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NOT FOR PROFIT

CHANGING IRELAND

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North East Inner City Dublin's community

Now we're listening

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'Changing Ireland' is an independent not-for-profit publication.

ABOUT US

'Changing Ireland' engages in original journalism to highlight the impact of local and community development and social inclusion work across Ireland. We report on action on the ground and provide a space for reflection on what serves people and communities best.

The magazine was established in 2001, is based in Moyross, Limerick, and is core-funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

This year, we began to produce quality journalism to reflect social inclusion work funded or supported by an array of Government departments and agencies. At the same time, we provide space for those with empty pockets and nothing but community development in their hearts.

We are dedicated to promoting social justice, equality and fair play and to giving people who are rarely heard a voice.

While covering serious issues, we hope our style of journalism provides encouragement to workers, activists and volunteers nationwide, including civil and public servants and all involved in social inclusion in Ireland today. See page opposite for information, including contact details, about the team behind 'Changing Ireland'.

SUPPORT

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Further information on this programme is available on our online prospectus at www.ucc.ie/en/CKE75, or by contacting, **Féilim Ó hAdhmaill**, at the School of Applied Social Studies, U.C.C.
Tel: **021 490 2616** or email f.ohadhmaill@ucc.ie

NOW WE'RE LISTENING



When there are seven bodies on your doorstep, people take more notice of what you have to say.

BUT community workers have a slightly jaded, been-there-before look about them in Dublin's North East Inner City.

They are the most resilient, patient and probably the most angry community workers in the country.

Tony Gregory was the only one to broker a deal to get the Government of the day – 30 years ago – to invest in the area. And only then because he held a swing vote that helped keep Charlie Haughey in power. Poverty was at appalling levels. The community itself began to chase drug-dealers out of the area.

Since then, even government politicians of the day – Pat Rabbitte being one – warned they were not taking seriously the sounding of alarm bells by community workers.

Meanwhile, with austerity in vogue, cuts of around 38% were imposed nationally on community, youthwork and anti-drugs programmes.

Now, the government is all ears. The Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, accompanied by six ministers visited the area in June. That, by coincidence, was one cabinet member for each public death

since the Kinahan gang started shooting in earnest.

Now the government has been made aware of at least three other drug-related deaths the public had not heard about over the same time period, run-of-the-mill drug-related (non-violent) deaths such as overdoses.

Such deaths – from poverty it can be argued – make barely a ripple on the national stage.

Limerick's poverty failed to move the politicians, or indeed the public, until dramatic street scenes provoked a response. Regeneration followed and, despite the drop-off in the murder rate in the city, it was not an out-and-out win for the communities.

The community workers of Dublin's North East Inner City are wise to the vested interests that circle their community.

They also know they have the ear of the Taoiseach and his cabinet colleagues. Cabinet meetings are held a mere 15 minutes walk away.

Let's hope the community and the State can work together to confront North East Inner City Dublin's unique level of neglect, gang crime and deprivation.

It's not like we don't know how to tackle the problems. And it's not as if the State can anymore abdicate from its responsibilities.

More and better policing is only one part of the solution.

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 project and what makes it unique. 300-400 words is plenty (and a photo if possible). Certain criteria apply. Your first point of contact should be the editor.



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**MADE IN MOYROSS
LIMERICK**

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.

Miss nothing!



IMAGINE 20,000 VISITING YOUR HOUSE!

Each year, about 20,000 people visit the house and gardens of Áras an Uachtaráin.

Many of these are civil society representatives as President Higgins recognises the work of voluntary organisations, community groups and those who seek to overcome oppression.

You will never however see an invitation issued to 'service-users' or 'clients' as those are two terms the President dislikes with a passion.

The house and grounds are now fully accessible to people with disabilities with step-free access throughout following work by the Office of Public Works.

KERRY BAKERS THROUGH TO FINAL

A Caherciveen bakery has won the South-West Regional Final of the Irish Local Development Network Enterprise Awards.

K&T Bakery run by Polish couple Katie and Tomasz Gwis, along with Loughbeg Farm from Cork and Integreat from Waterford, were selected to represent the Southern region.

They go through to compete at the inaugural National Irish Local Development Network Enterprise Awards due to take place in Dublin in September.

All those who are taking part in the competition got a start through their local development company and the Department of Social Protection's Back to Work Enterprise Allowance scheme.

For more see pages 12-13.

GREEN NGO AWARD GOES TO FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTOR

In April, the 2016 Green NGO of the Year award was presented to Aoibheann O'Brien and Karen Horgan of Bia Food Initiative (BFI) which manages the redistribution of large scale donations of food that might otherwise be wasted.

BFI distribute food - for example from Lidl - to over 300 charities. They offer an "a socially responsible, environmentally sensitive, business friendly alternative to wasting good food".

In 2014, food worth €4 billion was wasted according to the Environmental Protection Agency which reckoned that a million tonnes of food was dumped annually.

It is into this space that BFI has stepped and it now offers a national service to food producers, retailers and charities.

Supermarkets in France have been banned by law from throwing away or spoiling unsold food which must now be given to charities and food banks.

Meanwhile, the BBC reported a court in Italy ruled in May that the theft of food is "not a crime" if the person taking it is hungry.

W: biafi.ie

€25K GRANTS ALSO OPEN TO COMMUNITY AND TOWN TWINNING GROUPS

Town twinning should be aware that applications are being sought by September 1st for EU grants of up to €25,000.

There are still two rounds of town twinning grants to be applied for this year under the Europe for Citizens Programme.

And it is not just local authorities or town twinning committees that can apply, but also community groups (once it is agreed they can represent the local authority).

Grants approved in the Spring - under the 'Remembrance' theme for instance - were wide open to civil society groups to be the lead partners.

Deirdre Finlay is the European Programmes Coordinator based in The Wheel, Dublin, and she believes we should "take a fresh look at town twinning."

"Since the recession, twinning in Ireland has been less of a priority for many communities, sometimes considered as unnecessary travel during straightened times," she said. "As Irish society becomes increasingly diverse, partnering with European towns can achieve immense intercultural learning."

Deirdre is bursting with information on old and new town twinning ideas, funding advice and stories of success from Ireland and beyond and she welcomes all enquiries.

E: deirdref@wheel.ie / europeforcitizens@wheel.ie

T: 01-454 8727.

W: www.europeforcitizens.ie

NEW CHARITY STATUS APPLICATIONS THE PRIORITY

The length of time taken to process charitable status applications is "currently six to nine months", according to Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald.

Speaking in the Dáil, in May, she pointed out that the number of staff in the Charities Regulatory Authority is to increase shortly and that applications from new organisations are receiving priority.

W: charitiesregulatoryauthority.ie

TECHNOLOGY TO SOLVE SOCIAL ISSUES

A €1 million project called 'THINKTECH' was officially launched in June by Minister for the Environment, Community & Local Government, Simon Coveney.

Created by Social Innovation Fund Ireland (SIFI) with support from the Department and Google.org, THINKTECH offers funding, support and mentoring.

"This project shines a light on the potential for social enterprises to use technology to solve critical social issues and create a better Ireland," said SIFI's Deirdre Mortell. **More info:** socialinnovation.ie

IRELAND IN DANGER OF OVERLOOKING VOLUNTEER GOLD

Ireland is "in danger of ignoring the contribution that older people can make to their communities", according to a report launched in Dublin in April.

Research by the Galway-based Touchstone Project identified "barriers to this civic engagement which can isolate and marginalise" older people. Touchstone works to empower older people to overcome barriers. **The report is available on Active Retirement Ireland's website:** activeirl.ie

UN REPORT: HOMELESS PEOPLE ARE THIRSTY IN CORK

UN experts in May expressed concern over the number of homeless people in Cork city and their lack of access to water and sanitation.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation, Léo Heller, said, "It is deeply worrying that there have been no free and adequate public installations for water or public toilets in Cork for the last ten years."

During daytime, when shelters tend to close, people rely on publicans, shopkeepers and restaurateurs allowing them use their facilities.

There are over 700 people homeless within the city boundary.

The report is short and is available online: <http://bit.ly/28MFY8f>

VOICES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

DOWN SYNDROME'S PARENT POWER

Parent power has seen an extra two-and-a-half hours of resource teaching per week allocated to children with Down Syndrome.

The Department of Education said the supports were being granted in recognition of the fact that children with Down syndrome experienced a cluster of difficulties relating to the condition.

The decision was welcomed by parents, who had also called for the entire special needs provision system to be overhauled - promised in the longer term.

Meanwhile, Down Syndrome Ireland "wholeheartedly welcomes the appointment of Finian McGrath TD as the Super Junior Minister." He has responsibility for disability issues.

CRICKLEY ELECTED PRESIDENT

Anastasia Crickley is the first Irish person to be elected president of the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. She previously served as its vice-president.

Anastasia is the chairperson of both Pavee Point and Community Work Ireland (which she helped found). She is a founder member of the National Traveller Women's Forum and the Migrants Rights Centre Ireland. For many years, she headed up the social studies department at NUI Maynooth.

W: <http://www.paveepoint.ie/a-great-honour-for-ireland/>



A proud day for Ireland. Anastasia Crickley with Minister Frances Fitzgerald, Ronnie Fay of Pavee Point and Ambassador Patricia O'Brien.

'START STRONG' SHUTS ON SCHEDULE

The early years advocacy group Start Strong closed in May after seven years campaigning for quality, affordable childcare.

"Start Strong was set up as a time limited campaign. We always knew this day would come," said Cíairín de Buis, CEO. The advocacy NGO claimed to have had a big influence on the Programme for Government.

"We still have some of the most expensive childcare in the world... but we do seem to be moving in the right direction," said Ms de Buis.

Elements of Start Strong's work will continue through a newly created 'early years' position in the Children's Rights Alliance.

W: [startstrong.ie / childrensrights.ie](http://startstrong.ie/childrensrights.ie)

SAFE IRELAND: WRONG TO SAY 4,000 WOMEN & KIDS ARE "NOT HOMELESS"

Safe Ireland has condemned the fact that more than 4,000 women and children living in refuges are not recognised as homeless.

