

Blanchardstown Area Partnership

Mission Statement ¹

“To bring people together to create a better place to live, work and grow”

2008 has been a challenging year for the Partnership. In January 2008 the Board agreed to the Department’s proposal to extend our catchment area to the wider Dublin 15 area. This almost doubled our geographic area, and as a result the Partnership’s client base increased by a further 27,132 persons to 90,952, which translates to an increase of 136% in 10 years.

Staff began to work in the extended areas, making contact with groups and individuals, identifying services (or the lack of them) and consulting widely with the key target groups. The process ended with the December launch by Minister Curran of a DVD, calendar and photographic exhibition “Dublin 15 - Then and Now”.

As part of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, we initiated new actions in relation to older persons, including the Safer Homes project, and also greatly increased our enterprise supports to unemployed men and women.

The Board of the Partnership was revised and strengthened, with the addition of four new members towards the end of 2008. In addition the PIBs (Board sub-structure) reviewed its mandate and members participated in training which was very positively received. Training for Board members is scheduled for February 2009.

The work undertaken in 2008 is seen as a crucial part of the organisation’s continued focus on development, and will serve to develop a secure base for the future of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme.

Measure A Services to the Unemployed

The Blanchardstown Area Partnership (BAP) and the Local Employment

Service/JOBLINK provide a holistic and diverse mix of targeted interventions for persons looking to (re)-enter the workforce after a forced period of unemployment. Following on is a brief synopsis of activities that BAP and the LES deliver across Measure A of the LDSIP.

Blanchardstown Local Employment Service



LES mediators engaged with 579 new clients in 2008. The Blanchardstown Local Employment Service has strategic contact points geographically located across Blanchardstown in Coolmine, Parslickstown, Mountview and Blakestown. In relation to the key issue of progression

- 92 clients attended training courses,
- 76 availed of education supports and
- 122 progressed into employment.

Employment Unit

The **Employment Unit** is a key strategic part of BAP’s Economic Strand. This unit is BAP’s link to employers in the Dublin 15 area and has built up a particular expertise. The unit is a ‘Social Recruitment Agency’ and as such deals with the job placement aspects of the majority of BAP and all of LES clients. In addition to its core work of linking with employers, the unit linked with the Blanchardstown EQUAL Initiative and Blanchardstown Chamber to help Working with Employers. The Employment Unit registered 117 job vacancies in 2008, and 122 clients progressed to employment. 42 interview preparation sessions (mock interviews) took place.

The **Jobs Club** is a distinct service for people who are long-term unemployed, and aims to help this target group towards the labour market. During the training period people are helped with improving their job seeking skills. Interview preparation and mock interviews is a central facet of the jobs club, which aim to increase the client’s confidence levels. Participants have access to the internet, national newspapers, photocopying facilities plus fax and email while on the Jobs Club.

¹ Based on the values of inclusion, equality, empowerment, respect and collaboration

Future Options is targeted towards individuals whose confidence levels may be low, and who are undecided about the next step in their career path. This course facilitates them to achieve progression in a relaxed non-pressurised environment. The course is held twice a week over an eight week period, and includes components such as:

- Introduction to computers
- Telephone Skills and Customer Service
- Business English
- Future Options and Planning

Business Start-Up Workshops and Information Dissemination

Blanchardstown Area Partnership offers a variety of workshops and seminars to help people gain the knowledge necessary to develop and run a successful business. These individual seminars have been developed as stand alone training. This means that each workshop is about one specific topic, from Developing Your Business to Marketing On-Line. As a bloc they can be considered a very comprehensive Start Your Own Business course. Participants however, are free to choose which programmes are more relevant to their business.

Pre-Enterprise and Business Start Up Supports



Clients who attend specific business workshops are often the beneficiaries of pre-enterprise support. This is an intensive support session lasting several hours. The Enterprise Officer sits down and goes through the nuts and bolts of setting up a business.

The Back to Work Enterprise Allowance scheme was availed of by many of these individuals to help bridge the step from unemployment to self employment.

Measure B - Community Development Measure

The Board of Blanchardstown Area Partnership agreed to the proposal by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to extend the organisation's boundaries under the Cohesion process with effect from 1st January 2008. As a result, the Partnership now has responsibility to provide services to the whole of the Dublin 15 area. Funding was provided by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, through POBAL, for initial consultation and pre-development work in the new areas, particularly in Tyrrelstown and Carpenterstown. Innovative actions included the short-term **Get Connected** and **Catch Up with Technology** courses aimed at residents who wanted to learn more about new technology and the internet.

