet with her:

"I'd be willing to sit down with them all, work with the Government Departments and see if we can alleviate their concerns," she said.

Minister Phelan agreed the National Adult Literacy Agency could be asked to proof-read clauses to ensure they are written in plain English.

More recently - since penning this article - the RCNI began to campaign nationally for a reversal of HSE cuts to its core-funding.

Tusla which funded the RCNI until March 31st said: "The 2015 budget has been directed towards front-line service... The decision to cease the funding to RCNI is dictated by the need to achieve the best use of limited available resources."

Tusla said it has "developed a strategy for putting the domestic and sexual violence sector on a sustainable footing."

HAS ANYTHING CHANGED IN TWO YEARS?

- 39% of civil society groups engaged in advocacy work in 2013

Two years ago, the Advocacy Initiative (AI) examined how civil society groups in Ireland were advocating for social change.

The survey found that 61% of groups were not engaged in advocacy work at all. Of the 39% of non-profit organisations that were engaged in social justice advocacy, most did so at local and not national level.

However, planned advocacy was on the rise, with 44% conducting information and awareness raising work, 19% focusing on policy implementation and 18% developing new policy.

Raising public awareness, networking, participation in local committees, and lobbying were the main activities campaigners choose.

1) *The advocacy target was most often the general public.*

2) *The second most popular targets were local committees and county councils.*

From the survey, the AI recommended:

• A key way for civil society organisations to successfully stand up for citizens is to collaborate with other organisations to get the message across.

• Keep your message simple, tell clear and compelling stories, take risks in campaigns and recognise there is value in creating strong political alliances.

• Revealingly, the survey found that only 15% of members of the public thought the Community and Voluntary Sector was influential in political decision making; 46% felt the sector should be influential.

The Advocacy Initiative ran for three years and its website remains accessible: advocacyinitiative.ie



Changing Ethiopia

Ben Panter off to Addis Ababa TO TALK BEER via Simon Cumbers Media Fund

'Changing Ireland' reporter and UL journalism degree student Ben Panter will soon fly to Ethiopia to report for national news outlets here in Ireland on development issues in the East African country.

Ben won a Simon Cumbers Media Fund grant to cover the cost of his visit

Judges were impressed with journalist Ben Panter's proposal - to look at the impact of hops production and beer consumption on Ethiopian society - and he will visit both rural and urban areas.

He hopes his reporting will dispel the famine-fogged view many in Ireland have of one of Africa's most awesome countries.

Why Ethiopia?

I've had Ethiopia in my mind for years. Ethiopia has the oldest hominid remains in the world, going back two million years. It has culture going back thousands and thousands of years.

What is the Simon Cumbers Media Fund (SCMF)?

It's to give journalists who are passionate about development and equality the chance to go abroad and report. For a student like me it's an amazing opportunity. I couldn't raise the cash on my own. I do feel drawn to it all my life. The SCMF grant allows my lifetime dream to become a reality, to report from abroad on development issues.

What's the furthest you've ever been to date?

I came to Ireland 17 year ago and haven't been far since.

What led you to apply to the Simon Cumbers Media Fund (SCMF)?

After working for a few months with 'Changing Ireland' I got very interested in development journalism and I applied.

Who are you reporting for?

Newstalk, 'The Irish Times' and 'Changing Ireland'.

What do you hope to report on?

Today, Ethiopia has the second-fastest

growing economy in Africa, it has an excellent climate for growing crops, and modern technology has improved its agricultural export potential.

Yet, the Irish public's perception of Ethiopia revolves around the famine of the 1980s and Live Aid.

One of the upshots of the economic rise is an increase in beer production and consumption. Although beer is still considered a luxury, Diagio began brewing there last year and Heineken opened a brewery in January.

I'm going to look into the pros and cons and explore the impact of economic growth on Ethiopian society. On the surface, economic growth is a good thing, but does this benefit all equally? Should we measure development in more ways than financial success?

Will your journalism be published in Ethiopia?

The national newspaper is party-controlled so who knows.

Gorta/Self-Help Africa fund a rural project you might visit.

Yes, I'm looking forward to meeting farmers they support.

What is Ethiopia like for development workers?

While it's said to be a very safe country to visit, foreign NGOs working in Ethiopia are subject to strict laws. For instance, only 10% of NGO staff can come from overseas.

Have you any concerns?

Freedom of the press is an issue and I wonder how people's voices are heard. Only one member of parliament belongs to the opposition.

What might you write for 'Changing Ireland' readers?

Possibly an exclusive! I hope to highlight the fun side, by exploring and celebrating Ethiopian culture and seeing where it leads me.

We are forever hearing the stories we don't need to hear - about footballers and celebrities - and we don't hear enough from



Journalist Ben Panter

ordinary people.

