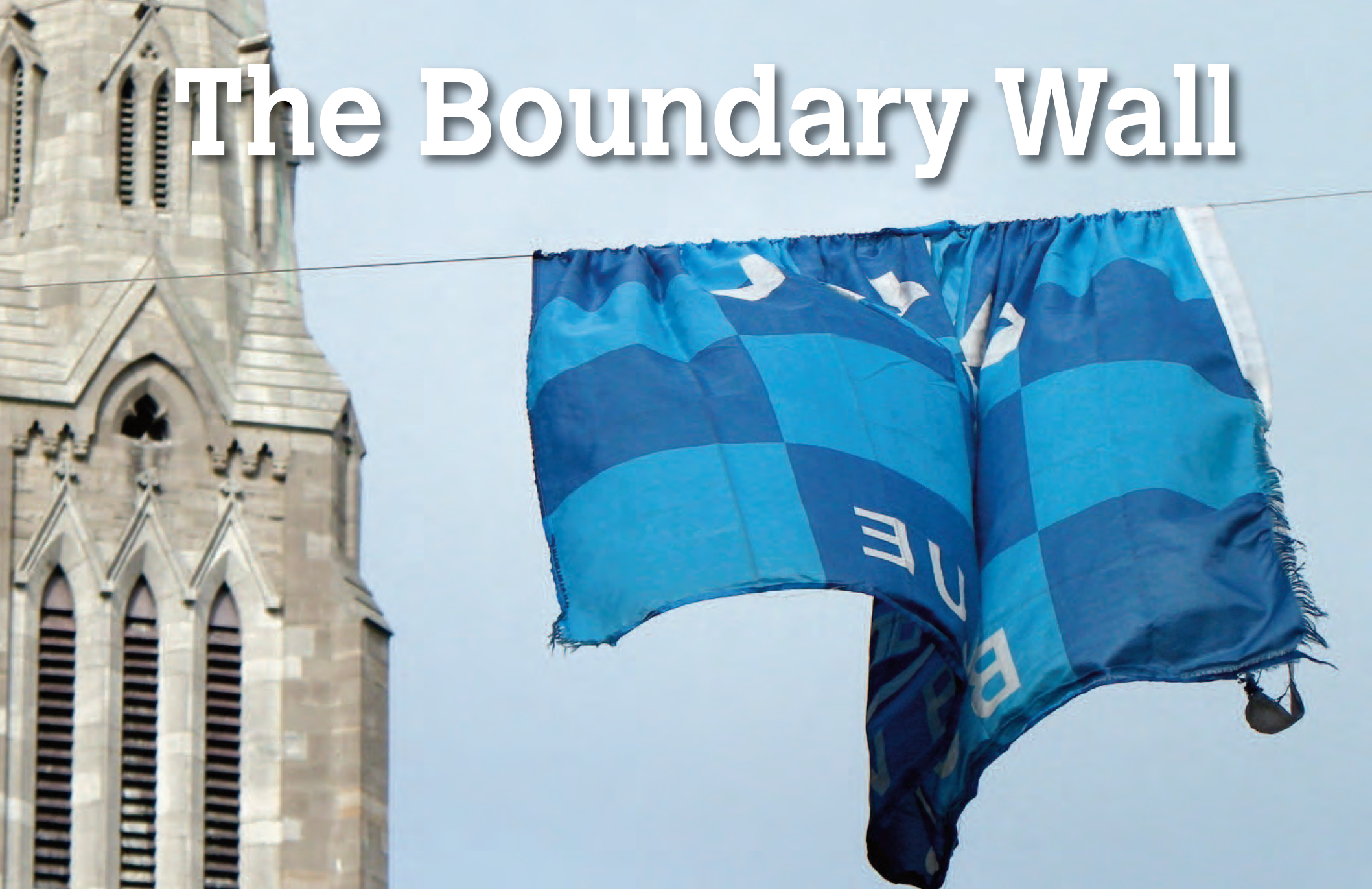


The Boundary Wall



A needs analysis in the North Wall area of Dublin with a particular focus on education and young people

March 2013

The Boundary Wall

The Boundary Wall was commissioned by the North Wall Education and Welfare Group and carried out by Deirdre McCarthy from Community Technical Aid.

Thank you to the trainees in the Community Training Centre North Wall and Una Collins for their excellent photography.



Deirdre McCarthy
Community Technical Aid
Unit 1 Killarney Court
Buckingham Street
Dublin 1

Tel: 855 7015
Email: info@cta.ie



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

This document does not necessarily represent the views of Pobal or the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

THE BOUNDARY WALL

A needs analysis in the North Wall area of Dublin with a particular focus on education and young people

March 2013

Deirdre McCarthy
Community Technical Aid
Unit 1 Killarney Court, Buckingham Street, Dublin 1.
phone (00353) 1 855 7015 **fax** (00353) 1 855 8291
email info@cta.ie **web** www.cta.ie



FOREWORD

This report was very generously carried out by Deirdre McCarthy, following discussions within the NWEWG, a group of workers from local schools, youth groups, specialised support services, child care services, etc, in the North Wall area, with a strong commitment and concern for the children and young people with whom they work.

The group was developed out of this concern and has met since 2009 to look at how services can better meet the needs of the children and young people in their community. An important part of this discussion focused on how services and groups could work more effectively together with children, young people and their families.

As part of that process workers met together every month during the school year and explored the needs of children and young people, and how their service could best meet those needs and looked at what was needed to work together for their benefit. It looked at how this could happen in the most respectful, confidential way, and in a way that included parents, children and young people. It shared information about what each service provided and how they worked, offered support where it was requested, and sought to prevent overlap in services and events.

Arising from these discussions the need for a clearer understanding of what young people needed, what was available to them and where the gaps lay became obvious. It was also agreed that the people who best understood those needs are the people living in the North Wall area, particularly the young people themselves, and they needed to be asked directly, as did the adults in the community who have knowledge of the community, its resources and needs.

This report is a clear, respectful and professional record of the contributions of the people consulted, with really skilled use of information from a wide range of sources as well as real and compassionate reflection of the experience shared by people throughout the research, and here Deirdre's generosity, with time, and openness must be recognised and appreciated, as it is by all members of NWEWG.

Thanks and respect must be given to the young people and older adults who contributed their time, shared their perspective and represented their community so openly, and to the workers and services who facilitated the work throughout.

Finally this report was commissioned for the purpose of more clearly understanding the needs and views of young people and families in the North Wall area, as an aid to developing the work of the existing services, identifying the gaps that exist, providing a basis for the development of new services, supporting more effective interagency work, and giving a voice to the people who use the services.

North Wall Education and Welfare Group January 2013

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Methodology	10
Findings	13
Summary	51
Recommendations	54

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all of those whose work, contribution and support ensured that this report was completed.

In particular I would like to thank the following. The members of the community of North Wall, including the young members of the community, who gave their time and shared their experiences. Their input was vital and it was only with their invaluable and unique insights that the work could be completed. The services/organisations and individuals who took part in the consultations, who also gave their time, knowledge and input. The trainees of the Community Training Workshop in North Wall who provided some striking and beautiful images of the community of North Wall.

Thank you to all of those who provided the information that was critical to completing the work. I aimed to treat it with respect and value. Every effort was made to try and ensure that the material in the report is factually correct, if there are errors I apologise, they were not intentionally made.

This report could not have been undertaken without the ongoing work and support of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group, who worked hard throughout the course of completing the report, meeting regularly and providing support on an ongoing basis. They ensured that the research was conducted within the context of the community and guided and managed the process throughout.

A final word of thanks also goes to those who assisted in some of the very early work as well as proof reading and editing the final report, in particular Mark Candon, Josephine Bleach, Ciara Cunningham and Peter O'Connor.

Deirdre McCarthy February, 2013

Our work is supported by



This document does not necessarily represent the views of Pobal or the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

INTRODUCTION

The following report is a needs analysis of the North Wall area of Dublin with a particular focus on education and young people. The work was conducted on behalf of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group. Consultations to compile the report were conducted between September 2011 and November 2012.

There are a range of services and organisations who work within the North Wall area and/or with the North Wall community. The staff of some of these organisations came together in 2009 to form the North Wall Education and Welfare Group, to develop stronger links, trust and sharing among all those working with children and young people in both a statutory and non-statutory capacity in the North Wall area.

This group identified the need to carry out some research into the North Wall area, with a particular focus on education and young people, to identify:

- Current service provision
- Current gaps within service provision
- Identify barriers to developing/improving service provision
- Identify the needs of the community
- Make recommendations

The aim of this work was to develop understanding of the issues in North Wall. This is not an evaluation of current service provision and has been produced in the spirit of developing our understanding in order to best respond to the issues raised. Therefore, it is hoped that this report and its findings are accepted as a constructive contribution to highlighting the issues that affect the North Wall area.

Where is North Wall?

North Wall, in Dublin's north inner city, is a small, tightly knit community with an historical connection to Dublin's docks which for many years provided employment for the local men and women. The core area itself is centred around Sheriff Street and Seville Place, in the parish of St Laurence O'Toole, an imposing church on Seville Place. North Wall is bordered to the north-west by Amien's Street and a railway bridge that runs at the top of Seville Place, to the north-east by the Royal Canal and to the south by the IFSC. There is also an area, known as North Port, which is part of the parish of St Laurence O'Toole, which is east of Spencer Dock and runs between Sherriff Street Lower and North Wall Quay down as far as the O2. This area is part of the hinterland of North Wall and is primarily older housing stock, edged by some new apartments and interspersed with vacant/partially built developments.

It is a small area that is unusual in that it is physically bounded in many respects, with a huge wall to the west of the area, behind Connolly Train Station, known locally as the *boundary wall*. At the top of Seville Place is an imposing

railway bridge; at the southern and eastern edge of the community is block after block of office buildings and apartments, all of which back onto the community and which are predominately gated and security guarded. The newer developments are also higher than the older accommodation stock which fills North Wall. To the north east is another bridge which heads into the neighbouring community of East Wall. Therefore, this is an area with a strong physical demarcation.



POPULATION

The latest census was conducted in Ireland in 2011 and therefore the figures that this census has generated are relatively recent. The census figures are now available for very small areas and as such we can calculate population sizes and get information on a range of other socio-economic issues. All information can be obtained from the Central Statistics Office at <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011smallareapopulationstatisticssaps/>.

Therefore, using the census we can identify that there are an estimated 1,847 people living in the core North Wall area, with 25% of these, or 462, being under 20 and 36% or 670 under 25.

There is a further population of 676, which would be in the hinterland of North Wall, where some the community would identify with North Wall. There are small pockets of people living in the immediate surrounding communities who may also identify with North Wall historically and socially, but these are difficult to specifically quantify.

These figures have not include the populations living in the IFSC and surrounding new apartments as these populations, although physically very close, do not identify with the community of North Wall or vice versa.

Within the core North Wall area the population is remarkably, culturally, homogenous. 9.5% of the population were born outside of Ireland, and the majority of this non-Irish population live in one small pocket of North Wall. Therefore, in the majority of the area only 5% of the population was born outside of Ireland (this includes the UK). This is in contrast some other small areas of Dublin's north inner city, for example near O'Connell Street, where more than half of the population was born outside of Ireland. 87% of the core population described themselves¹ as White Irish (including a tiny number of Irish Travellers). Excluding the small pocket, where most of those born outside of Ireland live, (in this

¹ Some respondents would have not answered the question.

small area 33% described themselves as White Irish), in the rest of the community 91% consider themselves to be White Irish.

Within the core area 60% of the family units with children describe themselves as lone parents, 53% of family units are headed by lone mothers.

EDUCATION

In terms of education, the figures are stark. Within the core population, of those aged 15 and over;

- 4%² stated they had no formal education
- 34% stated they had primary education only

Therefore, 37% of the population of North Wall aged 15 and over have either no formal education or primary education only. A further 17% completed lower secondary education only.

54% of the population of North Wall had left formal education before the senior cycle of post-primary school.

In terms of third level, 6% of the current population has a third level degree.

EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is a significant issue in this community and the figures highlight this.

32% of the core population aged 15 or over describe themselves as at work, only very slightly less, 30% described themselves as unemployed (either looking for first job or unemployed having lost or given up previous job). Therefore, almost the same number who are actively in the labour market are unemployed and looking for work.

A further 8% describe themselves as looking after home/family, 10% as unable to work due to permanent sickness or illness and 7% are retired.

The area of North Wall has experienced significant socio-economic decline. This has included the loss of traditional employment with the mechanisation of the docks, increased unemployment within the indigenous community and increasing social problems, including all of the problems associated with drug use and distribution. In the 1990s local authority flats complexes in Sherriff Street were demolished and many of the indigenous community were moved out to suburban areas.

² These percentages have been rounded off which account for the 4% plus 34% totalling at 37%.

North Wall sits beside the newly developed Docklands. Tax incentivised construction of the 1990s/2000s has resulted in massive developments literally steps from the heart of the North Wall community. This part of the city saw the most concentrated redevelopment throughout Dublin's inner city³ with the IFSC (Irish Financial Services Centre), the 02 (formerly the Point) and extensive apartment building along the banks of the River Liffey and its environs.

