

canal communities news

News Bulletin of the Canal Communities Partnership

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On Tuesday 22 April Eala Og, the creche based in Goldenbridge Integrated Complex, celebrated its first year of operation. After days of rain the sun came out just in time for the Big Day.

"It's hard to believe that it's been one whole year since we opened our doors to the children of Inchicore, Bluebell and Rialto", said creche manager Lesley Strahan. Since opening there has been a great demand for places.

"As always, there's a huge waiting list for spaces here at Eala Og but we are taking names for 2008 and 2009, particularly children who will turn two during these years."

For details on obtaining places in the creche contact Lesley Strahan on (01) 472 5610.

Eala Og's 1st Birthday



Eala Og's manager Lesley Strahan and happy customers celebrating the creche's successful first year of operation in the Goldenbridge Complex

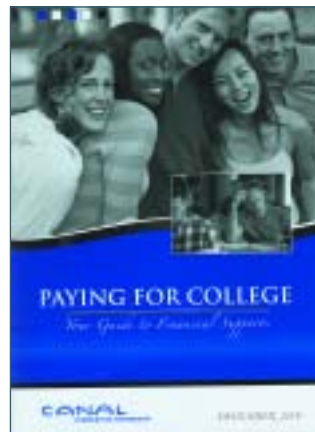
Future Education Needs

Inchicore and its surrounds is currently undergoing massive change including the closure of St. Michaels CBS this year. It is now an important time to highlight what the future education needs will be.

The Partnership with other community interests has conducted an independent assessment of future education needs in Inchicore.

A report based on this assessment will be available in the Autumn.

Paying for College



For your FREE copy of *Paying for College – Your Guide to Financial Supports* phone Fiona at (01) 456 4220 between 9 am and 1 pm Monday to Friday.

Childminding Information

An information evening on AFETAC Level 5 course in Childminding will be held on

Tuesday evening 4 September from 7pm - 9pm in the Oblate Basketball Centre, Inchicore.

The Course which starts on Tuesday evening 11 September from 7pm - 10pm will run for 14 weeks and cost €50. There are limited places on the course so

it is essential to book early.

For more information contact: Valerie Gaynor, Project Leader, Childcare Information Bureau, 4 Innishmore House, St. Agnes Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12. Phone: (01) 456 3487 (Enquiries from 9am - 2pm only).

A Date for Your Diary

Research has shown that many disabled people find school difficult and often drop out. So what is it that stops people with disabilities from getting the education they want?

You can help us find the answer to this question by coming along to an Open Space on Education for People with Disabilities which will be held on Tuesday 13 November at a venue which will be confirmed later.

This get-together will give everyone the opportunity to share ideas and opinions on the issue and explore ways of supporting disabled people to get the education that they are entitled to.

For further information please contact Maureen at (01) 458 4853.

Londubh Launches Plan

On Wednesday 23 May, the Londubh project launched its evaluation, strategic plan and a dvd showing the work of the project. Londubh works with children who attend Our Lady of Lourdes NS and St Michaels CBS. This is a very successful interagency project and is supported by the HSE.

The Londubh project works with individual children and also runs group work, after-schools groups and holiday programmes. Londubh hopes the launch of its new plan and dvd will help the project to attract additional funding from other government departments, so that it can further develop into the future. For further information contact Lucy Harrington (01) 458 4842.



Education Grant

If you live in the Partnership area and are going to college in September/October, you may be entitled to the Partnership's Millennium Fund Grant.

For further information phone Fiona at (01) 456 4220. An application form and information sheet will then be sent out to you.

Embracing the Future and Managing Change

Joe Donohoe has been Team Leader with Fatima Groups United since 2001. In the last six years not only has Fatima Mansions been transformed but the Rialto area itself has been undergoing massive change. Joe Donohoe's job over that period has been to work in the interest of the residents of Fatima.

Burning the Demons

In 1997 more than 3,000 people took part in a community parade in Fatima Mansions. The event was dubbed *Burning the Demons – Embracing the Future*. At that time Joe Donohoe had just begun working as a full-time youth worker with Rialto Youth Project.