Women and children sheltering in a refuge are viewed by the State as "out of a home" rather than homeless.

However, Safe Ireland argues many of these homes are too dangerous to return to and calls for a "a justice system that takes them seriously".

W: safeireland.ie

NATIONAL PLOUGHING SEPT 20-22

The 85th National Ploughing Championships is being held this year in Screggan, Tullamore, Co. Offaly from Sept 20th - 22nd.

W: npa.ie

€10M IN TECH SUPPORT

Microsoft plans to provide €10m in technology support to Irish not-for-profits over the next two years, having already given support worth €8m to groups such as Enable Ireland, Concern and the Irish Water Safety.

CARDS FROM CREDIT UNIONS

Eleven credit unions have come together to launch a new debit card for members, pending Central Bank approval. It would allow them access cash via ATMs.

The participating credit unions are: Gurrnabraher, First South, Cork, Tullamore, Mullingar, Waterford, St Canice's Kilkenny, Navan, Tralee, Health Services Staff, Mitchelstown and Ballinasloe.

Other credit unions are expected to join the scheme in due course.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS

Social Entrepreneurs Ireland will hold their annual awards event on October 11th at the Mansion House, Dublin. Full details available at www.socialentrepreneurs.ie

Gary Doggett was one of last year's winners. For an update on Gary's Pro-Social Drivers Programme, read our Autumn edition.

COMMUNITY WORK IRELAND

One of the first summer schools of 2016 was held in June by Community Work Ireland (formerly known as the Community Workers' Co-op). Held in association with NUI Maynooth, the two-day event focused on human rights based community work.

NO COMMUNITY FUND OBLIGATION

An Bord Pleanála is to allow an ESB/Bord Na Móna consortium to construct a 61-turbine windfarm in north Mayo without being obliged to pay into a community gain fund. The developers had earlier offered €1,000 per megawatt (MW) for the benefit of the community - this offer was noted and welcomed by An Bord Pleanála.

The windfarm is set to be constructed on 5,000 hectares near the old peat-fired power station at Bellacorick.

There are 20 conditions attached to the permission.

Last year, the board rejected a proposal from Coillte to construct a 48-turbine windfarm at nearby Moygownagh.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

In our Autumn 2011 edition of 'Changing Ireland' we focused on 'Community Resilience'. The Ecovillage in Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary, then a building site, was to the forefront in promoting the concept.

Five years on, students from UCC visited to learn about resilience and to see the Ecovillage for themselves. Today it has a population of over 100 adults and 35 children. See pages 20-21.



A COMMUNITY WORK V DUBLIN'S NORTH

BY ALLEN MEAGHER

You don't have to visit Dublin's North East Inner City to know it suffers from neglect. Just read the 'papers. Seven people shot dead.

Or google the area. The pictures speak for themselves, although they depict a place where you'd think the sun never shone.

Of course it does and people are friendly to strangers seeking directions. "See that building there, it was supposed to open as a youth centre... any day now," said a man in his 20s on his way to work who kindly led me to Lourdes Youth and Community Services Centre (LYCS).

He knew where it was. Nearly everyone his age had availed of their services at one time or another.

Moments earlier, I'd walked into a parish centre. Wrong place, wrong room. I found myself in a cafeteria where 30 or so older people were enjoying their lunch in a community facility.

When I found the 'School on Stilts' everyone had time to talk.

The deaths on the street - and the threat of more - makes people more contemplative than usual. There was far more resilience to be found than resignation, though community workers wished they could do more. They believed that successive governments let the ball drop.

Tom O'Reilly said, "This area is unique in all of Ireland - in terms of neglect".

Deliberate neglect,

he says: "I don't want to take away from other areas, but this wasn't a mistake, it was created."

The Community Training Centre that Tom manages provides 40 full time training places for 15-21 years olds and is aimed at those who fell out of the formal school system.

His colleagues in LYCS - including director Sarah Kelleher tell a story of 'We told you so, we warned you but you didn't listen'.

Some projects are meant to last and LYCS couldn't be any closer to the ground - excepting the strange stilts that lift the entire building one floor off the ground. If the floods ever come, they couldn't be more ready.

While interviewing Tom in the courtyard beneath, his colleague Graham Kinsella ran after a large rat we had spotted earlier: An old school next to LYCS is earmarked for renovation, but in the meantime, vermin rule the roost.

Beside the courtyard, one sees evidence of fantastic community garden work, albeit a little neglected at present.

While staff were retained - the people being LYCS's most important assets, noted Sarah - programmes suffered from the cuts of recent years of up to 38%.

You wonder how anyone can justify such cuts when you must pass by a dozen local boys dealing drugs - mostly quasi-legal pharmaceutical products - when entering LYCS on Lower Rutland Street.

The dealers are permanently stationed there, although recent moves by the Government may make illegal some of the products they sell. Whether or not this would help is disputed by some.

Buyers come from all over Dublin, all over Ireland.

LYCS PROGRAMMES

LYCS runs four main programmes with funding from a number of government departments and agencies.

It runs a full day-care creche and childcare facility. The Community Training Centre provides 40 full time training places for 15-21 years olds, while the Adult Education Programme offers basic education to men and women from aged 18 and over.

The Youth Programme provides a safe space and aims to prevent young people from getting involved in anti-social behaviour and drugs. It offers a challenging opportunities to young people to broaden their horizons. It also rewards those who demonstrate real potential as leaders through formal training opportunities.



Entrance to Lourdes Youth and Community Services.



Staff at work in Lourdes Youth and Community Services.



Who needs a nameplate when there are professional graffiti artists on hand.

VIEW FROM THE HEART OF EAST INNER-CITY

As Anna Quigley, co-ordinator of the Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, pointed out, "It's definitely a class issue - where you have poverty you will have a drugs trade."

"It's not that children from this area are any less capable than someone from a leafy, middle-class suburb," she says. In fact, they have to be smarter and work harder to get by."

In visiting an area that has seen acres of newsprint published in recent months, it is alarming nonetheless to see how few media outlets enquired about community resources.

The emphasis seems overwhelmingly to be on policing.

Until the media dance to a different beat, local community leaders are more inclined to turn down requests for interviews or to come on talkshows with big media organisations.

Anna Quigley let a 'Marion Finucane Show' invite pass. They wanted to compare Dublin with Limerick.

Given that 'Changing Ireland' is based in Limerick, we made ourselves available, but RTE went for a former policeman from Limerick and once again justice and policing themes dominated.

The truth of social inequality is there to see. Inequality is visible here. Cuts are tangible. And you don't have to go far to detect the stigmatisation of the people in the area.

The taxi-driver who picked me up made only one remark about the area: "You can get a gun here in five minutes if you've the cash."

Whether true or false, just imagine applying for a job and having Sheriff Street, Sean MacDermott Street or Lower Rutland Street as the address on your CV.

Anyone in Moyross, Southill or Mayfield could empathise with the inhabitants of North East Inner City Dublin.

In these circumstances, as Anna pointed out, and given the poverty and low value (though it's increasing) placed on education, the drugs trade is a reasonably attractive choice for many youngsters, though they underestimate the hold it will have on their lives.

Every community worker spoke of people who died without any media furore from drug overdoses or drug-related deaths. They all spoke about multi-generational drug addiction, like

a virus infecting most people in some families.

However, equally, they could ream off names of people who had participated in youth clubs, Community Employment schemes and other initiatives and who now worked for the "corporation" as one called it, or as architects, Gardai, teachers, in telecoms and so on.

Opportunity - this being the capital - surrounds people on all sides.

This makes it worse than other disadvantaged areas. The striking inequality in Dublin city centre makes

it seem even more attractive to enter the drugs trade and get rich quick.

It's not as if the local authority can take a bulldozer to the area, as they have to much of Moyross (alongside other measures).

There are 40,000 residents in the area, making it far bigger than any inner-city community suffering disadvantage in Cork, Limerick or Galway.

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny visited LYCS in April of last year, so even before he and a half-dozen ministers visited recently for urgent talks with community leaders, he was familiar with the area.

That recent visit was rumoured for weeks.

Meanwhile, during the days that 'Changing Ireland' visited, 'The Boss' - aka Bruce Springsteen - was within earshot. While interviewing workers, Bruce was rehearsing in nearby Croke Park, belting out tunes that could be heard clearly in the LYCS courtyard.

Locals stitch and sell hats, scarfs and flags and make a few quid whenever there's a match or a gig. An entrepreneurial spirit is evident, if only it could be built on.

Everyone agreed that until more opportunities are made available to young people, using drugs and selling them and running errands for gangs will continue.

In fact, nobody thought any quick change was possible, but something has to be done. If not now, what next?

The "massacre" as Anna Quigley calls it of Hutch family members and associates must be stopped. But how? It is an international policing issue, she said.

Meanwhile, she recalled three drug-related deaths in recent months that received next to no media or political attention.

The community remembers however.

**"This area is unique in
all of Ireland - in terms of
neglect"
- Tom O'Reilly, LYCS**



Children from the area on a trip to the seaside.



LYCS occupies the 'School on Stilts', a triangular stilted building that must be seen to be believed.



Locals engaged in a major tidy-up and have transformed derelict land into a community garden.



LYCS is located on Lower Rutland Street, between Sean Mac Dermott Street and Summerhill in Dublin 1.



Wall murals at LYCS.

THE BIG ISSUE

ON THE GROUND

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Sarah Kelleher, Lourdes Youth & Community Services.

INTERVIEW BY ALLEN MEAGHER

Sarah Kelleher is the long-time director of a critically important community development project in North East Inner City Dublin.

She heads up Lourdes Youth and Community Services and believes much more should be done by people in the Community Sector to explain simply what community development is.

She believes cuts may not have been so harsh if only politicians understood community development better.

"I've debated with politicians – particularly since austerity – that it is so important to keep funding community work," she told 'Changing Ireland'.