It became clear that two separate worlds were emerging in the Docklands: the world of educated professionals buying and renting newly-built apartments in the area, and the existing population who were left out of the boom-time and living in the older housing stock. While the high rise gated apartment complexes have led to physical segregation between the existing residents and the new community of professionals working in financial services, the economic benefits of the regeneration have not extended to those who have lived in circumstances of socio-economic marginalisation (Share, 2010).⁴

By 2006, in the height of what was termed the Celtic Tiger, the area was surrounded by new, affluent populations while the community of North Wall remained socially and economically very disadvantaged. In fact the communities of North Wall and the IFSC perfectly exemplify what was termed the divided city. The study *Divided City*⁵ examined how the census figures were masking these social divisions and more importantly hiding deprivation within the city of Dublin. Nowhere was this more marked than the area of North Wall and surroundings environs.

NORTH WALL

Apart from dealing with serious socio-economic issues the community of North Wall has also had to deal with the reputation that the area has gained. The labelling of the community of North Wall has been developed and reinforced over many years. In the RTE programme, *It's a Hard Oul Station*, which was made thirty six years ago, in 1977, the contributions from the community referred to the reputation of North Wall and how it hindered their ability to get work. They felt discriminated against because of the bad name the area had. This has continued unabated. Media reports detailing various events in the North Wall area are often sensationalised and almost always only refer to violence and/or criminal activities; all of which helps to further stigmatise an already very disadvantaged community.

We'll Fight Fire with Fire, Cops target feuding gang as teens tool up for all-out war. GARDAI have launched a massive offensive against one of the factions involved in the bloody Sheriff Street feud. ⁶

The area experiences considerable criminal and anti-social behaviour related to high levels of drug addiction and feuding gangs. The physical environment is bleak. It is in stark contrast with the gleaming buildings and public realm that characterise the adjacent regenerated Dockland streets and gated apartment complexes.⁷

³ *Divided City The Changing Face of Dublin's Inner City* A Study commissioned by the Dublin Inner City Partnership Trutz Haase Social & Economic Consultant 2008

⁴ *Developing Early Years Professionalism, Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative's Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands* Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene. Page 32

⁵ *Divided City*

⁶ <http://www.sundayworld.com/index.php>

Historically the area of North Wall has also not been linked to the wider north inner city and has been somewhat isolated from the wider local and community development that goes on in the inner city. In a sense North Wall is a community apart from its hinterland, both physically and socially.

⁷ *Developing Early Years Professionalism, Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative's Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands* Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene

METHODOLOGY

This work was conducted by Deirdre McCarthy of Community Technical Aid (CTA) on behalf of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group.

After initial meetings with the North Wall Education and Welfare Group in May 2011 an agreed proposal was developed. The methodology encompassed three key elements:

- A survey of service providers.
- Consultation with the local community, specifically including young people from North Wall.
- Documentary/policy research relevant to the North Wall area.

Survey of service providers

In consultation with the North Wall Education and Welfare Group a questionnaire was designed to be administered face to face with service providers and organisations working in North Wall. A list of those to be interviewed was drawn up in consultation with the North Wall Education and Welfare Group. The *YPAR (Young People At Risk) Directory of Services for Children, Young People and their Families in the North Inner City* was a valuable resource in identifying interviewees. In all cases the potential interviewees were contacted, information was provided on the work to be conducted and an interview arranged. A letter was drafted to provide more information if it was required. A small number of interviews were arranged via a member of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group. All of the interviews were conducted in the community of North Wall or the premises of the organisation being interviewed apart from one which was held in the offices of CTA. Individual responses have been kept confidential as agreed with the interviewees, and the key issues have been presented collectively.

The majority of the interviews were conducted between the 21st of September 2011 and the 14th of February 2012, with one additional interview in November 2012. There were twenty-one different interviews conducted during that period with people who work with or are involved with at least nineteen different organisations/groups.⁸ In some cases more than one staff member was interviewed. Therefore, in most instances interviews were one to one, but in three cases there was more than one person interviewed. In two cases there were two from the team of staff and in one instance there were five members of staff involved.

It should be noted that many of the interviewees have multiple roles within the community, for example a coordinator of one organisation may also be a board member of one or more other organisation(s). Therefore, there is significant overlap and the interviewee's knowledge and understanding of the community often comes from more than one source or involvement; a small number also live in North Wall.

⁸ A full list of the services and groups interviewed is in *Appendix One*, included in this list is a brief description of the project/service.

The majority of those interviewed have paid roles within the community, but not all. Some also have voluntary roles in addition to their paid role.

In addition to the services/organisations working in the area two focus groups were conducted with Home, School and Community Liaison Teachers (HSCL) who work with a range of schools where children from the North Wall community attend. The focus groups were held in December 2011 and May 2012. In the first group there were nine HSCL Teachers in attendance and in the second there were six⁹. As time was short at the end of the first session questions were sent ahead to the second session to provide people with information on what was going to be discussed. The issues raised have been included in the results of the service providers/organisations.

Every effort was made to include all of the services and organisations that are working in the area.

Consultation with the local community

There were eight focus groups held with the community of North Wall, attended by forty-one different people.

Focus groups were arranged with young people and adults living (and in some cases working) in the community. These focus groups were all arranged with the support of local groups who are members of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group.

There were five different focus groups held with young people who live in the North Wall area. In order to maintain their confidentiality details will not be provided about how the groups were organised. Young people under 18 were accompanied in the focus groups by a responsible adult. Permission had been obtained from parents/guardians.

The focus groups were held between December 2011 and March 2012 and overall there were twenty-three young people involved; eleven male and twelve female. The young people were aged between 14 and 22. The focus groups were grouped by age; there were two groups with 14/15 year olds, one with 16/17 year olds and two with young adults aged 18-22.

In the focus groups participants were asked about:

- The issues in their community from their own perspective.
- Services that they know and use.
- The gaps in relation to services in the area from their own perspective.
- What they would like to see in the community.

⁹ The second session was made up primarily of people who had attended the first session.

- Young people's view of the community and how the community views young people.

There were three focus groups held with adults in the community. The focus groups were held in April 2012 and July 2012. In total there were eighteen people in the focus groups, seventeen women and one man.

Great efforts were made by members the North Wall, Education and Welfare Group to bring together these groups, their time is greatly appreciated.

Documentary/policy research relevant to the North Wall area

Research material pertaining to the North Wall area and wider issues were reviewed as part of the needs analysis. These included;

- Data analysis of CSO material,
- Useful/previously developed literature/research,
- Useful policy documents.

To Note:

A central tenant of the work of CTA is to conduct all work in an ethical fashion, protecting and supporting those involved, particularly members of the community. As such we aim to conduct all research in an ethical manner, ensuring all of those who took part did so willingly and that confidentiality when assured is provided.

Within the context of this piece of work it is important to state that at times it was difficult to get people involved and to get them engaged. There is some tension within the community which has had a knock on consequence for the needs analysis in that some of those who did take part were anxious about participation. Some were very concerned about confidentiality, while others who said that they would take part, when it came to the time to participate did not.

All of the consultations with the community were done in focus groups and at times during the focus groups some participants were reticent and some disruptive (within the younger groups). It would appear that not all participants felt free to express some of the issues that may have been of concern to them. This reticence would be as a result of complex factors including: fear linked to anti social behaviour, an unwillingness to appear to talk badly about their own community and, in particular for the younger participants, an inability to articulate some of the issues that they faced.

FINDINGS

Presented below are the findings from the consultations with both the community and the service providers/organisations working within the community. They have been presented separately; the summary is inclusive of both.

CONSULTATIONS WITH THE NORTH WALL COMMUNITY

Overall there were eight focus group held with the community of North Wall, attended by forty-one different people.

There were five different focus groups made up of twenty-three young people, eleven male and twelve female. They were aged between 14 and 22, with sessions grouped by age; two with 14/15 year olds, one with 16/17 year olds and two with young adults aged between 18-22 years old.

Of the eight participants aged 16 and under all were still in school. In the older groups out of the fifteen participants, five are out of all forms of education having all left school early. One participant stated that they never went to post primary education at all, which meant they left education by the age of 12/13. Of the nine young people aged 18-22, four remain in education. A small number are in third level. All were born, reared and educated within the community.

There were three focus groups held with adults in the community, (notwithstanding the fact that many of those in the young people's focus groups are also adults.) In total there were eighteen people at these focus groups, seventeen women and one man. All but one currently live in the area and all but two were born, reared and educated in the North Wall area. All of those who participated in the focus groups had children, all of whom attend/have attended local schools and/or local services/organisations. Some also had grandchildren who were in local schools and services.

All of those who participated in the focus groups bar two were born, reared and educated in the North Wall area. The relative level of homogeneity of the community, where most come from families who have been there for generations, is a finding in itself. One, who was not from the community, described themselves as a blow in despite the fact they had been living in the area for more than twenty years and had reared children in the community.

All of those involved in the focus groups had some current link with a local project/organisation and at least twelve had worked or were currently working with local services/projects, and therefore have the perspective of both service users and providers of services.

In the focus groups participants were asked about the issues in their community from their own perspective, about the services that they know and use; specifically education and recreational services and the gaps that they feel are in

current service provision. They were also asked to discuss the North Wall community and any community issues that may exist. In addition the young people were asked about how the community viewed and accommodated young people and how they see their own position within the community.

At times the consultation process with community members was difficult as people were reticent about contributing to discussions about certain issues, in particular issues relating to community politics and tensions and/or anti-social activities.

The issues that were raised by the community consultations have been presented below by theme, with common threads highlighted. Unless specified to an age group, or otherwise stated, the issues were raised by most or all of the focus groups.

THE COMMUNITY

The focus groups highlighted a complex and contradictory view of their own community. While many people have mixed feelings about where they live and their own communities, the community of North Wall inspired strong and often contradictory views. Community members both loved and hated it; it appeared to rarely inspire a moderate or temperate response. Almost in the same breath one participant could express how much they love the community followed by a declaration that they were dying ‘*to get out of this shit hole.*¹⁰’ The only group who were unambiguous about the community were those in the youngest focus groups who without exception expressed that they loved their community and where they lived. This passion for their community was not shaken by issues they had living there (such as the visible drug dealing). This has been identified in other research:

While describing a strong attachment to their communities, the young people were very aware of their negative characteristics, including high levels of exposure to the use and sale of drugs.¹¹

All of the older aged young people were acutely aware of the contradiction and spoke of feeling very conflicted about their community and being aware of the complexities. While they often spoke about wanting to get out and get away they also spoke about a strong community which was valuable and which looked after/out for each other.

The complexities of the view are important. For example when the community is discussed by outsiders, such as the media, but also the researcher or service providers perceived to be outsiders, the community is defended vigorously. The residents, the young people in particular, are often very hurt by how the community is portrayed by those who do not

¹⁰ These are direct quotes from the focus groups.

¹¹ *The Free Time and Leisure Needs of Young People living in Disadvantaged Communities* www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre.

live there, particularly in the media. They feel discriminated against and described the classic model of discrimination where the behaviour and actions of one member of a community are used to make assumptions about the community as a whole.

One group of young people described how all of the media reports are negative, which damages the image of the community. One person is reported in the media as from North Wall or Sheriff Street and that report is then used to stereotype and blame the community itself. The young people noted that the media are only interested in stories about violence or problems. They never want to talk about anything positive in the community. This stereotyping causes shame and anger.

Some people look down on you, make you feel like you are nothing.

The complexity,

People from outside look down on us. They read stuff in the papers and they think that everyone is the same. They won't park their car in the area. The snobs from the IFSC won't; they won't walk through in case their iphone is stolen (another laughs that is because it will be stolen).

Issues specific to young people of North Wall

The older young people felt that some services and community representatives excluded them and tried to prevent them from becoming part of the community in a positive way, preventing them from getting involved in community initiatives and/or community fora. They argued that young people are not given the opportunity to express their views outside of settings particular to themselves, such as the youth service, and that the positive work that young people engage in is seldom acknowledged, supported or appreciated. This was the strongly expressed view of the majority of the older young people in the focus groups.

Again, this has been identified in other research:

Many of the young people felt excluded by local community development committees, residents' committees and local authority representatives from the planning processes in their areas.¹²

Many of these young people blame the community for what they perceived to be the high levels of violence and anti-social activities and for the poor opportunities, which they argued existed long before they were born or grew up.

¹² *The Free Time and Leisure Needs of Young People living in Disadvantaged Communities* www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre.

The older young people, who unlike the younger ones are analytical about their own situations, are angry. Those out of school have recognised their own damaged education and the consequent damage to their life chances and they are angry with how education systems and the community have treated them. They are aware that they played a part, but they can see that they are products of the community and the lack of opportunity that their own community has.

The older young people felt that young people are being blamed and looked down upon within their community, as well as outside the community, in a sense they are doubly discriminated against. Within the community they are blamed because they are the young people and externally everyone in the area is considered problematic because they are from the area. The irony that the young people in the focus group noted is that all the behaviour young people engage in was learnt within their community. It was stated that community elders are hypocritical and that it was within the community that young people learnt the behaviour that is considered problematic.

Young people get judged
(Young people), They see you as scum
They, those adults, are hypocrites

Young people were asked to identify their priorities for the community. Interestingly in all groups the priority for them are the problems in the community, followed by issues such as education, employment and leisure activities.

The focus group participants are aware that there are serious problems within the community which are part of the context of discrimination that they experience.

