

Case Study – The Cappamore Estates Project

Introduction

Area Profile: The Cappamore Estates project supports the residents of four estates in the Cappamore area: Mullally Lawn, Mullally Grove, Inse Bui & Turagh Crescent where there is a mix of housing types. Mullally Lawn, Mullally Grove were built by Limerick County Council almost 30 years ago and some of these houses are now in private ownership. Turagh Crescent is also a local authority estate added in 2005/2006. Inse Bui is a mix of private ownership and rental properties with clients of the HSE Mid West and Limerick County Council living there. (Cappamore is a small located in the north east of County Limerick).

Pre-development work was the focus of activity in Cappamore for 2008 and commenced in the second quarter of 2008. In 2008, the Cappamore area did not have an LDSIP action budget as it was located in the area which was cohesing from Tipperary LEAFDER group. Various project research was undertaken and exploratory meetings with communities and stakeholders were also held at this time.

Our research informed us that the priorities in the Cappamore area were:

1. General Information provision and creating links between community & statutory agencies
2. Provision of information, educational recreational supports for young people,
3. Securing a community space in order to make this work happen
4. Provision of education and training to adults
5. Estate management.

For the purpose of this case study information will be organised under the following thematic headings; Information provision and Linkages; Adult Education & Training; Estate Management; Young People; Funding, Successes and Lessons Learnt.

Background

In the last quarter of 2008 Ballyhoura Development Ltd (BDL) negotiated a lease on a local authority house in Mullally Lawn from Limerick County Council for a nominal amount.

In 2009, the local Community Employment Scheme (CE) granted a Community Employment participant to the house. Initially this worker was tasked with mainly maintenance and cleaning duties however through involvement in the women's group and participating in the first part of post-compulsory personal development training her confidence has grown and she has moved towards a co-ordinating role in the Community House. This includes taking bookings and being a link for training courses, tapping into local publicity, estate management, working in the homework club, volunteering in the Foroige

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Drop In and fund – raising activities, as well as taking part in the Cappamore Family Coordinating group meetings, the East County Limerick Traveller Sub Committee group and the Cappamore Estate Management group. She also works in the after – schools club and volunteers at the Foroige Drop In.

Information provision and Linkages

To promote dialogue between funders, providers and local communities and develop strategies to both improve access to services and better co ordinate local services a Family Co-ordinating Group¹ for the Cappamore area was established. This network continues to meet quarterly.

- In third quarter of 2009, Citizens Information commenced providing an outreach service once a week for 2 hours in the Community House.
- In the final quarter of 2010, the Cappamore Estates Group were invited to make a presentation on their work to date to (1) other residents groups in County Limerick and (2) the Housing Section of Limerick County Council at a Resident’s day facilitated by Limerick County Council in County Hall. At this meeting, a Local Authority Residents Forum was established. The Cappamore Estates Group nominated two representatives onto this countywide forum. This Forum has subsequently met on three occasions the most recent hosted by the Cappamore Estates Group.

Adult Education & Training

Basic Computers

- Basic Computers was provided by the VEC in the Community House. Eight local people were supported to participate in non-accredited post-compulsory training. A further eight individual’s progressed to post-compulsory adult training in Basic Computers in 2010 - 2011. There is ongoing demand for courses of this kind.

TO Programme²:

- There was also a focus on increasing people’s work readiness with a particular focus on the long term unemployed. A key action in the area was providing Programme where a range of services were developed to assist people toward entering the labour market. In the third quarter of 2009, 11 individuals registered to participate on a TO Programme Part of this training included a module in Horticulture and complimented the work of the estate management group and the

¹ Family Co Ordinating Group is made up of various stakeholders from the statutory, youth and community & voluntary sectors engaged in service provision and community work in the Cappamore area

² The Transition to Employment Programme is training programme targeted at individuals who are distant from the labour market.

women's group which was ongoing at this time. In the third quarter of 2010 16 individuals were engaged on this programme and a further 12 individuals registered for 2011/2012.

Horticulture

- In 2010 eight local women progressed to post-compulsory adult training in horticulture provided by the VEC. A women's group was established, in the first quarter of 2010 and was introduced to new learning informally through drama, and craft activities. Following the horticultural training the group set themselves up selling flowers baskets and window boxes and as a result of this initiative made almost €800 profit. This work complimented the estate management work in the area. The group progressed to the first module of personal development training and organised a well supported Christmas event for the community, with up to 40 people attending. The women's group has subsequently organized a further two events and training.
- **Operating Horticultural Equipment:** Ten men from the local area are signed up to commence Fetac Level 4 training in Operating Horticultural Equipment course

Committee Skills Training

- In 2010 post-compulsory Committee Skills Training commenced with the newly formed Cappamore Estates Group. This group was the result of almost two years of working with individuals in the area. The breakthrough came as a result of estate management work in the area. In 2010 residents took it upon themselves to commence looking after the cutting of the grass and the landscaping of green spaces in their own estates. The numbers engaged in the Estates Group grew from five in 2009 to 40 in 2010 and included the participation of children as well as adults. There are 18 local people nominated to representative their estates on this group. This is the first piece of training that many of the group have completed in a long time or in fact, ever.
- This original 16 individuals and a further three individual's recently progressed to more advanced non-accredited post-compulsory Committee Skills training.