More recently, she and fellow community leaders have again been talking to politicians. With gang violence

reaching unprecedented proportions, the community leaders are being called upon by the most senior politicians in the land to bring their expertise to the table.

"The biggest thing we do is engage with hard to reach communities. We're not magicians, we just talk to people," said Sarah.

She gave an example of an initiative they set up locally that was a success and is now being rolled out nationally under Tusla.

"Ten years ago, we the Young People At Risk (YPAR) initiative was established. It brings together all social inclusion stakeholders.

"Through YPAR, we all gather around the table as one because young people were dealing with all the separate agencies and any

one young person could fall through the gap."

It happened and lives were put at risk. Now, that is less likely to occur.

SELLING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

"I've been around a long time," said Sarah. "I've worked for 20 years in community development in Ireland and I worked in community development in England for about 10 years before that. And I said about 15 years ago to ourselves in the Community Sector – we are not promoting community development enough and people don't understand it. We just haven't sold it enough.

Sarah describes community development as "a particular way of working with communities by first enabling them to identify their needs, then facilitate them to access their own needs."

"But we have not been good at showing the impact of that work, nationally. If I could do anything, I'd have a community development conference. There are really simple ways of showing the impact of community development," she said.

She did not believe the funding situation would improve until politicians better understood community development.

"They tend to run with the myths of what it is. Ranging from 'You're constantly trying to rally people against us, so why would we fund that?' to 'You're not doing anything serious, why would we fund you?' and 'The country is in a bad state, you're just fluff!'

"Today, we have many who struggle to fully understand community development in my opinion. I'm not being patronizing – you often get people on local committees asking what is community development," she said.

KNOCKING ON

3,000 DOORS

"We doorknock 3,000 houses per year. We go back a few times. The only way to engage with people is face-to-face.

"You might imagine that LYCS is very well established and that everyone knows we're here. But, no, you have to keep engaging, door-knocking. Particularly in a community with a lot of private rented houses, turnover can be quite high.

QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES IMPORTANT

Sarah believes more credit should be given to the qualitative outcomes from community work. If so, LYCS would get 'A's all the way and presumably funding would flow their way in greater quantity.

"There's been a huge drift in recent years (in terms of State support for communities) into service delivery and measuring it by quantity – numbers, bums on seats. There's been very little qualitative measurement done," she said.

"Take the Community Employment Programme for instance – if a participant progresses straight from Community Employment (CE) into a job, you tick a box, it's 'excellent'. If they get a part-time job, tick another box – 'excellent'. If they progress into education, tick another box, 'excellent'. If they leave here with no job, that's not (seen as) good.

"So, if they're with us for two years and they complete accredited training which they all do, but don't get a job, it's measured as a zero return.

"We recently did a survey on our own CE workers and when you talk to them, they speak at length about the positive benefits that community employment brought them. Apart from the accredited training, they talk about how much their confidence has improved, how much they've got back into real life rather than being stuck at home doing nothing, how much they now value educa-

THE BIG ISSUE

tion and how much they're now talking to their children about the value of education, how much they tell their friends.

"So the plusses from CE – from the people who've done it are huge – but we're not measuring it (nationally).

"When you've the OECD looking at CE as a 'labour market activation measure', and saying that the Government isn't getting enough returns for its investment, then the Government ask themselves 'Well, why are we running it?'. In actual fact, it is the backbone for a lot of disadvantaged communities," said Sarah.

MEASURE THIS PROPERLY

National policy decisions have had major impact locally:

"Another problem for us here was when the Government decided to axe the double-payment as they called it – lone parents coming on CE used to get an extra benefit, but the Government thought we don't want to incentivise this cohort of people," said Sarah.

"We warned the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton at the time, four years ago, that what was going to happen was as follows: you will have lone parents not engaging with CE, we'll go back to where we were 20 years ago with people staying at home in their flat with their small children, alone.

"The Minister listened to us but she didn't do anything about it. We also said to her – you're not measuring this properly."

"Today, in the 20 years I've been here, I never saw it so bad, but some things are looking up. We see more people staying on at secondary school. Leaving Cert numbers are up," she said.

"We have better quality housing now – it's not enough, but it is better," she said.

While the unemployment rate is declining, local people face layers of disadvantage. While the schools are doing terrific work, if the parents do not have an education themselves, or the money to send their children for extra tuition or on summer camps, their children cannot compete with children from wealthy areas.

Sarah did not directly call for more resources. However, she pointed out where we are failing some of the most vulnerable in society.

The national Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme is targetted at those deemed most hard-to-reach. In Sarah's experience: "In this community we have lots of families with a high level of dysfunction. If they're really hard to reach, we probably don't have the resources to reach them."

She said there needs to be more trust built between the State and the community sector.

While she wholeheartedly believes in gathering data to measure the value of community work, she feels that current paperwork requirements imply that "the State doesn't trust that we'll do the right thing."

An Taoiseach had not yet visited when Sarah spoke. Time to rebuild relations.

Community training centre manager outlines his experience



Tom O'Reilly and Graham Kinsella both work with young people in the area.

You don't expect to meet a farmer in inner-city Dublin, but Carlow-born Tom O'Reilly, manager of the Community Training Centre in Lourdes Youth and Community Centre (LYCS) grew up on a farm.

He saw poverty and addiction growing up however and can equate very well with people from disadvantaged urban areas.

He loves where he works and the people of the area and, in a soft-spoken way, he gets to the heart of the issues facing the community. Drugs and gang problems are number one and they're rooted in poverty.

"We're an unique part of Ireland – in terms of neglect. The tenements aren't gone that long. They were still there in the 1960s and 1970s," he said.

"The last person here to have a bath in their kitchen – the council didn't get around to renovating their house until 2001. They had no shower, no bathroom, the toilet was outside and they had a bath in their kitchen. Yes, in the kitchen."

"City centre Dublin is special – the glaring difference between rich and poor areas here emphasises the neglect. There's lots of money around. The poverty in Ballyfermot is different – most people are poor."

"Back in the old days, when the docks were thriving, a lot of things fell off the back of lorries. There was a strong black market. People were poor."

Little was done for the area when the dock-work declined.

The programme he runs could be improved to better meet the needs of

young people. Some changes could make it more useful vocationally. He recalls many youngsters for whom a training place marked the turnaround moment in their lives, when they became more confident, wiser to a wider world of opportunity.

Slowly, the educational outcomes locally are improving and early school leaving is on the decrease.

His own family prized education:

"My family were farmers and every penny they had went into my education. It was hugely important to us. One September the electricity wasn't paid because they had paid for my books," he recalled.

Tom sees the drugs trade's impact up close.

"It's all around us. You've people on methadone and off the gear for a year, but not yet entirely suitable for every vacancy you might have.

"I listen to kids who are not on drugs – but they're up against it when they're living in a home environment where Da or Ma, or both, and their uncles and aunts and all their grandparents are on drugs," he said.

'Changing Ireland' will continue with further reports, insight and solutions suggested by community workers in our Autumn edition. We will also post stories online in the meantime.

- Ed.

TRANSPARENCY & PUBLIC SPENDING

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

FOLLOW THE RULES OR THE

Public concern over how money is spent supporting the most vulnerable in society is understandable when one looks at Prime Time Investigate's report of how a leading Irish charity, Console, deceived its funders. However, monitoring is tight in most quarters of the Community and Voluntary Sector. **ALLEN MEAGHER REPORTS:**

RTE are to be commended for exposing the deplorable behaviour at Console.

Since a similar case involving Rehab was exposed two years ago, changes have been implemented. The Charities Regulatory Authority is up and running over a year now and is being allocated extra staff to ensure that all charities act in an accountable and transparent way.

When it comes to Community and Voluntary Sector spending overseen by

Pobal there are stringent controls in place. The agency oversees millions of euro in spending across a range of programmes designed to promote social inclusion.

For instance, with regard to the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, partly funded from Europe*, the paperwork and oversight is considerable, as it should be.

While workers on the ground bemoan the form-filling that is part and parcel of

funding for community initiatives, and seek to have some of the bureaucratic rules tweaked, the Government and EU require reliable data.

So tight are the rules that even slight transgressions could see funding put in jeopardy and Pobal is in regular contact with grassroots organisations delivering on the ground to ensure they adhere to the terms and conditions.

In November, and again more recently,

"They're deadly about logo size, but you got to do it"

Community workers have complained to 'Changing Ireland' about the paperwork and rules underpinning the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

While grateful for funding that helps their communities, they decry the time spent inputting data onto computers.

More than one community worker has made us sit down and go through the SICAP beneficiary form.

They often dislike asking people questions about the state of their personal finances.

"Couldn't they find out through the census?" asked one worker.

"Imagine asking those questions while trying to build trust?" she said. "You've to do it bit by bit."

"They're deadly about the ESF logo size, but you got to do it their way," said another worker, preparing for a public event. Woe betide his organisation if he left behind his 'Supported by the ESF, etc' display (complete with right-sized logos).

Can I quote you, 'Changing Ireland' asks.

"Go away or I'll have to SICAP you," they all reply. The programme has evolved into a verb. One chased us from his building with the five-page beneficiary form.

Beyond the sparring and joking, everyone recognises the importance of collecting reliable data, to show how SICAP works, to measure its impact and to account for their work.

However, the maze of boxes to select when inputting the data online isn't what many workers were thinking of when they were first drawn to community development work and the fight for social inclusion. Agents of social change today must be data-savvy.

Pobal Statement

A statement from Pobal points out that, "As SICAP is co-funded by the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative, certain information requirements must be met. The information gathered is used to demonstrate the social inclusion value of the programme and also assist in improving and developing the services provided.