Within the adult focus groups the views of the community were also very conflicted. For some, it is a great community, with a fantastic community spirit, where they would do anything for you. For a small number the sense was that no one cares at all. Those who had problems with the community stressed the impact the antisocial behaviour and violence had on them as members of the community, particularly as it is also perpetrated by members of the community. This was linked with bullying and/or fear of being bullied, in particular children being bullied. It was summed up with the following statement:

There are great parents and mothers, but also trouble

Within the older age group there were those who lament the loss of the flats and argue that the flats were the heart of the community and when they were there the community. They argued that when the flats were there the community had more focus and was closer. These older members remember a great childhood in this community.

The adults raised interesting points about the culture in the community, which includes providing the latest of everything for children, and the pressure that this puts on parents. Parents are expected to have new clothes for children for bank holidays and all special occasions. Children are expected to be kitted out in the latest of fashions. It was felt that the community itself puts mothers and parents under huge pressure to have these public displays and that other bills wait in order to pay for these clothes. The pressure is intense and particularly significant at important/special occasions such as Christmas and First Communion. The focus groups argued that women are often in debt trying to keep up with these demands.

Yet the same woman agreed that,

You would feel sorry for the young fella if he didn't have them (the latest runners)

A child/young person is considered disadvantaged when they do not have the latest fashions.

The older members of the community are also acutely aware of the name/label the community has they feel this reputation is because of the problems, but also how they are reported. Respondents felt that people who live in the community are seen as *scum* by those who are outside, but what people don't realize is that although the area is *rough and run down, there are good people and great neighbours, it is just a few drag you down.*

The focus groups also noted that over the years of the boom this community was promised a lot, new schools and jobs, which didn't materialise. Even now the jobs that local people do get in the IFSC are low paid and insecure. Many of the older members of the community are very concerned about unemployment for their own children and grandchildren and they wonder what will be there for them. It is *no wonder that the young fellas turn to drugs when there is nothing else.*

In one of the focus groups the issue of racism was raised, with one participant arguing that racism is a problem in the community.

ANTI-SOCIAL ISSUES

Both the young people and older focus groups talked about antisocial issues within the community, but one of the most striking features was how much the issue of violence was raised and how visible and common place violent acts were in the community.

The focus groups with older young people were very articulate about these issues and they argued that the violence causes great stress within the community. While the media and many commentators focus on the extraordinary acts

like shootings, the young people noted that they see violence every day at a lower, more common place level. This includes violence against children and women, young children being aggressive towards each other, and shouting and aggression on the streets. In one focus group it was stated that the first thing that came to mind when they thought about their own community is the violence.

The young people felt that they see it all the time in the community and that often young people are just copying what they see going on. Importantly, some of the young respondents noted that you had to be involved to fit-in in this community, to be a part of the community. To stand apart left you more at risk of being the victim of violence.

The young people said that the violence causes stress and intimidation which also results in the Gardaí getting involved, which they argue can then lead to harassment.

For some of the young people this makes them feel ashamed and upset, and all of the young people were conscious that it can make their families nervous when they are out. But for others, there was a macho response (particularly with the younger men), they argued that the violence toughens you up; you have to learn how to protect yourself because of the violence that is in the community. These young men didn't have any sense that this might not be the case for all young men their age:

That happens every night. There is always a fight.

The violence issue was discussed extensively in each focus group with the young people and the response was a mixture of bravado, fear and shame, but crucially it indicted the centrality of the issue within the community. Examples included seeing the aftermath of a murder, with a body left lying in the street for hours, shots fired into the air, people mugged, weapons - such as knives - on show, people getting beaten up, shouting, children getting slapped and screamed at and pervasive bullying.

There is no doubt that this causes trauma and stress to everyone in the community, including both perpetrators and victims. Importantly, it is not unusual for someone to be a victim and perpetrator.

In this climate, deviance from what is perceived to be the norm for this community can be very difficult; for example being gay or academically inclined.

Apart from the violence, there are other anti-social issues that the community referred to. These include:

Drugs and drug related activities

Drugs and drug related activities are pervasive within the community. The young people referred to seeing this behaviour every day, seeing

Junkies all over and trades, you see it every day.

People ask you for blow, it happens all the time you are on the street

The older focus groups worry that children are witnessing this dealing on the streets and have concerns about the influence that it has on them, and it does have an influence, the behaviour is normalised:

I look out my window and all I see is drug dealing.

But what was clearly stated by the adult groups is that there is a fear, a fear that your own are involved/might become involved, or that you might be intimidated by those who are involved. A small number felt that you cannot complain as it could be yours involved at some stage.

The older focus groups argued that there is not enough done by the police or educators to challenge and tackle the drugs issue.

It was also noted by the older community members that drug dealing is a business in a community that has very little opportunities for young people. The young people have no work, often little education, and they see some of their peers with money. It is not hard to see why some young people are making the choices that they are making.

Interestingly the older focus groups constantly refer to the drug problem as an issue with young people, but this problem has been going on for over thirty years, the young people are not the originators of drug problems in this community.

Public drinking was also seen as an issue

People are so fucked up you see them on the street

Property damage

The damage and vandalism to property and the general depilation of the community was raised. The younger respondents stated that the place looked awful and that they hated it being that way. The older focus groups focused on the damage to

community resources and facilities and the stress and damage that that causes the community. In September 2012 one of the local schools was damaged by a fire that was maliciously set.

In terms of property damage the respondents said that if you live in the community your property is fine, but that the community facilities are damaged constantly though they are serving the local community.

Policing

The relationship with the Gardaí as described by the community is fraught.

The young people in the focus groups are very vocal on what they described as harassment from the Gardaí. This was across all of the focus groups and described and articulated by all of the young people, including those who are at third level. One point raised repeatedly was that young people from the area who leave the area are told to go back to their community. The young people argued that they are being corralled and cordoned off into their community and they are identified as a problem in themselves. Young people felt that it is assumed that they are up to some criminal activity, or that if they have anything (a bike, car, phone etc), that they stole it. They argued that they are not treated with any respect. The assumption is that they are guilty before they are even spoken to:

The cops on the street, they hassle us, tell us they will nick us, move us when we are outside of the area.

There are rats on the street, cops come and say that they have been rung. They pick on us because they don't want to pick on the older ones, they are afraid. .. When up town you are told to go home.

It was also argued that the community is policed differently. If something happens within the community it is ignored, but if it happens in the IFSC it is addressed straight away. Despite there being police on the street there is still visible drug dealing on the streets. It was argued by the community that the police focus on young people and not on the real problems in the community.

Some of the young people, particularly those living in the urban and suburban areas, reported problematic relationships with local Gardaí ... High visibility of young people 'hanging around' on the street brought them to the attention of neighbours and the Gardaí¹³

This was a sentiment that was echoed by some of the organisations and community groups working in North Wall, where it was noted that there was a sense that the small stuff is over policed and monitored (such as speeding or

¹³ *The Free Time and Leisure Needs of Young People living in Disadvantaged Communities* www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre

teenagers hanging around) while significant criminal activity is not dealt with effectively. Also, that members of the community are automatically assumed to be up to something or in the wrong, they are not respected or trusted at the outset.

Apart from the feeling of harassment, both adults and younger members of the community were very clear that the community does not talk to the police.

People see a lot happening but they won't say anything, ... you cannot be a rat.

It was noted that there is fear in the community and that you cannot be seen to be talking to the police. It is accepted by both young and older members of focus groups that this code of silence exists and to break it would mean that you are a *rat*. To be seen as a rat is a huge stigma and potential danger in this community. Among the young members of the community there is no link made between this code and intimidation. The older community members recognise that it is reinforced by unspoken intimidation.

COMMUNITY SERVICES/SUPPORTS

Those involved in the focus groups are, by and large, very aware of the services and organisations working in the community. The gaps often lie in an understanding of what specifically an organisation or group does or how to access the service i.e. details in relation to their knowledge of what is available in each organisation. There are also assumptions about what services do which may not be true. This is true for both the adults and the young people. This can be a problem at times where people think they are excluded from a service, where as in fact they do not meet the criteria for that service. Alternatively, they are not aware that a service can provide them with the support that they require because they think it is not suitable for them.

The older young people clearly stated the value of youth services to them and as a consequence the community. They articulated how, apart from providing leisure alternatives for them, they are a life line of support. This includes acting as advocates for them, providing them with a space where they are respected and giving them the opportunity to raise their own issues. Even the younger interviewees, who did not articulate the issues in this way, clearly use the youth service as a support in their lives and described how it helped them with various issues, in particular issues in relation to education, for example talking to a school in the absence of a parent:

If it was not for services like SWAN I would be in prison.

The younger interviewees are involved in a wide range of activities, including sport and youth activities, and have a good range of supports available to them. The difficulty often lies in the space that is being used for the activities, which is

small and unsuitable. The asset is the high level of support and trust that the youth services and clubs have established with the young people. They are highly valued, which only the older young people appear to have the confidence to say directly.

As was raised by the services/organisations, the lack of good quality premises can make the services appear messy and not structured to the young people.

Some of the young people argued that they are excluded from some local services, which makes some of them very frustrated. The perception from some in the focus groups with young people is that young men from the community, in particular, find it difficult to access some services.

Gaps identified in community services/organisations from the perspective of the community.

- Community space for services and groups but also for the local community to use.
- A women's group. The focus group itself sparked this comment, as the women enjoyed the opportunity to discuss and raise issues.
- A men's group.
- Support for parents with children with special needs.
- Options for the 16-24 year olds in relation to education, training and activities.
- Support to get more men involved in community work.
- More sports facilities.
- Guidance counsellors and counsellors to support young people and help them make decisions.
- More clubs for (older) young people, and clubs that are open longer. The young people felt that these facilities are the protective factor for young people.
- Young people wanted more respect for and within the community.
- An acknowledgement and way to manage the levels of stress that are in the community, stress from anti-social activities but also lack of opportunities.
- A better physical environment, including ways that young people could work to improve the local environment.

EDUCATION ISSUES

What emerged in the community discussions with the young people and adults is the level of educational disadvantage experienced in the community. In the focus groups with adults fourteen of the eighteen adults had left school early. Of the four who had completed school three were under thirty. The remaining participant had completed her education outside of Ireland. In two of the focus groups with adults not one had completed second level education. None of the adults had third level education although many had done some further education and training. Although it was not asked, given the nature of the focus groups, during the course of the discussion it became clear, or was disclosed, that

a number of the participants were not literate or had very poor literacy, including two young mothers with no literacy at all. This caused very visible stress to some people.

All of the young people had gone to the local primary schools as had almost all of the adults, and all of the adults had children and/or grandchildren who had gone to school locally, and/or had children who had used local pre-school services.

Throughout the discussions, in particular with the adults, their knowledge of the specifics of the education system was at times weak. In fact while most of their children had attended the reception year¹⁴ in the local primary schools, some were completely unaware that this system was not universal and that it was an additional educational support for this community.

Despite their own poor educational experience, all of the parents had ambitions for their children to stay on in school, but many were less than certain or even hopeful that this would be the case. In terms of ambitions for their children, a small number aspired to third level, two had children in third level, but many stated they would be happy if their children finished school. At a time in Ireland when the majority of young people go on to third level education the aspirations in this community, while growing, are still trailing the national picture.

You want them to get a better education than you got.

Even with a good leaving they can't get a job.

If he can just get his junior I will be happy.

This is also true of the young people. Very few referred to a third level ambition or employment that required third level education. In the younger age groups only two thirds were even committed to finishing school. Some, while in school, were aspiring to the FÁS training centre.

In discussions it became clear that parents often see their role as simply getting the children to school and that the education providers take it from there, but national policy views the parents as the primary educators of their children.¹⁵

It is clear that there is a lack of awareness in this community of the additional role and support required from parents to ensure that children get the best outcomes from schools. There is also often a lack of skills and resources to be able to provide those supports.

¹⁴ The reception year is a year of pre-school education within the school setting.

¹⁵ *Developing Early Years Professionalism*, Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene, Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative's Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands

From the parents perspective it is easy to get children to primary school, but it got harder to get them to post-primary.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

All of the young people and the parents expressed their happiness and satisfaction with primary school in the community, apart from one. One had concerns about the local schools because of what goes on around them, rather than the schools themselves.

Overall, the young people really only spoke about primary school to compare it favourably to post-primary. What these young people highlighted as valuable about primary school was that,

- they were small,
- within the community,
- the teachers knew them (the young people/children) and cared for them, they had a relationship with them, and
- the girls noted that they enjoyed the sports at primary school, but that they had drifted off from sports at post-primary.

The parents in the community were also very happy with the primary schools. Parents felt that they had,

- good teachers,
- good support including help with the homework and help for them as parents to deal with homework,
- the schools are very approachable, and
- seem to be very well resourced.

It was noted that children with special needs were getting additional support. One parent made the point that one of the problems for her child was that they got that support at primary level but not at post-primary, and that as soon as the support was gone the child's engagement with education was gone too. The more they struggled, the more difficult it became educationally, the more difficult the child became socially. This child has now been put out of school at post-primary level.

One of the issues raised at primary level is capacity to support children in completing their homework. One group agreed in a discussion amongst themselves that most of their problems lay in poor organisation, but some found it hard to deal with subjects like maths, English and Irish. They all noted that it gets harder and harder to help with homework as children get older. Despite the problems with homework, all of the respondents were happy that they could approach the school and raise questions/problems.

I hate it, it can take hours. (Mother of a child in primary school)

All of the parents who had children in primary school noted that they had been involved in projects and initiatives run with the schools (often in conjunction with other agencies)), projects on books and reading, although parents were vague on the details. They laughed that it all got very competitive.