Estate Management

- Attempts at estate management in 2010 were better than 2009. In 2009 5 people were engaged.
- When engagement in this process grew in it resulted in the establishment of Cappamore Estates Committee. This work was supported by Limerick County Council and a grant of €1500 was awarded to the area.
- This work continued to grow with great success in 2011. Limerick County Council Housing Section awarded Cappamore Estates Committee €2,000 toward general upkeep & maintenance and the Community & Enterprise Section awarded the group €1,100 toward grass cutting.

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Cappamore Estates Committee also completed a landscaping plan with Ballyhoura Development Ltd and was the Estates Category winner in 2011 Pride of Place competition.

Young People

- A Foroige Drop was established in 2009 and 14 children between the ages of 12 – 15 registered. The training of four residents to become youth leaders in the Foroige Drop In was the result of a volunteer drive locally. All four leaders were trained in Child Protection & Health & Safety Training. The Foroige Drop continues to grow. 'Putting the Pieces Together' training also commenced in 2010 with leaders and young people between the ages of 12 – 15 being trained.
- Summer Camps have been run since 2009 with 25 children between the ages of 5 – 12 attending in the first year. In 2010 34 children between attended and the FAI Development Officer facilitated a soccer camp for 20 children between the ages of 8 – 18.
- In 2009 a Parent & Toddler group was established; 3 mums & 5 toddlers attended. This group is ongoing.
- In 2010 a homework club was established with up to 20 local children attending. Recreational activities are also part of this club and parents are encouraged to get involved. Local parents are very happy with this service and according to the local school Principal this intervention has improved school life for both the children and teachers with particular emphasis on student attendance. Training has been provided to the part-time staff in this intervention and further training is planned.
- In 2010 an Older Boys Group (15 – 18/19 years) was piloted by Limerick Youth Services and 10 boys were engaged. This club has now been expanded to also include girls of this age. The club are in the process of doing some research regarding the needs of young people in the area.
- The most recent development regarding young people in the area is local parents volunteering to meet with TRYS regarding the setting up of a juniors club in the area. This club will target children from 7 – 12 years.

Funding

- In 2009 a total of €15,268 and in 2010 a total of €16,300 was brokered from other stakeholders to deliver social inclusion activities including the HSE Mid West Childcare Section, The National Lottery, Limerick County Council, County Limerick VEC, DFSA, and The Catherine Howard Foundation, The Irish Youth Foundation and MWRDTF. Core funding was provided by the Local Community Development Programme (LCDP).
- In 2009 there was a focus on the refurbishment of the local authority house in Mullally Lawn. Monies toward the refurbishment were brokered in from HSE Mid West and Limerick County

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Council and were used in conjunction with LDCP monies. The actual labour was provided by the local (CE) scheme and the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) scheme. A CE worker secured for the house from the local CE scheme. This worker was tasked with mainly maintenance and cleaning duties at this point. .

Successes

Some examples of success in Community Development & Education and Training are listed below:

Community Development: Cappamore Estates Committee has been empowered to take on the responsibility of maintenance & upkeep of the estates green areas. They have also completed a landscaping plan with Ballyhoura Development and were the overall winners of 2011's Pride of Place competition. The group were also runners up in the Limerick in Bloom Competition. The level of community pride in the area is very evident as a result.

Education & Training: It became apparent from our research that engagement with formal education had been largely a negative experience for many residents of the area. One of our biggest challenges was to tackle this negativity and in doing so foster an engagement with education at least informally at first. We did this by putting on training that was requested by residents. It was a very practical approach meeting training needs ranging from basic computers to horticulture to committee skills and has gone some way in breaking a cycle of educational disadvantage amongst adults in the community. Adults, both women and more recently men, no longer fear training and are enjoying and requesting more of it. See example of training and progression below. The homework club is an informal educational support for children of primary school going age. The provision of training in the community house has promoted positive engagement with the wider community, as individuals from outside of the aforementioned estates also enrolled for training.

1. The secretary of the Cappamore Estates Committee has progressed recently enrolled to in FETAC Level 5 in Business studies as well as a Fetac Level 5 in Addiction studies. She also completed the non-accredited post-compulsory training in Committee Skills as well as Child First training. She also works in the after – schools club and volunteers at the Foroige Drop In.
2. The Community Employment (CE) participant working in the Community House has completed module 1 of the GROW personal development programme, completed Child First training and defibrillator training and is currently has enrolled in Adult Literacy classes with the VEC. She is also considering the FETAC Level 5 in Childcare for 2012/2013.
3. Cappamore Estates Committee: a total of 16 individuals completed non-accredited post-compulsory training in Committee Skills many of whom would have been out of education for a long time.
4. Subsequently two members of this Committee progressed to non-accredited post-compulsory training in Basic Computers Course which was run in the Community House.

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5. The homework club is ongoing. This service has been very well received both by parents and teachers and approximately 20 children attend on a weekly basis.

Lessons Learned

Initially much of the work was focused on relationship building between Ballyhoura Development Ltd and the community both the residents on the estates and the wider community. Going door-to-door gathering information, collating a community profile and delivering initiatives to address needs and service gaps is crucial to this early relationship building process.

However buy in from statutory agencies, the youth, community and voluntary sectors and the wider community is equally important. By all these groups working in partnership an appropriate response tailored to the needs to a particular community can be put in place.

To date much of the work has focused on empowering the community to engage various statutory agencies, youth organisations, schools and local community groups using a community development approach. This has been a very successful approach in terms of working with the community as a whole. Further to this work and possibility as a result some individuals have been accessing their own skill levels and have returned to education; a result of engaging people through soft skills, building relationships and building confidence in the community.