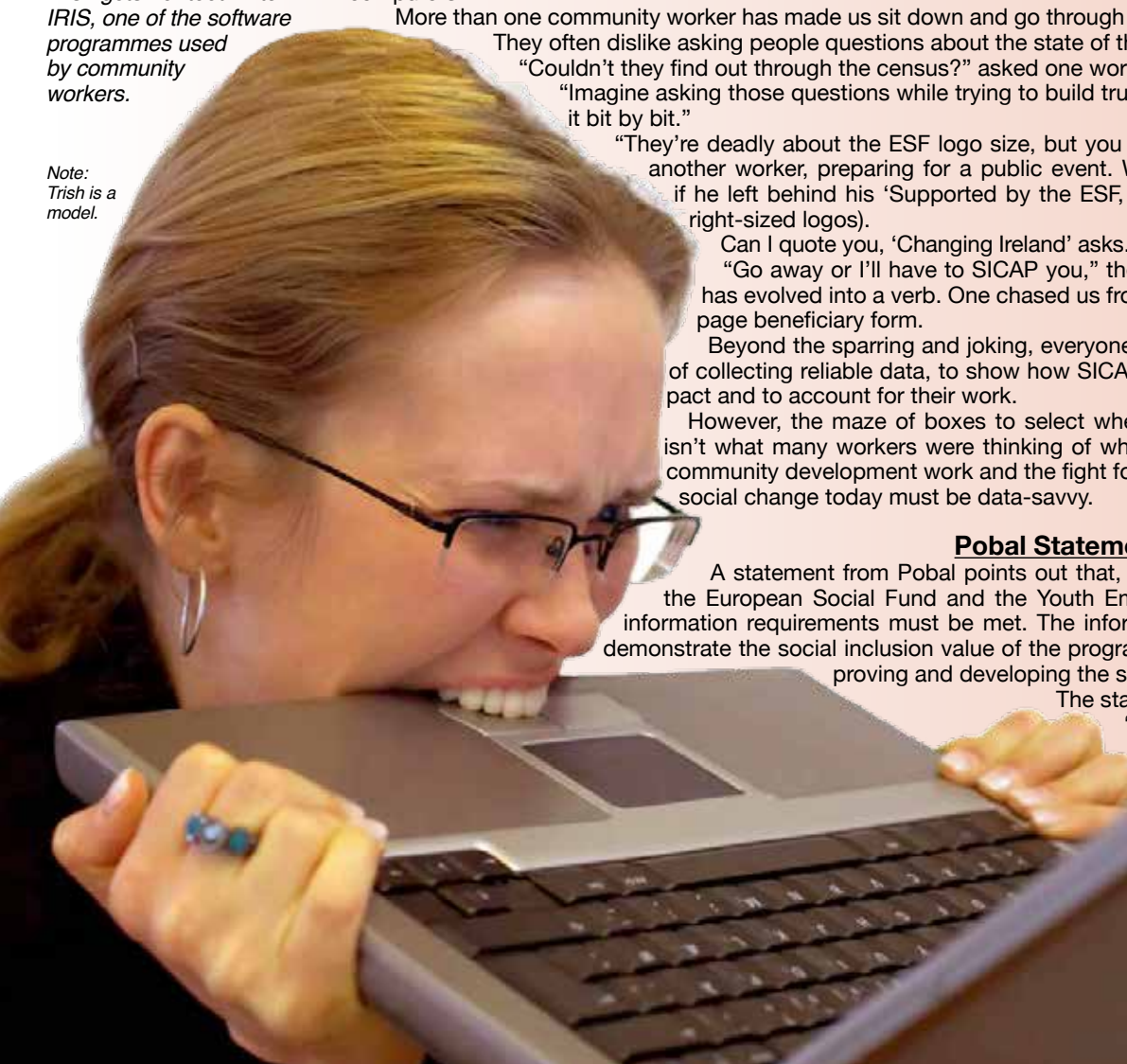
The statement continues:

"Pobal regularly monitors programme requirements and also interacts with LCDCs and Programme Implementers to offer help and explanations regarding these requirements.

"The data collected is used to benefit ongoing programme development and improve its design and reach," it adds.

Trish gets her teeth into IRIS, one of the software programmes used by community workers.

*Note:
Trish is a model.*



FUNDING'S AT RISK

Pobal wrote to all involved in delivering SICAP to emphasise what is of prime importance in regard to monitoring, accounting for expenditure and ensuring that SICAP does what it says on the tin.

In Ireland, the European Social Fund (ESF) contributes co-funding to support individual SICAP participants aged between 15-24 years.

As the EU monitoring guidelines** state, "The ESF delivers a substantial contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and represents a considerable part of the budget of the European Union (€1.15bn in

the 2014-2020 period)."

"In the context of tighter budgets and more public attention to the effectiveness of EU policy instruments in general, the demand for demonstrating the performance, impact and added value of ESF-supported initiatives has grown. In this respect, monitoring and evaluation play a key role in providing the necessary evidence," advise the guidelines.

Pobal was nominated by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to act as its agent with respect to national management and oversight of SICAP, including in respect of

co-funding under the ESF.

Across Europe, the ESF funds tens of thousands of local, regional and national employment-related projects.

** SICAP is partly funded under the European Social Fund (ESF) Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020 and the Youth Employment Initiative.*

*** Source: 'Monitoring and Evaluation of European Cohesion Policy European Social Fund Guidance', page 3.*

CORRESPONDENCE

Pobal has pointed out perils of overlooking detail

Pobal has written to the Chief Officers of Local and Community Development Committees nationwide and the CEOs of implementing bodies, generally local development companies.

The correspondence notes the "strictness that is applied to EU funding rules and regulations and the severe sanctions/losses that could be imposed" if there are transgressions.

Paul Skinnader is executive director of Pobal's Community Support and Services Directorate. He wrote that Pobal hoped those delivering the programme on the ground - known as Programme Implementers (PIs) could avoid "pitfalls" they have been warned about, thus ensuring - the continuing eligibility of expenditure under SICAP.

Mr Skinnader told 'Changing Ireland' that Pobal was aware of the demands that compliance placed on PIs and Pobal is providing assistance through workshops and support sessions for PIs and the Local and Community Development Committees.

"It's placing particular and necessary expectations on PIs but there is a strong requirement and a need to be accountable to the public for the expenditure and also to ensure good practice and governance," he said.

Over 250 pages of guidelines have been provided, however some points have been emphasised by Pobal, including the following:

Public Procurement / Tendering

The PIs - which are subject to on-the-spot visits must show:

- Written evidence of verbal quotes received from one or more suppliers for the purchase of items under €5,000.
- At least three written quotes for goods and services costing from €5,001 and less than €25,000.
- A formal tendering process applies for higher expenditure.
- Any payments to third party, suppliers, sub-contractors and consortium members between €650 and €10,000 require a written declaration their tax affairs are in order and their tax reference number.

Beneficiary files

Individual beneficiary files must be maintained under SICAP:

- Detailed registration forms must clearly identify which target group the beneficiary belongs to.
- Beneficiaries must sign and date their registration forms.
- Personal Action Plans must be prepared for every beneficiary. They do not need to be long.
- Training attendance records and copies of certificates of course completion must be kept on file.
- Documentary evidence that tutors are suitably qualified is a must.
- Beneficiaries aged 15-24 years and who are not in employment, education or training must be informed of the ESF co-funding including the special allocation under the Youth Employment Initiative.

Apportionment of Salaries

- A written apportionment policy must be in place in respect of all SICAP-funded shared overheads/salaries.
- Where staff salary costs are apportioned across a number of different funding streams... timesheets must record all staff time worked in respect of the various funding streams.
- For 100% SICAP-funded salaries, timesheets must record the time spent working on each relevant programme goal.

Other Points of Note

- Strict SICAP publicity requirements apply and hard copies of all publicity materials produced must be kept.
- Documentary evidence of a commitment to equality and diversity must be available.
- Documentary evidence must be available to demonstrate that no more than 15% of total SICAP expenditure was spent on sub-contractors.

What is the European Social Fund?

The European Social Fund (ESF) is Europe's main instrument for supporting jobs, helping people get better jobs and ensuring fairer job opportunities.

The ESF includes the Youth Employment Initiative which is designed for countries with a youth

unemployment rate in 2012 above 25%. It is dedicated to young people not in employment, education or training (aka NEETs).

The ESF is one of four main European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Programmes for 2014-2020 from which Ireland benefits,

the other three being:

- The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).
- The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

Yvonne's bakery an outlet for 7 more local producers



It's amazing what starts out as a simple market stall can become. Yvonne Delahunty was unemployed only a few years ago. Now she runs The Little Chef, one of Nenagh's premier bakeries and she was one of 12 regional finalists to feature at the inaugural Mid-West Enterprise Awards held in May, in Dromoland, Co. Clare. She is pictured here with Jim Finn, chair of North Tipperary LEADER Partnership (NTLP).

Her shop now also provides a sales outlet for seven local food producers. A lone parent, the support provided to Yvonne from the outset came through the NTLP and the national Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.

Visit 'Changing Ireland's Youtube Channel to see our interview with Yvonne and you'll be licking your lips when you see her baking: <http://bit.ly/1UEA7Sa>

'It's easy to blend in... So do something different.'

- 'The Pudding' boss gives motivational talk



Gillian Horan gave ten top tips on branding. Visit 'Changing Ireland's Youtube Channel to hear Gillian tell her story and give her tips on branding: <http://bit.ly/1TYGVgm>

Gillian Horan was the guest speaker at the Mid-West Enterprise Awards.

She is a self-proclaimed "brand fanatic", a brand consultant with over 12 years' experience and a lecturer, trainer and author on the subject.

Stuck for a name for her company, she came up with one that some thought rather iffy: The Pudding Brand.

Everyone gets it however once she asks them where the proof is.

"It's too easy to blend in... Sometimes we have our own vision, but it's only when you put it together that it makes sense to everyone else," she said.

As the force behind a business now employing six people full-time, with offices in Dublin and Limerick, and national and international clients, she recalled help she got along the way.

She came up with a framework for building brands for small companies ten years ago. "I never excelled at school, but I was creative," she said.

She credited all three local development companies in the region with lending her invaluable support.