The only issue of concern raised in relation to the primary schools, by the parents in the community, was the poor condition of the buildings of two of the schools. The schools were compared to new schools such as the Lourdes School on Sean McDermott Street and parents hoped that new schools like that could be built.

POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION

One of the most significant and serious issues from the perspective of the community was the difficulties that they had with post-primary education. The young people expressed dissatisfaction with their post-primary education and parents also listed a range of problems.

The issues were not really about the specific local schools (although there were some issues) but more about the issues with the transfer from primary to post-primary, coping with being in post-primary education, discipline, survival in education and education outcomes.

In the focus groups with the 14/15 year olds, six out of the nine showed clear signs of disengagement from post-primary school, included repeated suspensions, an expressed dislike of school and little/weak commitment to completing school. The problems they raised included the fact that they didn't like friends separating (as they had to leave the community and go to different schools), indicating that they lacked confidence without their own peer group. They felt that post-primary was just not like primary school, they find it hard, too strict, with long days, they didn't like changing rooms for classes or the much bigger schools, *they knew you in primary school, you don't get treated badly by the school.*

In the older focus groups, all of those not currently in education had a damaged education. They managed primary school but the transfer and second level experiences were poor. They discussed how second level was run compared to primary. The older young people felt that there was very little support or encouragement and they found the culture of second level very different to primary.

In primary school they had a good relationship with the teachers, which they found did not exist at second level.

The support for the person is gone when you are in second level.

The older young people were very animated and angry about educational issues in relation to post-primary education and they argued it was the most significant issue in the community for young people. They felt that within their own peer group the majority finished early or finished badly, and that it was time to look at the phenomenon of young people being put out of school rather than focus on those leaving school. It is assumed that young people leave voluntarily, the point was made that many leave because they have no support and they go before they are pushed out.

The parents also had a more mixed view of the post-primary schools. A small number were happy with them, feeling that they kept a close eye on the children. *The schools texts me if she is not in school which I think is great.*

Again, though, the parents felt that their main role was to get the children to school and that this was harder at second level. *Some just hate school.* Therefore, parental involvement in the education of the children is weak, which is an issue of concern:

According to the research parental involvement in a child's learning has more of an impact on their educational outcomes than any other demographic measure including social class or level of parental income (Desforges, 2003; Feinstein et al, 2004; EFLN 2008; NESF, 2009).¹⁶

In a community survey conducted for the National College of Ireland a key finding was that,

While parents have high aspirations for their children, they do not understand their pivotal role in enhancing their own children's learning. This finding was crucial in informing the planning and designing of the activities of the Early Learning Initiative.¹⁷

But, similar to the young people, parents had a range of concerns about post-primary, many of them the same as the young people in the community. For the parents there was the added stress of watching their children struggle.

There was also a significant information deficit in the community, many of the parents had very little understanding of the school system at that level, they didn't understand about subject choices, the implications of programmes such as Leaving Certificate Applied and third level, or how school was organised.

Specific issues of concern raised by the adult focus groups:

- The school work itself is hard.
- They get a lot of homework and parents often cannot help.
- Young people don't like changing class rooms/lots of teachers.

¹⁶ *Family literacy in Ireland*, NALA September 2011.

¹⁷ National College of Ireland, Community Survey by Dartington Social Research Unit 2006

- Young people don't seem to have as much of a connection with the teachers.
- There are concerns that some children get sent home for very minor breaches of discipline (for example having the wrong shoes).
- Parents are concerned that children are very young (12/13) starting post-primary school and that this is a difficult age for children anyway.
- The school style is so different from primary school. They would like to see the style of post-primary more like primary school.

A recent study noted similar concerns:

One of the commonly mentioned anxieties expressed by students pre-transfer was that they would find it hard to cope with the demands of extra homework and study on entering the more academically oriented second-level system.¹⁸

Unlike primary school the parents literally had no relationship with the schools outside of scheduled meetings and or the odd text. They often had no idea what went on inside the school. Their lack of understanding about educational routes was very clear. Older parents, who were out of school the longest had no idea about the Leaving Certificate options and few were aware of Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). One parent was very upset because she felt that her child was pushed into LCA and was not allowed to do a standard Leaving Certificate. A younger parent, who herself had done LCA noted that she had no idea when doing it that it would mean she could not study to be a teacher when she left school. Parents felt that they needed much more information about post-primary education, in particular the senior cycle and the Leaving Certificate options; information that they could understand.

They did, overall, feel that it was useful for the young people to attend schools outside of the immediate community, as it might help promote independence.

Some of the parents noted that their children do have additional educational support. Some are involved in homework clubs, in the schools or elsewhere, some have children getting support from the National College of Ireland (NCI). Parents found the extra support very useful and it helped the children in a way that they could not.

There was considerable debate among the adult focus groups about whether the young people in the community are staying longer in school and whether the community is more committed to education as a whole. Some see an improvement with more doing their Leaving Certificate, but for many they feel young people just not attending, or are still leaving early with nothing, particularly the boys.

¹⁸ 'Moving In' and 'Moving Out' 2010 Maeve O'Brien National Centre for Guidance in Education Marino www.ncge.ie/primary

Suspensions

One of the signs of disengagement from school is suspension. This was one of the significant issues raised by all of the young people. Overall seventeen out of the twenty-two young people had been suspended at least once; some had been suspended many times. That is over 77% of the young people in the focus groups. Of the nine young people in the younger age group (14/15 year olds) six had been suspended at some stage in post-primary school (to date); none had been suspended in primary school. That is a rate of 66%. One was suspended at the time of the focus group.

In one small focus group with 14/15 year old young men, all had been suspended at post-primary level (they were never suspended at primary level) and all calculated that they had missed more than 20 days in the previous school year. One was aware that the Education Welfare Board had been in contact with his family due to poor attendance. Discussion with this group indicated that they had no notion of what was involved in the Leaving Certificate cycle, (they were currently in the junior cycle of post-primary). It is very clear that these young men's connection to education and school is tenuous.

What was argued over and over by the young people was that they were suspended for very little, usually small infractions of various codes that they had very little commitment to; such as minor dress code infractions.

Suspension was also raised as an issue by parents. 75% of those with children in post-primary school, or who had left/completed post-primary school, had had a child suspended. In one case the child was constantly out of school. The mother has been contacted by the Education Welfare Board due to the poor attendance which she argued is down to the child being suspended. In this case, the mother argued, there is a clear link between the child's academic struggles and poor behaviour. In primary school he had support for his difficulties, which he did not receive at post-primary level. To her the support was taken away as it did not continue into post-primary school. Two other parents linked their children leaving school early to learning difficulties as they did not get any support. The children left because they couldn't cope.

It was telling that some parents had to constantly battle, both with the child and the school, to keep their child in school.

Third Level/Further Education

A small number of young people who are in third level were part of the focus groups. In the adult focus groups a small number of parents had children in third level.

What was clear is that those who attend third level are the exception. They are the exception in their own peer group and in the wider community. The young people estimated that between five and ten percent of their friends are in third level education. They noted that it can be hard in college as some feel like outsiders. These young people often feel like

the exception both in the community and in the third level institutions. These young people are breaking the mould which takes strength and requires support.

When discussing third level, it was clear from all of the focus groups that having the NCI nearby was a great bonus as the transition to third level was considered momentous enough without making the students travel. Many in this community will not consider travelling any distance for education/training.

Most in third level are the first in their families to go to college, or part of the first generation to go.

Finances were a huge issue for those at third level and their parents. Their peers, who go to FÁS, get paid. Those who do nothing get the dole. Those in college get very little and they have to study. It can be hard for them to see peers with money and spare time while they are struggling:

We have to study or get to class while they can just hang around ... I have been told why do you bother, just leave, you get more (money) just dosing.

Young people who are in college felt that the community needs more information about third level, and the grants and supports that are available, because many people in the community are fearful of how much it will cost.

The young people spoke about attending college vs. the Community Training Centre ([CTC], always referred to as FÁS). Some argued that friends chose FÁS because it was the easy option and they get paid there. But they felt that there should be progression from FÁS and training, to NCI and other colleges. Again it was argued that at times people did the LCA because it was the easy option (and no one pushed them) and that parents don't really know that it is the easy option.

Young people noted that another central issue is expectations. They stated that middle class young people are expected to go to college while young people in North Wall are not. *D4 kids are expected to go to college, we are not.*

College in this community is seen as a bonus and not an expectation, *parents are happy if you do your leaving ...*

It is hard to impress upon young people then the value of education, particularly in a community where the expectations are low.

All parents wanted the best for their children but middle-class parents had direct experience of the system themselves and also had the resources to help their children with schoolwork. Working-class parents were afraid to push too much. They are

well aware of the social cost of academic success in moving away from family and peer group practices (Walkerdine et al.,2002).¹⁹

What are you going to do after school?

The younger aged focus groups found it difficult to articulate their situation. Like many their age they do not consider beyond the weekend, but out of a group of nine only one had a solid ambition for the future (to be a nurse). For the others the most significant ambition was to go to FÁS (CTC). The CTC is perceived to be a job. There is no recognition that it is second chance education. These young people often see it as a first choice after a certain age. Many of the young people in the focus groups simply did not want to discuss the future, for many their expectations are very low, so low they cannot even be named.

Consultations with the older young people identified an anger; anger and stress about their own educational experiences. These groups recognise their own disadvantage, educationally and socially.

Some talked about emigrating, but many noted that they had no money or skills which would be a barrier to successfully leaving the community.

Employment

The adults in the community and older young people are acutely aware of the employment issues in the community. Parents are concerned about the employment prospects of their children, as are the young people who are out of education, including those who have finished further education.

Older members of the community noted that many of their own generation are not educated and they have little hope of getting work in this employment climate. Jobs, that a few years ago they would have had a chance of getting, have become professionalised and/or computerised and they cannot hope to get those jobs. They argued that much of the work that people from North Wall do get offered is also the lowest paid with the poorest of conditions including long hours and no security.

Unemployment is a huge issue in the community and, as it was noted with a sense of irony, the IFSC around the corner is providing employment to thousands while half of North Wall is unemployed.

¹⁹ 'Moving In' and 'Moving Out' 2010 Maeve O'Brien National Centre for Guidance in Education Marino www.ncge.ie/priamary

Among the younger people in the focus groups many had not thought that far ahead, stating that as they were in school it was not a problem for them. The young people had no notion of planning or directing their lives. At the age of 15/16 they were not making any plans for the future. This is at an age when many middle class young people have picked all the subjects that they desire, for the points that they require, for the third level course that they want to study, to get the job they want in life.

Other Issues Raised

- Accommodation – where do young people go? This was a concern raised by the adult focus groups. New social housing was promised but not built and the community are concerned that families are leaving as there is no where within the community for them to stay. There is a need for accommodation in the community for the next generation; the new/younger mothers are still in their own family homes.
- Having children at a young age was discussed by the young people in the focus groups. The younger age group did not identify it as a problematic issue and argued that nineteen was a perfect age to start a family. The older young people felt that people were having children before they were ready (and able to). They felt that more work and support was needed to help those who did have children young, and to educate those who haven't had children, about the reality of parenthood.
- One group of adults noted how much they had enjoyed the opportunity to talk together as a group. As a result they felt they would like to see some place for them to meet and chat as a group, like a women's group.

RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Interviews with the service providers, community groups and individuals involved in projects/community work in North Wall were conducted between the 21st of September 2011 and the 14th of February 2012. One interview was conducted in November 2012. (Further details are in the methodology section.)

There were twenty-one different interviews, involving twenty-seven individuals, who work with or are involved with at least nineteen different organisations/groups.

A full list of the services and groups interviewed is in Appendix One. Included in this list is a brief description of the project/service.

In addition to the projects/services working in the area two focus groups were conducted with Home, School and Community Liaison Teachers (HSCL Teachers) who work with a range of schools where children from this community attend.

SERVICES IN THE AREA

As the interview list and service descriptions should indicate there is a wide range of services and organisations in the North Wall area. Of the nineteen different organisations that were interviewed as part of this work, fourteen focus all or a significant proportion of their work on the North Wall area. In these cases they are either based within North Wall, providing services and supports directly to the community, or are based close to North Wall and focus on the community of North Wall as one of their target communities. Some of the larger statutory organisations, such as DCC or the Gardaí, have specific staff/workers that are tasked with focusing on North Wall. The other five organisations/groups work in wider catchment areas, such as the north inner city as a whole, whose remit include North Wall. As such, some of their work is with the community of North Wall. For these organisations their involvement can be changeable. At certain times they are more involved in the community than at other times.

Services include: three primary schools (all designated DEIS Band One²⁰), a community training centre, a community development project, community crèches and after school services, a community association, a youth service, a community centre, a sports club and, just on the periphery of the community, a third level college with an Early Learning Initiative focused on local communities, inclusive of North Wall, and Dublin City Council. As well as a range

²⁰ In May 2005 the Irish government launched the *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools* (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion (DES, 2005).

of services that are not area specific including Dublin City Council, community projects, the HSE, the Gardai and the City of Dublin Youth Services Board.²¹

What has been noted is that there is no post-primary school in the community itself, although there are a number of schools in the neighbouring communities, including single sex boys' and girls' schools and mixed schools.

As noted in the introduction both physically and demographically this is a small community, with an estimated 1,847 people living in the core area.