Two years earlier FGU had been set up to try to make order out of the chaos that was Fatima Mansions. "At that time Fatima was physically and socially the most marginalised of places. It was seen as notorious, associated with drugs and was demonised," says Joe. *Burning the Demons* was the beginning of a movement for change.

Joe recalls that in his first week as a full time worker in Fatima he was stopped twice by the Gardai. "The problems at times seemed overwhelming." But Joe believes that his own background helped him in his work in the area.

Dolphin House was where Joe Donohoe grew up. In the early eighties according to Joe if you didn't have a job or play a lot of football there was nothing for you but emigration. Joe played a lot of football. "When I think of the eighties I think the only things to do were drugs, football or emigration."

Joe's interest in sport – and an unexpected TV interview he did during US President Ronald Reagan's visit to Ireland led to him getting an offer of youth work. "I was asked in the interview what I thought of the visit and I replied, *All I want is a job.*" Very soon after he was contacted and got a start in youth work managing a drop-in centre in the Ferrini Youth Centre in Rialto.

In 1989 Joe was the first person from Dolphin House to become a student in Maynooth College doing the Diploma Course in Youth and Community work. After leaving Maynooth in 1991 he got jobs in youth based work, first in Ballyfermot and then Blanchardstown.

When Joe took up the position of community youth worker in 1997 Fatima Mansions already had a massive



Joe Donohoe: Team Leader Fatima Groups United and Chairman of Canal Communities Partnership

refurbishment failure behind it. £6.5 million had been spent in 1986 on a refurbishment programme which was never completed. By 1990 the community had become seriously marginalised with spiralling drug related problems.

By the late 1990's there had been official recognition that mistakes had been made. The demand by residents to demolish the flats was being listened to and formal negotiations began with Dublin City Council.

"You have to recognise and respect where people are coming from"

A Regeneration Board was established and by 2006 the flats had been levelled and the majority of residents had moved into new homes on the Fatima site.

Regeneration, according to Joe, is not a word that was in common usage when he began work as Team Leader. But it is now a sort of by-word for a new beginning for people looking for change. "There can be



Celebrating: A festive occasion in Fatima saying goodbye to the old flats and welcoming the new houses and apartments

an air of positivity about it. The regeneration of Fatima is widely regarded as a success story in Dublin city and is seen as a role model for other areas."

Canal Communities Partnership is currently finalising a regeneration "best practice" learning document reflecting on the experience of communities in the Canals area.

Two years ago Joe became a member of the Canal Communities Partnership board as a representative of the community sector. In December 2006 he was elected chairman of the Partnership board. According to Joe it's all about maintaining good healthy relationships with people who work in the various sectors, "You have to recognise and respect where people are coming from. You have to recognise their differences and work with them."

Taking the Pulse

The Partnership recently held two consultation meetings for members of groups working in the Partnership area in order to "take the pulse" prior to starting work on the next strategic plan for the Partnership.

Joe Donohoe attended one of those meetings "The atmosphere was great that day. There was a real willingness on everyone's part to engage in planning for the future in a positive way. That hasn't always been a feature of such meetings."

He puts this down to the good cross section of people that are now on the Partnership board. He also suggests that there has been a shift away from people saying what they are against. Instead they are adopting a more difficult but positive position by saying what they stand for.

While the role of Partnership chairman covers development in Bluebell, Inchicore, Islandbridge and Kilmainham, Joe's primary role as FGU team leader focuses on Fatima. "FGU has served the people well. There's the creche, community employment, homework club, the Health Initiative and festivals." He also points to the FGU Development Team which has helped in the delivery of everything associated with the regeneration and all the other activities in the area.

So what's in the future for Fatima? In a word – sustainability.

"Estate management will be at the forefront. Issues that arise will have to be dealt with," says Joe. "They will have to be dealt with in a respectful but disciplined manner."

In other words, "we will have to do everything in our power to address needs such as employment and problems such as drug abuse. We have to get it right".