National awards for who start su

Style and suspense were in the air as the first batch of regional finalists in the inaugural National Local Development Company Enterprise Awards Competition came face-to-face on May 19th.

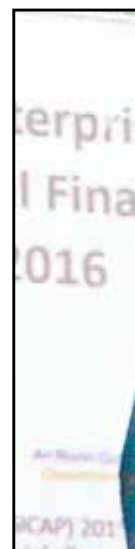
Everyone put on the glitz for a glamorous occasion and for many they work so hard they rarely have an evening off.

For everyone involved, they came on a journey from being unemployed, some long-term, to being a successful small enterprise owner.

The PAUL Partnership's Elaine MacGrath didn't drag out her announcements X-factor style, but the finalists first had to show their wares, have a sit-down dinner and get advice from a branding expert.

The venue was Dromoland Inn for the Mid-West Regional Finals. The event was sponsored by the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme and the ultimate winner on the night, Kaye Faulkner, was left speechless on being announced the winner.

In Cork, meanwhile, which hosted another regional heat on June 9th, the competition captured the public imagination. A local newspaper featured a prominent interview with Cork City Partnership's local enterprise officer Tony O'Regan.



(Left): Elaine

The SIC mentioned the wonder development year, supporting people suffer help them to setting up way, the live people are tr work is not c This comp pitches Tony

Carer wins in Mid-West

Kaye Faulkner, of Partners in Home-care, was announced the Mid-West Regional winner of the inaugural Local Development Company Enterprise Award.

Kaye worked in nursing in London for over 30 years before returning to Ireland in 2009 to care for both her parents.

She saw a gap in the market for good quality homecare. Her company began trading less than two years ago, providing a non-medical service to clients in their own homes. The business has generated four full-time jobs and four part-time jobs to date.

It is based in Ennis and supported by Clare Local Development Company.

Kaye believes her business could create up to 20 more jobs in the next year.



And th and La



Awards for unemployed people successful enterprises



McGrath, PAUL Partnership MC'd. (Right): Finalists in the Mid-West Final of the inaugural Local Development Company Enterprise Awards.

AP programme wasn't in the coverage, but as achieved under local got great publicity. Each it is provided to ambitious ering marginalisation to overcome the barriers small businesses. In this es of many thousands of transformed each year. This often publicly recognised. etition also, interestingly, against his colleagues in

other local development companies as they push for their favourites. Not that they've any say. The judges are independent.

The competition also helps highlight that supports (eg Back to Work Enterprise Allowance*) are available nationwide to unemployed people with a business idea.

As Elaine put it, "While the recovery is slow, opportunity is there."

Marie Price Bolger, chair of the Irish Local Development Network

noted that across the State over 6,000 businesses were started in 2015 with the support of Local Development Companies and the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance.

Jim Lynch from the Department of Social Protection spoke of the challenges and rewards that self employment can bring and congratulated the 12 Mid-West finalists.

These heats decide who will represent each region at the National Awards in

Dublin in September. Three from each region go through.

There will be full coverage from the finals in our Autumn edition.

* The BTEA provides a two-year exemption from income tax (up to a maximum of €40,000 per year) for people who have been unemployed for at least 12 months before starting their own business.

The scheme is administered by the Department of Social Protection.

SPOT THE WINNER!



The winner is... Kaye Faulkner, front row - fourth from left. The two runners-up were Kevin Lynch (to Kaye's right) of Airmid Natural Irish Skincare and Laura Fitzgerald of Future Heroes Childcare.

PIONEERING PLAY

'BRING ME BACK ALIVE!'

- Aftermath of suicide central to play touring the country

- Underground hit in communities over three years

BY RAY LUCEY

The play 'Bring Me Back Alive!' is a thought-provoking story set in a youth centre in modern-day Dublin. It is about suicide and its aftermath and it has a positive message, especially for young people.

The play highlights some of the warning signs to watch out for and it focuses on the need for far more mental health services in this country.

The devastating affects that suicide has on family and friends is brought to the fore, but it also shows there is hope, there are alternatives. It is written in as light-hearted a way as possible.

The playwright, Patricia McCann, left school after primary school aged 12. With writing as her passion since childhood she says, "I never took a writing lesson in my life other than school and I find these plays so easy to write."

Patricia says she gets a lot of inspiration from her job which she loves, working as a catering assistant in St. James's Hospital, and from talking to people, but she loves the writing more so.

"I am not an arty person as such, but I love to write about issues that affect communities."

"It also helps those left behind in the aftermath"

Other plays written by Patricia have covered HIV, AIDS and alcoholism and most recently the elderly - 'Gold Folks' sold out for four nights last December in St. Andrew's Community Hall, Rialto, Dublin 8.

'Bring Me Back Alive' to date has been performed hundreds of times within communities throughout the country in venues such as schools and churches. It was performed at this year's National Travellers' Conference and Patricia commends the cast who "need to be recognised for the work they've done on this."

The play has not had a single negative review in the three years we've been touring. It has not only helped people contemplating suicide, but also those left behind to deal with the aftermath.

Patricia got the idea to write 'Bring Me Back Alive' from a friend's son death caused by suicide: "The grief and devastation that I witnessed. And so many others that followed... I kind of stood back and thought I have to write something about this."

"I had already written a play about HIV



Follow Patricia and the cast on <https://www.facebook.com/BringMeBackAlivePlay/>

that went on in Vicar Street on World Aids Day in 2006. I also wrote a play on alcohol and the effects on families and friends. The local Drugs Task Force (covering the Canal Communities in Dublin 8 and 12) began to fund them.

"Then I wrote 'Bring me Back Alive!' which has gone from strength to strength in schools and communities, with churches now bringing it in."

At this stage, after three years on the go, it has been performed in many parts of Ireland and the more it goes on the more people want to see it."

The play has developed a huge following, with people returning in some cases up to six or seven times, so it obviously helped them in some way.

The power and strength of 'Bring Me Back Alive!' lies in its ability to touch

everybody. Patricia says it receives a standing ovation after every performance.

"It eliminates the blame for family members left behind after a loved one's death by suicide. Someone who saw it said, 'That play has shown me that no-one is to blame, that I don't have to live with the blame anymore,'" she recalled.

Such strong responses drive her, director Geraldine Pender and the cast on.

Currently, a number of communities are seeking to have it performed in their areas, with some applying for grants to support its performance.

Five new performances set for South Dublin

Performances of 'Bring Me Back Alive!' will be held during Health and Wellbeing Week in September. All shows are sponsored by South Dublin County Council:

- 12 September: Esker Educate Together School, Lucan at 7:30 p.m.
- 13 September: Church of The Presentation, Knockmitten, Clondalkin, Dublin 22 at 7:30 p.m.
- 14 September: Killinarden Community Centre, Tallaght, Dublin 24 at 7:30 p.m.
- 15 September at 11:10 a.m. in Firhouse Community School
- 16 September: Scouts Den, North Tallaght (Sponsored by Hope Tallaght).



OPINION

Rave reviews as people are “blown away”

- Read the testimonies



Cast members and playwright.

At last ‘Changing Ireland’ got to see the play everyone is talking about, but don’t take our word for it:

“Cork is in awe of this masterpiece”
- Joe Dalton, Feb 2016

“Unbelievable, we were literally blown away. This production should be televised.”
- Tricia Calnan, Feb 2016

“100% real and completely showed the truth behind suicide. Everyone should really go and see it.”
- Deirdre O’Connell, Circle of Hope, Feb ‘16

“What a performance ... I was totally blown away emotionally but it was such a good release, I’ve no doubt it will conquer the country xxx”
- Valerie Haynes, Feb 2016

“Heart warming, powerful, funny, sad, genuine, insightful, soulful, empowering, thought-provoking, uplifting, professional, moving, intelligent and hopeful. It is a wonderfully put together well-acted piece of theatre that you will be the better for seeing.”
- Stephen Murphy, Feb 2016

Back in November, 2013, **students and staff from Trinity Comprehensive Secondary School Ballymun** attended the play. The 5th years were riveted. Here’s what some of them said afterwards:

- “It would change anyone’s mind who might be thinking of committing suicide.”
- “It gave out a good message to those who might be thinking about committing suicide.”
- “I cried... brilliant... effective.”
- “The mother broke my heart...it just shows what some people go through as a result of family suicide”.

‘IF ANYONE HAS AN OUNCE OF SENSE, GET THIS PLAY INTO SCHOOLS’

- Patricia McCann, playwright



Patricia McCann is the Ken Loach of Irish theatre production today.

“If anyone has an ounce of sense in this government they should get the Arts Council, the HSE and Department of Education together to get this play into schools. It wouldn’t take a genius to work that one out,” says a somewhat frustrated and perplexed Patricia McCann.

The playwright is “bewildered” at the lack of support from one or more government departments regarding funding.

“There should be support for staging this nationally because it’s helping people.”

Since its success became apparent, she has tried her best:

“I have written, I have sent emails to

different departments and I’ve tried to get funding for this play everywhere I could think of. We have to pay the bills and nothing has stopped us so far, it’s performed on a wing and a prayer... And nothing will stop us performing it.”

Those involved feel they could help in confronting the suicide epidemic nationally if given a chance.

“Because we’ve had such a powerful reaction, we know this play has been spoken about at national level by at least one of the HSE’s Suicide Prevention Officers.” (See below).

- In conversation with RAY LUCEY.

Here’s the impact the play has

By Martin Ryan, HSE Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention

I received notice of a play that is working its way around the country about Suicide and its impact on a group of young people and the impact on their family and mother in particular.

I had no idea what to expect as this subject can be quite difficult to play on stage. However within ten minutes I was blown away by the level of courage, skill, talent and most of all honesty shared on the stage by the young cast.

The play explored the aftermath of a suicide by a friend and the longing to have him back and the huge impact that plays out within the family, friends and community as a whole.

The play had the right mix of humour and dramatic scenes with very clear appropriate dialogue. I was gripped from the opening scene to the closing piece. This play can play a huge part in opening conversations within communities about the impact of suicide and the pain that it carries for people left behind.