Therefore, there are a range of services working in a small area, with a small population, resulting in a huge overlap of usage and personnel involvement. People work in one organisation, volunteer in another; the community attend services in multiple organisations, which may have an overlap of staff/volunteers all within a small, tight knit community.

Of the nineteen organisations that were involved in the research, the types of work they are involved in includes:

- Sixteen are involved in networking with other services and organisations within the community and at times beyond.
- Fourteen are involved in direct service provision within the community.
- Seven are involved in policy work.
- Seven are involved in community development work.

Many of the organisations have multiple functions and, for example, while proving a direct service they are also involved in networking with other organisations or developing policy initiatives.

Twelve of the nineteen organisations are statutory organisations, while the remaining organisations are community (six) and private organisations (one).

Sixteen of the nineteen organisations get the bulk of their funding from the state regardless of their status. It should be noted that some of the organisations get small amounts of additional funding from other sources such as philanthropic groups or other agencies (i.e. Pobal, Dublin Docklands Development Authority, etc). However, the core funding comes from the State.

²¹ The provision of services and supports in Ireland is often complicated by the fact that catchment areas are not consistent between organisations or over time, and are rarely rigid. There is also the added complication of the complexity of the organisations that work with the community; some are large organisations who provide a range of services some of which are specially targeted at communities such as North Wall and some are small organisations with very specific remits targeted at very specific communities.

Funders into this community include:

- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Department of Education and Skills
- Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
- Department of Justice and Equality
- Dublin City Council
- Dublin North Inner City Drugs Task Force
- FÁS (including CE (Community Employment))
- HSE (Health Service Executive)
- Pobal
- The Parish of St Laurence O’Toole
- Philanthropic Funding
- Probation and Welfare Service
- CDVEC (City of Dublin Vocational Educational Committee)

COMMUNITY ISSUES

A range of questions were asked to raise and examine issues that the services and organisations are dealing with on an ongoing basis. These issues are presented collectively by theme. These themes interconnect, all impacting on each other, and it is only within the overall context that the issues can be understood and addressed.

Socio-Economic Disadvantage

One of the overwhelming findings to emerge is the issue of socio-economic disadvantage of North Wall and the impact that this disadvantage is having, and has had, on the community. Essentially, the services/organisations consider this community to be one of the most disadvantaged areas in the city. At its simplest, there is a lot of visible poverty in the area.

All of the respondents referred to the high levels of socio-economic disadvantage that the community experiences and the resulting problems that emerge, such as educational disadvantage, issues with anti-social behaviour including criminal activity and, in particular, drugs related activities, economic disadvantage, poverty and unemployment, and the physical degradation of the community.

While not all respondents described the issues or placed the same emphasis on each of the issues, overall disadvantage was a central theme throughout particularly the impact that disadvantage has on the community and on providing services within that community. A local service, such as a childcare provider or youth group, is providing their service

within the context of all of these issues. The issues are within the services in that they impact on the children attending and they are all around the services outside. The socio-economic disadvantage does in itself mean that services are designed and delivered in a particular way but the wider community issues almost always outweigh the supports and/or responses that an individual project or organisation can provide. For example a local school cannot eradicate generations of literacy difficulties alone, even with additional resources (although they are very much needed), as the causes of educational disadvantage do not lie solely within the formal education system.

It was noted that this community did not benefit from the boom in the ways that other areas of the Docklands did, . If anything it was further disadvantaged by new large scale developments built right up to its borders. (Interestingly, it was noted by one of the community respondents that restaurants/bars and clubs within the IFSC used to refuse service/bookings from the North Wall community, but they appear to be happy to take bookings now!)

Services such as schools, which operate under national guidelines and curriculum, have to constantly develop creative ways of increasing their resources to support the children in their schools. These additional resources are required to support children who are growing up in North Wall due to the wider socio-economic issues within the community.

Projects and schools are involved in fund raising from the corporate sector, have volunteers to support their work and the additional support provided by community programmes. In some cases local projects and schools have successfully linked together to develop and provide additional programmes in schools and youth projects, to support educational achievements. One such example is the ongoing relationship between Citi (Bank) and local schools.

For all services, in particular the schools, this requires more work and more commitment than many schools and projects outside of this community have to produce. This has an impact on staff, resources and continuity. If schools and projects are relying on volunteers, grants, or particularly enthusiastic staff there is more of a risk that these resources can be lost. It was also noted by one respondent that voluntary groups, at times, are given the sense that they are not trusted to spend grants/monies appropriately and that heavy requirements and monitoring is placed on them for small sums of money.

Community Culture

Clearly the culture of North Wall is enormously impacted on by the socio-economic status of the community. In this community there are a number of specific issues.

Firstly, it was noted that it is a very closely knit community, which provides enormous internal support for the community overall. Despite the image of the community externally, people leave their keys in the door, look after their neighbours and support one another to a huge extent. The women of the community were particularly referred to as the positive glue and core that maintains the community and provides its strength. It is often the women of the community

who identify those who need support. This is also a community with a strong sense of its own history and place within the Docklands. This was also expressed in the community consultations where the complex view of their own area includes reference to the strength, love and support that people get from their own community. It is also a very indigenous community, with much of the population coming from families that have lived there for generations. The IFSC and surrounding apartments have brought a large amount of new residents into the wider area, but the local community remains highly indigenous.

It was also noted that people grow up young in North Wall, a similar pattern in many inner city communities, where people become parents and grandparents younger than the general population.

What was noted as particular to this community is the somewhat isolated nature of the North Wall area. The isolated nature of the community was described as both physical and cultural. The community itself is surrounded by a huge wall, gated communities, railway bridges and rivers/canals. When the building work was going on it was also surrounded by hoardings and over hung by cranes. The anti-social behaviour has given the community a negative reputation, causing those who do not live there to stay away. At times a heavy Gardaí presence adds to the isolated, *no go*, feeling of the area.

The community is perceived to be insular and the new massive developments in the IFSC/Spencer Dock has yielded little gain for the community, but has served to increase its sense of isolation. It was lamented by some that there was little or no benefit from the IFSC (and there has been plainly little integration with the new communities that have moved in literally steps away). North Wall has now become dominated, physically, by these new developments.

It is a community that is perceived to have no political clout and is therefore unable to apply any political pressure. In terms of service provision and community development the area has also been somewhat distinct and disconnected and in fact does not identify with the rest of the north east inner city (NEIC).

The physical isolation and insular nature are additional potential barriers to getting members of the community to leave the area to attend services outside of the area; as well as barriers to developing new services with outside support.

Anti-Social Issues

Before discussing the issues with anti-social behaviour it is important to state that all of the respondents highlighted the fact that those who engage in anti-social behaviour are very much in the minority; the difficulty is that the consequences (and seeds?) of their behaviour effect the whole community.

Another issue, particular to this community, is the visibility of the anti-social issues. Anti-social behaviour is often public, very visible and in clear view of the community, including children. This includes gangs hanging around, public

drinking, drug taking, and crime against property and people; one of the most dramatic incidents was a shooting, the aftermath of which was witnessed by many in the community, including children.

While there are issues with anti-social activity throughout the area and surrounding areas there is a particular flash point in this community. One small intersection of streets has become a focal point for anti-social behaviour. This small intersection, quite apart from being the focal point for problematic behaviour, also houses two primary schools, a training centre, a church, a counselling service and a community development project, as well as being adjacent to housing and a community centre. It was described by one respondent as the educational hub of the community, and all of the services in this small area are fundamentally affected by the problems that occur here.

Apart from the damage that the behaviour is causing those directly involved, it is also damaging the wider community, both directly and indirectly. Directly, the services nearby are damaged, both literally (broken into/vandalised) and by reputation and the behaviour intimidates people. It has also resulted in a fear having developed around this part of the area, so that even when nothing is currently happening there is an expectation that something will happen.

There are also specific issues with addiction in the community. There are very visible signs of drug and alcohol abuse and the distribution of drugs within the community.

What was also noted as very visible was violence; violence ranging from aggressive shouting and slapping, to muggings and more serious violent crime. North Wall was identified as quite a macho community.

Apart from anti-social behaviour at this location and in the area generally, there are also fears and stresses caused by some more organised criminal activities which have, at times, occurred within the community. This activity has been reported widely, including reports of a feud between gang members, which has given rise to community fears and stress.

The consequences of the anti-social activities include:

- Intimidation of both the community and staff of the local organisations/projects.
- The community is stressed.
- Anti-social behaviour has become normalised.
- The community has become labelled, with members of the community feeling that they are discriminated against, as it is assumed that they engage in or condone the behaviour.

A further outcome is a palpable fear and/or reluctance to engage with Gardaí. This was a significant issue in the focus groups with the community, but was also referred to by the projects/services. Local people do not generally speak to the

Gardaí as there are fears around intimidation and reprisals, which are often masked as a statement of their own code. *We don't speak to the Gardaí, we are not rats.*

Young people often feel blamed for the anti-social behaviour and as a result feel excluded from community initiatives. It was noted by some organisations that young people are not seen as a resource but as a problem/trouble.

Community Politics

Apart from the anti-social issues it was also noted that there are other tensions within the community. These were evident in conducting the needs analysis itself. It was noted that there is a history of tension between groups and organisations who work in the community, with a weak record in relation to coordination and cooperation between services/organisations. This is likely to be linked to the somewhat isolated and disconnected nature of the community in relation to service provision and community development and related to the anti-social issues. It was noted that the formation of the North Wall Education and Welfare Group itself has helped to respond to some of these issues in particular cooperation and understanding between services/organisations; but the historical dynamic in the community can be damaging.

In some cases relationships are poor or there is a poor understanding between organisations of what each other are doing. There appears to be a lack of trust and weak relationship building. This problem has been further inflamed by funding cuts and allocations of funding by service user numbers/enrolment, where some services are 'competing,' for the same service users.

It is felt that, as a result of these problems, some service users are not using all the services they should or could be using and some members of the community may not be in the services that are the most appropriate to their own needs.

There are also specific concerns raised about the place of young people in the community as they are often seen as the cause of the anti-social behaviour. This can result in significant implications for young people resulting in them being isolated within the community.

There are some gaps noted in relation to this issue, they include:

- Good quality information.
- Further space for groups and organisations to develop relationships and trust.
- Lack of coordination and cooperation between the services.

It takes time to develop and build these relationships, time and effort that is almost never included in funding budgets and nearly always conducted as an add on to an already busy workload.

Apart from education issues which are discussed below, there were a range of issues named by different service providers/organisations as significant within this community. Education issues were one of the priority issues for this analysis and for most of the respondents, but the following issues were also noted by more than one respondent as issues of concern:

- Unemployment: Unemployment in North Wall is very high, and a particular issue for the younger members of the community. This results in a lack of incentives for the younger adults. One respondent noted that it would not be unusual for children to grow up in North Wall having never seen their parents working.
- The drugs trade is felt to be one of the main industries in the community which affects all aspects of life, including the choices the young people make.
- Addiction: Clearly the issues with drugs and alcohol impact on the community as a whole, with problems such as drug dealing and public order issues; but addiction issues also affect individuals and their families. Addiction issues were felt to be significant in this community, with hash use at levels high enough that its use has become normalised within the community. There were problems with head shops which have now abated but there are continuing and growing problems with cocaine use. Gambling was also named as an addiction issue, while problematic alcohol use remains a key concern. The dynamic of addiction changes over time, but the central issue of addiction itself remains and it impacts on the community at individual, family and community levels.
- Mental health: There are issues with mental health, but also with the stigma around responding to mental health issues. There is a counselling service in the centre of the community, Oasis Counselling, but there is still felt to be cultural resistance in the community to dealing with mental health issues professionally and with accessing outside help.
- Broken promises, in particular promises of new building infrastructure which never arrived, have resulted in increased decay and physical degradation of the current building stock, but also frustration and annoyance at being let down and often not told or dealt with directly.
- There are issues with the air quality and traffic in the area. Traffic has increased further since the opening of the new Samuel Beckett Bridge.

EDUCATION

The issue that garnered the most discussion was education ranging from pre-school education through to third level and inclusive of community education and wider education issues.

EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY

One of the central socio-economic issues in this community is the level of educational disadvantage. As noted in the introduction 37% of the population of North Wall aged fifteen and over have either no formal education or primary education only, with a further 17% having completed lower secondary education only.

The educational disadvantage is generational and continuing to manifest with each new generation. More and more young people from this area are staying on in school and completing a Leaving Certificate, but this is at a time when the majority of school leavers in Ireland are now moving on to competing third level qualifications. While some young people from North Wall are going onto third level, they remain in the minority. So, as the community reaches an educational goal, the goal has moved upwards, ensuring that the disadvantage remains.

There was some debate within the services/organisations in relation to the attitude towards education within the community. Some identified improvements, with the community placing more of an emphasis on school completion and education overall, but others felt that education is not high on the community's agenda and that there is a weak education culture. Some argued that literacy and numeracy are improving, while others felt that standards are dropping. Either way, the educational issues have to be understood within the context of educational disadvantage. Even where parents are willing, the knowledge, capacity and understanding to support themselves and their children may not be there.

