

Partnership

# IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE!



Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network:  
Local organisations working  
together to focus on Anti-Poverty  
Strategy for Ballymun.



**ballymun**  
**partnership**

## Also Inside

Key themes for  
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“ BALLYMUN PARTNERSHIP IS HEADED UP BY THE SYNERGY OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL AUTHORITY AND ACADEMIA... ”



From left to right Declan Dunne, (CEO) Ballymun Partnership, Damien Drumm, (Deputy Chair) Regional Manager for Dublin City Council, and Chris O'Malley, (Chair) Strategic Planning Executive for Dublin City University.

## Ballymun Partnership Staff

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“ ...AND THE DYNAMIC ARRANGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTED TO UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF BALLYMUN ”

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Julia Carmichael	Local Councillor	City Council
Ray Corcoran	Local Councillor	City Council



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### DISCLAIMER

Articles published in this magazine reflect the views of the individual contributors. Ballymun Partnership is privileged and proud to be able to provide a space for these views to be read and heard by a range of audiences. We hope that it will encourage a greater spread of knowledge and current thinking on the key issues impacting on the work, and particularly the policies behind the work, in Ballymun going into 2005.



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*Partnership: It's About People* is an initiative of Ballymun Partnership. We wanted to bring forward the voice of the people involved in key work affecting Ballymun going into 2005. For the most part, Annual Reports tend to tell of the things that the organisation is doing, and seldom do we read about the people, the individuals who tirelessly sit at our meetings and through their commitment and enthusiasm, whether it be with the Partnership or through their own organisations, networks and departments bring synergy to the work that needs to be done at the local level.

So this publication is an attempt to combine these two things; give a flavour of the very practical events that the Partnership has been involved in over the last year, but primarily, bring forward just some of these people. To provide them with an opportunity to offer their own views and to highlight what's happening on important themes for Ballymun. True partnership, after all, is about people's own contribution, their positive outlook and the good will they bring to working together for the common good.

We hope that in this, the reader can experience a bit of what it's like to be in Ballymun at the moment, and in that, recognise the good work that is being done, and the challenges and the potential for everyone involved.

Special thanks to the people featured in this publication. In alphabetical order by first name, these are:

Bernie Roe Co-ordinator of Ballymun RAPID AIT and Chairperson of Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network Catriona Lawrence Ballymun Parents Network Chris O'Malley Strategic Planning Executive, DCU and Chairperson of Ballymun Partnership Deiric O'Brion CEO North Dublin Coalition Donnacadh Hurley Manager, Ballymun Regional Youth Resource and Partner at the Board of Ballymun Partnership Ian Murphy Assistant Director of Regional Services, Department of Education and Science Iggy Fields FAS Community Services Manager for the North Dublin City and County Julia Carmichael Local Councillor, Fianna Fail, and Partner at the Board of Ballymun Partnership Mick Creedon Manager, Ballymun Job Centre and Partner at the Board of Ballymun Partnership Minister Eamon O'Cuiv Community, Rural & Gaelteacht Affairs Minister Noel Ahern TD and Minister of State with special responsibility for Urban Renewal and Social Inclusion Noirin Coughlan Childcare Co-ordinator, Ballymun Partnership Noirin Hayes Childhood Development Expert and lecturer at DIT, Dublin Pauline Logan North Dublin Chamber of Commerce and North Dublin Coalition, and Partner at the Board of Ballymun Partnership Ray Corcoran Local Councillor, Sinn Fein, and Partner at the Board of Ballymun Partnership Tom Hickey Principal of St. Joseph's Senior School, and chairperson of the School Principals Forum Ballymun Hugh Greaves Co-ordinator of the Ballymun Local Drugs Task Force and Partner on the Board of Ballymun Partnership Emma Freeman Manager Community Action Programme (CDP) Ballymun Camilla Fitzsimons Manager Community & Family Training Agency (CDP) Ballymun Damien Smith Co-ordinator St. Margarets Travellers Community Group (CDP) Ballymun John Murphy Co-ordinator The Mens Centre (CDP) Ballymun Declan Dunne CEO Ballymun Partnership Thanks also to the Administration Staff of Ballymun Partnership, Romaine, Sam and Orla in assisting gathering the material for use in this publication.

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**B**allymun Partnership's primary role is to broker good relationships between statutory agencies and the community. FAS is just one of the many important agents delivering services into Ballymun, particularly through its Community Services Unit for the North Dublin City & County Area.



**Relationship between FAS and Ballymun Partnership is open and frank**

"I believe in the **strong dynamic** of using **community projects** as the vehicle for driving the development of **individuals**."

**Iggy Fields**, Community Services Manager, has been involved in training and employment services since 1977. Based in the **FAS** Community Services Unit since 2002, Iggy is responsible for the variety of Community Labour Market Initiatives. Iggy talks about the relationship between FAS and **Ballymun Partnership** and about the relationship between FAS and Community Projects in Ballymun.

#### **FAS in Ballymun**

FAS has been delivering its full range of services to the Ballymun area since its inception in 1988, through its Services to Business, Training Centres, Employment Services and Community Services Divisions. The FAS Community Services Unit currently provides funding for over 700 places to Ballymun - out of a total of 2400 for the FAS Dublin Fingal Area - through its three main Programmes. This represents approximately 28% of the Region's activity for Community Services, and does not include the additional provision for Community Training Centres, Local Training Initiatives and Jobs Clubs in the area.

"This broad allocation of places to Ballymun has remained reasonably consistent over the last few years", says Iggy, "with relatively few reductions in numbers." There has been an actual increase in the allocation through the three main programmes to the Ballymun area this year of 14%.

In terms of budget allocations to Ballymun, Iggy says that there is no specific percentage of the FAS Community Service budget dedicated to a geographic area. He explains however, that factors are taken into account when allocating resources. These factors, he says "relate, firstly, to the availability of eligible clients, and secondly, to the capacity of Community Projects to meet the needs

of the clients, while at the same time provide valuable community services to meet the local needs". When determining these factors, FAS is also required to take account of priorities as determined by Government Policy. Current policies place priority on Drugs Task Force Projects, Projects in Rapid Areas, Projects dealing with Childcare and the needs of the Disabled and Elderly Incapacitated.

#### **Relationship with Ballymun Partnership is a valued one**

For Iggy, a strong dynamic emerges when using Community projects as the vehicle for driving the development of individuals. He explains that the primary objective of FAS programmes is the

development of unemployed people to a stage where they are ready for work. Worthwhile Community Projects are used as the vehicles to provide the development opportunity for these people. "In doing this", says Iggy, "a healthy tension exists between the FAS objective to develop the individual and the Community Project's objective to provide a service to the community." The very best projects he adds, "are those where there is mutual recognition of the importance of each others' roles". This appreciation of roles is evident in Ballymun by the quality of service provided by Community Projects and the good numbers of individuals progressing from them into the open labour market.

Iggy states that FAS monitors its programmes in Ballymun to ensure that the numbers of people entering the open labour market are driven to the optimum. The participants are the ultimate beneficiaries for FAS. "This", say Iggy, "is done in a collaborative manner in Ballymun, where the working relationship between FAS Community Services and the Ballymun Partnership is open, frank and working extremely well in consequence". Iggy states that FAS's relationship with the Ballymun Partnership is a valued one and facilitates FAS in meeting its obligations, whilst at the same time, responds to the service priorities identified by local Community Projects. "This", adds Iggy, "would be considered a good example of leading the way for other communities, and, is characterised by a clear and sympathetic understanding of the objectives, procedures and constraints of each member of the partnership".



**THE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PLACES TO BALLYMUN HAS REMAINED CONSISTENT OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. THERE HAS BEEN AN ACTUAL INCREASE OF 14% THIS YEAR.**



### Community Projects in Ballymun Effective

This positive relationship is extremely helpful in dealing with individual Community Projects, where the working relationships are also generally positive and effective in Ballymun. Iggy adds that there is a clear focus on participant development and a clear understanding of the Community Project's primary role as a Labour Market instrument with the participants. The primary focus for FAS Community Service in its dealings with Community Projects continues to be the preparation and progression of participants to employment, self employment, training or return to education. "The relationship with Community Projects, in most cases", says Iggy, "has been a good relationship, even in situations where unwelcome action was required as a reaction to external factors".

### Ongoing Challenges to Support the Individual

There are still ongoing challenges for all involved in progressing the individual onto the open labour market. "These challenges", says Iggy, "are represented by low levels of participation in Second and Third Level Education by the individuals themselves." Employers generally tend to look for staff who can demonstrate abilities that can be gained by

completing education standards. But it's not that simple. As Iggy explains: "There are a variety of other issues - varying from person to person - that affect people's ability to engage with the labour market. For some I believe it is self confidence, for others mobility, for others literacy, for others low skills - all of which contribute to the distancing and marginalisation of the individual."

### FAS Open to Suggestions on Regeneration Opportunities

Iggy states that the Regeneration is now providing opportunities for residents and will provide opportunities for anyone willing and prepared to accept these opportunities. "FAS", he adds, "will respond to suggestions from Community Groups and Employers on ways to respond to the employment creation objectives, and sees the local knowledge and area commitment of Ballymun Partnership as

being central to the FAS Community Services contribution."

However, the individual is the key component. Iggy states firmly that it is of questionable value if potential participants - at whom FAS Community Services Programmes are primarily aimed - cannot seriously engage with these opportunities, to see them as the first step on the ladder to further opportunity. "We must jointly work to match the needs and aspirations of the individual to the opportunities provided by FAS Community Programmes. It must continue to be a key component of these programmes that participants are given the tools to build confidence and to take a long term view of their own future as a resident and worker in the Ballymun area."

Iggy concludes, "FAS, working with the Ballymun Area Partnership, will continue to strive to make sure that all of our programmes have sufficient flexibility and understanding of the needs of individuals, so that we are able to respond in a way that continues to engage the individual and builds on their potential for employment and progression."