Are you going to bring back a bottle of Ethiopian beer for the editor?

If you want but I am not sure about liquids on a plane.

In an interview with Allen Meagher.

We wish Ben well on his journey and look forward to his reports. Bring back Ethiopian beer or else! - Ed.

FOLLOW BEN! Fly direct from Dublin

• Ethiopia is fast becoming a popular new tourist destination.

• Readers who would like to see Ethiopia for themselves can now fly directly from Dublin to Addis Ababa with Ethiopian Airlines. The new route opened this year.

• Visitors need not worry about Malaria (there's none) or street crime (almost non-existent) or the heat (if anything, it can be a little chilly in the highlands).

W: ethiopianairlines.com

MARK QUINN, JOURNALIST

'Changing Ireland' welcomes aboard the newest member of our reporting team, Mark Quinn. He studied Journalism and New Media at the University of Limerick and has recently been working as a freelance journalist.

Mark is passionate about sustainable community development and was a founding member of the fundraising group, Worthy Cause. The group funded a number of sustainable development projects in and around Siem Reap, Cambodia. This included the 'Self Help Community Centre' a locally-staffed project that teaches English and computer literacy skills to children and adults in the community.

On what gets him fired up about writing for a national community development magazine he says: "Seeing people take control of the challenges they face and telling their stories is the reason I got into this type of journalism. We're surrounded by remarkable people who should have their stories told."

Mark is a high altitude mountaineer who has climbed some of the world's highest peaks including Aconcagua and Everest.



RURAL CORK & LIMERICK

UCC development students focus on Ballyhoura

Ballyhoura is the perfect place for students of Co-operative Organisation, Food Marketing and Rural Development to visit – it is part of the course requirements for UCC's diploma/masters course that their students spend a week in a rural area to see how theory and practice match up on the ground.

"Ballyhoura has it all," said lecturer and researcher Noreen Byrne (pictured). "It's an ideal place for students to see rural development and local food marketing in action. This time, module co-ordinator Mary O'Shaughnessy wanted the students to look at local branding which Ballyhoura now excels at."



Noreen Byrne



"Some of our students wrote afterwards that Ballyhoura felt very remote, with internet access an issue at times. For international students, it gave them what they called their first real introduction to Ireland."

"We've long had strong links with Ballyhoura Development and they take an interesting approach to development," said Noreen.



RURAL ENTERPRISE SUPPORT FOR 120 COMPANIES EMPLOYING 1,500

Previously 'Changing Ireland' reported on a social enterprise that provided a home-care service and employed 250 people in the Ballyhoura region.

Now known as 'Carebright', the not-for-profit showed that investing in community ventures can be "as good as having a local factory". (Ref: 'Social Enterprises Mean Much More Than Just Jobs' – page 9, Issue 40, Autumn 2012).

In the same edition, we highlighted the fact that, additionally, Ballyhoura Development's social enterprise initiatives provide support to 120 "community-based businesses" that employ "approximately 1,500 people with a turnover of approximately €50 million per annum."

This work will continue to be supported under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and LEADER.



Access previous coverage of Ballyhoura in our archive: changingireland.ie

REGION TOOK NEW APPROACH AFTER JOB LOSSES

- Kim and Kayne's visit signifies area's ongoing recovery & potential

You might wonder why famous US rappers and socialites come to Ballyhoura on their honeymoon. Why not!

The Ballyhoura region is at the heart of the Golden Vale (straddling counties Cork and Limerick) and has traditionally had a very strong food heritage. The area boasted a thriving agricultural sector for decades, with farm produce sold to large operators. People relied on the land and made a good living from it.

However, globalisation and reforms of the CAP payment system led to restructuring and dramatic job losses in farming. Many large-scale producers also closed down, laying off thousands of people, because of competition, globalisation, rising costs and falling prices in world food markets.

However, at the same time in Ireland, there emerged a niche market for direct sales to consumers and for quality, speciality local food. Amidst all this, Ballyhoura Development, a not-for-profit Local Development Company, conducted a review in 1998. The company consulted with communities and the 'Ballyhoura Food Strategy' was born.

The aim was to revive the food heritage industry thereby creating sustainable jobs in a rural region.

Ballyhoura Development, through funding from the Rural Development Programme, invested in supporting artisan food production as a key part of this strategy.

The new brand brought together seven companies, from start-up micro-enterprises supplying to farmers' markets to established larger companies already supplying to Irish retail outlets.

Its success can be seen on grocery and supermarket shelves where the 'Taste of Ballyhoura Country' logo can be found on local food products.

