

Dublin North West Inner City

Regional Youth Service Study

Research Report April 2005

**Commissioned by the Interim Working Group
for the North West Inner City Regional Youth Service**

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The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of any of the sponsoring or funding organisations.

List of Contents

Section 1 Introduction

Terms of Reference
Research Methodology
Area Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile

Section 2 Survey Findings

Identified concerns for young people in the Inner City
Current services and facilities
Local facilities – the views of service providers and young people
Do available facilities meet local needs?
Views on improving services and facilities
What should a regional youth service offer?
Needs identified by service providers and community representatives
Needs identified by young people
Should the service be mainstreamed or targeted?
Volunteering
On integration between the areas
Integrating new communities

Section 3 Research Conclusions and Recommendations

Section 4 Appendices

Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

This research was commissioned by the Interim Working Group for the North West Inner City Regional Youth Service to carry out a needs analysis relating to youth services in the North West Inner City Area. It follows on from the recommendations of the report *Good Neighbours Close to Town*, carried out by Community Technical Aid (CTA) in 2002.

80:20, Educating & Acting for a Better World conducted this research in the area of the North West Inner City (NWIC), defined more specifically as the Markets Area and including Dominick St., Dorset St. & Hardwicke St. - referred to throughout the report as the DDH Area.

The aims of the research are as follows:

- To provide a demographic & socio-economic profile of young people between the ages of 10 – 21 years in the above areas
- To profile the present resources / facilities and planned services for these areas
- To identify gaps and future needs in the provision of youth work in the area
- To identify potential community and/or youth activist volunteers in these areas.

Methodology

Research was carried out by means of questionnaires administered to young people through schools; semi-structured interviews with service providers and community representatives; and focus groups with young people and community representatives. Questionnaires and interview schedules were drawn up in conjunction with the Interim Working Group and a small number of service providers were also consulted for feedback before finalising the survey instruments. Responses were analysed to provide answers to the questions posed by the Interim Working Group.

The following young people were consulted during the course of the research:

- Seven young people between the ages of 10 and 13 were interviewed individually in Hardwicke St. Community Centre.
- A focus group was held with 13 young people over the age of 15 in St. Vincent's Trust Community Training Centre.
- A further focus group was held with 5 young people between the ages of 13 and 16 in St. Vincent's Trust High Support School.
- A total of 97 questionnaires were completed by a second year and a fifth year class in both St. Paul's boys' school and Mt. Carmel's Girls' school. Four focus groups were held – one with each class group – to follow up on issues arising through the questionnaire.
- A focus group was held with approximately 30 participants at the MAYS drop-in session for over 15s. The young people attending the drop-in were asked for their opinions on what a youth service should offer both as a whole group and in smaller groups in an informal setting
- Individual interviews were held with seven young males between the ages of 10 and 16 at the St. Saviour's Boxing Club on Dorset St.

A total of 22 service providers were consulted representing the following groups/organisations:

- Dublin City Council Sports Development
- Dublin City Council Community Workers
- Northern Area Health Board
- Dublin Inner City Partnership
- Community Technical Aid
- The DIME Project

- St. Vincent's Trust
- Markets Area Youth Service (MAYS)
- Catholic Youth Care
- Markets Area Community Resource Organisation (MACRO)
- Vocational Education Committee (VEC)
- Inner City Organisations' Network (ICON)
- St. Paul's School
- Mt. Carmel's School
- Dublin Christian Mission
- Step-by-Step Project

Community representatives were consulted during the course of the research as follows:

- The Block Committees for Dominick St. on which, there are 16 representatives in total
- One individual community representative from Dominick St.
- Four community volunteers at the Hardwicke St. Community Centre
- One community representative from Dorset St.
- Three Dublin City Councillors representing the NWIC area

Area Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile

The NWIC area crosses the boundaries of seven Electoral Divisions. An Electoral Division (ED) is the smallest geographical area for which the Central Statistics Office (CSO) will provide Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS). SAPS were therefore obtained from the CSO for the following seven EDs, which the NWIC area intersects:

- Ballybough A, Rotunda A, Rotunda B, Mountjoy B, Inns Quay A, Inns Quay B and Inns Quay C

The latest available SAPS are from the Census of 2002. In 2002, there were 1,900 young people in these seven EDs aged between 7yrs and 18yrs. We can therefore estimate that the number of 10 -21yr olds in these EDs in 2005 is also approximately 1,900. While there will have been some movement by families into and out of the area, this is the closest approximation available based on CSO SAPS.