Iggy (right) with Tim Tynan (left). Tim represents the interests of FAS on the Board of Ballymun Partnership.

# Whose Voice?



*The relationship with elected representatives, as well as state agencies, is equally if not more important in terms of ensuring the closest relationship between the people and Government. When formulating policies and making key decisions that impact on the lives of whole communities, particularly in a place like Ballymun, the relationship between the Politician and Councillor and the people and groups who operate in the interests of local people, is critical to ensuring that the voice of the representative reflects the views of their constituents.*

*Minister of State, and local TD, Noel Ahern, along with local Councillors Julia Carmichael and Ray Corcoran, talk about their role as representatives of the people and, in particular, their role in representing the Local Community and Development interests in Ballymun.*



“Politicians are simply the medium of the people.”

**Noel Ahern** has been a local representative since 1985, when he first became an elected Councillor and then a TD 1992. Ballymun is a key part of his constituency and it has been from the very beginning. As Minister of State with special responsibility for Housing and Community for the past two and a half years now, he says he misses being a part of the local City Council Area Committee in Ballymun, “although I do have a significant impact at Ministerial level,” adds Noel. “The personal friendships I have made over the years and the people involved in Ballymun, both formally and informally, keep in touch, keep me abreast of their concerns, and are never shy about giving me the benefit of their opinion.”

“Noel believes that the Politician is an extraordinary animal, much criticized, exposed to an awful lot of things and masters of nothing. “But the range of different things that you get involved in is immense, so it’s often that you pick up knowledge from chasing queries, personal cases etc., that you become a great reservoir of knowledge over the years. And when you come along to express a voice then, and

ask whose voice am I, politicians are simply the medium of the people, but we are using all that knowledge and experience built up when pushing for our constituent, or our constituency or the community.”

As a representative of Dublin North West, Noel believes that all of the public representatives in this area, TDs and Councillors, would be very much of the people. “Sure, there may be differences between the communities within the area, but the people living there are all genuine people who work for a living,” says Noel. “For the most part, they are not the high property classes, they are not the big business classes, and any representative coming from this area would be quite rooted in their communities.”

When it comes to working together, Noel says: “By and large we’re in parties, so people will represent their parties, particularly at the City Council or Dail levels. But a lot of the things at the Area Committee level are not party-oriented.” The Area

Committee is where the Councillors come together to flag and tease out the issues, for the particular area they represent, with the City Council management and staff. He says that when Councillors rally together they can be a formidable force at times when going up against City Council officials on some issues that they believe are not in the interest of their constituents,” says Noel.

As a party member, and before he became Minister of State, Noel was not a huge supporter of doing away with the Dual Mandate. This was when a person could act in both roles as TD and Councillor. “I would believe that the constituency type TD, in terms of the broader political influence, is more important from the point of view of places like

“WHEN COUNCILLORS RALLY TOGETHER THEY CAN BE A FORMIDABLE FORCE ON THE ISSUES THAT ARE IN THE INTEREST OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS”

Ballymun, where the local authority is the main landlord and where the issues are very complex for a large amount of families and individuals. But he recognises the dual mandate is gone now and the good thing that it has introduced is new blood, and new energies into the political system. Out of the 7 newly elected Councillors last year, 6 are relatively new to the scene. "Ideally," says Noel, "if you were in any committee you would look for a balance in terms of introducing new personnel, i.e. 2 would leave and 2 new people would join, while the rest would remain so as to maintain the continuity of the group. However, I think this is a welcome challenge overall and an opportunity for of us to ensure that good working relationships prevail, between the TD and the Councillor, particularly on all things local, for the benefit of the people."

### Hearing a Coherent Voice

The biggest significant event happening in Ballymun is the physical and social regeneration of the area. In response to the question: is there a way that key structures locally, together, could be more coherent when discussing the priorities for Ballymun with the policy makers, particularly in this time of renewal?, Noel replies: "Could it be better? In terms of receiving a clearer voice, yes."

Noel hopes that in time, both the City Council structures (elected representatives and City Council managers & staff) and Local Development structures would pull together, in order to gain knowledge of the others



## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DON'T HAVE TO TAKE OVER ONE ANOTHER, THEY JUST HAVE TO COMBINE ON CERTAIN THINGS.



points of view and offer a coherent voice between them. "They don't have to take over one another," cautions Noel, "they just have to combine on certain things so that they can speak with authority," and he adds "any Politician, any Minister would welcome any structure that did this effectively."

Having come from the local government representative structure, Noel would like to think that this could be done in some way through one executive committee, like the Area Committees. Although he realises that this is probably 'a bit airy fairy', as we must recall that the Cabinet is just one meeting that speaks for Government. "I recognise there are things happening out there in Local and Community Development as well, via the Partnerships, the Local Drugs Task Forces, the CDPs etc, that are important to the development of areas like Ballymun. But I also believe that the Community and Local Development structures have far better contact among themselves and there isn't that much formal involvement with the Councillors." Decision-making is ultimately reserved for the elected representative. "But decisions that are informed by a range of stakeholders, coming together to have the necessary discussions with the representatives on board, just makes more common sense," says Noel "afterall, none of us has a patent on the issues for

people on the ground at the end of the day."

**Julia Carmichael** is just one of the 6 newly elected Councillors for the Dublin North West Area. The ending of the Dual Mandate, says Julia, has increased the focus on the

City Council budget to each of the Area Offices across Dublin, in an effort to be able to measure where, how and when funds have been spent in each constituency and can we do better next time? "Local Government must be local, reflecting the community needs and services. It must also have a cohesive relationship with national Government, particularly in relation to policies such as social inclusion agencies, economic and educational development and policing and crime measures."



Julia Carmichael (centre) with fellow Councillors Andrew Montague (left) and Ray Corcoran (right) represent the interest of the people on the Ballymun Partnership Board of Management

local community and it has also generated many questions regarding the functioning and powers of the elected representatives versus those of the Dublin City Council officials. "This is a critical issue," says Julia, "if Dublin and indeed Ireland is to focus on the roles that communities may have in their own future."

She believes that it is important that those representing local government (i.e. the elected Councillors) have the opportunity to influence policy to the point of how and where Dublin City Council funds are spent, for example. Julia also states that we should begin to look at the decentralisation of the

For Julia communication has got to be improved at all levels across the City Council, particularly among the Community and the Council. "It is imperative that communities have a say in the shape of their future and the shape of the services, amenities and supports that surround them and how these things are integrated into their society." Julia has already called for an increase in public meetings across the constituency in relation to events or developments that will impact on people and the community.

The challenge for the leaders in Ballymun, Julia states, is not only making themselves heard, but also

being perceived as representing a legitimate number of people in order to have their thoughts and comments taken on board. "It is critical that their input is included in the plans to move the development of Ballymun forward, otherwise what will be created will not be sustained over time. "However," says Julia, "in terms of putting together a cohesive strategy or even to simply resolve a problem, it can sometimes be difficult to ensure that all issues are dealt with effectively for each group." Over time it will become necessary to work with them to identify the duplication and potential opportunities to merge to achieve these goals together.

### For Ray Corcoran

another of our newly elected Councillors, there is a whole issue in general in Ballymun about feeding in and feeding back. In feeding in, sometimes people are challenged to demonstrate who they represent when they say they represent the community.

“IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT COMMUNITIES HAVE A SAY IN THE SHAPE OF THEIR FUTURE”

"But my role as a public representative of the people who elected me," says Ray, "is to be a vehicle through which people and groups at least have their say. It's up to the powers that be then to decide whether there's a case or not. We can't be gatekeepers, every ones' views are valid, as long as they understand that there is a process and they accept and adhere to the decisions at the end of the day."

### Public Debates Helpful in Raising Issues

For Ray, events like the public debates held in Axis Community & Arts Centre, over the last year, help to raise a lot of the issues and so as a mechanism for feeding in to Councillors and the decision making process they're good. But feeding in is always easier

than the feedback, and sometimes, expectations that people may have in terms of how quickly Councillors can respond can be challenging. "Most often the issues I hear from people on the street or at clinics are not always Council issues and there's an expectation that Councillors can carry out the role of a TD. But we can play a role in bringing forward social welfare issues for example through the Council or through the relationships we have with TDs for our area."

At the City Council tables, though, Ray says that he can be quite vocal about the issues on an area level, and doesn't necessarily think that the issues he brings forward are any different to what other Councillors for the area are and have been bringing forward for the last 30 years for Ballymun. "Yes, people are saying there's bad management of the estate, the regeneration is one of the biggest concerns facing people every day and there are always difficulties with that in terms of roads, accessibility, disruption etc., and all that negatively

impacts on peoples' lives. But I have also begun to hear good things where people are actually saying they can see the progress, that the main street is taking shape etc. So we are getting some things right, but the regeneration is the biggest challenge to everyone."

In terms of better 2-way communication between the people and the decision makers, Ray adds that there's always room to be more creative on this front. There are enough structures out there to do this but there could be more co-operation in terms of gathering the range of views and presenting them as one coherent voice. The production of a Ballymun wide publication that concentrates on the major policy decisions would allow people to discuss the implications before decisions are made: discuss them with their neighbours, groups and agencies, but in particular with their Councillor or TD as we are elected into a system that formally makes those decisions on their behalf."

## Public Debates: A Creative Way to Capture the Voice of the People!

During 2004 **Ballymun Partnership with Ballymun Welfare Rights**, organised two public debates. The debates were held before and after the local and EU elections in June. The debates formed the basis for the Partnership's Active Citizenship Campaign, which was aimed at encouraging people to register and to vote in the elections, while at the same time encouraging people to publicly debate the local issues of concern to them, with their local candidates/representatives.

Another important reason for debates was that there had not been any opportunity for people to come together to

highlight issues of common concern for the area, in particular issues relating to the regeneration programme.

The first debate took place just before the local elections and adopted the style of a 'Questions and Answers' format. Each candidate got an opportunity to present their mandate to the people followed by questions from the floor. This debate was the first of its kind to take place in Ballymun in many years. The feedback overall from those in attendance was very positive and invigorating. Ultimately, it gave people the opportunity to describe the kind of representation needed by the

people of Ballymun from their councillors and TDs.