Three years on and the initiative is backing up efforts to promote tourism in the area. It is likely for instance that when Kayne West and Kim Kardashian honeymooned in the area late last year that they ate locally-produced cheese, beef, venison or wild boar, a compote dessert or perhaps downed a locally produced craft beer. If they did, they left Ireland with a real taste of 'Ballyhoura Country'.

- A. Meagher



Ballyhoura - Kim Kardashian and Kayne West chose the area for their honeymoon last summer.

30 YEARS OF INDIE FARMING



- Pioneering North Cork farmer began diversifying 3 decades ago
- Visitors stay on farm with 800 deer, 200 wild boars and 20 cattle
- Historic house with exotic livestock a heritage hit
- Every August farm hosts 'Indiependence' festival'

BY JULIAN LUNA ESPINOSA

Have you ever sat in the foothills of the Galtee Mountains munching on a 'Wild Boar Burger' while Kodaline play in front of you? There are people who are going to do just that this summer.

Built in 1727, Ballinwillin House outside Mitchelstown, County Cork, is attracting a lot of interest from foodies and tourists alike while proving that livestock-rearing can be an exotic and profitable pursuit.

Owned by Patrick Mulcahy and family and set on 80 acres, the property and farm offers luxurious accommodation and is also today home to two of the most exotic domestic species in Ireland, deer and wild boar.

It is even better known as 'The Deer Farm', the venue for the past five years for the 'Indiependence Festival' which is held every August bank holiday weekend. (This year's acts include Kodaline, Basement Jaxx, Ham Sandwich and Ash).

However, for the remainder of the year, the Mulcahys put their energies into livestock rearing.



Mulcahys' festival-venue farm. Photo: Indiependencefestival.com

Thirty years ago, Patrick and his pioneering family started producing venison and wild boar meat.

"I decided to try new things," said Patrick modestly.

The company is now running at full capacity and its current livestock population consists of approximately 800 deer, 200 wild boars and 20 cattle. It is a full time job that demands 17 hours per day, seven days a week.

Mulcahys' produce is supported by Ballyhoura Development.

Padraig Casey, Ballyhoura's enterprise development officer, said, "Their work straddles both food production and tourism, so we're very interested in doing all we can to support them."

Today, Ballinwillin's venison and wild boar meat can be enjoyed in many of the country's top restaurants and in city hotels for example in Dublin, Cork and Galway.

Ballinwillin House supplements its farming income by offering luxury accommodation for guests who would like to taste a different experience in rural Ireland.

More information:

W: ballyhouradevelopment.com

W: ballinwillinhouse.com

W: indiependencefestival.com

FRENCHWOMAN'S FRUITY IDEA A RURAL ENTERPRISE SUCCESS

Ballyhoura cottage industry entrepreneur Clotilde Fitzgibbon is a Frenchwoman who has settled in Glanworth, Co.Cork. On arrival, she hit on a winning business idea – Irish compote.

'Clotilde's 100% Fruit Compote' came to life when she moved from France and quickly spotted a niche gap in the Irish marketplace – a total lack of compote, a dessert consumed every day in France.

"It was nowhere to be found in Irish shops," said Clotilde.

One year after starting her business in 2011, the brand "A Taste of Ballyhoura Country" began to back Clotilde. Ballyhoura Development advised her on marketing, PR, health and safety and so on, at no cost.

Today Clotilde runs a successful company, supplying compote made in her kitchen to 50 shops, including Super-Valu, with plans to expand beyond south



Clotilde Fitzgibbon, pictured here with visiting UCC student Ewelina Urbanska, is the only producer in Ireland of a fruity French dessert called compote.

Munster.

Compote originates in medieval Europe and Clotilde's products are made with "100% fruit".

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

NE JAMAIS OUBLIER!

LEADER acronym is French

LEADER funding is intended “to support sustainable economic development projects for rural communities ranging from tourism, agri-food and other business activities.”

‘LEADER’ is a French acronym and stands for ‘Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rurale’. The EU initiative began in 1991 and comprises a mix of EU and national government investment in rural areas.

“This money will be targeted at tackling social inclusion, rural isolation as well as increasing the capacity of rural communities to participate in economic development,” said Alan Kelly, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, speaking about the next round of funding to carry us to 2020.

“The exact nature of the projects chosen will be based on ideas that emerge from the communities themselves,” he said.



LEADER explained simply

- EU and Irish money, delivered to rural areas

The reporting on these pages mark the first time ‘Changing Ireland’ has taken an in-depth look at the local impact of LEADER funding. We are grateful to students from UCC (see page 25) who interviewed local business owners on our behalf. We supplemented their work with further enquiry.

So, what is LEADER? ‘Changing Ireland’ journalist MARK QUINN explains:

LEADER funding is available to businesses, individuals and community groups in rural areas in Ireland and all over Europe.