Joe Donohoe can be contacted at:
Fatima Groups United
Community Buildings, Reuben Street,
Rialto, Dublin 8
Tel: (01) 453 4722

Farewell to Bluebell Staff



From left to right: Niamh Lyons, Clíodhna Fogerty, Mags Laffan, Serena Glennon and Doreen Carpenter

Bluebell Community Development Project (CDP) held a small get-together in June to say thanks and goodbye to some very special staff members who are moving on from the CDP.

Clíodhna Fogarty has finished her contract to work with local women as part of the Equality for Women Measure.

Serena Glennon receptionist and admin person with the CDP is going on maternity leave.

Niamh Lyons is moving on from the Bluebell Addiction Advisory Group to live in Barcelona.

Mags Laffan and Doreen Carpenter continue to work for Bluebell CDP.

Disability Survey

Canal Communities Partnership is conducting a Survey of the Needs of People with Disabilities living in Bluebell, Inchicore, Rialto, Kilmainham and Islandbridge.

The reason for carrying out the survey is that the Partnership wants to find people living in the area who are over 16 and who identify themselves as having a disability: to ask about the needs of people with disabilities; and to help the Partnership work together with people who have disabilities to improve the quality of their lives.

The closing date for the return of the Survey of the Needs of People with Disabilities is 18 July 2007.

If you would like to receive more information on the Survey contact Maureen at (01) 458 4853

Canals Area - Taking the Pulse



Some of the people that took part in 'Taking the Pulse' in the Canals area

The Partnership recently took the first step to begin planning its work for the next six years. Members of various groups from across the Partnership area were invited to attend one of two introductory meetings to 'take the pulse' of the canals area.

The two meetings which were held in the VEC Sports Hall on Emmet Road in June were well attended and have laid the ground work which will be reviewed by Partnership staff and board.

The planning will be taken forward in the autumn after Pobal (government agency) makes clear what the full remit of the Partnership's work will be. Community groups will again be invited to take part in another meeting as part of the strategic planning process.

Intercultural Health Needs

BY EBUN AKPOVETA

In our desire to address the needs of everyone living in the Canal Partnership area and to have a socially inclusive area, the Canal Communities Intercultural Centre, supported by the HSE, recently carried out research to find out the health needs of people from new communities living in the area.

We approached this research by forming a Health subgroup from Volunteers of the centre. They included Laura Molloy, a Health Promotion Officer, Olivia Devine from the Department of the Environment, Jacob Nwazota the Coordinator of the CCIC and Ebum Akpoveta a member of the Steering Committee of the Intercultural Centre.

The work was quite stimulating and interesting because we got to work with people from different communities and nationalities. We had four major groups, Africans, citizens of the new EU states, Chinese and Asians. We learnt about their cultures, how they addressed their health issues in their home countries and what were the greatest challenges to their health since coming to live in Ireland. We looked at what people understood by health. Then we expanded on these understandings to show that health means much more than just not being sick.

Food for thought

Are our health needs the same, White, Black, or mixed? Does your religious belief affect your health in any way, your upbringing or your country of birth? Well all these and more questions were raised at the workshops, so watch this space for more information on the findings and what you and I can do to help ourselves to lead healthier lifestyles, what is available and what would we like to see put in place to make the Partnership area healthier for all.

Staff Change in CCIC

Members of the Canal Communities Intercultural Centre are saying goodbye to their Co-ordinator Jacob Nwazota. Jacob has been pivotal in establishing the Centre on Ring Terrace and the Steering Committee say a big thank you for all his hard work and wish him the best for the future.

We share a premises with the Citizens Information Centre and during the summer the CIC will be open Tuesday and Wednesday mornings 9.30 to 12.30 and everybody is welcome to drop in with their questions.

The Intercultural Centre will be launching a new programme of activity in the autumn and we are looking forward to seeing the community join in!

In the meanwhile if you want more information about our activities or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer in the Centre please contact Claire Ducept at 087 1324115.

New Citizens Information Centre Open



The Citizens Information Centre now operates from 1D Ring Terrace off Tyrconnell Road in Inchicore. Its opening hours are from 9.30 to 12.30 Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. For advice and information call into the office or phone (01) 454 4720 during opening hours.