As a result of local interest, the second public debate took place after the local elections in October 2004. The panel for this debate included Olivia O'Leary as Chairperson and the newly elected local councillors. Once again, there was energy among those who attended, and a request from people that these debates continue into the future.

### Common issues arising from debates

- Childcare services and benefits
- Delays in opening the new Health Centre

- Concerns that new Leisure Centre may exclude the most marginalised
- Housing issues
- Concerns around the opening of Pub in the Shangan area despite views of the local people
- More diverse services for people with disabilities
- Employment for local people in the Regeneration Build
- Concerns about the objectivity of the Regeneration Monitoring committee in its make up
- Better delivery of education in Ballymun to combat poor record of Education.



# What drives us? YOU do!

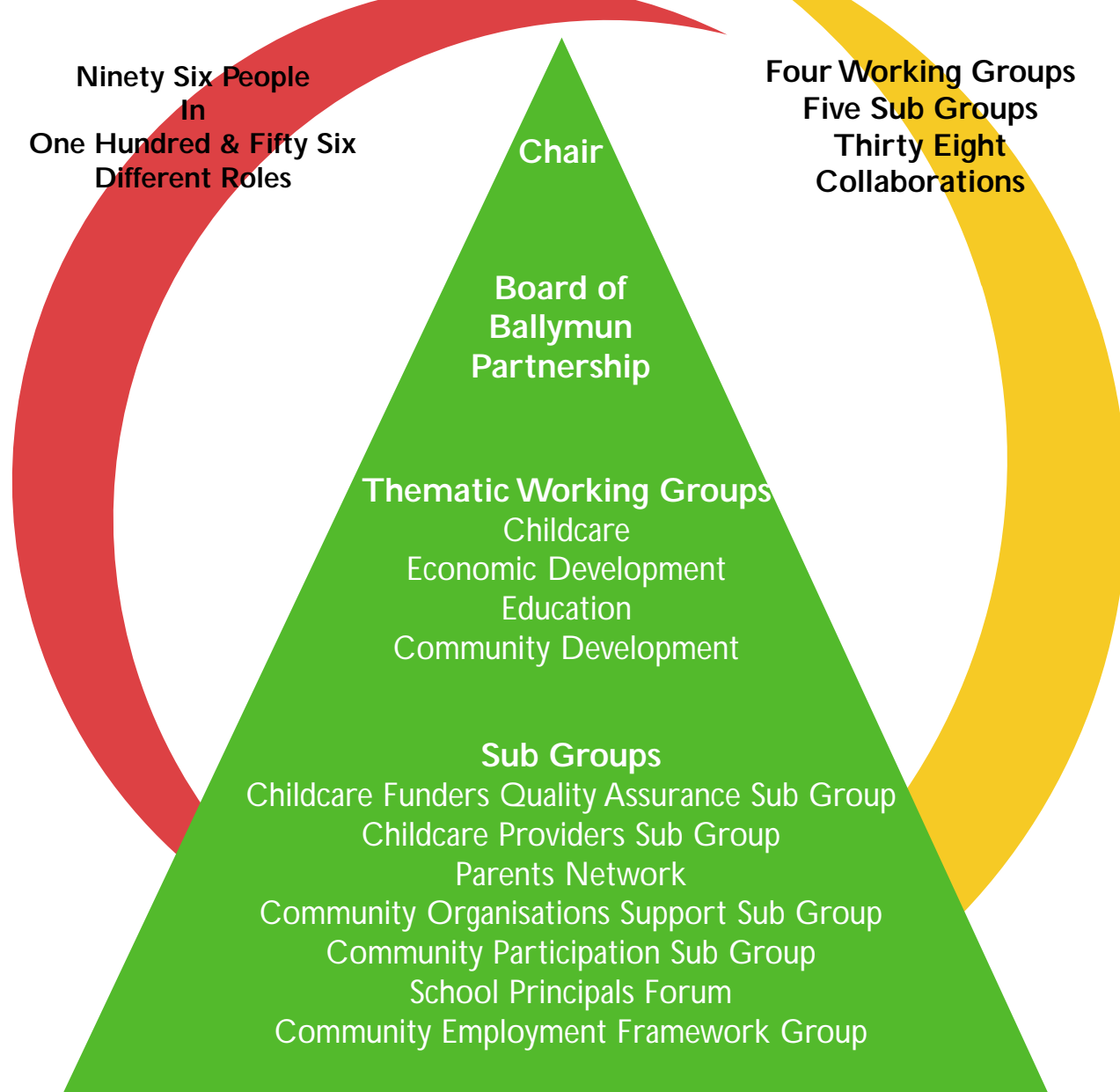
Partnership, it's about people, it's about working together, it's about building relationships and it's about making space at every level in the decision making process so that as many individuals and groups and organisations and agencies can have as great a part as possible in the plans and the actions that we carry out every day to benefit the community and people we are here to serve.

Ballymun Partnership must be driven by an ethos of community development, where power flows upward and not from the top down, if we are to leave any lasting legacy behind us when our job is deemed to be complete in Ballymun. We haven't gotten this right yet, but with 96 people now involved in over 156 roles in our structures and working groups, we

are delighted to be making significant progress in living up to our proclaimed ethos. And we're not going to stop here...

In 2005, we will continue to grow our structures, and therefore engage more and more people in dialogue and activities that have the absolute interest of our community at their very core. We will also willingly rise to the challenges that the very many stakeholders in Ballymun present us with over the remainder of our current Strategic Plan 2001 – 2006. We will do this because the people of Ballymun have a vision, and we feel honoured that they have entrusted Ballymun Partnership, as just one of a range of local organisations and agencies, to support them in realising that vision.

## BALLYMUN PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES



# Putting parents back into childhood development planning and actions

The Ballymun Parents Network is at the heart of a broader Childcare Network that aims to support the children and young people in Ballymun. It follows on the work of the Childcare Task Force and its Childcare Plan and the findings of the Ballymun Partnerships Education Strategy. Both of which identify early education and childhood development as central and key to happy and successful families in Ballymun.

In 2004 Ballymun Partnership set up The Parents Network, which was launched by Brian Kerr, International Manager of the Ireland Soccer Team, in February this year. Noirin Coghlan, Childcare Co-ordinator for Ballymun Partnership, and Catriona Lawrence, local parent, talk about The Parents Network, the work to date, and their hopes for greater participation by parents in the future.



## Parents in Ballymun say they want...

- parent support groups
- support with their and their children's education
- better information services
- a range of quality, affordable services for children and young people.

When **Noirin Coghlan** first started working with the Partnership a year ago, she immediately noticed that there was no parent representative on the Partnership's Childcare Working Group. "I made it my goal that the Partnership would engage more with Parents," says Noirin.

Based on 20 years experience working in the Early Years sector and her own experience of being a parent and parent representative, Noirin says that she has come to understand and value the importance of working in partnership with parents. "Every child comes from a family," says Noirin, "and so we cannot talk about providing quality childhood services or develop a childcare strategy without working in real partnership with parents."

Through the Parents Network, there are now 2 parent representatives on the Ballymun Partnership Childcare Working Group. "Parents and children are the building blocks of society and the social

regeneration of Ballymun will have a better chance of success if it empowers parents and children in the decisions that impact on their lives."

Over the course of the last year, The Parents Network has been meeting almost once a month. At the meetings, parents are introduced to other parents, and issues for them in relation to childcare and social development are discussed. They also planned a Family Day - which incorporated the formal launch of the Network. During this time, Ballymun Partnership's Parents Network also began the process of developing an area based parents strategy. A brochure has been produced and distributed around the area, outlining what parents say they need to support their families.

## Over 40 people involved

Over forty people have been involved in supporting the development of The Parents Network to date. This is recognition of the

important role of parents and their requirement to have a place to discuss a variety of matters relating to parenting.

## Catriona Lawrence,

Mother of 2 boys under the age of 4years, is an active participant in the Parents Network. The reason why Catriona got involved in the first instance was to get out of the flats and socialise, and to meet up with other parents. "The children can also mix with other children which they don't get to see very often," adds Catriona.

Before her involvement, she says: "I just spent a lot of my day looking out at the world from the windows in the flat, just watching all the cars going by - and you'd feel that you want more, to be doing more things in your life. Children are a full time job in themselves, so finding something to do for yourself often has to revolve around their schedule." Catriona has met a few people by being involved and hopes that she can build on these relationships. "At least now I can stand in the Shopping Centre and

chat with people I've met, sometimes it's good to be able to even wave and say hi to somebody, so you don't feel your on your own in this planet!"

Working previously with children in Barnado's Mobile Pre-School in the inner-city, and starting 2nd level training in childcare at the moment, Catriona has some experience with young children outside of the family setting as well. She believes that it's important for parents to get as much information about early childhood, because as parents we're not experts, and we only learn how to meet our childrens' needs as we go along. "There's a lot more to know about how children think and learn that's fascinating. And once you hear them you never forget."

For Catriona, there are two particular things that she would like the Parents Network to take on. They are; increasing the number of quality and affordable childcare places and the setting up a number of Mother & Toddler Groups around the area. "I think that it's hard for parents to get together because you're trying to raise a family and work at the same time now, but some place where mothers can come together with their children would be good." As a parent, Catriona says that you're always concerned about leaving your children, whether it is with a crèche or people you know, and not everyone has family who can step in and lend a hand. You need to be really assured that they are in a safe environment, that you know their needs are going to be looked after properly. "The reality for me is that there is not enough quality and affordable childcare places out there, waiting lists are full, and as

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AS PARENTS WE'RE NOT EXPERTS, AND WE ONLY LEARN HOW TO MEET OUR CHILDRENS' NEEDS AS WE GO ALONG.