The funding is administered by local development agencies to promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development. It also supports companies involved in agriculture, forestry, food and animal welfare.

At present the procedure for applying to the fund has been to get in touch with a Project Officer in your Local Development Company.

They should be able to provide an initial assessment of your proposal, so you can decide if it is worthwhile to formally apply.

A project that is eligible will not necessarily meet other criteria such as viability, so applicants usually work closely with Project Officers in

preparing their formal application which is then forwarded to evaluation committees.

The process is often cumbersome and requires patience and preparation but is obviously worthwhile for successful applicants whether they are private promoters or community groups.

As part of the new 2014-2020 programme Local Community Development Committees have been established. Their membership is made up of councillors and local authority staff alongside representatives of public bodies, local community interests and local development bodies.

There is currently a submission process underway to Brussels and while there may be changes to the way the fund is administered it seems likely that your Local Development Company will remain the point of contact for those who wish to access LEADER funding.

The fund originates from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which allocates the funding through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

The EAFRD has a total funding pot of almost €85bn for the period 2014-2020 from which Ireland receives €157m towards LEADER funding.

A further €93m is added in national co-financing bringing the total LEADER fund to €250m. Certain spending has been ringfenced (see below) leaving €220m in LEADER programme funding.

Programme helped create 4,000 extra rural jobs

- Nonetheless, cuts see LEADER funding reduced for 2014-2020

The county allocations available under LEADER for the years ahead have been published, with €250m to be spent from 2014-2020.

Nationally, €364.5m was spent the seven previous years via LEADER up to 2013.

Despite successes for instance in helping to create rural jobs, LEADER funding was reduced.

Minister of State Ann Phelan told the Dail on April 15th: “I am confident that through improved coordination and enhanced delivery structures at local level, the funding, while decreased, will be maximised to support the sustainable development of our rural communities.”

In Kildare and Clare funding was halved. Clare’s allocation went from €16,175,000 (2007-2013) to €8,920,000 (2014-2020). In a few counties, for example Cavan and Monaghan, LEADER funding is being increased. This however is not the norm.

The level of the cuts in spending in many counties led to acrimonious debate in the Dail with the Government accused of having forsaken rural communities.

Fianna Fail TD Michael Moynihan told the Dail he “has been informed there will be job losses as a result of the new allocation of LEADER funding”.

Minister Alan Kelly however said he was confident that the 2014-2020 programme will be just as successful as the 2007-2013 programme (which, since 2009, funded 8698 enterprises thereby supporting the creation of 4084 jobs).

From the €250m pot, €30m has been allocated to specific initiatives under LEADER such as supporting food marketing. These funds will be dispersed based on need and include:

* €15million for two agri-food measures.

* €10 million to support co-operation projects, with the emphasis on cross-border initiatives (this will be coordinated by the Department of the

Environment, Community and Local Government and delivered using the LEADER/Community-led approach).

* €5 million is being held in reserve to boost the Rural Economic Development Zones, a pilot project set up following a report by the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas, if the project proves successful.

From this year, following legislation to reform local government, Local Development Companies are expected to work much more closely - as partners - with the new Local and Community Development Committees set up in each county.

Minister Alan Kelly told the Dail last September: “The new systems for the delivery of local development interventions will be community centred and community led, epitomising the ethos of the LEADER approach.”

“I am confident that they will be effective and efficient, will facilitate the participation of all members of local communities and will strengthen local government’s position as the driver of local and community development for the future. This allows for greater local authority involvement than before in LEADER, although ultimately it is communities that should have the greatest say,” he said.

Previously, Local Development Companies (aka Partnerships) have acted as the Local Action Groups (LAGs) to administer LEADER funding locally. Some LDCs have applied to be the LAGs for LEADER 2014-2020 and a decision on applications will follow later this year.

Full county allocations under LEADER (2014-2020) are available online at: environ.ie

(For more on how LDCs are working, it being early days for the new ‘public participation’ structures, see Ben Panter’s report on page 5).

Deadly serious **HELP ME HORACE!**

We hereby re-publish, with full apologies, some of the earlier work of Horace McDermott, as found in the annals of 'Changing Ireland'. Happy 50th Horace!

WEDNESDAY, 2.30PM

Back in 2001, Horace quit his job as a faceless bureaucrat to enroll on a Community Development course. He kept a diary:

Got our first essay - "The person who inspired me to be a community development worker".

The man that embodies what community development is all about for me has to be President George W. Bush. I mean look at the key principles:

CONSULTATION: Before beginning any war, President Bush went around and consulted with everyone before he went ahead and did what he wanted to do anyway and isn't that what it's all about?

