

# **Case Study Ballyhoura Architectural Survey**

## **Margaret Barry, February 2012**

### **Introduction**

The Ballyhoura Architectural Survey Local Training Initiative was established in April 1997 by Ballyhoura Development Ltd. It is run under the auspices of FÁS as a Local Training Initiative and supported by a dedicated steering committee. The Local Training Initiative enables learners to avail of a wide range of training opportunities while also learning about local vernacular architecture and developing awareness of the built heritage.

Initially based in Kilmallock town, in November 1999 the survey moved to its present location adjoining John the Baptist Community School campus, Knockainey Road, Hospital, Co. Limerick.

Specifically the L.T.I. assists people over the age of 16 to move into employment and further education by providing community based training and work experience which leads to nationally recognised FETAC Level 3 other training is accessed as required.

The Architectural Survey is being conducted in the Ballyhoura region. The purpose of the survey is to compile an inventory of all domestic architecture based on the second edition of the Ordnance Survey maps, published in 1927.

The survey is undertaken by conducting site visits and recording architectural information through the use of photography and recording sheets. The collected information provides both training opportunities for learners and a valuable archival source for communities, local authorities and architectural historians.

Each site recorded in the Second Edition (1920) of the Ordnance Survey six-inch maps is visited. A written description along with photographs of the exterior of each building which appeared on that map is recorded. The information collected is an important historical record of the architecture of the region at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

All buildings, from the humblest cottage to the grandest house is of interest to us. Many of these buildings are unique to this area and reflect a wide range of social and economic influences. Some buildings have been demolished; many others have been modified to meet modern living requirements.

### **Activities**

Since 1997, over 200 places have been provided on the Ballyhoura Architectural Survey FAS Local Training Initiative. Learners may be experiencing social, economic and/or educational

exclusion. The Local Training Initiative accommodates learners' varying levels of education and their requirement of additional training in order to achieve employment or access to further training, education, social skills and life skills.

Initially, learners are allocated a period of one year to cover training and accreditation. An extension period is available to individual learners. Learner intake is on a continuous basis.

## **Lessons Learned**

It has become very clear that learners seeking support at this level need a lot of individual guidance and learning supports. This is due to exclusion and lack of education opportunities and support.

Currently, the Local Training Initiative offers employability skills at FETAC Level 3 certification. Modules include: Application of Number, Career Preparation, Communication, Computer Literacy, Database, Digital Media, Internet Skills, Media Expression, Personal Effectiveness, Plant Identification, Plant Propagation, Work Experience, Word Processing and Typing Skills – Speed and Accuracy. Other training and certification may include ECDL Driving Theory, Advanced ECDL, First Aid, Manual Handling, E-Citizen and any specific training a learner may require for progression.

The Local Training Initiative where necessary and if budget is available, uses external trainers for specific training. These include: IT Training, Personal Development, Local History, Archaeology, Regional History and Area and a Mobile IT training unit.

## **Success**

After a relatively short period many learners enjoy increased confidence and self-esteem, becoming more experienced in the undertaking of a wide range of social and work related skills. The development of these work skills and the achievement of certification locally enables many learners to progress further in many fields. The majority of learners have gone on to employment, further training and education opportunities. Learners are encouraged to engage with their local communities (ie schools, tidy towns, clubs etc).

## **Conclusion**

The Ballyhoura Architectural Survey Local Training Initiative hopes to continue to facilitate and support learners in striving towards reaching their potential. The project has become an integral part of the wider community of Hospital, and most importantly it fills a gap in adult education and training by initially supporting learners individually. These learners progress to confidence and ability making a valuable contribution to their families and communities.