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far as I'm concerned my Mother has already raised her kids, so I'm conscious about dumping her with mine." Catriona hopes that the parents together can look at this issue and hopefully get the government to listen.

### Network launched by Ballymun Partnership

The Parents Network was formally launched during Family Day in February this year, organised by the Ballymun Partnership in Axis, the local Arts and Community Centre. Catriona says that this was good for parents and for the children in lots of ways. The children joined in workshops that kept them busy and happy, while the adults could relax and mix with other adults, and join in events tailored for them. "I really enjoyed the talk given by Dr. Vincent Maloney. He was giving us the low down on the 10 commandments of raising a child," says Catriona. "It was funny and I learned a lot from the way in which he was able to communicate the needs of

the child to us and what they go through at various stages of their growth." Catriona would like to see more of these type of events.

The launch was celebrated with Brian Kerr accepting a cheque on behalf of the Parents Network from the main sponsor, Dublin City University.

The day was fun-filled for children aged 4 to 10 years with face painting, art and drama workshops. A crèche was organised by staff from Geraldstown House and Ballymun Day Nursery.

Ballymun Partnership acknowledged the contribution of Axis, Dublin City Council, Dublin City University, Geraldstown House and Ballymun Day Nursery, the staff of the Childcare Resource Centre, The FAI and TGI Fridays, and the members of the Parents Network, volunteers, exhibitors and speakers Brian Kerr and Doctor Maloney.



Brian Kerr receives a piece of artwork created by the women in Ballymun Arts Factory on behalf of the Parents Network

## Open Invitation

To other local parents to join the network in defining their needs and seeking the supports they deserve.

If you want to be kept up to date of services as they develop or indeed take up a role in the Parents Network you can contact the Childcare Co-ordinator at:

**Ballymun Partnership  
Ballymun Town  
Centre  
Dublin 11  
Phone 01 842 3612  
E-mail:  
ncoghlan@ballymun.org**

In January 2004, Atlantic Philanthropies invited 6 local actors, including the Ballymun Partnership CEO, to form a Development Group that would work on a 10-year plan for Children & Young People, and a funding proposal to implement it. Just over a year later, the Development Group has produced a draft framework document, which synthesizes the plan's development phase to date. In January 2005 the Development Group secured funding of €158,000 from Atlantic Philanthropies, which is administered by Ballymun Partnership on its behalf, to assist the next stage of the development process. The challenge now is to embark on a broad consultative process with young people, the community, and other stakeholders to discuss the framework, and, to come up with a plan of actions to realise the strategic outcomes set out so far.

Two members of the Development Group, Dr. Noirin Hayes, child development expert with DIT and Donnacadh Hurley, local practitioner working for young people, describe the political context, their views on the needs of children and young people, their vision and the potential and the challenges in trying to realise it.

# Investing in Our Most Precious Resource: Children & Young People.

Currently there are an estimated 15,000 people in Ballymun. Over the course of the Regeneration Programme, the population is projected to almost double. Ballymun already has a relatively young population, where the average age is 26 and where almost a third of the population is under the age of 14 years old. A dramatic situation for Ballymun's younger population is that almost half the families are headed up by lone parents. As a result, children and young people experience a very different family experience to most others their age throughout Ireland. Along with this, while there is a positive change in relative affluence and deprivation figures, the area still registers within the classifications 'very disadvantaged' and 'extremely disadvantaged', presenting a very different experience for our young people as they grow up in Ballymun.

It is in this knowledge that the Development Group's 10-year Strategic Framework for Children and Young people states: "It is appropriate then that there should be a well thought out strategy for children and young people, to accompany the massive infrastructural, demographic and social change comprehended within the regeneration masterplan."



"The way in which services to children and young people are delivered in Ireland, may be counter productive to the needs of the child."

Noirin Hayes chairs the Development Group for Children & Young People in Ballymun. Noirin is involved because fundamentally she believes the way in which services to children and young people are delivered in Ireland, may be counter productive to the needs of the child. "Childrens' issues and lives overlap with a range of policy offices," says Noirin, "and if the issue is not a

family or school responsibility then it is seen as a problem for some department i.e. health, welfare or justice. The reality is that children need, but are not getting, an integrated experience."

When asked why she would focus her energies on Ballymun in particular, Noirin says: "There's no reason to say that the children and young people in Ballymun aren't the same

## MISSION STATEMENT

"In Ballymun, we want our children and young people to flourish and be happy, to live in nurturing families, to be healthy and emotionally strong, to be educated and equipped to reach their full potential, to be confident, motivated and aspirational citizens and to live in a stimulating physical environment, which is safe and secure."



as any other children, in terms of their potential and their needs as children. But the environment, unstable as it is, is the main thing impacting on their lives. And in Ireland we have a history of being slow to support our families in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment, and a history of simply responding to the most needy." Noirin adds that children are not born as 'disadvantaged'; rather they can be at risk of disadvantage which may, without help, become a more long term reality. However, many people can go through different periods, ups and downs. The Strategy Framework unfolding for the Development Group attempts to recognise this, and promotes an approach that is based on supporting

the fundamental developmental needs of the child through focusing on positive child outcomes.

### Themes for 10-Year Plan

For the Development Group, there are currently 6 key themes that have significant impact on the development of the child and young person in the context of Ballymun. These are Education, Childcare, Family, Environment, Health and Social Development. The mission statement that is emerging for the group encapsulates all of these themes. (Above picture).

Child focussed outcomes are a primary area of interest to the stakeholders involved in the development of this Plan. The background report to the

Strategy Framework document infers that knowing the outcomes you want at the very start "can translate the vision into substantive, tangible, realistic results for children and young people in Ballymun".

"Child outcome policies," says Noirin, "force you to be focussed, to think of the child, and at the same time it allows people their professionalism while challenging the extent to which procedures, systems, policies and programmes actually respect children." The notion of child outcome driven policies already has currency across a number of fields, adds Noirin, and she states that we need to work hard at grounding ourselves in this concept. An example of a child outcome policy would be

that 'the children of Ballymun will be physically and emotionally strong'. This type of child outcome, in itself, demands the combined attention of a whole range of government departments' policies and services to the child.

Noirin reminds us that there's lots of evidence that people have bought into the idea that children's issues are cross cutting; The UN Convention on Children's Rights has been ratified by Ireland, we see high level and cross-departmental Childcare co-ordination at Government administration level, and we have a National Children's Office driving the National Children's Strategy. This 10-year plan is yet another significant move in the right direction. "However," says Noirin, "at every one of

these levels, people are still wondering how we are not getting very far in terms of meeting the development needs of children and young people? And this is because, for the most part, issues such as child care have been driven by the needs of the labour market and economic development with limited national debate as of yet about what we want for our children."

For **Donnacadh Hurley**, Manager of the Regional Youth Resource, it's important to put in place this plan for Ballymun young people because of the need that exists here. "There are a lot of young people, particularly teenagers, suffering and in some cases causing suffering in Ballymun," says Donnacadh. "More substantially, there are many instruments for improving the situation, and we've come a long way in obtaining these." Atlantic Philanthropies, he adds, have come in at the right moment, where there is a maturity and level of commitment among the relevant agencies and organisations in the area, with a level of investment that was calling out for deeper, strategic collaboration and so there was a great willingness to get involved.

For Donnacadh there is both potential and a challenge in this and says that a focus on the positive vision of young people is required in the first instance. A focus, he suggests that is driven not by a deficit model of thinking, but of one that starts with the positive premise that we should have faith in our young people, to trust them and to look forward to even greater

“ THE WORK OF THE DEVELOPMENT GROUP WILL FORM THE BASIS OF A PROPOSAL FOR CHILD OUTCOME-LED POLICY DEVELOPMENT, WITH PROVISION AND SUPPORT IN AN INTEGRATED, PHASED WAY OVER A 10 YEAR PERIOD. ”



outcomes in the future of Ballymun. We also need to celebrate the programmes and successes that already exist."

In 10 years time, Donnacadh's hope would be that young people are well in themselves, that they have a positive sense of themselves and a good attitude towards community. "Above all," says Donnacadh, "I would hope that young people would have a sense of ordinariness about being themselves."

**Challenges**

The challenges in that, he adds, will be having to extract the basic love and commitment that people, particularly adults and professionals, have for young people. "People naturally want to have a good positive relationship with young people, but in Ballymun there's work to be done here. We need to have a positive attitude and rise to the challenge of raising our kids. There's lots of

scope in trusting young people but young people's expectation of adults may not be very high, as they are used to being disappointed."

Another challenge will be institutionally, where he says national strategies don't give local flexibility. For example, schools can't question the national curriculum, even though it may not be relevant or seen as meaningful in the eyes of the young people and their families.

Communication between adults in statutory agencies that are particularly close to the community and young people needs to improve also. "Things adults say about young people are sometimes unhelpful and the word 'youth' in Ireland today has become a problem word." But attitudes, Donnacadh believes, can be broken down through meaningful 2-way communication.

But with all of these challenges, Donnacadh states that there are even

bigger or more significant ones for young people themselves. We now live in the information age, where consumerism is king and where quality time for families in this economic climate is difficult to achieve, which creates other types of stressful environments. "Important information and communication in the development of the young people," says Donnacadh, "is by-passing the normal gatekeepers like the family via mobiles, television, internet etc and penetrating the protection that young people should have in their stage of development, something that we must address as a nation, sooner rather than later."

**Possible actions**

In terms of specific actions that could be considered as part of this 10-year plan, Donnacadh recognises that there is a need for change in the delivery of education to people in Ballymun, any strategy developed on this front has to respond to the real needs and competencies of teenagers, and it must be embraced by all concerned. "The secondary education system requires highly energised people who are working in a less contradictory environment - because currently we are pushing square pegs into round holes - and where the curriculum and the personal supports are supportive to the needs of the young person, where there is good communication and where people can enjoy their work."