COLLECTIVE ACTION: Another strength he possesses is his ability to build alliances. With Tony Blair doing a bit of outreach he got everybody to pitch in on the campaign. Even countries like Ireland.

ANTI-POVERTY FOCUS: I mean they don't come much poorer than Afghanistan and you can't be more anti-poverty than bombing the shite out of it.

ACT AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: G.W. has created one hell of a movement of people whose social circumstances have changed as a result of his anti-poverty initiative.

Later, 'Changing Ireland' took Horace on as its resident Agony Uncle, a role he excelled in:

I'M WORRIED ABOUT POVERTY

Dear Horace,

When will poverty in Ireland be a thing of the past? I'm nervous we might make a sudden breakthrough, because then I'd be out of a job.

Bothered Bob

Dear Bob,

Some things are very hard to get rid of like Twink or Gay Byrne. Poverty is the same. It's always there and when you try to have a real go to eradicate it and consign it to history all you get is an upsurge in wrinkly rocker record sales.

Anyway look at it this way. If you did away with poverty and you lost your job then you'd be poor. Then somebody would be given the job of

fighting poverty and soon you'd be out of poverty and then they'd lose their job and ... well you can see you have nothing to worry about either way.

Horace

STATUS QUO QUANDARY

My Dear Horace,
My favourite band of all time is 'Status Quo', but I am also a big fan of 'Changing Ireland' and feel something isn't right.

Yours truly,
Con Tradiction,
Fighting for Peace CDP

Dear Con,

Yes, I think you'll have to change your musical tastes. My favourite band is 'Something Happens' because in this work I'm not always sure what's going on, but I know something's happening.

Keep fighting!
Horace

ABBREVIATED

Dear Horace

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

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

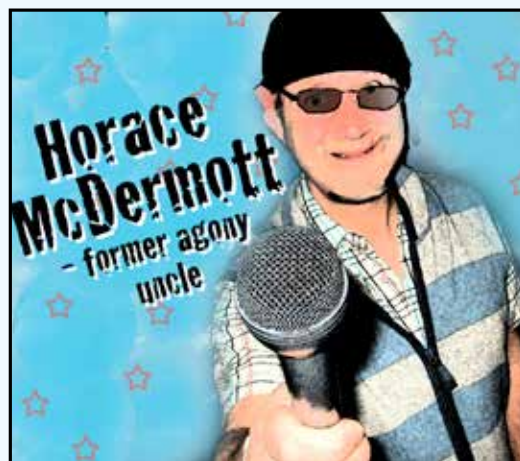
Yours truly,
PJ O'Dea
KCC CDP

Dear PJ
Sounds OK!
H.McD.

CHANGING IRELAND - HOW ABOUT FASTER?

Dear Horace,
'Changing Ireland' me arse! Can you change my house, my car and my husband, and I'd like to go on a cruise.

Yours sincerely,
Demanding Dorothy,
Administrator,
Mad CDP



My darling Dorothy,
That's no problem. We may be a perfect match. Move in with me.

My ideal woman should have her own boat, around 16 foot long with an outboard engine. Marriage duties would include digging worms and cooking fish.

Dorothy, please send me a photograph (of the boat) and we'll see if we can get hooked.

Love - Horace x x x

FED UP BEING CONSULTED

Help me Horace!

Working in the Community Development Programme is tough enough but over the last number of months I've been inundated with questionnaires from the Support Agency, the SIM Group, Government Departments, consultative bodies, college researchers and so on. Who do they think they are, Larry Gogan?

What can I do?

Sincerely
Con Sulted of Swing CDP

Con,

You have three options:

1. Ignore the questionnaires and don't return them.
2. If a prepaid envelope is provided send it back empty and tell them later you they must have lost your form.
3. Get a student on placement to devise a questionnaire asking them why they want this information.

Now please circle the above option that most suits you and return to Horace McDermott, c/o 'Changing Ireland':

Please give reasons for your choice.

How did you find this advice (rate as follows):

- Helpful
 - Very helpful
 - Extremely helpful
 - Couldn't be more helpful
- Horace

€28M DISTRIBUTED NATIONWIDE

- Social Inclusion & Community Activation

NOTES ON TABLE

This table details the awards, budgets and targets for 2015 under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

Indiv Target = Total no. of individuals (15 years upwards) engaged under SICAP on a 1-to-1 basis in 2015. A key performance indicator.

Gps Target = No. of Local Community Groups Assisted in 2015. It is a key performance indicator.

All companies listed here are limited by guarantee.

The budget figures cover the months of Apr-Dec 2015.

DESSA means Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency.