The cast brought home to me the importance of the work we do every day. I recommend this play to any community around the country.

Martin Ryan is based in St. Stephens Hospital Campus, Sarsfield Court, Glanmire, Cork.

Experts consider best social inclusion measures

A seminar and workshops held in Dublin in May looked at how best to target social inclusion measures under the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme. It was attended by experts in the field.



Helen Lowry of the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland said, "Out-reach work, anti-discrimination measures, interagency approaches were all mentioned in terms of good engagement strategies."

Denis Leamy, CEO of Pobal, opened the day while Clodagh McDonnell, Principal Officer with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) fielded a range of questions.

Ms McDonnell reminded people that, "The Local and Community Development Committees in your area is the key body for ensuring cooperation/collaboration happens."

Rachel Doyle of Community Work Ireland (formerly the Community Workers' Co-op) spoke of plans to hold nationwide workshops shortly to discuss standards in community work.

There was a good vibe and energy in the room, according to those attending and there will be further engagement with "stakeholders groups" about the Programme's effectiveness in targeting in the near future.

Stakeholders are also to be

consulted shortly as part of a value-for-money evaluation by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Ucasadh in Waterford drove home the point that it costs €65,000 per annum to jail someone, whereas they can offer rehabilitation to people for €1,800 per annum. (The project featured in our magazine in 2013).

The INOU pointed out that among people aged 15 and over with a disability, only 21% were at work. "That's why SICAP targeting matters," the INOU said. They described the seminar and workshops as "valuable".

The page opposite gives an example of the social exclusion data being presented by participant groups. Workshops followed to discuss the best ways to respond.

The event was organised by the DECLG and Pobal and a dozen presentations - each one clearly presenting its case - are now publicly available on Pobal's website. Bitly link: <http://bit.ly/29b2Qyq>

- A. Meagher

National Social Enterprise report launched at UL

A new report exploring the Social Enterprise Sector in Ireland was launched by Dr Philip O'Regan, head of Kemmy Business School (KBS) in UL, in June.

Titled 'Creating an Enabling, Supportive Environment for the Social Enterprise Sector in Ireland', the report was written by Dr. Briga Hynes of the KBS on behalf of the Irish Local Development Network. It can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/294Bale>



Pictured at the launch of the ILDN report on social enterprise at Kemmy Business School (KBS): Denis Leamy, Pobal CEO, Brian Carty, ILDN director, Dr. Briga Hynes, KBS, Marie Price Bolger, ILDN chair, Elaine McGrath, PAUL Partnership, Padraig Casey, Ballyhoura CEO, Dr. Philip O'Regan, KBS Dean.

Independent report on development landscape

A thorough and critical report about local and community development, based on a conference held in UCC last October, has just been published.

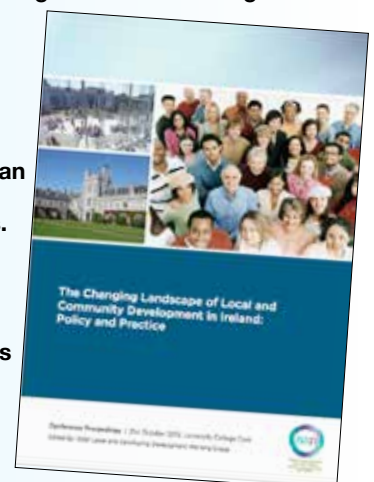
The report is titled 'The Changing Landscape of Local and Community Development in Ireland: Policy and Practice'.

It describes research carried out by UCC academics and includes voices from the Community and Voluntary Sector on "the impact of both austerity cuts and changes to central and local government funding on the sector."

It examines the impact of these changes on the independence of the sector, while also looking at collaboration and co-operation in the sector in an atmosphere of increased competition for resources.

Other themes covered: community development as a method of work, and notions of participative democracy and grassroots engagement.

Get the report here: <http://bit.ly/296Twuc>



SOCIAL INCLUSION

Survey of 1,008 undocumented migrants reveals what life is like here for 20,000

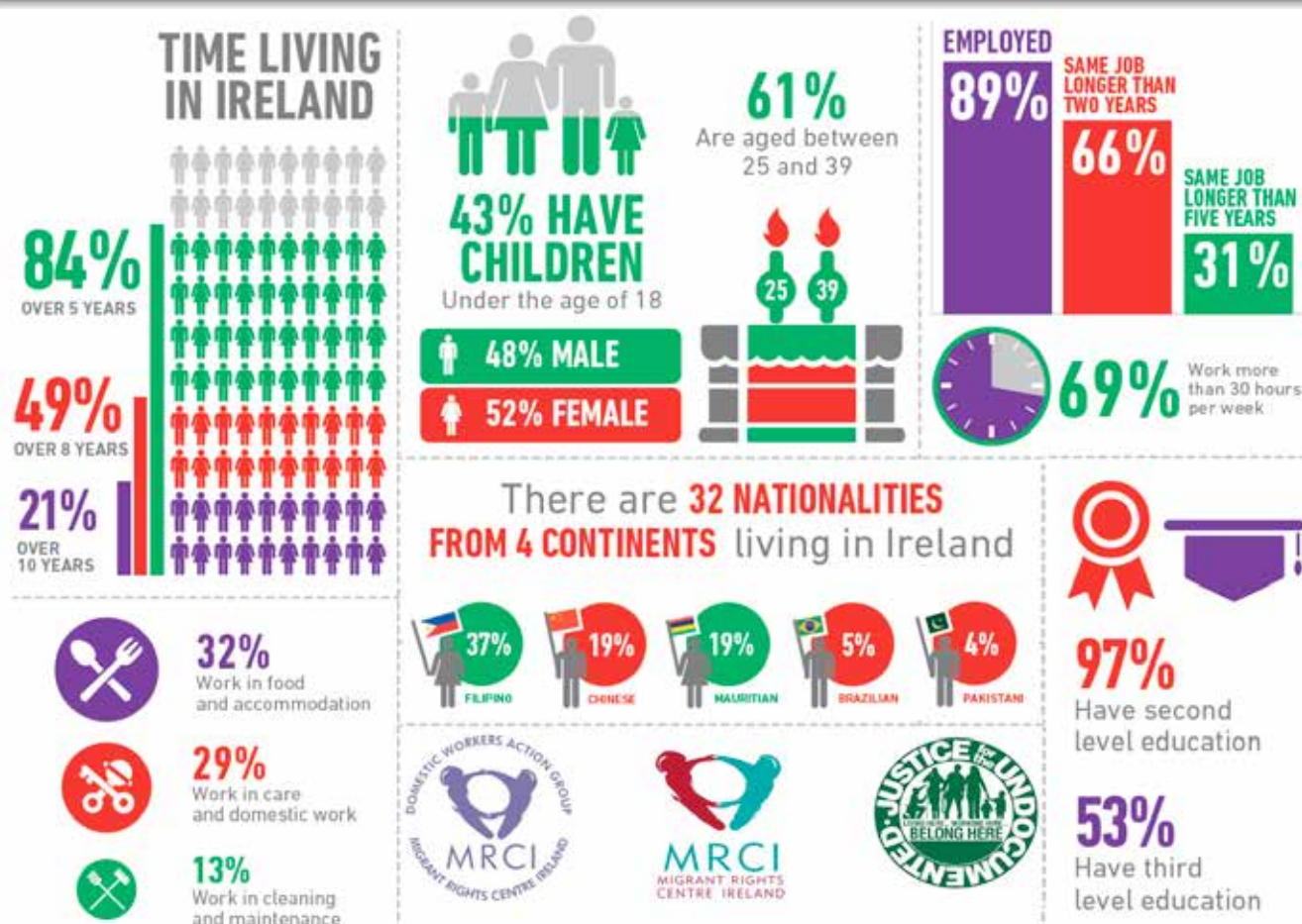


Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

There are now between 20,000 and 26,000 undocumented migrants living in Ireland, including around 2,000 children and young people.

According to Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (www.mrci.ie) a survey of over 1,000 undocumented people here revealed that 84% of them had lived here for over five years and 21% for more than ten years.

The findings were presented at a seminar organised by Pobal and the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in May. Among other things, it looked at the best strategies for engaging with new communities.



UNDER THE RADAR



A WIN FOR BRAVE CLARE LC

Their work recognised by judges as

INTERVIEW BY ALLEN MEAGHER

ALLEN MEAGHER: For new people coming into the Community Sector, can you tell us Dóirín what is 'Community-Led Local Development' and why is it important?

DOIRÍN GRAHAM: It's what we used to call bottom-up decision-making, that process where it's people on the ground in local areas looking at what they need and making the decisions.

It's led by communities, rather than by the State at a national level looking at a local picture and saying this is what is needed. It's driven by what the communities feel that they need and they get to make the decisions and, in many cases, manage the resources to solve the problems that they see in their own communities.

Community-Led Local Development (CCLD) has a very good future at European level. Largely because of the success of the LEADER programme across Europe over the past 23 or so years – including LEADER in Ireland. The European Commission have adopted CCLD as a methodology or an approach for delivering European supports and for addressing problems through European programmes at local level.

It is going to be mainstreamed across more and more European programmes and funds.

AM: That's great that Brussels is going for the Community-led model. So, why have we a situation where in most countries local authorities implement LEADER. That's the direction we in Ireland are now going too, moving away from local community-based organisations such as yourselves delivering the programme?

D G :
That's one
of the
reasons
why

LEADER in Ireland has been particularly successful. If you compare it to other countries in Europe, it's successful because it has been implemented by community-led models – organisations with statutory and local authority representation, but with very strong community group and voluntary involvement. That is the secret of why LEADER has been very successful in Ireland – and Europe. If you talk to people at European level and in the Commission, they say Ireland is a very good example of how LEADER can work. Yes, there have been some problems, but by and large it's a very successful programme in Europe.

And other countries would have adopted or tried to adopt the model we have here in Ireland. Finland for example went for a more non-governmental model for their LEADER groups and they have been particularly successful as well.