Our recreational infrastructure, adds Donnacadh, is better than ever, but it is underdeveloped and

requires a deliberate focus that perhaps actions under this 10-year plan could address. "The Regeneration Programme needs to be designed in a way that young people are comfortable and engaged in every way in terms of developing general infrastructure like our parks, community buildings, shops and services like cafes that help meet their need for social spaces also."

One thing that both Noirin and Donnacadh are clear on is that the plan can't be about just shining a light on Ballymun for 10 years and then people walk away after that time. "We need to ensure that we are not seen to be doing anything to anyone, but simply going through a process of unlocking the potential of the stakeholders for the long term. Because we believe that there are already lots of the right things here already."

### Going out to the community

Up until recently the Development Group kept themselves small until they were sure themselves about what they were doing. Now that they're a bit more confident on this front, they need to engage the people of Ballymun. Back in January 2004, the last thing the group felt the community needed was another broad consultation: people felt that they were "all consulted out" at that stage. So they put a bit of time and effort into looking at what the community had already said by gathering all consultative material on Ballymun and of relevance to Ballymun to date. The Strategic Framework document now in place is a culmination of all of that, as

well as the ideas emerging from thematic workshops carried out at the end of last year.

The Development Group are now entering a new phase in the process where they have a new project co-ordinator, Ann Matthews, to help co-ordinate the tasks of the Development Group. They have an editorial sub-group in place who will develop a series of briefing papers to be used in different ways with young people, parents, policy makers etc. They have also begun a small research project which will begin the integration of a local database, so that facts and figures can be put together into something that is comprehensible. They are also developing a strategy on how to communicate with all interested parties, including young people themselves. The Development Group will also begin some site visits this year to see how things have been done in other countries.

"All of this work," says Noirin, "will form the basis of a proposal for child outcome-led policy development, with provision and support in an integrated, development way over a 10 year period. It will consider mechanisms for maximising current spend to make it efficient and effective. It will look at the need for additional funding, not limited to service development but also supporting existing services to work more together and develop sustainability."

The final plan will be informed by the work to be done between now and September, to allow all stakeholders to get more and more involved.

## NEW FACES AT BALLYMUN PARTNERSHIP

**Colma Nic Lughadha** has joined Ballymun Partnership as **Education Programme Manager**. Most recently Colma spent 3 years working as Education Officer with Ballymun Local Drugs Task Force. Prior to this Colma has worked in Health Promotion and in Youth Services. In her role as Education Programme Manager Colma will be working for the development of Ballymun's education system with a view to fostering a culture of educational achievement and excellence throughout Ballymun.



**Ann Matthews** joins the Ballymun Development Group for Children and Young People as the **Project Coordinator**. Ann comes to the Development Group from Area Development Management Ltd (ADM) where she has been working for the past four and a half years. During her time in ADM, Ann held the posts of Finance Coordinator, Monitoring Coordinator and Development Team Leader with the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP). Ann aspires to support the work of the Development Group and contribute to building a strategic plan, that will plot the course for the next 10 years to support the positive development of children and young people in Ballymun.

**John McEntee** has been recently appointed as **Economic Development Manager** with the Ballymun Partnership. Previous experience includes 6.5 years with IBM. John plans to develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy with the support of the Ballymun Partnership and local interest groups, engaging in relationship building with individuals, groups and support organisations which have the resources & experience to help in the Ballymun area.



**Máirín Ó Cuireáin** has joined the Partnership as the new **Community Development Co-ordinator**. She is no a stranger to Ballymun having worked locally with Ballymun Regional Youth Resource for the past two years as the Volunteer Support Worker. She plans to continue the work already started by the previous Co-ordinator. She is keen to develop the relationships with the local community and voluntary groups, in particular, and will strive to meet their needs, mainly through the Community Development Working Group of the Partnership.

# Lining up the structures for a better delivery of Education in Ballymun

For 2 years now, **Ballymun Partnership** has been involved in the process of devising an educational strategy and blueprint for a more meaningful delivery of education for 4 to 18 year olds, in Ballymun. As the Department of Education & Science embark on a new era of Structural Reform, and where Regional Offices are being set up closer to the education system on the ground, it is timely that Ballymun Partnership's Education Strategy flags a number of area-based education structures and resources that can interface between the Regional Offices and the deliverers of education in Ballymun.

Ian Murphy, Assistant Chief Inspector of the Directorate of Regional Office Services, in the Department of Education updates us on the rational and progress of the Regionalisation process while, Tom Hickey, Chairperson of the Principals Forum in Ballymun and educator in Ballymun for over 30 years, gives his vision for a collective approach locally, and the potential of working in this way to meet the new regional structures.

**Ian Murphy** says that the concept of the Regional Offices emerged from two concerns – the need to make the Department of Education & Science more accessible to the public and the need to free the Department of Education &

Science from excessive preoccupation with details of the operation of the education system. "The Regional Offices," says Ian "should also be seen as a further expression of the Department of Education & Science's commitment to openness and transparency."

The Regional Office for Ballymun is the last of the 10 offices to be established around the country. This is expected before the end of the year and is to be situated somewhere between Blanchardstown and Finglas, in an attempt to be as accessible as possible to its catchment area of North Dublin. It will have a staff of 5 and its premises will be shared by the National Council for Special Education and the Education Welfare Board. "This is a deliberate effort to bring these types of services together under the one roof, where they will be serving the educational needs of the same region," says Ian.

The added value for the Department of Education & Science will primarily mean that it can handle enquiries locally and divert questions

from the centre, and quite quickly it can make the Department aware of policy issues within the catchment area. In addition, and more relevant to communities like Ballymun, it will monitor complementarity in education provision, particularly in relation to educational disadvantage.

While the Regional Offices can provide this added value, Ian is very clear on their limitations. "They will not make policy; they will apply, and inform it from the regional base. They will not issue



The plan for Regional Offices is contained in this document by the Department of Education & Science

payments to the public; they will provide information. They will not take over the work of other educational providers in the Department of Education & Science, such as the Inspectorate; they will collaborate with them. They will not assume the tasks of already established educational agencies like the Vocational Education Committees and National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS); they will co-operate with them."

Government sees this as an exciting development

“**SHARED REGIONAL OFFICES ARE SEEN AS A MAJOR STEP IN PROVIDING A JOINED UP EDUCATIONAL SERVICE**”

School Principals Forum 13 Members	
Name	School
1. Tom Hickey (Chair)	St Josephs Senior School
2. Ray O'Diomsaigh	Gael Scoil Bhaile Muna School
3. Donal O'Loinsigh	Scoil An Seachtar Laoch School
4. Mary Downey	Girls Comprehensive School
5. Frank Byrne	Boys Comprehensive School
6. Anne Carty	Our Lady's of Victories School
7. Maire O'Halloran	Our Lady's of Victories School
8. Paddy Fitzgerald	Holy Spirit Boys National School
9. Marie O'Brien	St Josephs Junior National School
10. Eileen Marinan	Virgin Mary Girls National School
11. Angela Murray	Ballymun Senior Comprehensive School
12. Marian Hackett	Holy Spirit Girls National School
13. Des Deegan	Virgin Mary Boys National School

“THE FORCE OF THE COMBINED VISION AND EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND REGIONAL OFFICES WILL LIGHT UP THE WAY FOR A MORE TIGHTLY WOVEN AND INTEGRATED SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM.”



for the educational infrastructure of the country. "These new offices will bring the panoply of the nation's educational resources closer to those who need them most. They will maximise the delivery of a superior education service throughout the country."

For **Tom Hickey**, he expects that Regional Offices will be more aware of local needs and be better tailored to meet them. With the support of the Ballymun Partnership, School Principals in Ballymun are now organising themselves to be a fitting conduit, through which, the advantages resulting from local administration can be best passed on to their school communities. "The traditional stance of principals which had them locked into the welfare of their own particular schools, and to some extent becoming isolated and distrusting, must give way to one of a more Regionalised involvement," says Tom, "where they now become one of a team of local experts and educational leaders."

## Education Strategy

Huge steps have already been made in a slow but steady process that has attempted to include all of the necessary stakeholders in the development of a highly supported, Educational Blueprint for Ballymun. As a result of consultation and feedback on the Ballymun Partnership's Strategy for Education so far, there has been 3 re-drafts to accommodate the recommendations of the school principals in particular who, as a key stakeholder group, have readily embraced this



"The traditional stance of principals, which had us locked into the welfare of our own schools, must give way to a more regionalised involvement."

process and have proposed more than half of the 33 recommendations included in the most recent draft. As a next stage in the process, the Partnership has been invited by the principals of each school to go into the staff rooms and begin a discussion with school teachers, whereby they can input 3 to 5 principle objectives, from their perspectives, to the strategy.

With this Blueprint in hand, the aspiration for Tom, in terms of the Regional Offices, is that the immediacy of access to the centre of planning and delivery will give principals a greater say in things educational. While at the same time the fabric of local school administration becomes more tightly woven and integrated. "The force of the combined vision and experience will light up the way forward, while the unity of purpose makes goals more attainable and will be a source of strength as we labour to implement programmes," says Tom. He hopes that they will develop networks with other schools for the purpose of sharing best practice, teacher

education, quality control and also link with services and support systems outside the school in order to meet the needs of all young people.

## Integrated Services

But for Tom, it is not simply an effort on behalf of the educators that is required to realise a positive vision for children who come out of the school system. He would like to see the business sector play, and be required to play, a more active role in education in Ballymun. "The sector could provide sponsorship for awards and scholarships, mentoring for students and teachers, support for worthwhile educational and cultural initiatives, work placements etc." School principals, says Tom, should push this agenda as part of setting-up an integrated services model in Ballymun. This is a co-ordinated, holistic approach to addressing the needs of children, particularly the complex inter-related problems of 'at risk children', by providing a comprehensive range of educational and human

services.

The establishment of high quality pre-school services, with close links to primary school services, is a matter of grave importance to school principals also, says Tom, as it has a direct impact on numeracy and literacy programmes in local schools as well as on the overall success of a child's educational development. The good news is that already the principals in Ballymun see opportunities for sharing and supporting in the development and implementing of reading recovery and ICT programmes, and, the setting up of a centralised interdisciplinary team to address such issues as speech difficulties, emotional/psychological problems, sight and hearing deficiencies etc.