PAUL's partner organisations are: 1/Limerick Community Development Project; 2/Moyross Community Enterprise Centre; 3/St. Munchin's Community Enterprise Centre; 4/St. Mary's AID; 5/Garryowen Community Committee; 6/Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group; 7/Southill Area Centre; 8/Southill Development Co-operative Society. t/a Tait House Community Centre; 9/Limerick Learning Hub.

* In counties Meath and Galway, these are the budgets and minimum targets set for these areas as SICAP contracts have not been signed. This was the information available as of June 10. Source: pobal.ie

LCD Name	Lot Name	Budget (€) 2015	Indiv Target	Gps Target	Programme Implementer
Carlow	Co. Carlow	402,321	724	40	Carlow County Development Partnership
Cavan	Co. Cavan	556,338	753	41	Breifni Integrated
Clare	Co. Clare	641,506	868	46	Clare Local Development Company
Cork City	Cork City	908,870	1,291	77	Comhar Chathair Chorcaí
North Cork (3)	Kanturk, Newmarket & Millstreet	118,402	250	51	IRD Duhallow
	Charleville & Mitchelstown	123,242	200	12	Ballyhoura Development
	Mallow & Fermoy	206,544	280	15	Avondhu/Blackwater Partnership
South Cork	South & East Cork	591,919	965	53	South and East Cork Area Development Partnership
West Cork (3)	West Cork District	222,829	305	25	West Cork Development Partnership
	Bandon & Kinsale	115,689	160	15	West Cork Development Partnership
	West Cork Islands (7)	21,578	203	4	Comhar na nOileán
Donegal (3)	Inishowen	447,885	606	35	Inishowen Development Partnership
	Gaeltacht	254,561	344	18	Donegal Local Development Company PARTNERS: 1/DESSA; 2/Donegal Travellers Project; 3/Na Rossa CDP; 4/Pobal Le Chéile.
	Co. Donegal	778,489	1,053	55	Donegal Local Development Company PARTNERS: 1/DESSA; 2/Donegal Travellers Project; 3/Regional Employment Service
Dublin City (5)	Ballyfermot & Chapelizod	404,112	561	30	The Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership Company
	Ballymun, Whitehall & Tolka	1,147,582	2,070	82	Tolka Area Partnership
	Northside	839,502	1,136	60	Northside Partnership PARTNERS: 1/Doras Buí; 2/Speedpak Ltd
	Canal, Rathmines & Pembroke	998,554	1,600	71	The Bluebell, Inchicore, Islandbridge, Kilmainham and Rialto Partnership Company (Canals Community Partnership)
	Inner City	635,514	3,027	533	Dublin Inner City Community Co-operative Society
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	700,868	948	50	Southside Partnership DLR PARTNER: 1/Southside Travellers Action Group
Fingal	Fingal	889,593	1,208	63	The Blanchardstown Area Partnership
Galway City	Galway City	487,093	660	45	Galway City Partnership

DE TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES

ation Programme launched in April

LCDC Name	Lot Name	Budget (€) 2015	Indiv Target	Gps Target	Programme Implementer
Galway Co.*	Co. Galway	1,201,187	1,625	86	<i>Decision deferred</i>
Kerry (3)	North East & West Kerry	794,043	1,370	97	North and East Kerry Leader Partnership
	Rathmore & Gneeveguilla	42,051	80	10	IRD Duhallow
	South Kerry & Killarney	386,105	522	31	South Kerry Development Partnership
Kildare	Co. Kildare	765,170	1,035	54	Cill Dara Ar Aghaidh Teoranta (Co. Kildare LEADER Partnership)
Kilkenny	Co. Kilkenny	455,860	620	33	Co. Kilkenny Leader Partnership Company
Laois	Co. Laois	423,048	585	30	Laois Community and Enterprise Development Company
Leitrim	Co. Leitrim	393,488	532	30	Leitrim Integrated Development Company
Limerick (3)	Limerick West Rural	392,652	531	28	West Limerick Resources
	Limerick Urban	929,360	1,258	92	PAUL Partnership (People Action Against Unemployment)
	Limerick East Rural	317,058	450	55	Ballyhoura Development
Longford	Co. Longford	383,669	505	21	Longford Community Resources
Louth	Co. Louth	965,881	1,307	75	Louth LEADER Partnership Company
Mayo (3)	Mayo Islands	34,404	47	2	South West Mayo Development Company
	Ballina & Mayo West	537,050	740	40	Mayo North East Leader Partnership Company
	Castlebar & Claremorris	359,454	540	35	South West Mayo Development Company
Meath*	Co. Meath	278,304	377	20	Meath Partnership Company
Monaghan	Co. Monaghan	464,453	795	38	Monaghan Integrated Development
Offaly	Co. Offaly	553,736	800	45	Offaly Integrated Local Development Company
Roscommon	Co. Roscommon	448,762	607	32	Roscommon Integrated Development Company
Sligo	Co. Sligo	439,136	1,392	36	County Sligo LEADER Partnership Company
South Dublin County Council	South Dublin Co.	1,533,589	2,445	109	SDC South Dublin Co. Partnership
Tipperary (2)	Tipperary North	388,921	643	28	North Tipperary Leader Partnership
	Tipperary South	452,917	613	32	South Tipperary Development Company PARTNER: Knockanrawley Resource Centre
Waterford City and Co.	Waterford City and County	823,835	2,469	91	Waterford Area Partnership
Westmeath	Co. Westmeath	574,661	800	45	Westmeath Community Development
Wexford	Co. Wexford	1,276,311	1,727	92	Wexford Local Development
Wicklow (2)	Bray & Greystones	534,069	723	38	Bray Area Partnership PARTNERS: 1/ Bray Community Enterprise; 2/ Little Bray Family Resource & Development Centre
	Arklow, Wicklow & Baltinglass	438,515	593	31	Co. Wicklow Community Partnership
	Totals:	28,080,680	44,946	2,777	