Through the development of Get Connected and Catch up with Technology, a successful consultation phase was completed, and positive linkages were made with the Community Development team of the Partnership.

BAP staff and the outreach team linked effectively with the Blanchardstown Youth Service youth worker and the parish sisters in Tyrrelstown. Additional information was gathered regarding current services (or lack of them) and the profile of the area. Consistent thematic issues were brought up by residents from Carpenterstown and the Tyrrelstown Estate. Some of these needs are distinct to those from RAPID areas where drugs, crime and anti-social behaviour feature highly but similar to residents in other expanding areas of Blanchardstown such as Ongar.

Closely linked to the extension issue was the commissioning of an interagency report by the Tyrrelstown Development Group who wanted to profile the area, identify the needs of and challenges facing the area, engage the community with the process and chart a strategy for their work in Tyrrelstown. BAP management and staff sat on this development group. Three priority recommendations were presented for all interested agencies: a) Develop a community facility for resident of Tyrrelstown b) establish adequate childcare and family support services for families c) develop a strategy to combat social isolation in Tyrrelstown and to promote integration for all members of the community.

Pre-Development Community Development Support

On Friday 5th December 2008, Minister of State at the Department of Gaeltacht, Community & Rural Affairs John Curran T.D. officially launched a DVD, calendar, photographic exhibition of 'Dublin 15 Then & Now' at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Over fifty people were in attendance, many of them from the extended areas. The photographic exhibition is now on show in Dillon House, and it is intended to move to various locations in the Dublin area. The DVD was distributed to the Board of the Partnership, to local Councillors, and to people who took part in the DVD. It will be a useful tool for the future. The Calendar was a great success and has been distributed to community centres, schools, and community projects in the D15 area.



Another outcome that emerged from the extended coverage working group in 2008 was the dissemination of a new information foldout guide entitled '**Welcome to Blanchardstown**' targeting members of new communities. This guide was translated into six languages and strives to help more people integrate into the local community through the provision of information. It is available to view on BAP's website www.bap.ie

-Support to Older Persons

In a key new initiative in 2008, the Community Development team is working with local community organisations to develop a range of responses to the needs of older persons, including:

- Access to computer classes and the Internet
- Information seminars on safety in the home and
- Participation in local safety events in conjunction with the Safer Blanchardstown initiative

The use of internet and email emerged as the most requested information need from older persons, including CE participants

over 55. These ongoing classes were provided in Dillon House, using community computer facilities developed with Dormant Accounts funding.

The Blanchardstown Safer Homes Project

The **Blanchardstown Safer Homes Project** held an afternoon of information on safety in the home and services for older persons in Corduff Community Resource Centre, Blackcourt Rd, Blanchardstown, on Wednesday June 4th 2008. At the well-attended meeting, there were short presentations by the Gardai, the Fire Brigade, Fingal County Council, Citizens Information and the HSE, followed by an opportunity to browse and talk to a wide range of information providers covering issues such as health and safety. BAP has allocated €6,000 LDSIP funding under Measure B towards its Safer Homes for Older People action.

Supporting People with Disabilities

The Daughters of Charity, the Citizens Information Board (CIB) and the Partnership through the Assistant Manager have been working together towards the establishment of an independent advocacy service for people with an intellectual disability and services in the community and voluntary sector. As a consequence a new Advocacy Worker was recently recruited. This post is funded by CIB as part of a pilot initiative until 2010, to support the development of advocacy services in the community and voluntary sector. The worker will be employed by BAP to ensure that the advocacy service provided will be independent of the service provider. The advocate will work to the direction of the steering group².

Support to Established Groups

Friendly Call Service is a community based alert call service set up in 2005 by the Health Service Executive and FCC for elderly and vulnerable people in the Dublin 15 area. Referrals are made from Public Health Nurses, the home help service, the Gardai, other community groups, family, friends and self-referrals to the service. Elderly and vulnerable clients are phoned every morning to check on their well being, remind them of appointments and medication. A number of social events are

² DOC, CIB, Health Service Executive, Inclusion Ireland, BAP and also representation from the service users

organised each year to help reduce isolation and loneliness. The Partnership's Community Development Officer is a member of the local management group and the Partnership helps fund the service through Measure B of the LDSIP.

Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME)

Nutrition and healthy eating are topics that we are all interested in - they are vital to good health, whether for families, people living on their own, young people, students etc. The HSE developed the HFME programme, which started in Dublin in May 2008 as a partnership between the Health Service Executive (Dublin North East), Health Promotion Services and Blanchardstown Area Partnership.



The aim of this community-based project is to help people learn about healthy eating and healthy cooking in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. Fourteen peer tutors were trained in the second half of 2008, and they will begin delivering training to a wide range of groups in early 2009.

The HFME course comprising of six sessions of two and a half hours long will be delivered in local venues such as Ladyswell National School, Buzzardstown Campus, Tolka River etc.

Participants will learn how to make healthy food choices and cook healthy meals.

Each course will include topics such as:

- how to increase your fruit and vegetable intake;
- food labelling;
- decreasing your fat intake;
- increasing your fibre intake;
- healthy shopping habits;
- family food issues such as fussy eaters.

Participants who complete the course will be awarded a HFME certificate and '101 square meals'- a cookery book written in conjunction with MABS, the Money Advice Bureau.

Family Support and Childcare Supports

This research was a jointly funded by Blanchardstown Area Partnership and Fingal County Childcare Committee.



The focus of the study was to research the demands on community childcare services in County Fingal and identify if there is a need for higher staff ratios and therefore increased staffing funding

due to the additional supports needed within childcare services operating in the community sector.

Measure C

Community Based Youth Measure

Addressing the Needs of Early School Leavers

Learning @ Work is a project that attempts to upskill workers who are in employment but who have minimum vocational or academic qualifications. The scheme originally piloted between 2001 and 2004 encourages employers to release their staff for accredited FETAC training and Level 3 Junior Cert or 4 and 5 Leaving Certificate equivalent. The project is now funded by FÁS and the Department of Education and Science under the umbrella of the Dublin Employment Pact, with additional funding from the Partnership's Local Development Social Inclusion programme.

A successful joint application from six Partnership areas in Dublin including Blanchardstown was submitted to the Dublin Employment Pact, and the Education Co-ordinator played a key role in this application. As a result FÁS allocated €1.2 million to the six projects over two years, and the Department of Education and Science is also contributing funding. Training commenced in early 2008 and will continue until March 2010.

In 2008 Learning @ Work provided flexible accredited education and training

opportunities for 32 young adults from Blanchardstown. Modules offered include communications, ECDL, personal and interpersonal skills, manual and computerised accounts, forklift truck driving, counterbalances, and computer applications.

Continued contacts with employers and local publicity through newspapers Blanchardstown Chamber, and local events all help to raise awareness of the issue among employers, the community and local agencies.

The Learning @ Work Project

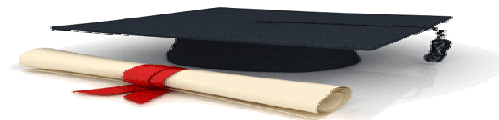
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FÁS NED

Supporting Access to Further and Third Level Education

Millennium Fund 2008



140 adults received financial supports to help meet the daily cost associated with college such as books, accommodation and travel. Applications from RAPID areas are prioritised within the application process to deliberately to help increase the numbers of adults from disadvantaged communities attend third level.

Students are offered one-to-one career and course guidance along with CV and interview preparation. Every August students who have just received their CAO and Leaving Certificate results are offered free confidential advice from qualified career guidance counsellors. In addition once off workshops on topics relevant to college lifetime management note taking and study skills are delivered throughout the academic year.

Preventing Early School Leaving

Eighty two per cent of Travellers in Blanchardstown (excluding 'not stated') ceased their education before the prevailing statutory minimum age of 15 years. In light of this reality an initiative that aims to prevent early school leaving amongst Traveller children and promote Traveller equality in education was financially supported via Local Development Social Inclusion Programme funding during 2008.

The Blanchardstown Traveller Development Group (BTDG) is the lead agency and other partners include Health Service Executive, Blanchardstown Youth Services and the Partnership. These agencies supported a youth/education worker of the BTDG, who was employed through Dormant Accounts funding.

The youth worker, who was a member of the Community PIB, helped to run homework clubs, a 6th year transition and summer programmes. The Partnership is continuing to fund programme delivery elements from the LDSIP with Traveller children and young people as identified by the steering group. Seventy nine Traveller children benefited through these multiple activities in 2008. Unfortunately funding for this post by the Dormant Accounts was discontinued and the person's contract ended in 2008.