AM: Phil Hogan, former minister, brought in the 'alignment' policy, whereby new LCDs (see side panel) were set up in every county. That model wasn't attractive to you – you obviously competed with them for the bid and were successful. What's your issue with

BACKGROUND TO BIDDING FOR LEADER



Dóirín Graham's company took on a challenge and won. The prize - community-led control over an €8.9million pot of EU/Irish funding for the next five years under LEADER. On May 9th, they learned of their success.

In impressing the judges, Clare Local Development Company secured their position in rural development in the county. Losing out in the competition was the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in Co. Clare. In most counties, such committees could confidently expect to oversee the delivery of the next LEADER programme.

LCDCs were set up under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and it is Government policy that they should operate as the Local Action Group (LAG), an EU term for those given responsibility for delivery of the programme.

However, as it was an open bidding process, a total of 45 expressions of interest for the country's 28 areas were received. In 19 areas there was only one expression of interest, and typically in those cases, the LCDC acts as the LAG.

In at least four counties, long-established local development companies competed with the new committees for the LEADER funding.

Two got through: Clare and Kilkenny. Dóirín saw their wins as "a milestone" in regard to the promotion of Community-Led Local Development.

The LEADER programme has been active in Clare since 1992 through a company called Rural Resource Development, which evolved into what we know today as Clare Local Development Company. Dóirín has been there since the beginning.

Dóirín
Graham



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CO.

best suited to delivering LEADER

that approach? What does your company, staff and board not like about LCDCs?

DG: They're essentially mirror images of what local development companies are. If you look at the structure, they're pretty much the same structure...

AM: So why did Phil Hogan bring them in then?

DG: Because they are committees of the local authority. They are independent in their decision-making function, but nevertheless they are a local authority committee.

AM: Are they not then more accountable to the people?

DG: There's huge accountability with the existing local development companies

I don't think there was ever any issue with accountability.

We have three councillors on our board. We got great support from the councillors in the council chamber on

two occasions when we spoke to them

about the future of LEADER. We

got a very strong endorsement of our

accountability... they said CLDC

are doing a great job in

delivering LEADER

and we don't want that to change in Clare. That wasn't the universal opinion, but it was the

opinion of the majority. So, if you're looking for endorsement and accountability, councillors and Clare County Council certainly felt they were getting that from CLDC.

AM: For students of Community Development, do you see this as an important victory?

DG: It's a milestone. We never wanted to be in a position where we needed to compete, but we did and thankfully we were successful.

For the future of CCLD, there needs to be a strong, independent sector. Local authorities have a very important role (and we've always had a very good relationship with the local authority). However, their role is not the same as a community-led organisation. They are a state body and they have their functions and their skills and strengths.

And the two together can do a lot and we've shown that in the past in Clare, and there's a lot of things we've done together in the past, but we are different.

What communities in Clare want and they've told us this again and again – they want the non-governmental organisation; they want a community-led organisation that they feel is theirs and that belongs to the communities of the county and they want that organisation to deliver LEADER.

The community-led way is better. LEADER is a community-led programme and therefore it should be delivered and managed and run by a community-led organisation.

AM: In five years time, would you see more community-based companies competing with LCDCs for LEADER?

DG: I think so. We always said we had no problem with competition, so long as it was a fair competition, which it was. It is good for people to say 'Hang on, maybe we can do this ourselves. Maybe we could do a better job than whoever the incumbent is.'

I don't think that competition should be stifled or that that people's ambitions to do it better or strike out on their own should be stifled.

The reason it's important that we retain independent LEADER groups is that, for the future, we need to have Community-led development which is driven by community and voluntary people. And I don't think that will happen if there is a local authority led model of community-led development. I think you would lose the participation and the involvement and expertise of the C&V Sector and that's what's made the difference over all the years.

AM: You've a Bolshie attitude, you stuck your neck out. Do you think there should be

more Bolshie leaders in the Community and Voluntary Sector?

DG: You have to believe. Sometimes it's hard to hold the faith when (we

were hearing) 'Look! This is inevitable', 'This is going to happen', 'You're swimming against the tide' and 'You can't change this'.

So, you have to really believe in yourself and believe you can be better and compete and win. It's about self-belief and also from having experience and confidence from doing it (already). Also knowing that there's someone else out there that is going to oversee and guarantee a fair process and that was the European Commission.

AM: Twice a majority of the elected councillors in Co. Clare voted in support of CLDC.

DG: Yes, they voted to retain the existing model.

AM: Happy days in Clare?

DG: Whatever disappointment from the local authority side and I'm sure there is disappointment, we had a lot to lose that the local authority didn't, because people's jobs and futures depended on us getting LEADER. But there's definitely a willingness for us to get on and work well together in the future. Communities won't thank us if we don't work well together in the future, so that's what we'll do.

To watch Dóirín's interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=En_JbzDvLNY

IN OUR AUTUMN EDITION: Best practice as developed by Local Community Development Committees responsible for the SICAP programme and now LEADER.

LIKEWISE IN KILKENNY



Declan Rice, CEO, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership.

Later in the same week that CLDC received the green light for LEADER, Kilkenny LEADER Partnership (KLP) learned that they also had been successful in applying to become a Local Action Group.

They now have responsibility for €7.7 million in spending over six years (down 42% on the previous allocation under LEADER).

KLP traces its origins back to its securing of the LEADER programme for the county in 1991 and the Social Inclusion programme in 1995.

Responding to Dóirín's interview (on our Youtube Channel) they stated: "Well done Dóirín on providing an excellent account of the challenges to community-led local development."

KLP congratulated CLDC on their win and commended it for having the "courage" to compete.

"Local is not enough- it must be community-led to be LEADER," the statement concluded.

We understand that community-led consumption of cake received as great a boost in Kilkenny as it did in Clare when the news came through.



The local media believed that Kilkenny LEADER Partnership had a battle on their hands.

21-YEAR-OLDS CAN NOW APPLY FOR COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PLACES

Change only applies to childcare, healthcare & social care positions



In March, there were 1,442 children in Community Employment Childcare facilities.

Since February, 21 year olds can apply for Community Employment (CE) Scheme positions in Childcare, Healthcare and Social Care. This opens up opportunities to thousands of people who are unemployed. It also makes it easier for community childcare facilities, for instance, to maintain staffing levels.

The changes are “designed to meet the needs of a broader range of CE applicants, including lone parents and those on transition payments,” the Department of Social Protection said in a statement.

The 19.5 hours-per-week posts are attractive because they offer work and training in a community childcare setting often close to home. They can last for up to three years during which time participants are encouraged to complete a QQI Major Award at Level 5 (e.g. in childcare).

On site, the CE participants learn about working with children, communicating with parents, working as part of a team and covering admin. They receive €22.50 on top of whatever they were receiving in social welfare

payments.

Until now, you had to be 25 years of age or older to apply. Other criteria remain unchanged – generally, you must be on the live register for at least one year.

“The duration of participation will be 1 year to 2 years to facilitate the achievement of a Major Award with an optional 3rd year to assist weaker participants to achieve the required standard of qualification needed to become job ready,” the Department said in a statement. “The option of a third year will require the approval of the DSP Officer.”

ISLANDERS, TRAVELLERS

Certain categories of people have always been allowed apply without meeting the general criteria around age or length of time unemployed. For example, offshore islanders, Travellers, refugees and ex-offenders can apply from 18 years of age.

CE Drugs Rehabilitation Places (DRP's) are also available to persons aged 18 years or over who are in recovery and referred for a rehabilitation place on CE.

Overall, the CE Programme is designed to help people who are long-term unemployed or experiencing disadvantage to find work by offering them part-time and temporary placements/training opportunities in jobs based within local communities.

The scheme is funded nationally by the Department of Social Protection.

At local level it is sponsored by the many groups wishing to benefit the community, namely voluntary organisations and public bodies involved in not-for-profit activities.

*Same as any
village in Ireland -
open to visitors!*



The Ecovillage in Cloughjordan is the most resilient if not the most daring community in Ireland.

As with any village in Ireland, anyone can visit the Ecovillage in Cloughjordan.

However, it's not a place you drive through - that wouldn't make much sense in a community forging new ways for society to respond to climate-change.

Guided tours are held every weekend, starting from the Sheelagh na Gig bookshop on the Main Street of Cloughjordan at 3pm every Saturday and Sunday.

You can also book in for a longer visit and schedules can be devised according to visitors' specific interests.

5-HOUR VISIT

This is an active learning experience, opening with a presentation on the Ecovillage, followed by a guided tour in small groups and a facilitated discussion. Typically 11am to 4pm. No charge, donations accepted.

2-DAYS

This is a community-based learning experience focused on a sustainability topic of interest to the visitors. It often includes some practical work and typically runs for two or more days.

ACCOMMODATION

The 36-bed 'Djangos Hostel' gets five stars on Tripadvisor and costs from €20 per night. The hostel was part-funded under the Rural Development Programme and opened in 2011. More accommodation available locally.

For more info, options and bookings:

E: edvisits@thevillage.ie

W: thevillage.ie

Field study trips are an essential part of the Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Co-operative Organisation, Food Marketing and Rural Development at UCC.

The course was developed by the Centre for Co-operative Studies in conjunction with the Department of Food Business and Development.

W: www.ucc.ie/en/ccs/postgrad/



CLIMATE CHANGE & HOUSING

STUDYING COMMUNITIES

WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN'T WORK

- Cloughjordan's Ecovillagers face problems & challenges like any community

Measures that communities can take to become more resilient were highlighted to UCC students who visited the Ecovillage in Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary, recently.

Cloughjordan now has 55 new modern, energy-efficient houses, an enterprise centre, a hostel and a bakery, all powered by 100% renewable energy systems.

The students received an honest account of how the project is developing - not everything works out as planned as community workers anywhere will tell you.

The students were particularly taken by three projects. All are studying for a Postgraduate Diploma in Co-operative Organisation, Food Marketing and Rural Development.