There are adults, in particular women, who are getting involved in education which in itself is supporting their children and families. Respondents are concerned about the impact that cuts such as the cuts to Community Employment (CE) will have in relation to supporting adults in the community into education, arguing that if you lose educational support for adults, then this will impact on the children; *you educate the mother it will educate the child.*

Specific community education issues include:

- Educational disadvantage of the parents/grandparents of the community. Many of the older generation left school early, and did not have an extensive, or positive experience of education.
- Poor literacy within the community.
- Children coming to school with weak language, cognitive and comprehension skills, skills that are now understood to be the corner stone of good literacy.

For a flourishing life you need oral language development... the language of books is weak.

- Poor educational attainment impacts on the confidence and the ability to engage and support yourself and/or your child in education.
- Parents and families most in need of support are often the hardest to engage in any support programmes.
- At times poor parental involvement in the education of children, particularly as the children get older.

What is certain is that supports directed solely at formal education systems will not counteract educational disadvantage which has complex roots. It was noted clearly, and somewhat depressingly, that very young children are already educationally disadvantaged before they even start school as a result of the educational disadvantage in the community.

PRE-SCHOOL

A recent study of community childcare, including childcare in this area noted:

Until the mid-1990s there was virtually no Irish state investment or national policy on the care and education of children in the years before they entered primary school. Since then, the government has introduced separate childcare and early education policies, a childcare funding framework, quality standards for early years settings, an early years curriculum, a subsidisation scheme for community childcare places, and a free pre-school year for 3 to 4 year olds.²²

So, while there has been some significant changes in the child care and early years education in recent years, the concept of educational provision for the pre-school age group is still relatively new. There is still a perception, among parents and providers, that pre-school is primarily about childcare and not education and this is also true in North Wall.

One study has noted that childcare providers in Ireland have only very recently begun to operate in an environment of quality standards and a national early years curriculum.²³ Changes in recent years affecting early years provision include; the development of the first Irish quality standards for all early years settings for children called *Síolta*, followed by a curriculum, developed by the National Council for Curriculum Assessment for all children up to the age of six, called *Aistear*. But, at this stage, neither *Aistear* nor *Síolta* are compulsory and neither are inspected or tied to any funding.

In terms of pre-school provision in the North Wall area there are two community childcare providers and two primary schools which offer a reception year, for which the Department of Education allocates a teacher. The reception year is a year of pre-school education within the school setting. There is another pre-school education service available in the North Wall area called the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP), which is one of the key programmes of the Early Learning Initiative at National College of Ireland.²⁴

²² *Developing Early Years Professionalism*, Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative's Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands, Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene, Page 30

²³ Page 31

²⁴ The Parent Child Home Programme is a 'learning through play experience' for parents and their pre-school children (1.5 to 3.5 years), designed to strengthen the natural bond between parent and child and encourage a love of learning. It helps prepare children for later success in school and is delivered in Docklands by trained home visitors who themselves come from the local community. It is an evidence based programme from the United States that has been adapted by the NCI to fit with the Irish context. There is a growing demand each year for a place. However, funding limitations are an issue.

One of the community crèches and the two primary schools use or are starting to use *Aistear*, but for all this is a relatively new step.

The community childcare providers also operate the community childcare subvention scheme and the free pre-school year, both recent government initiatives.

A range of respondents noted that no matter which structure the children are engaged in, the need is to prepare them to start school and give them the skills that are necessary to have a successful primary school experience. In order for this to be the case all providers must be constantly up-skilled and supported. This is supported by the *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020, Department of Education and Skills (July 2011).

KEY AREAS IN THE STRATEGY

Improving teachers' and early childhood education and care practitioners' professional practice through changes to both pre-service and in-service education

TARGETS IN THE STRATEGY

- Improve the oral-language competence of very young children in early childhood care and education (ECCE) settings and their readiness to develop early mathematical language and ideas.
- Revising the elements of the primary curriculum in infant classes to ensure consistency with the *Aistear* curriculum framework for pre-schools announced in 2009 and putting a greater emphasis on early language and numeracy development²⁵

In North Wall there is a need for good communication between all early years providers to support both the education of children and a positive transition from one structure to another.

There is a concern, and this continues throughout the education system, about the implications of how systems are funded. Providers, both pre-schools and schools, get funding per child. This makes it critical for services that are under pressure to sustain numbers in order to maintain the funding/staffing levels. Therefore, organisations are keen to retain and/or attract children into their services, and while this may be in the best interest of the services, it may not always be in the best interests of the child. Critical decisions are being made by parents about where and when to place a child. These are being made in consultation with providers. Are they made in the best interest of the child or the provider?

²⁵ *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020, Department of Education and Skills, July 2011

PRIMARY EDUCATION

The vast majority of the children of North Wall attend one (or in the case of the boys) two of the local primary schools. The girls' school²⁶ takes the children from the preparatory year to sixth class and the junior boys' school take the boys from the preparatory year to first class, while the CBS school takes boys from second to sixth class.

One of the key differences in the North Wall in relation to early childhood education is the provision of the reception year in the two local primary schools who take junior infant children. This year is designed as a preparatory year for school and children start in this the year when they turn four, if this happens prior to the end of the first term.

It was noted in the whole school evaluation of these primary schools that, *the provision of the preparatory infant year should be reviewed by the board*.²⁷ The concern from the evaluators appears to be the amount of time that the children are spending in primary school, nine rather than eight years.

The issue for North Wall is the need to transition from pre-school into school in a way that supports and develops the child's learning and capacity to engage with school. If the reception year is removed most of the children will finish pre-school and start school, most likely at age four. This is a community with extensive educational disadvantage evidenced by the fact that all three local schools are in DEIS band, by the CSO figures and this research. Thus, starting school earlier is unlikely to benefit the children.

Overall the services argued that the experience of education at primary level is very positive and that there have been significant improvements. Some of these improvements are as a result of national changes to the primary school curriculum and general culture of education at primary level and some are specific improvements in the local schools.

The schools at primary level have good attendance, good discipline, but it was clearly stated that the socio-economic disadvantage of the community impinges on the schools; issues such as addiction, poor educational backgrounds, poverty, abuse and general disadvantage.

The schools would all have numbers of children with emotional and behavioural issues as well as mild and general learning difficulties. Apart from the extra resources that are allocated to the schools as result of the specific needs of

²⁶ In January 2006 the infant and senior girls' schools amalgamated.

²⁷ St. Laurence O'Toole's, Junior Boys' National School, Seville Place, Dublin 1 Uimhir rolla: 11776C Whole School Evaluation REPORT Date of inspection: 25 November 2010, An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna Department of Education and Skills & St Laurence O'Toole's Girls' National School, Seville Place, Dublin 1, Uimhir rolla: 20228S, Whole School Evaluation REPORT, Date of inspection: 19 September 2011, An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna Department of Education and Skills.

specific children, i.e. resource hours, the schools all do additional work to support areas such as critical literacy and numeracy issues. Many of these supports are developed in partnership with external agencies.²⁸

As noted it was felt that it would be useful to have a transition programme from pre-school to primary school. It was also noted that there is a need to further develop the work that is taking place in relation to the transition from primary to post-primary school. At the moment the schools run programmes with the NCI supporting awareness of the future by working with 5th and 6th classes and young people in first year in post-primary school. The HSCL teachers also support parents and children in this transition but more is needed.

Therefore, in relation to primary education in the North Wall community, the majority of services have noted that great strides have been made educationally at primary level and while issues remain there have been positive developments.

To Note:

- Due to the educational disadvantage in the community children and families need to be supported to prepare children for school. In order to support and develop this preparation the services working in this area need to work together and develop relationships of trust to establish what is required and support the development of the requirements. The outcome should be a clear transition programme from pre-school to primary school.
- It is difficult to garner any further improvements in the educational outcomes of the children in this community without more radical supports. The formal education system cannot tackle the wider issues of educational disadvantage.

The strategy (*Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*) acknowledges that the education system alone cannot deliver better literacy and numeracy and it envisages a central role for parents and communities in supporting and encouraging children and young people to learn to use and understand literacy and numeracy in their lives.²⁹

- While there is a need for more radical solutions, it is also important in this current economic climate to ensure that the current supports that the schools receive are maintained and ring-fenced.
- There remain serious problems for children in this community in relation to post-primary schooling. Children who are doing well, with support, at primary level are failing at post-primary level. Their educational career is souring when they transition. Therefore, the transition from primary to post-primary, and the maintenance of a positive educational experience and outcome at post-primary, remain serious areas of concern.

²⁸ In addition to DEIS numerous initiatives have been undertaken with a variety of agencies. Examples include literacy initiatives supported by the National College of Ireland's Early Learning Initiative (NCI, ELI), Citi (Bank), and the Write to Read Project.

²⁹ *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020 Department of Education and Skills Launched July 2011

POST-PRIMARY

As noted the majority of the children in North Wall attend the local primary schools up until sixth class. At this stage all of the children transfer to schools outside of the community as there is no post-primary school in North Wall. The children transfer to a range of schools many of which are close to the North Wall community.

What has emerged as a key issue in this consultation, with both the community and service providers/organisations, is that this transition is not successful for many of the children of North Wall and their educational outcomes remain poor. This is a significant issue of concern in this community.

Some of the issues appear to be structural and linked to wider issues of transfer between primary and post-primary education, while some are specific to the community of North Wall.

This issue of transfers between primary and post-primary and the complexity of this stage in education has, until recently, been over looked in Ireland. One research study has highlighted that it poses particular risks and consequences for working class students.

Transfer from first to second-level schooling has been shown to be a demanding time for both students and their families (Naughton 1997, Reay and Lucey 2000,). For students it involves a triple transition: the move from the familiar school culture to a new one, the informal move from established friendships and peer groups to new peer groupings at second level and the coincidental, developmental move from childhood to adolescence (Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan 1996). Yet, little attention has been paid to the issue of transfer in the academic and educational discourse in Ireland although elsewhere it has been shown to be a complex process. It is a process that is mediated by a complex web of in-school and out of school factors. It is characterised on the one hand; by structures at national and local level and the particularities of individual schools (Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan 1996). It is also shaped by students' own individuality, their social class, ethnicity, gender and the resources of their families (Reay and Lucey 2001).

School Choice is starkly shaped by classed identities: Although the social was regarded as important by all students it was of critical importance to working-class students. They needed familiar faces at transfer for both their sense of safety and for their sense of identity in moving to an unfamiliar institution and system.³⁰

Respondents noted that the transfer to post-primary in Ireland happens at a difficult age for children/young people. Aged 12/13 they are moving from very different types of ethos and environment. Primary education in North Wall is based in small schools, which are embedded in the community, where generations of a child's family have been educated. The style of education at primary level is family orientated and supportive. In North Wall this education takes place within a community which is insular and educationally disadvantaged. The schools themselves are designated

³⁰ 'Moving In' and 'Moving Out' 2010 Maeve O'Brien National Centre for Guidance in Education Marino www.ncge.ie/priamary

disadvantaged and as result get additional supports including a better pupil teacher ratio. Children at primary school, when assessed as 'in need' can also be entitled to additional supports, an entitlement which does not automatically carry over into post-primary school.³¹

Therefore, children in this community are moving out of a community that they know, from schools where they are known, that receive additional resources to respond to their educational needs. They are moving into schools where the system is more individualistic, schools are bigger, the children are not known, they are with children they do not know, and the additional supports that they had at primary level may not be available. An example raised by a respondent highlighted this point: If a child has an SNA (Special Needs Assistant) entitlement at primary they have to start all over again to get this support at second level. It is not automatically carried over. A new assessment may have to be undertaken. This is a very significant loss for a child and parents often depend on services/organisations such as the HSCL teacher, youth or community groups to fight the case for them to get the resources. They often do not have the skills, knowledge or inclination to do the work themselves. Primary schools also have the capacity to have a second adult in the room which supports weaker students, who may not have designated needs but benefit enormously from having an extra adult in the room. These supports are, by and large, gone at post-primary level.

It was acknowledged that the post-primary schools that the children attend are often aware of the needs of the children and aim to support them, but the system at post-primary level is less conducive to a supportive response. This is an issue with the post-primary system nationally.

Therefore, the transfer to post-primary school can be a very difficult and lonely step for a child from the community. Within the community they were protected and got a lot of support. This can be particularly difficult for the eldest child in a family. Many of the children struggle with confidence at second level and struggle in schools outside of the area. Parents are often powerless to support their children, unable due to their own confidence issues and poor educational history, or literally unaware/unwilling/unable to provide the vital role of supporting their own child's education.

The primary schools, the NCI and youth projects are all involved in work examining and supporting the transfer to post-primary school. SWAN (the youth service), NCI and community projects all continue to offer support to young people in post-primary school. It was noted that some schools are also more willing to acknowledge and engage with the non-formal education sector and see it as a resource when supporting children with specific issues and needs, than they used to be. It was noted that at times it can still be a struggle to engage with some schools, when this is true for other service providers/agencies, in must be really difficult for educationally disadvantaged parents.

³¹ This is also true if a child transfers between primary schools, which happens to boys in the North Wall community as a rule, as they move between the Junior Boys' school and the CBS.

Working-class students are vulnerable to exclusion and to alienation from the academic and in order to preserve their self-esteem 'moving on' may lead to a need to 'move out'; the transfer experience may lay the seeds of this exclusion.

We suggest that transfer to second-level schooling is not a process to be taken lightly or indeed for granted.