COMMUNITY WELLBEING & LEADERSHIP ASKING WHAT MAKES US HAPPY!

- 'Happy book' a novel way to draw newcomers into community work

BY MARK QUINN

A community group in Limerick have discovered a truly original way to engage volunteers in community affairs who were never previously interested in becoming involved.

As part of a pilot project designed to empower community leaders, local people joined a University of Limerick programme, the high-point of which was their publication of a book titled 'What Makes You Happy?'.

Local student Christy Flanagan found the course drew him in. He said, "It has really opened my eyes. I was overweight when I first started this and now I've lost over three stone, while the book engaged people who weren't interested before in community development."

While the course and the book project didn't aim to tackle weight loss or physical health, Christy said people found it transformational.

It "really helped" him and others to "look at our lives and change a lot in our lives."

He pointed out that one in ten people suffer from depression in Ireland.

'C.W.E.L.L.' stands for Community Wellness, Empowerment, Leadership and Lifeskills and it is a diploma course delivered through UL and the community of flood prone St Mary's Park.

One year ago, much of the estate was underwater when storm walls proved inadequate. The area is known to many outsiders for its high unemployment and associated social issues, yet locals are incredibly proud.

The book has created "a real buzz" throughout the local community according to Ciara Dempsey, a research assistant on the CWELL programme.

Playing music loudly while driving around makes one young man happy. By utter contrast, for other contributors, fishing in quiet calm waters – the Shannon is on the doorstep – makes them happy. Children were naturally the focal point of many grandparents and brings them great joy.

Gary Hyland, a fellow student on the course, said the book's main aim is to get people talking about mental health:

"When you talk about depression it's always negative, so we started to talk about the good side of mental health and what makes everyone happy.

Gary said that now he can't walk down a road in St Mary's



Smiling faces at the book launch of 'Happiness'

without people stopping him to talk about their own happy memories.

"It's definitely a way to get people involved in the community," he said.

The CWELL group have now embarked on a community garden and an outdoor gym project.

CO-OP STUDENTS' VIEWS

Ashley O'Sullivan, a co-op student from UL who served in a support team alongside the CWELL group, wrote to us to say they found the group to be "undeniably amazing" and "inspirational". She said the people from King's Island taught them more about "perseverance, overcoming challenges and life in general than any module ever could."

Testimony indeed!



Happiness is "just a habit"

- Martine Brennan, author, community worker, counsellor

Martine Brennan, a former reporter for Changing Ireland, wrote a widely-popular book in 2009 about how to be happy.

Having found it difficult to get back into the "swing of life" after her daughters death.

Martine put together a list of things that she could do every day that make her happy and put the ideas together into the book: 'Happiness, it's just a habit'.

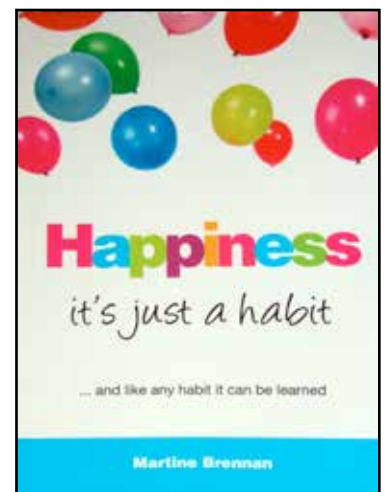
The book focuses on simple things that cause minimal disruption to the busy lives that people have. Things like walking on the beach writing a card to someone or bringing someone a bunch of flowers.