They drew attention to:

1. Car-sharing clubs where a group collectively owns one or more cars and members rent them as needed. The drivers use a smartphone app to book times and they pay in proportion to use.

2. 'Passivhaus' insulation standards which are so strong that no heating is needed.

3. Community-owned village heating systems.

Student Cormac Manning noticed that Cloughjordaners are sometimes "derided as living in the clouds" but with climate change wreaking havoc, they are in his opinion among the most sensible people in Ireland.

"The lack of access to transport in rural areas and the cost of car ownership can be excessive," said Cormac. "But Cloughjordan develops practical solutions to real problems."

"Villages are reeling from the closure of local shops and post offices. We can take inspiration from the Cloughjordan residents who are setting up their own co-operative shop and cafe, run by the community for the community.

Cormac said, "There are many other ways the co-operative model can bring benefits to communities" and he sees Cloughjordan as "a shining example for other rural



Children in Cloughjordan in 2011 when the population began to grow. PICS: A. MEAGHER.

communities".

The village's 500 m2 display of solar water heating panels was installed in 2011, they are community-owned and look fantastic.

But even the Ecovillagers are not without their problems. For example, the solar panels have yet to be switched on - the company that installed them went to the wall before the job was finished. Employment opportunities are limited in Tipperary as elsewhere. There are tensions as in any community. Also, residents have differing levels of eco-belief and not everyone pulls the same weight.

But the community is strong on cohesion, food, technology and carbon-usage. They have an ecological footprint that equates to one-planet usage. Most of us in Ireland live as if there were three planets providing us with resources.

There are still 50 or so house plots available - snap one up if you can!

As one resident told student Leidy Osorio Villamil, "For me, the idea of being able to

have a house that is comfortable, that is cheap to heat, has good quality food, in a community of people who are like-minded, was fascinating."

Student Stefanie De Buck was impressed that Cloughjordan residents pay a flat fee of €65 per month for all they need in vegetables and fruit grown by local farmers.

Fellow student Luke Casey saw spin-offs from the new community's growth for the older village of Cloughjordan. For example, there is now more money in circulation, schoolteacher numbers have been retained and more people are using the train.

The Ecovillage is an ongoing 67-acre community project in development for 15 years now. It has become, as Leidy put it, "an alternative way... a modern resilient community based on democratic decision-making, responsible production and consumption, and respect for nature and future generations."



The Ecovillage is a community-owned initiative. It wasn't funded by Europe or as a pilot by the Government, although investment would be welcomed by the community. To the surprise of many, after the crash it was for a time the biggest building site in Ireland.

PEOPLE & PROJECTS



The Irish Traveller Movement reported that it felt "incredible pride and energy" among the many thousands who took part in the Dublin Pride Parade on June 25th. W: itmtrav.ie



Limerick's Pig'n'Porter Tag Rugby Festival this year celebrates its 15th anniversary - pigs may not fly, but the years do! @Limerick_ie

Over 500 children from Ennis Primary schools took part in National Cycle to School day. Róisín Ní Gháirbhith who works as a Green Schools Travel Education Officer with An Taisce in Co. Clare said it was the highlight of her year so far.



Michael Keegan, Treasurer, takes everyone through the annual accounts at the AGM of the Carmichael Centre For Voluntary Groups, in Dublin.



At the launch of the 'TechSpace' site in Castleisland, on June 23rd, supported by North, East & West Kerry Development, were: Kate O'Neil, Yvonne Lane, Sarah Lane, Ciara Kepp, Zoe Smith, Joel Smith, Ava Fitzmaurice, Hollyanne Smith, Shay Duffy, Bronagh O'Neill, Abina McSweeney, Maura O'Leary, Adam Tees and Don Rogers.

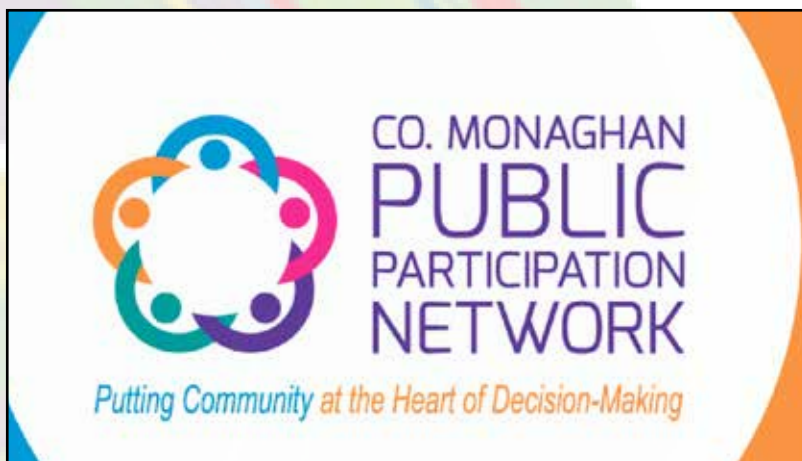
TechSpace is a way of setting tech-savvy teenagers loose on a path of creativity and imagination. Still wondering... read this report in the 'Maine Valley Post': <http://bit.ly/29dfgaG>



Three supporters at Knockanrawley Resource Centre's Organic Open Day on June 26th. The centre is busy preparing for September when it celebrates 25 years in operation.



Since CoderDojo was founded in 2011, what was once an after-school computer club has grown into a global movement with over 1000 Dojos in 63 countries. The Coolest Projects event, now in its fifth year, was a chance to showcase the work of Dojos from Ireland and abroad. According to the organisers, the event attracted over 10,000 children, parents and the odd Tyrannosaurus Rex. @DublinGlobe



We rather like this logo. If you think your Public Participation Network has a better one, let us know!



Ian McDonagh, the overall winner at the inaugural Galway Traveller Pride awards, is pictured receiving his award from Cindy Joyce.

Ian's citation reads:

"This amazing young man has achieved so much in a very short time. Proud of his Traveller identity, he was a winner in the Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition 2016, he is a strong community activist, with an interest in making his community a safer place to live. He is interested in law and politics and the plight of refugees. He is a credit to himself, his family and his community."

W: <http://gtmtrav.ie> Also on Facebook.



At the launch of Galway Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan on June 28th. @HealthyGalway

TEN THINGS WOMEN IN IRELAND IN 1955 COULD NOT DO

~~UNEMPLOYED~~



Keep their jobs in the civil service once married

Women were not allowed to keep their jobs in the public service or in a bank or hotel once they married.

How it changed: The marriage bar in the public service was removed in July 1973, on foot of the report of the first Commission on the Status of Women. In 1977, the Employment Equality Act prohibited discrimination on the grounds of gender or marital status in almost all areas of employment.

Get the same pay for jobs as men

In March 1970, the average hourly pay for women was five shillings, while that for men was over nine. In areas covered by a statutory minimum wage, the female rate was two-thirds that of men.

How it changed: Legislation on equal pay was introduced in 1974 and employment equality legislation followed in 1977, both as a result of European directives.



Drink in pubs

Many bars refused to allow women to enter a pub. Those who allowed women to enter generally did not serve females pints of beer.

How it changed: In 2002, the Equal Status Act banned gender discrimination in the provision of goods and services. It defined discrimination as "less favourable treatment". Service can be refused only if there is a reasonable risk of disorderly or criminal conduct.

Refuse to have sex with their husband

A husband had the right to have sex with his wife and consent was not an issue in the eyes of the law.

How it changed: It was not until 1990 that marital rape was defined as a crime.

Choose their official place of residence

Once married, a woman was deemed to have the same "domicile" as her husband.

How it changed: Acting on a report from the Law Reform Commission, the then Junior Minister for Women's Affairs Nuala Fennell introduced the Domicile and Recognition of Foreign Divorces Bill in 1985. It granted married women the right to an independent domicile.

Own their home outright

According to Irish law, women had no right to share the family home and her husband could sell their property without her consent.

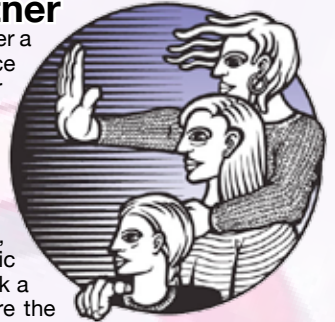
How it changed: Under the Family Home Protection Act of 1976, neither spouse can sell the family home without the written consent of the other.



Get a barring order against a violent partner

A woman who was hospitalised after a beating by her husband faced a choice of either returning home to her abuser or becoming homeless. Abusive spouses could not be ordered to stay away from the family home.

How it changed: Women's Aid campaigned for changes in the law, and in 1976 the Family Law Act, Ireland's first legislation on domestic violence, enabled one spouse to seek a barring order against the other where the welfare or safety of a spouse or children was at risk.



Collect their Children's Allowance

In 1944, the legislation that introduced the payment of child benefits to parents specified it could only be paid to the father.

How it changed: Responding to the report of the Commission on the Status of Women, the 1974 Social Welfare Act entitled mothers to collect the allowance.

Sit on a jury

As only home owners could sit on a jury and women couldn't own their own home outright they couldn't sit on a jury.

How it changed: Mairín de Burca and Mary Anderson challenged the Act and won their case in the Supreme Court in 1976. The old Act was repealed and citizens over 18 on the electoral register are eligible for juries.



Buy contraceptives

According to the 1935 Criminal Law Amendment Act, the import, sale and distribution of contraceptives was illegal. As a result the majority of women had no access to contraceptives.

How it changed: In 1979, an Act was passed to allow doctors to prescribe contraceptives to married couples only. A 1985 Act allowed contraceptives to be sold to anyone over 18 but only in chemists. In 1991 the sale of contraceptives was liberalised.



The Irish Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s.

Inset: Nell McCafferty.

The information provided here comes from Monaghan County Council's booklet 'A Tale of Two Counties'. It compares past to present. We had a great response to our Spring 2016 report about this resource booklet.

More information from Monaghan County Council:

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