As a plan for local Regionalised education provision unfolds, other areas of common interest and challenge for school principals will appear. But Tom and the other members of the School Principals Forum are prepared to meet whatever comes. "We have been working together to anticipate these challenges and look forward to the time when Ballymun will be a leader of excellence in Ireland and Internationally in educational outcomes."

**“ BALLYMUN REQUIRES A CO-ORDINATED, HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF EDUCATIONAL AND HUMAN SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN OUR SCHOOLS. ”**

So...

## What can Ballymun Partnership do for local groups, organisations and collaborations?

### THE PARTNERSHIP CAN ACT AS AN INCUBATION SERVICE OR VEHICLE FOR GROUPS AND INITIATIVES IN THE PRE-DEVELOPMENT STAGE

We can do this by helping to identify local needs and we can develop collaborative local responses for Ballymun. After 15 years, we also have a good record built up for attracting funding for services to Ballymun.

We can and have already assisted independent groups to form and address local needs. And we can act as a member, convenor, secretary, or chair for these groups where appropriate.

We can also assist groups develop projects from concept and support them to carry them out. We can assist these groups develop funding applications

to support their autonomy and sustainability. The Partnership can lend credibility, to the funding application, for accountability with Government Departments, from what might otherwise be an unknown or a new entity. We can also lend credibility from the Partnership's Charitable Status.

We currently provide a separate Partnership bank account for funds. This assists groups and local collaborative initiatives with accountability, as they go through the pre-set up phase. We also have systems in place to administer these funds on their behalf and generate financial reports for them and their funders etc., when required.

We also provide a range of other practical supports and resources to local groups and collaborations like meeting rooms and equipment rental.

### Meeting Rooms available to Community Groups without charge

If your community group needs a room to meet, why not contact the Partnership to book the boardroom or the smaller meeting room. The new reception area is also available for lunches or public reception.

The boardroom seats 20 people around the boardroom table or about 30 without the table. Its facilities include flip charts, whiteboards, TV & video and projector and screen. The smaller room suits between 6 and 10 people.

There are no charges for community groups but booking in advance is advisable, contact Orla for more information at 8423612.

#### Current users of the Partnership meeting rooms

Ballymun Drugs Task Force and Committee  
Ballymun Community Employment Framework Group  
Ballymun Health Centre

Ballymun Job Centre  
Ballymun Children & Youth Development Group  
Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network  
Ballymun Youth Action Project  
Ballymun Literacy Scheme  
Residents Associations  
Northern Area Health Board  
BEST Education Project  
Ballymun Community Organisations Network  
Ballymun Jobs Initiative  
North Dublin Supported Employment Programme  
Dombhail House Clinical Team  
Ballymun Public Health Nurses  
SOLAS Development Centre  
Ballymun Education SUB-Committee  
Ballymun Childcare Committee  
Ballymun Economic Development Committee  
STAR project for women recovering from addiction  
Ballymun Neighbourhood Council  
Ballymun Local Employment Service  
Ballymun Money Advise Bureau  
Ballymun Intercultural Group

### Leverage Ability

*In terms of the Ballymun Partnership's ability to lever additional funding in to Ballymun, last year alone, we directly raised €1,803,973.00. This was over two and a half times the Partnership's own budget for 2004. This demonstrates a leverage capacity of over 250% return on the National Development Plan investment in the Partnership's Programme of Activities for last year.*

Benefits for all players in the local development field.

# Cohesion

In 2003, the newly formed Department of Community, Rural & Gaelteacht Affairs set about reviewing Local and Community Development structures, in an attempt to bring about a more cohesive approach to services on the ground. Basically, this was to encourage more cooperation among groups and agencies at local, regional and national levels. In response to Minister O'Cuiv's call in February 2004, for applications from local actors working collectively to meet cohesion objectives, Ballymun Partnership facilitated the coming together of the Local Drugs Task Force, Ballymun RAPID, the 4 local Community Development Programmes and the Partnership itself, to form the Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network. Going into 2005, the Network successfully secured €100,000 from the Department for joint activities to be carried out over the next 2 years.

Minister Eamon O'Cuiv talks about the progress of his cohesion objectives and the benefits from his perspective, while Bernie Roe, Rapid Co-ordinator and Chair of Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network, gives us a flavour of the challenges and potential of integrating plans and activities on the ground.

For Minister Eamonn O'Cuiv, the experience of trying to establish cohesion within his own Department in the first instance has been very interesting. "The first thing I noticed was that the various sections of the Department, coming from other established Departments, all brought different cultures with them and different ways of working. But what we've tried to do is pick the best of each methodology and use that to our advantage and the benefit of the communities we serve."

The experience over the last 3 years has provided the Minister with a level of empathy with local structures in attempting to

work more collaboratively on the ground. He remembers at the beginning of his cohesion strategy, that people were very sceptical. "Everyone thought it was about taking the money back into Government and I kept saying no. What I have at the beginning of January, I'll be doing my best to hold onto and give none of it back, because my objective is to spend it to the biggest effect possible." For 2005 the Department of Community, Rural & Gaelteacht Affairs has approximately €340 million, an increase once again on the previous years.

When asked about some of the key developments or successes for the

Department in the last 3 years, the Minister quotes a number of decisions that he describes as 'sensible'. The first decision recognised that we have enough bodies on the ground, and that any new services would be delivered through existing structures, "unless something very, very exceptional happens". According to the Minister, there has been no significant reduction in the number of structures around the country as a result of his cohesion strategy, but all the time there are new schemes coming on board.

The second decision recognised the RAPID Programme as a good vehicle for alleviating



"The money I have at the beginning of January, I'll be doing my best to hold onto and give none of it back."

deprivation and profiling the local areas at Government level. But in its initial phase there were difficulties. "At one stage, I counted that there was over a thousand RAPID actions nominally handled by Departments, knowing too well that no Department could handle that many actions at the one time. RAPID is now streamlined, where actions like Estate Management Training and Playgrounds and such - things that are common to all 45 RAPID areas - are dealt with through a specific budget, matched by other Departments." This way, says the Minister, it gives much more responsibility and control at the local level and, administratively, small actions are not clogging up Government Departments. "For RAPID itself, I think it is beginning to concentrate more on the big issues which is a much better method of delivery."

The third sensible decision relates to one that the Minister says his colleague, Minister of State, Noel Ahern is mainly responsible for. He says that a lot of buildings were constructed or developed with money from the Young Peoples Facilities & Services Fund. So the Ministers decided to radically increase the current amount of funding being provided by the Departments to support diversionary activities and the provision of facilities through the National Drugs Strategy. "I think everybody would agree there is no point having buildings without having staff and programmes, which is a major concern coming through from communities right now."

When the Minister first announced his review of Local and Community



THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE IS TO SUPPORT LOCAL AUTONOMY, TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITIES IN THEIR ACTIONS. I DON'T THINK THERE IS GOING TO BE ANY RADICAL CHANGE AT THE END OF 2006.



Development structures, it was in the context of significant cutbacks in Government funding to the sector at the time. It was important then for the Minister to get the point across that his cohesion strategy wasn't just about saving money. With the support of the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, a Cohesion Fund was established. "Psychologically it was very important, and it was 3 million euro that served us well," says Minister O'Cuiv, "but much more importantly we went to people and said come up with ideas on how you can do things more efficiently, and if you do that not only will you keep all of the additional benefits you will create, but on top of that we will actually give you some extra money." It was a strategy that returned good kudos for the Departments involved, as most areas around the country got something out of it. As a result of the good response from the ground last year, the Cohesion Fund has been raised to €4million in 2005.

### Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network a good example

The Minister praised the Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network (BAPN) for its proposal to the Cohesion Fund. Facilitated by Ballymun Partnership, the Network secured €100,000 at the end of 2004 for joint actions at the local level. "I

think the bain of a lot of peoples' lives has been refusing the ordinary man or woman on the street a simple integrated service. When local entities start working together, there's a much greater presence for local people. I definitely think that what happened in Ballymun, with the setting up of the Anti-Poverty Network and the joint plan is a very, very good example of how sensible, simple things can be done.

In relation to concerns that current contracts with Local and Community Development structures will run out in 2006, the Minister says: "I don't think that there is going to be any radical change at the end of 2006. I don't anticipate it and I'm not planning it and life will go on. I always see change as gradual and interventional rather than sharp and there's certainly no intention to have 31/12/2006 as some major red letter day." The Minister believes that the Department will have an even more central role as society develops. The Department's role, he states, is to facilitate community activity via its support measures. "It is intended to support local autonomy and to encourage their actions and to act as a catalyst for all those actions."

In terms of good governance and local decision-making, the Minister says, "At the end of the day, decisions must be truly representative of the

people, they need to be seen as fair, and above all, there must be accountability to the paymaster which is the ordinary tax payer in this country."

### Message to Ballymun

Finally, the Minister sends a message out to Local and Community Development structures in Ballymun, in terms of realising successful integrated and cohesive strategies, particularly in this time of regeneration: "We know that change doesn't take place overnight, and at times you're going to think nothing's happening and nothing's changing. And fear of sharing is absolutely natural, but look what you'll find if you share. Don't always think of your corner and your organisation. Try to see the bigger picture. If you are generous, people will be generous back and everyone will benefit. Most of all I'd ask all the different partners in Ballymun to keep looking at what they're about. They are about serving the ordinary people."



For **Bernie Roe**, Chairperson of Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network (BAPN) and RAPID Co-ordinator, there's been a huge shift locally from individual to interagency work. "Money forces you to get into structure, outcome and action mode because you must account for what you do. But

having a shared and creative agenda is a much better reason for coming together.”