Transfer is a time of emotional and social challenge for many students, but particularly those without the necessary capitals. Although individual schools have implemented policies to settle their first year students, the weight of classed identity is huge. Transfer can herald a step towards moving out while others move on.³²

As noted earlier it can be difficult to get some parents to engage with schools and education providers. What was also noted by respondents is that this difficulty increases the older a child gets. Many of the parents themselves do not understand the post-primary system. There are likely to have been changes since they were at school (for example the Leaving Certificate Applied) or if they did not get much post-primary education their own knowledge of the system is limited. The schools are further removed from the community, literally in that they are further away, and children often make the journey to school alone, emotionally as well as physically, in that they are out of the community and not part of the insular network.

There are issues with how the children are making choices about what post-primary school to attend. At the focus group discussions with the community the decision making process in relation to post-primary choices were evidently weak, and often led by the child. Children make decisions based on their friends or family, not necessarily the educational environment that is best suited to their own needs. Parents often do not have the knowledge, information, capacity or will to make the choices for their children based on the child's needs. Some respondents noted that some parents are becoming more involved in working with their children about making those choices (*where as previously they didn't really pay any attention*) but the choices still appear to be driven by the children.

Respondents noted that parent's expectations of what their child can and should be achieving at post-primary level are increasing, but there are some issues about their own understanding and comprehension of how the system works. It is clear from all of the respondents, both community and projects/services, that expectations are low. A child who gets into a high stream at post-primary level is noted as the exception, doing well at the Established Leaving Certificate is noted as it is not the norm, particularly for young men. The families and young people talk about getting through school, not getting to third level.

The education system at post-primary level is developing systems to engage young people who were otherwise leaving school without accreditation, systems such as Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). But there are concerns that children

³² 'Moving In' and 'Moving Out' 2010 Maeve O'Brien National Centre for Guidance in Education Marino www.ncge.ie/priamary

from communities such as North Wall are often offered routes such as LCA as par for the course and the parents have no knowledge or understanding of the implications of that choice. Parents who have not completed their education do not know what these systems mean. The community consultation made it clear that the LCA is a popular route among the young people in this community, but that the parents had very little knowledge about what the LCA actually was. The young people had very different views about it and saw it either as the easy option and/or the route for educationally weak students.

Discipline is another issue that was noted by both projects and the community, by the young people in particular. The levels of suspensions at post-primary level appear to be very high, with 77% of the young people in the focus groups having been suspended at one stage or another from post-primary school. None of the young people stated they had been suspended from primary school. Therefore, many of the young people have developed fractured relationships with post-primary schools.

What was also noted is that many of the young people at second level have become very difficult to deal with in terms of discipline and that the teachers in many cases are dealing with really difficult young people. The schools, in many cases, are offering a supportive and structured environment that they would not get elsewhere. But the young people are leaving ill prepared for further education/training or employment.

It was argued by a small number of respondents that the children often do not conform to the structure of post-primary school; leading to the question does the system suit them?

What we know from the consultations that children who were managing and doing well at primary level start to fail at post-primary level.

Additional issues raised by the respondents included:

Cuts to school guidance hours could have a devastating impact on vulnerable children. The young people from North Wall are coming from a community that is under pressure and at times from families in crisis. These young people need the support offered by a guidance counsellor more than most and not necessarily for academic support; but to support them in times of crisis in a safe environment. It was felt that this loss could have very serious consequences for some young people.

The guidance cuts will have a huge impact, schools need them. There is not a day that goes by in these schools where there isn't a crisis of some sort with young people and there seems to be no awareness of the counselling aspects of the services that the guidance services offer.

- Overall, it was felt that girls are doing better than boys. The girls are starting to succeed more at post-primary level than the boys. This would mirror the experience of other disadvantaged communities.
- Parents need support to engage with post-primary schools including more information.
- Parents need the confidence to question the schools and support to engage with the schools.
- The supports that young people get from the non-formal education sector are vital, in particular from youth projects such as SWAN and the After School Education Support Programme (ASESP). There will be a significant negative educational impact if these supports are cut.

As with all of the transition points in the education system, it was argued that there was a need to have a transition programme between post-primary and third level.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING POST, POST PRIMARY

It is something of a finding itself that transfer to third level featured so little in the respondents concerns as the young people were often, simply not getting the outcomes that would give them those opportunities. There are a small number of young people from this community in third level, or who have just completed third level. Respondents noted that they were the pioneers and role models.

One of the issues that emerged in relation to young people's involvement in third level was the issue of cost. Young people who attend the Community Training Centre for example get an allowance, as do those on social welfare, those in third level often get a grant, but the amount is very low. Therefore, young people have to be willing to understand and appreciate the short term loss as a long term gain. These young people are to be,

very determined to go a different route (and not get a payment)

There are training programmes running in the community, in the ASESP via CE schemes, in the Community Development Project for adults (including young adults) and in the Community Training Centre (FÁS), and.

There is a range of FETAC training (levels 3-5) on offer in the community via these routes, but respondents noted that gaps remain, in particular:

- The lack of progression options for young people.
- There were concerns raised by some providers that some young people in the community cannot access appropriate training and education options.
- There are specific concerns about young people who have done their Leaving Certificate but did not do well enough to progress into college; what options are available for them?

- A lack of educational opportunities for non-school leavers (25+). ³³
- The cost of education at third/adult education level can be too much for someone in this community to contend with in itself but when coupled with the lack of an education culture it can be difficult to win the argument to justify the cost and loss of income.
- There are particular gaps in education and training for men.

³³ To note a new Local Training Initiative is starting in the Community Development Project in January 2013.

SUMMARY OF THE KEY ISSUES THAT EMERGED IN THE REPORT

The following is a summary of the key issues raised in the consultations with the service providers/organisations and the community. The issues are listed here, more detail can be found in the findings section.

NORTH WALL COMMUNITY

- North Wall is a close knit, homogenous community, with many coming from families who have lived there for generations.
- This is a small community, physically and geographically and the level of inter community relations are complex and complicated.
- North Wall is a community with significant, generational socio economic disadvantage, surrounded by new developments and new affluence.
- The North Wall community has become labelled and stigmatised with many in the community feeling discriminated against.
- There are significant levels of anti-social problems and violence.
- The physical environment is run down.
- Vandalism is attacking local community resources.
- Young people felt that they are being blamed and looked down upon within their community, as well as outside the community.
- At times the community is stressed and isolated.
- There is little or no new community housing being built therefore young families are moving out of the area as there is no accommodation for them. The irony is that the community is literally surrounded by empty buildings.

CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION

Services in the community include:

- Three primary schools (all designated DEIS Band One) St Laurence O'Toole's Girls National School, St Laurence O'Toole's Junior Boys' National School and St. Laurence O'Toole's CBS.
- A FÁS community training centre - The North Wall Community Training Centre.
- A community development project - The North Wall Community Development Project.
- Community crèches and after school services - The After School Education and Support Programme.
- A community association - The North Wall Community Association.
- A youth service - Swan Youth Service.
- A community centre (Dublin City Council).
- A sports club - Sherriff Youth Club
- The parish St Laurence O'Toole, North Wall.

- A counselling service - Oasis Counselling

Just on the periphery of the community there is a third level college (the National College of Ireland) with an Early Learning Initiative focused on local communities, inclusive of North Wall. There are also a range of services that are not area specific, but include the area of North Wall in their catchment. These include Dublin City Council Community Development and Sports Officers), community projects (such as the Community Policing Forum and YPAR [Young People At Risk]), the HSE (including the Family Support Service), the Gardaí (including the Community Gardaí) and youth organisations.

ISSUES IN RELATION TO CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION

- Many services are well embedded in the community.
- Services and organisations are physically and socially close together as this is a small, tight knit community.
- There are good community services but there is poor integration and trust between the services.
- There are tensions within the community and between services and organisations working in the community.
- Young people felt excluded from some services and organisations.
- There is a need to ensure constant up skilling for all (both community and statutory) and accountability for spending and programmes.
- All of the current service provision/organisations are working within the context of funding cuts and/or changes in funding structures.
- There is a lack of good quality suitable space in the community, in particular for services for children and young people.
- At times there is a lack of information about the current service provision.
- There are gaps in terms of responding to the needs of 16-24 year olds when they have finished education.
- There is a particular gap in supports for young men.
- The changes in the CE programmes are affecting all services and the ability to engage men and women.

THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

- There is a need for an Education Action Plan (see recommendations).
- There is a need for a driver/mechanism to champion the recommendations and forward their implementation.
- There is a need to support cooperation between the services and projects in the community and create a space for people to work together, to develop trust and collaboration, and support progression and linkage between services and projects.
- There is a need to develop supports and responses for 16-24 year olds in relation to employment, education and training.
- There is a particular gap in supports for young men.

- There is a need for more family support.
- There is a need for more community accommodation, both for people to live in and for the community projects.
- There is a need to support the community to participate more actively in their own and their family's education and educational choices.
- This community is experiencing shock, trauma and violence at levels that cause community stress. There is a need for responses to the stress that is in the community.
- There is a need to protect current resources and develop more.

CRITICAL EDUCATION ISSUES

There are critical education needs in the area for children, young people and adults, including literacy and numeracy needs.

- There is significant educational disadvantage in the community at all levels and throughout the generations.
- Knowledge of the specifics of the education system, particularly at post-primary and third level, is weak.
- Educational aspirations in this community while growing are still trailing the national picture.
- Educational transition points are a real area of concern, there is a need to develop more cooperation between services as children and young people transfer between services, such as between pre-school and primary school and primary and post-primary school.
- There are serious difficulties with post-primary education, including problems with the transfer from primary to post-primary school, education survival and outcomes.
- Education supports provided in one school cannot be automatically carried over when a child transfers school. This gap and/or loss of support causes significant problems for young people with additional needs.
- There is a lack of progression for those who leave school early.
- Many parents in North Wall have little or no post-primary education, or have had a poor experience of post-primary education and they often do not understand the systems, or have the skills and capacity to support their children within the system.
- There is a need for more educational and training options for the young people who have left school.
- There is a need for more educational and training options for the adults.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are three key recommendation areas:

- 1. Current Service Provision**
- 2. A Community Education Action Plan**
- 3. Specific Recommendations**

1. CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION

As identified in the findings there are a range of services and organisations currently working in the community but there are key weaknesses in terms of cooperation between the organisations and clear information in the community as to what specifically the services do.

- 1.1 To continue to develop and promote the coordination and cooperation of current service provision and projects in the North Wall area and beyond.

There is a particular need to develop relationships and trust between services and organisations, in order to support cooperation and coordination in the community, as well as supporting good quality service provision.

In particular there is a need to improve and support relationships between services/organisations who are working with the same community members (i.e. children). It is particularly essential to develop relationships between organisations who are working with young people and children who transition between the organisations, for example pre-schools and primary schools. This can support the transition process and develop the knowledge and understanding of each organisation's needs and the needs of the community.

Supporting collaboration is key to developing the following actions in relation to community education.

- 1.2 Improve the information that is available in relation to current service provision and organisations in the community and servicing the community.

It may be useful to hold an open day/exhibition of services within the community and/or develop a small directory of services in the community.

1.3 There is a need to develop a focus on progression with all of the services. This includes:

- Progression of the participants within the services/projects.
- Progression from one organisation/service to another, development of progression paths.
- The continued professional development of the organisations, including challenging poor service provision and developing staff training. Staff must be released for training. This includes all organisations, statutory, community and private.

1.4 Develop a specific mechanism/driver for the recommendations.

Improved coordination of the current projects and service provision should also aim to produce a driver/mechanism to forward the following recommendation. This can be developed from the current North Wall Education and Welfare Group.

The key is that in order for any recommendations to be achieved they will have to be forwarded and fought for. This requires a structure/driver with that specific responsibility.

It may be useful to look for an independent chair, someone with status, to support the implementation of the actions. Examples of the use of an independent chair include; regeneration committees such as O'Devaney Garden Regeneration Board (Peter Ward Senior Counsel), Dolphin House Regeneration Board (Fergus Finlay, Barnardos), *The Task Force on the Travelling Community* (1995 Chris Flood T.D.), the establishment of the Drugs Task Force (Pat Rabbit, Junior Minister at the time).

A Community Education Action Plan

Significant educational disadvantage throughout the community of North Wall was a key finding of this work. There is a need to support education at all levels and to challenge the social exclusion of this community.

There is state acknowledgement that education is an equality issue and that in order to support the education of young people the community and family are key. As noted in the *National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*:

Literacy and numeracy skills are crucial to a person's ability to develop fully as an individual, to live a satisfying and rewarding life and to participate fully in our society. Ensuring that all young people acquire these skills is one of the greatest contributions that we can make to achieving social justice and equity in our country.

A note from the Minister Ruairi Quinn TD ³⁴

³⁴ *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020 Department of Education and Skills July 2011

One of the six key areas in the strategy includes

- Enabling parents and communities to support children’s literacy and numeracy development.

National policy also views the parents as the primary educators of their children.³⁵ In order for this to be achieved in a community where educational disadvantage is endemic the community has to be supported to fulfil that role or the educational disadvantage will never be adequately addressed or challenged.

Despite the fact that parental involvement has the biggest impact on children’s educational outcomes, there are very minimal funds available for this. Currently the Department of Education has a fund of €225,000 for families. The primary school system is where the government has concentrated its investment in educational disadvantage³⁶and not communities or families.

It is also key to support early intervention for disadvantaged children.