"It's like exercising, there's no point doing it once a month, do something small every day. A little few minutes that provide an oasis of contentment."

Martine said that struggling with her grief was a long a process and, at times, it took perseverance to form the habit of happiness:

"I didn't want to every single day but it was worth it because at the end of it I had something to show."

Martine's book is available on her website: martinebrennan.com



BHUTAN PROMPTED UN TO MEASURE HAPPINESS

In 1972 Bhutan became the first country in the world to reject the idea that

wealth should be measured purely in economic terms and established Gross National Happiness (GNH) as an index of Bhutan's wealth. GNH aims to address the lopsided focus that governments tend to place on increased Gross National Product (GNP). Measuring happiness helps to inform better policy making.

To calculate happiness levels, the Bhutanese authorities survey

citizens and measure society in relation to:

- Psychological wellbeing.
- Health.
- Time use.
- Education.
- Cultural diversity and resilience.
- Good governance.
- Community vitality.
- Ecological diversity & resilience.
- Standard of living.

Bhutan's experiment with GNH has garnered international attention and in 2012 the United Nations released their first annual World Happiness Report.

The UN report compiles expert analysis from economists, psychologists and others that measures wellbeing and assesses the progress of nations.

This year's World Happiness Report highlights the new emphasis that nations around the world are putting on the importance of happiness and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are to be published later this year and will include indicators of 'Subjective Well-Being' and 'Positive Mood Affect'.

IRELAND NO. 18

Ireland's relative position on the latest World Happiness Report:

1. Switzerland
2. Iceland
3. Denmark
-
18. Ireland
-
158. Togo



TAKING A WIDER VIEW

'SOCIAL CAPITAL' AS A POLICY TOOL

How happy are people in Limerick city? More specifically, how high is the social capital within communities targeted for regeneration.

'Social capital' is a term used to describe how strongly networked and trusting a community is, how strongly bonded people are as a group.

If an area has a high social capital, that is deemed to be positive.

It is measured by looking at property prices, social class, education and employment levels, level of residents' satisfaction and so on.

Dr Eileen Humphreys of UL has carried out extensive research on regeneration and public policy.

For her doctorate, Dr Humphreys examined the relationship between 'social capital' and the quality of life in local communities

particularly in regeneration areas.

It is a popular belief that if the social capital in an area can be increased, many social challenges may be relatively simply addressed.

However, policy-makers can get carried away by focusing on building up the institutional capacity of a community so that social capital 'gaps' can be bridged.

Dr Humphreys found that "reliance on simplistic notions of social capital as a policy tool is a diversion from the deeply structural needs of disadvantaged spatial communities."

Her findings are available online in her paper titled 'Social Capital – the explanatory factor in effective socio-economic regeneration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods'.

(Note: Dr Humphreys is not involved in the CWELL Programme).

TABOO-BUSTING CONFERENCE FOR SEPTEMBER

Weddings and funerals are two of the largest community events that take place in Ireland.

While talk of getting married often comes up in day to day conversation at many points in a person's life, it is seldom that death is discussed in a pragmatic way.

"Dying to Talk?" a conference which will take place in September is organized by the Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF).

The conference aims to get people in communities talking about and thinking about how best make sure their last wishes are clearly and accurately conveyed.

As well as having guest speakers, the event also includes a 'Death Café'.

The Death Café is a Swiss idea popularized in London where people meet, drink coffee and talk about death in a pragmatic and relatively anonymous environment.

In 2011 An Taoiseach Enda Kenny officially launched the 'Think Ahead' initiative on behalf of the IHF.



The 'Think Ahead' programme asks participants to fill in a form which addresses five key questions about their wishes immediately before and after their death.

The completed form will provide answers to questions on legal and financial matters as well as care preferences, organ donation and even who you would like to look after your pets and social media accounts.

Aine McCambridge Development Officer with Think Ahead said:

"Think Ahead is at its heart, an empowerment of the individual and a way in which a person can voice their autonomy and independence. It ensures that their voice will be heard, should a time come when



they cannot speak for themselves."

W: thinkahead.ie

DIRECT DEBIT GRAVES SNAPPED UP

Meanwhile, a scheme that allows people to buy plots in their local graveyard by weekly direct debit payments got a big response in a County Limerick.

The 'Limerick Leader' reported that residents of Kildimo village "have jumped at the chance to secure a spot in their local graveyard for just €8 per week."

Kildimo Community Council came up with the idea.

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T: 021-4903354

Or log on to www.ucc.ie/en/ckl10/ for further details.

Alternatively, watch our informational video clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihUhiLoB0Bk>

- Do you hold a degree (in any discipline)?
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- Have you access to the internet?

This programme is designed with you in mind.