On a very practical level, Bernie lists the rewards of interagency work as; improved information exchange; clearer understanding of the role and value of other agencies; and better insights into their work. Interagency working groups also need to take on an advocacy role for local actors. She believes that joint planning will be the ultimate reward because there are many bonuses and scope for attracting additional funds and resources as a result. It also brings a new energy and dynamic to the work, says Bernie, and people get a buzz from this. “We can’t ever underestimate the currency of energy in partnership arrangements like, the BAPN, RAPID, Partnerships etc..”

Speaking as chair of the BAPN, Bernie says that they are trying to meet the Cohesion Agenda as set down by Minister O’Cuiv’s Department. “We have strategically focused ourselves to work together in very practical ways. We are trying to match what local agencies are doing when setting their targets with the national targets set down in the National Anti-Poverty Strategy.” Presently, Trutz Haase is helping us to define the potential and possibilities behind this approach.

Speaking as the Ballymun RAPID Co-ordinator, Bernie states that the Area Implementation Team (referred to as the AIT) has shifted its emphasis from the 1st phase of RAPID, where there were nominated projects for priority funding, to concentrate now on demonstration models of



Ballymun Anti-Poverty Network: a good example of cohesion on the ground. Member organisations include: Ballymun Partnership, RAPID, Local Drugs Task Force, Community Action Programme, Community & Family Training Agency, St. Margarets Travellers Group and The Men’s Centre, Ballymun.

interagency co-operation. “We’ll look for the gaps in adult education for example and we’ll bring people together involved in this theme. In Ballymun, this is the kind of practical thing that we can do to enhance service delivery.

## Ballymun AIT Credible

The members of Ballymun AIT are Ballymun Partnership, Dublin City Council, City of Dublin VEC and Youth Service Board, FAS, Eastern Regional Health Authority, The Department of Social and Family Affairs, Gardai, Local Drugs Task Force, Ballymun Regeneration Ltd., Ballymun Job Centre, Ballymun Regional Youth Resource, Ballymun Community Organisations Network and local residents.

In the meantime, RAPID’s achievements, in partnership with the variety of agencies and organisations in Ballymun, have been many. In terms of additional investment, 26 out of the original 31 projects listed in

the first RAPID AIT plan have been delivered on. “They weren’t just RAPID projects,” says Bernie, “they included RAPID-endorsed projects that were initiated by others, which we chased up on their behalf.” As a result, the Ballymun RAPID AIT has successfully been able to move on from the last plan, seeing their work on this as complete.

Bernie insists that the credibility of the Ballymun RAPID AIT is more important than the structure. “If RAPID is to be described as a successful programme it is because people locally, regionally and nationally see it as having some political will behind it and that there is a line of accountability between the decision makers in the government departments and the organisations on the ground.”

The people involved in the AIT really want to have influence. I think that the team in place are people willing and able to take on the things that others may be reluctant to do,” says

Bernie. An example of this is the work we are doing around the Community Trust, where the AIT would like to see an autonomous, community gain structure in Ballymun, with its own agenda for delivering resources for community and local development.

However, the legacy for the community in terms of all of this joint activity, says Bernie, is still work in progress. She concludes by saying: “None of our structures are robust enough yet to withstand changing political climates, and the changes in staff and volunteers involved in these structures, to completely sustain ourselves in the long term.”

“WE CAN’T EVER UNDERESTIMATE THE CURRENCY OF ENERGY IN PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS LIKE, THE BALLYMUN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK, RAPID, PARTNERSHIPS ETC.”



## Ballymun Concrete News: Ballymun Partnership recognises its responsibility to communicate with the local community, by funding and using existing information and communication channels.

In Ballymun we have a unique publication, which focuses on Ballymun, 8-pages, full colour, publishing only positive news. The Ballymun Concrete News is an initiative of Seamus Kelly, editor and resident, who was supported by the Partnership in setting up his own business. Ballymun Concrete News is a free monthly newspaper distributed to every home in Ballymun with drop off points in the surrounding Dublin area. It has a unique community focus.

Ballymun Partnership chairs a support committee for Seamus and his paper, bringing together key advertisers and supporters of the publication like Ballymun Regeneration Limited, Dublin City Council, Ballymun Job Centre, RAPID AIT and O'Dea's

Pharmacy, with the objective of encouraging other local organisations, large and small, to support the paper. In particular, anyone interested in advertising useful information for local people.

This is a worthwhile initiative for Ballymun Partnership, as it allows us to avail of an existing medium, with a high circulation, and most of all a publication that people like to read, instead of the Partnership independently using additional resources to publish yet another monthly publication. The Ballymun Concrete News has been a very successful channel for the Partnership to meet its commitment to keep the local community up to date on the progress of our actions to date.

# An opportunity to do something very new for development in Ireland



**A** key to a healthy and vibrant community is its ability to be enterprising and opportunistic when it comes to economic development chances. The 80 acres of prime land just north of Ballymun offer a real opportunity for local economic development and jobs for local people.

As Ballymun Regeneration Limited awaits the recommendations of a feasibility study, which they undertook to tease out the possibilities for the M50 lands, we ask 4 economic interests to give us an insight into their thoughts, the potential and the challenges in realising some of their ideas.



**Pauline Logan**, is a member of the **North West Dublin Chamber of Commerce** and a Director of Ballymun Partnership. She believes that Ballymun, in general, is a very attractive location for businesses due to its strategic location. It's easily accessible from Dublin Airport and the City Centre and well connected to other parts of Dublin and the Island of Ireland via the M50. "But the potential of the M50 land," says Pauline, "will be particularly attractive given its pivotal location and potential for developing a world-class, mixed use park which will create jobs for the people of Ballymun." When asked

what type of interests might be most favourably disposed to this type of development, Pauline says: "It makes a lot of sense to devote at least part of the M50 land to a Science or Technology Park, given that economists expect knowledge intensive industries (such as Information Technology and Biotechnology) to be key creators of sustainable and well paid jobs in the future."

Pauline adds that proximity and close links to a university are key success factors for Science and Technology parks. Dublin City University is just a few minutes drive away, and the location of other world class research institutes within 20 minutes drive from the M50. For example, the 3 teaching hospitals i.e. Beaumont, the Mater and Blanchardstown; Royal College of Surgeons Research Centre; and Trinity College Dublin. "I think the case for building on these strengths, to place Ballymun at the centre of a

growing industry cluster, is very strong in the context of an overall economic development plan," says Pauline.

And there's plenty of evidence where regions throughout Europe have placed university-linked Science Parks as the lynchpin of economic development. "Science parks linked to renowned universities such as Cambridge and Stanford," says Pauline, "have been the catalysts for the creation of world leading companies, employing thousands of people." A close example given by Pauline is Manchester Science Park (MSP), which was built in 1984 and is ranked in the top five science parks in the UK. It has more than 70 tenant companies employing over a 1,000 people in sectors including healthcare, biotechnology, ICT, electronics and environmental consultancy.

What's interesting for

Ballymun in this example is that growth has contributed to the regeneration of the neighbouring Hulme area, and has created employment for the local community. "When you think about how much more secure it is to have the risk of employment loss spread over 70 companies rather than concentrated in one large employer," says Pauline, "you can see how beneficial it can be to invest in Science Parks to attract these firms. Naturally, you can have a mix and there is room for larger and more established firms in complementary areas in this type of park."

There is a downside however, as Pauline explains, the cost of fitting out Science Parks, as opposed to more general Business Parks, are higher and it takes longer to fill them and grow them to their full potential. "It is more difficult for industry alone to take the risk to establish a park and bring it

to break even point. For this reason, they are often the result of joint initiatives between the local or regional authorities, existing research institutes and industry." The success of the Manchester Science Park, according to Pauline, was due to the co-operation between Manchester City Council, all three universities in Manchester (Manchester University, UMIST and Manchester Metropolitan University) and a number of commercial organisations, including Ciba Speciality Chemicals, Granada TV, 3i plc and the National Westminster Bank plc.

"The commitment of at least one local university and the support of Government is, therefore, necessary for the success of a Science Park," adds Pauline "the university provides the strong research connections and government puts an effort behind putting the infrastructure in place and attracting investors as part of the national economic development strategy."



**Chris O'Malley** is the Strategic Development Executive in **Dublin City University (DCU)** and Chairperson of Ballymun Partnership. DCU is interested in a Research & Development (R&D) Centre, which is recognised worldwide as a leading centre of its type, with an emphasis on Diagnostic and Medical equipment. "It would be great if this centre was located in the Technology or Science Park proposed," says Chris, "and DCU can act as a key magnet in attracting the companies that would be interested in this type of centre because of its connections to the R&D Managers in leading multinationals in Europe."

These types of international companies spend tremendous amounts of money on research and development, like Intel on semi-conductors for example. Twenty years ago at the time when there was an all out demand and push for improved Information and Communication Technologies, these companies combined spent over \$43bn in the R&D field.

Chris sites the potential of R&D facilities for an area like Ballymun through the example of North Carolina. Here a similar R&D facility was established in almost Desert settings and managed over time to create 50,000 jobs – 20,000 of which didn't require a 3rd level education. "An opportunity to provide something like this on the

Northside of Dublin, considering the socio-economic profile of some of the neighbouring communities, could encourage targeted training and employment for local people."

In Ireland, Chris reminds us that Government has a habit of giving grants to manufacturing to assist our development. And we've seen the negative impact of factory closures on small towns etc as a result of this single-focussed strategy. "We now need to look at other areas like Sales or R&D," urges Chris, "which will help us to become more sustainable in the long-term, as society demands more from the information wave."

In trying to realise this alternative vision of development, Chris states that we need to ensure that there is enough initial investment, particularly Government financial investment. The likes of which the IDA Science Foundation can give, explains Chris, which can be up to 50% of finance for new projects such as the one DCU is proposing. "DCU," he adds, "on a very practical level, can then help by selling the story to research interests, by securing the financial packages in place, and be a resource partner to BRL, Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council in this development.