Check Us Out

Visit the Partnership's website www.canalpartnership.com to avail of some of our resources and for Information on the Partnership and its work.

Back to Work Allowance

If you have been out of work for more than five years you may be entitled to the Back to Work Allowance (BTWA) which will allow you to keep 75% of your welfare payment on top of your wages.

Benefits of BTWA

Under this scheme you can retain your social welfare payment at the following rates: first year 75%, second year 50%, third 25%.

You will pay tax and PRSI on your wages but not on your back to work payment.

You will also retain your medical card for three years and you may also apply for family income supplement.

How to get BTWA

In order to get the BTWA you would need to have just gotten a job where you would be working at least 20 hours a week. You also need to be aged 23 or over and have been out of work for 5 years or more.

You will also need to be entitled to Unemployment Assistance at a weekly rate greater than €50.79 for single person or €78.72 if married or cohabiting.

You may also qualify no matter what age you are, if you are getting one of the following payments for 15 months (or 12 months if you are aged 50 or over):

- * One Parent Family allowance
- * Blind Pension
- * Disability Allowance
- * Carer's Allowance/if not a carer any more
- * Farm Assist
- * Invalidity Pension
- * Unemployment Supplement
- * Pre-Retirement Allowance
- * Widow's or Widower's (non-contributory) Pension
- * Deserted Wife's Benefit or Allowance
- * Prisoner's Wife's Allowance

You may also qualify if you are receiving disability Benefit for at least 3 years. Time spent on FAS Training and CE, is accepted as periods of unemployment.

For further information contact Canal Local Employment Service Network at (01) 453 7229.

How to Find the Job You Want



Job Club facilitator Jackie Colgan, assisted by Olive Byrne, helps Job Club Participants pursue the jobs of their choice

The Canal Local Employment Service Network Job Club offers good quality guidance /training to help people secure the job that they want. The Job Club is open to anyone who is out of work or to people who are in part-time employment.

The key features of the Job Club are:

- * Focused Job search guidance to help you plan your way back to work
- * A wide range of modules which are available to suit your needs, to give you help and advice on Job search techniques, alternative jobs/careers and training.
- * A resource area where you have access to telephones, job vacancy information, stationary, stamps and other office equipment such as a word processor and photocopier.
- * A skilled Job club Leader to assist you in your job search, providing group based and one to one advice and guidance where needed.
- * Access to newspapers, manuals and publications to help you generate ideas about job goals and find out about different types of employment/Jobs.
- * Optional FETAC accreditation available in Preparation for Work and Interpersonal Skills.

For friendly advice and more information about Job Club contact Jackie Colgan or Olive Byrne on (01) 453 7324

Training

The Canal Local Employment Service Network (CLESN) also offers a selection of work related training programmes free of charge for clients in the Canal Communities Partnership area.

A timetable for the autumn training programme is being drawn up, however you can apply right now for any of the following courses:

- * Keyboard Skills
- * Basic Computers
- * Computers for Improvers
- * Office & Reception Skills
- * Manual and Computerised Accounts
- * Manual Handling
- * First Aid
- * Paediatric Emergencies
- * Safe Pass

To apply for any of the courses ring Janet Shanks at (01) 453 7229 or email her at training@canallesn.ie. Alternatively you can ring or call into any of the CLESN offices listed below:

Inchicore: 103 Tyrconnell Road, (01) 473 1881
Bluebell: La Touche Road, (01) 409 7850
Rialto: 398 South Circular Road, (01) 454 0935

New Staff in Partnership and CLESN



Emer Kiniry has recently taken up the post of Administrator with the Local Employment Service. She is based in the Goldenbridge Integrated Complex.



Claire Ducept has recently joined the Partnership staff as Volunteer Development Worker for the Canal Communities Intercultural Centre. Her role will be to recruit the volunteers and work with them on events and programmes as well as providing support and training for all volunteers in the centre.



Olive Byrne has recently been employed by the Local Employment Service as Job Club assistant and is currently based in the Goldenbridge Integrated Complex working alongside the Job Club facilitator.