“A large and growing body of evidence has demonstrated that prevention and early intervention are more effective and more cost-effective than remedial interventions. This is particularly true of interventions in early childhood, given what we now know about brain development in children’s earliest years (Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, 2007, cited in Start Strong, 2012). Investing in high quality services and supports for children in their early years can save public funds many times over in areas such as the criminal justice system, public health-care, and remedial education.³⁷ (Start Strong, 2011, cited in Start Strong 2012)”

Therefore, there is a need to develop a community education strategy for the community of North Wall, including all of the key players and educators from pre-school to third level and adult and community education providers. This must also include the community and young people from the community and the non-formal sector such as youth services. This is supported by national policy.

Area Based Approach to Child Poverty’ Initiative

North Wall should be included as one of the new area based poverty initiatives announced by Minister Fitzgerald on the 5th of December 2012. This announcement stated that the number of sites will be expanded from three to six in 2013. This research, previous work and national statistics highlight the needs of this community and its suitability as an appropriate site for area based intervention.

³⁵ *Developing Early Years Professionalism* Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene. Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative’s Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands

³⁶ *Developing Early Years Professionalism*

³⁷ Start Strong (2011) *The Economics of Children’s Early Years - Early Care and Education in Ireland: Costs and Benefits*, Dublin: Start Strong.

Area Based Approach to Child Poverty' Initiative

Minister Fitzgerald has welcomed the new 'Area Based Approach to Child Poverty' initiative for which €2.5 million has been provided for in the 2013 Estimates.

This initiative will build on and continue the work of the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) which supported projects in Tallaght, Ballymun and Darndale.

The new initiative announced today reflects the Programme for Government commitment to adopt an area based approach to child poverty in co-operation with philanthropic partners, drawing upon best international practice and existing services, to break the cycle of child poverty where it is most deeply entrenched.

In line with this commitment, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of the Tánaiste and the Departments of Social Protection, Communities, and Education will work in 2013 to expand the number of project sites from 3 to 6. By 2015, the Exchequer funding for the initiative is expected to be in the region of €4.75 million. Minister Fitzgerald said that the new initiative will not simply be a continuation of the PEIP scheme but will instead seek to implement programmes which have already been evaluated and proven to work in improving outcomes for children and families at risk of disadvantage,

Minister Fitzgerald stated: "We know that early intervention improves life chances for children and families. This is even more true in communities with high levels of disadvantage and joblessness."

"This new initiative will draw upon existing community strengths and efforts already underway."³⁸

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has four objectives which include:

- Support a national public information campaign highlighting the role all parents and communities can play in supporting literacy and numeracy learning; and
- Provide advice and information to parents to enable them to support their children's language, literacy and numeracy development.³⁹

Key areas that need to be included in the North Wall Education Action Plan are:

- A focus on developing the family's capacity and role as educators in their family.
- Supporting the family's agency as educators, including supporting them to question and challenge, and meaningfully participate in the education of their children.
- There is a need for a specific focus on prevention and early intervention programmes for disadvantaged children

³⁸ <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=2516>

³⁹ *Family literacy in Ireland* NALA September 2011

- There is a need for an education programme to inform the community of the importance of engagement and community participation in education.
- There is a need to further develop transition programmes between the pre-school and primary school and primary and post-primary schools.
- Supporting and developing positive outcomes at-post primary level.
- Developing and supporting family literacy.
- Parents need support to engage with post-primary education, including more information on the implications of various educational routes such as LCA.
- The supports that young people get from the non-formal education sector are vital, in particular youth projects; their role must be included and acknowledge in the education strategy.
- There is a need for support services for young people with special needs as they continue in school.
- There is a need for more support for the older children in education.
- There is a need to respond to the needs of young people who have completed their Leaving Certificate but who did not do well enough to progress into college directly.
- There is a need to focus on adult education and training in the community.
- There is a need to develop and support community education.
- There should be a focus on developing and supporting educational progression at all stages.

At all stages in the development and implementation of the action plan it is vital to include young people and the wider community. Effort will have to be made to ensure meaningful participation.

There is a need to link into key policy initiatives and strategies such as the NALA initiative to support family literacy in Ireland; to argue for funding and support in relation to this work:

Family literacy in Ireland NALA September 2011

Literacy development remains a crucial and pressing issue in Ireland and investment in family literacy provides a win-win scenario to policy makers. In the context of the current climate, family literacy provides a policy option that can help deliver value on several socio-economic priorities such as raising adult literacy levels, enhancing child literacy development and improving children's performance in schools.

Policy recommendations

- National literacy policy should include an increased commitment to family literacy as a basis for improving chances of educational equality for children and adults.
- Family literacy also needs to be supported and enabled with quality childcare provision and peer support opportunities.

- A NALA, DES, IVEA partnership should work with DEIS schools to make a systematic community development model of family literacy available to parents in their locality.

There is a need for the establishment of a dedicated and significant funding stream for family literacy work.

3. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- The supports that young people get from the non-formal education sector are vital, therefore funding and resources for youth services must be protected.
- Engagement and inclusion of young people in this community should be a priority.
- Establish women's and men's groups, or further advertise and encourage people to join existing groups.
- There is a need to work with young offenders.

There is a need to support and teach communication skills throughout the community. There is a need to develop good quality community space for local services and community projects to use. Space that is suitable for the needs of the community and projects, as well as maintaining and developing current community space.

APPENDIX ONE: CONSULTATIONS CONDUCTED FOR THE NEEDS ANALYSIS

The following organisations were consulted as part of the needs analysis.

AFTER SCHOOL EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The After School Education and Support Programme provides education, support and intervention programmes to a range of groups including pre-schoolers, children in primary school and post-primary school. They provide pre-school, after-school and teen group programmes.

CITY OF DUBLIN YOUTH SERVICE BOARD (CDYSB)

The CDYSB is the youth work development agency of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee. It achieves this through the administration of grant aid on behalf of Government to almost ninety projects throughout the city. In addition CDYSB also provides direct grant aid for over 400 youth clubs and groups together with providing support services to communities for the development of youth work programmes, which respond to the changing needs of young people within Dublin City.

COMMUNITY GARDAÍ FOR THE NORTH WALL COMMUNITY

- Community Garda provide the people in an area with their own dedicated Garda, someone with whom they can discuss everyday occurrences and build up a strong and supportive personal relationship.
- Community Garda help the residents of the area to prevent crime by supporting crime prevention initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert.
- Community Garda work with other social agencies in the area to help curb crime and vandalism.⁴⁰

COMMUNITY POLICING FORUM

The Community Policing Forum provides a confidential process whereby resident groups, young people, the elderly and individuals affected by criminal behaviour are provided with a space where they can discuss and bring forward possible solutions in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL SPORTS OFFICER

Dublin City Council Sports Officers organise sports programmes for youth at risk, involving them in the design and planning process. They work with National Governing Bodies of Sport, Youth Service Projects, Garda Special Projects, Outreach Youth Workers and Local Drugs Task Forces. They assist sports clubs and groups to apply for funding, access training for coaches and volunteers, and work in partnership with schools, community groups and centres to increase access for young people to sports and recreational facilities.⁴¹

⁴⁰ <http://www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=74&Lang=1>

⁴¹ <http://www.dublincity.ie/RECREATIONANDCULTURE/SPORTSFACILITIES/Pages/SportsDevelopment.aspx>

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Dublin City Council Community Development programmes work with communities towards improving the quality of life in their areas.

EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVE: THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND

The Early Learning Initiative provides a range of education programmes including:

- Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP)
- Parents Together Community Course
- Stretch to Learn
- Third level Courses

HOME, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LIAISON TEACHERS (HSCL TEACHERS)

The HSCL scheme is a mainstream preventative strategy targeted at pupils in primary and secondary school who are at risk of not reaching their potential in the education system. The aim is to get parents more involved in their children's education, empowering parents in relation to their own education also; linking the home, school and the community.

HSE, THE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

The Family Support Service provides home based practical support to families to empower and enable them to sustain the care of their children and maximise their potential to do so. They work with families to build on strengths, to find realistic and practical solutions to identified problems. A key aspect of the work is encouraging families to develop contacts within their community. It is essential for the Family Support Workers to build and maintain links with community agencies. A Family Support Worker is allocated for each family by the Coordinator who attempts to match the worker best suited to the needs of each family.

NORTH WALL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The North Wall Community Association is a voluntary group working on various community issues. They are involved in range of community organisations and projects.

NORTH WALL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Services provided by the North Wall CDP include:

- local employment
- early childhood development and community crèche
- Community Employment and Jobs Initiative
- training initiatives both academic and recreational
- courses aimed at FETAC Level 4 and 5
- community development
- policy and advocacy
- information and advice
- outreach / support and drop in centre

NORTH WALL COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTRE

The North Wall Community Training Centre is a FÁS funded training programmes for early-school leavers and those looking to up-skill.

PARISH ST LAURENCE O'TOOLE, NORTH WALL

The Parish of St Laurence O'Toole provides pastoral work and community work.

SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH WALL AREA

St Laurence O'Toole's Girls National School is a girls' school catering for junior infants to sixth class, with a reception year.

St Laurence O'Toole's Junior Boys' National School caters for boys from junior infants to first class, with a reception year.

St. Laurence O'Toole's CBS a Senior Boys' Primary School, 2nd to 6th class catering for boys aged 7 to 13 years.

SHERRIFF YOUTH CLUB

Sherriff Youth Club is a football club founded and run by members of the community, providing a wide range of activities, including a number of football teams.

SWAN YOUTH SERVICE

Youth work service providing service such as:

- Small group work
- Drop-ins
- Individual work/ one to one support
- Streetwork
- Advocacy and outreach
- Referral to community, statutory and other agencies
- Range of educational and social programmes

YPAR (YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK)

YPAR is an interagency network of services working with children and young people.

APPENDIX TWO: NORTH WALL EDUCATION AND WELFARE GROUP

The North Wall Education and Welfare group is made up of people who work with the following organisations/groups.

- After School Education and Support Programme
- Community Policing Forum
- Early Learning Initiative: The National College of Ireland
- Home, School, Community, Liaison Teacher
- HSE, The Family Support Service
- North Wall Community Development Project
- St Laurence O'Toole's Girls National School
- St Laurence O'Toole's Junior Boys' National School
- St. Laurence O'Toole's CBS
- Swan Youth Service
- YPAR (Young People At Risk)

APPENDIX THREE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of the organisation _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____ Email _____

Website _____

Name and role of person completing the questionnaire _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANISATION/PROJECT

Short description of the project/organisation (work done by the project)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE NORTH WALL AREA?

IS THE PROJECT/ORGANISATION INVOLVED IN? (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)

Direct service provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community development work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other			

If you are providing services what model/curriculum/accreditation/guidelines do you use?

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF ORGANISATION?

Statutory	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

WHO ARE THE PROJECTS MAIN FUNDERS? (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)

Pobal	<input type="checkbox"/>	HSE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Justice and Equality	<input type="checkbox"/>	City of Dublin Youth Service Board	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Education and Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	FÁS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Children and Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dublin Docklands Development	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affairs		Authority	
Department Environment , Community and Local Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dublin City Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Social Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drugs Task Force	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other Please name _____

Please describe the work that the project/organisation is doing in the area?

Has your organisation any plans to further develop its work in this area? (or in parts of it)?

What obstacles, if any, does your organisation face delivering/developing services for this community?

NORTH WALL COMMUNITY ISSUES

What do you think are the key issues in this community?

Do you think there are any gaps in service provision in the area, please describe?

What are the main barriers to address these gaps?

Is there anything in particular you would like to see developed to address these gaps?

Are you aware of any information/ reports that may be useful to this work?

Any other comments?

REFERENCES

Divided City The Changing Face of Dublin's Inner City A Study commissioned by the Dublin Inner City Partnership
Trutz Haase Social & Economic Consultant 2008

Sheriff Street from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheriff_Street

'Man shot dead on Lower Sheriff Street' <http://dublinobserver.com/2010/07/man-shot-dead-on-lower-sheriff-street/>

'We'll Fight Fire with Fire' *Sunday World* <http://www.sundayworld.com/index.php>

Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020 Department of Education and Skills Launched July 2011

The Free Time and Leisure Needs of Young People living in Disadvantaged Communities www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre

Family literacy in Ireland NALA September 2011

Developing Early Years Professionalism, Evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative's Professional Development Programme in Community Childcare Centres in the Dublin Docklands Michelle Share | Liz Kerrins | Sheila Greene

<http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=2516>

Start Strong (2011) *The Economics of Children's Early Years - Early Care and Education in Ireland: Costs and Benefits*, Dublin: Start Strong.

St. Laurence O'Toole's, Junior Boys' National School, Seville Place, Dublin 1 Uimhir rolla: 11776C Whole School Evaluation REPORT Date of inspection: 25 November 2010, An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna Department of Education and Skills

St Laurence O'Toole's Girls' National School, Seville Place, Dublin 1, Uimhir rolla: 20228S, Whole School Evaluation REPORT, Date of inspection: 19 September 2011, An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna Department of Education and Skills

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2012/0221/education.html>

YPAR (Young People At Risk) Directory of Services for Children, Young People and their Families in the North Inner City.

'Moving In' and 'Moving Out' 2010 Maeve O'Brien National Centre for Guidance in Education Marino www.ncge.ie/priamary

It's a Hard Oul Station RTE 1977

National College of Ireland, Community Survey by Dartington Social Research Unit 2006





Design & Print: Printwell Design,
17-21 Church St East, North Wall, D3