Chris, like Pauline, also advocates the creation of what he describes as the Triple Helix, which is required to progress such an initiative at the M50 lands. "Three parties, the Local Authority, Academia and Industry need to work on it together. The challenge here in Ireland, is that there isn't a habit built

up for working together like this." But BRL is unique in the sense that it was deliberately set up by Government and Dublin City Council to be in a position to bring about this type of Triple Helix, as the local authority with the remit for an Integrated Area Plan (IAP). "However," says Chris, "it needs a joint vehicle to develop the IAP in a systematic way."

According to Chris, it would cost 10s of millions for just one R&D to locate here in Dublin. For example a 3-year figure for a team of up to 30 people, including facility fit-out and equipment, would need somewhat in the region of €30 million.

As mentioned by Pauline, the average private developer won't be attracted by the scenario where fit-out for this type of facility is high and the return on their investment could take years. But an appropriate, large scale developer, with the long-term vision, a partner who would be able to afford the wait, might be willing to make the investment. "A state-funded entity, like BRL and DCC themselves should be in a better position to take the longer term view as the developer, but there may be pressures from Government to seek an independent investor."

"The incentive to BRL and DCC," says Chris, "is that they would be seen as instrumental in building something new, not just in terms of infrastructure, but changing the way we think about economic and sustainable economic development in Ireland. So, in this case it should be attractive to Government and its agents to actually become the developer themselves."

“THE TRIPLE HELIX OF LOCAL AUTHORITY, ACADEMIA, AND INDUSTRY NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROGRESS IDEAS FOR THE M50 LANDS DEVELOPMENT.”





**Mick Creedon**, is the Manager of **Ballymun Job Centre** and is a Director of Ballymun Partnership. Since 1994 the Job Centre has secured almost 5,000 job placements for people from Ballymun.

This is no doubt due to the range of training programmes the centre has run over the years. Types of programmes include IT, Clerical/Reception, Warehousing, Construction, Financial Services, Customer Care, Catering, Retail & Sales and a whole range of preparatory courses. The job centre has worked in co-operation with training agencies such as FAS, FIT (Fast Track to IT), the City of Dublin Vocational Educational Committee and CERT and the business sector including companies such as AIB, Microsoft, The Great Southern Hotel and Developers in the Regeneration Programme to help meet their labour market needs.

For Mick and the clients of the Job Centre, proposals for large commercial interest, like IKEA, are attractive because they can have an immediate gain and positive impact on a lot of people and interests. "In terms of providing non-skilled jobs for unemployed people in Ballymun, the development profits, and all the VAT that Government will get back, it's a pleasing short term gem."

In terms of the Science Park idea, Mick says,

upskilling will be the challenge for many working in the provision of training and employment for local people. "Yes," says Mick "it has a greater capacity to provide for spin offs, but we would have to ensure quite deliberately, and plan from the outset, that the spin offs stay locally and would not be hived off to somewhere like the Far East, where economies are cheaper."

But it's not just a simple choice of IKEA (low-level jobs) versus a R&D Centre (High-level), states Mick, both would be good. "But we should also strive for something in between, for example Financial Services and Call Centres. With these types of entities, there's a better chance of putting in place training programmes that people can meet relatively well, and bring people on much quicker."

Mick believes that we have an opportunity to be more creative about the vision of what will be required in and around the area in 10 years time. "Looking at the demographics of the Northside, there is something in the Caring Industries that could also be developed. We already have 2 new private nursing homes in the area. Is there an argument to be made for getting a large public facility into the area? Could we work with DCU's new nursing programme to put in place a fast track to the caring sector, for example?" Mick adds that Warehousing is another area which is developing into highly computerised work, as too is the Hotel & Leisure Industry, and they'll be all around us in the immediate future. "We should be thinking about gearing up our labour market pool to avail of jobs and

enterprising opportunities that these can bring."

It's difficult to anticipate the needs of the labour market, and sometimes you have to be a little visionary in providing skills and courses that individuals can feel they would like to invest time in, when the jobs scene is uncertain. At the same time there's the need secure the funding critical to run the training. While there isn't a great demand locally for retail and sales training at present for example, we know that there will be, but it is difficult to secure funds from training agencies such as FAS, unless there's a waiting list. "For us," explains Mick, "the objective is to create the interest, run the training and be prepared for when the jobs come, not simply when or after they come, because it's most likely that the positions will be filled by people from all over north Dublin, which is fine, but it is our job to ensure that there is work for local people in these types of opportunities."

Whatever happens in Ballymun and with the development lands at the M50 Mick, like Pauline, cautions that we need to ensure that we have a good mixture and a relatively high number of developments. In times of economic uncertainty there will be some fall guys for sure, and we can't afford to return to days where no economic activity exists beyond the local Tesco.

"What we really need to recognise now is that Ballymun is not isolated. And its needs are within the context of everything else around it: the economic prosperity of the area, of north Dublin, the region, Ireland, EU and the world. We are connected and ripples will impact on us

both negatively and positively as a result. Any economic strategy for the area cannot be created around a single entity. We must invest more in our understanding and analysis of what's happening in these other circles, and see where the possibilities lie, it could be communications, genetics, robotics, biotechnologies who knows, but it would be nice to take advantage of this knowledge and hope that we at least get a production spin off from one of them!"

**“WHATEVER HAPPENS AT THE M50, WE NEED TO ENSURE A GOOD MIXTURE AND HIGH NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENTS. IT'S NOT JUST A SIMPLE CHOICE OF IKEA VERSUS A SCIENCE PARK. WE SHOULD ALSO STRIVE FOR SOMETHING IN BETWEEN.”**

Mick believes that there is a case to be made to the EU Commission for special treatment of areas like the Ballymun of the EU. Recently, the Commission turned down a grant to Intel to locate in Ireland, because Ireland was seen as one of the fastest growing economies in the EU and perhaps the thinking was that other new economies could avail of the Intel investment more. "But while Ireland may be the fastest growing economy in the EU," says Mick, "we locals know that Ballymun isn't quite yet at the races. MEPs in particular could highlight the fact that there are still pockets of relative deprivation in rich Ireland that still need attention."

**Deiric O’Brion** is the Chief Executive Officer of **Nordubco**, a North Dublin Coalition for building up economic knowledge on the Northern Fringe of Dublin. He is also a member of Ballymun Partnership’s Economic Working Group and of the Monitoring Committee for the IAP in Ballymun. Deiric says that National decisions are already having a major impact on local level infrastructure, and any strategy for development of the area around the M50 lands will need to integrate positively with the plans of the State, and vice-versa!

Other mechanisms are required to assist the development of the M50 lands and interests thinking of locating here. The Metro or other appropriate light rail system, like the LUAS, are particularly key to the development of the region. According to Deiric, the Rail Procurement Agency, which is responsible for putting in place the LUAS, estimates that if there was a system going through the area, just 15% of the potential passengers would use it to go to the Airport. “But the rest would be local people using rail access to get around. So it has the potential to bring social, economic and environmental benefits all round.” In this knowledge,

Nordubco has been making a strong case for a light rail system with stops through the area.

Another key development is the 2nd Runway at Dublin Airport. Deiric reminds us that airports never stop growing, if they stop they’re dead. “As the debate continues as to whether or not it is put in public or private hands,” says Deiric, “for the moment it’s best for the development of North Dublin, and communities like Ballymun, to see it as a strategic national issue, where we can still have a local say in key national infrastructure that can benefit our area.”

**And so...**

Whatever the recommendations the feasibility study brings to BRL, the questions that will have to be asked is how much will the recommendations contribute to the long term sustainability in the area? And how much is the Government itself willing, or indeed able, to invest to turn this development opportunity into something very new for Ireland: in terms of choosing the long-term view, and not simply the quick fixes, which are helpful but vulnerable on their own in the common market that we now operate within?

“ **NORDUBCO HAS BEEN MAKING A STRONG CASE FOR A LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM WITH STOPS THROUGH THE AREA.** ”



M50 Lands development critical to compliment Main Street commercial development for future sustainability of Ballymun

**Ballymun Partnership Supports Nordubco Research for Pharmaceutical and Biopharmaceutical Skills Development Programme**

One of Ballymun Partnership’s strategic objectives is to help promote knowledge-based economic development in North Dublin – with a specific focus on industry demands for labour and skills and the untapped potential of Ballymun people, particularly in the area of Medical Instruments and Bio-Pharma sectors and where existing jobs are threatened by the shift of certain types of employment to the Far East & Eastern Europe.

In 2004, Nordubco (North Dublin Coalition) carried out research called The Potential for a Pharmaceutical/Biopharmaceutical Accelerated Skills Development Programme in North Dublin.

Recommendations from the research include adopting a pilot programme for about 20 people here in North Dublin, based on a successful programme in North Carolina, called the BioWork Programme.

This pilot programme would include participants from our catchment area, and arrangements are already being progressed through the Economic Development Working Group of Ballymun Partnership.

Potential partners include pharmaceutical/biotech companies on the North Side of Dublin, training and education providers like VEC, DCU, and Tallaght ITC, plus the Employment Services of the 3 Northside Partnerships.

# our ballymun

## our future



# employment

 **ballymun  
partnership**  
opportunity | renewal | progress



*“Our picture shows what kind of jobs we would like.”*

Left to Right

**Clár Ní Riain, Caitríona Ní Fhaoláin,  
Niamh Ní Bhroin.**  
**Scoll an tSeachtair Laoch**

# From These Green Heights

A scene from Dermot Bolger's award winning play, which follows the life of a Ballymun family, starring Vincent McCabe and Alan King. An axis world premiere, it was directed by axis Creative Director, Ray Yeates.

**Winner of Best New Play 2004 Irish Times/ESB Theatre Award**



"axis was built to sit at the cultural heart of the ongoing structural and social change in Ballymun, and to act as a pivot for many different individuals, networks and organisations active in the wider community. The building is here ... a space to work together. The only limits are the limits of our imagination."

**Mark O'Brien, axis local arts development officer**

Axis is a community led Initiative guided by the Community, Ballymun Partnership and Ballymun Regeneration Limited.