As the NWIC area forms only a part of these EDs, it is then necessary to take a percentage of this figure to estimate the number of 10-21 yr olds in the NWIC area. This percentage is necessarily arbitrary as it is impossible, without a household survey, to know exactly how many of the 1,900 young people between the ages of 10 and 21 in these seven EDs fall into the NWIC area. Taking a figure of 25 per cent, we can estimate that there are approximately 475 young people between the ages of 10 and 21 living in the NWIC area. The figure of 25 per cent may be somewhat large, especially given anecdotal evidence from residents in the DDH area, which indicates that while there is a large proportion of young people under the age of 11, the number of those between 16-21 yrs is relatively small. In Dominick St. flats, residents estimate that there are approximately fifty 4-11 year olds, about twenty 12-16 yr olds and only about 10 young people over the age of 16. However, the number of 10-21 yr olds in Dorset St. and the in the Markets area is likely to be significantly higher.

A recent report published by Dublin City Development Board (2005) provides a demographic and socio-economic profile of Dublin Central – one of the five Dublin City Council administrative areas, that encompasses the whole of the NWIC area as defined in this study. According to this report, there are 33,579 persons who are 24 years or under in Dublin Central. Of these, just over one in six is under the age of 5. There are 23,181 children living in family units in Dublin Central. Of these, just over one third is living with a lone parent, compared with 29.4 per cent in Dublin City and 18.6 per cent in the State as a whole. Of 9,120 children living in family units where all children

are under 15, nearly one third live with lone parents compared with 28.3 per cent of children in such family units in Dublin City and 14.7 per cent of those in the State.

Table 1 Children in family units classified by composition of family unit and age group of children (%) 2002

Family Composition	Couple & children %	Lone father & children %	Lone mother & children %	N
Dublin Central				
No. of children in Families	66.6	3.5	29.9	23181
All children <15	67.4	1.7	30.9	9120
All children 15+	62.0	6.5	31.5	8148
All children other (not all <15 or 15+)	71.8	2.1	26.1	5913
Dublin City				
No. of children in Families	70.6	3.5	25.9	146804
All children <15	71.7	1.4	26.9	52534
All children 15+	66.9	6.4	26.7	57804
All children other (not all <15 or 15+)	75.0	2.0	23.0	36540
State				
No. of children in Families	81.4	2.7	15.9	1470819
All children <15	85.3	1.1	13.6	581442
All children 15+	73.4	5.3	21.3	485173
All children other (not all <15 or 15+)	85.5	1.9	12.6	404204

The NWIC area, as defined in this study, encompasses a large section of Dublin City Council flat complexes. It is therefore useful to look at the tenant profile of Dublin City Council as a whole and specifically at the profile of the North West Inner City tenant population.¹ In 2001, Dublin City Council, in conjunction with the Housing Unit, carried out a profile of its tenant population, which produced the following key findings:

¹ Dublin City Council defines the North West Inner City Tenant Housing Area as 'a large area stretching from the North Quays to include the Markets area, Smithfield Village, O'Devaney Gardens, North Circular Road, Cabra, Glasnevin, Phibsboro, Dorset St., Dominick St. and Hardwicke St.

- At 30.7 per cent, the proportion of children aged less than 14 years amongst City Council tenant households is higher than in the national population (21.4 per cent).²
- At 22.4 per cent, a significant proportion of City Council tenant population contains lone parent households
- The average weekly income of a tenant household is less than half of the national average for the 1999/2000 period. The average income of female members of City Council tenant households is consistently lower than that of men, across all age groups
- Average incomes of single adult and lone parent tenant households are lower than all other types of households accommodated by Dublin City Council.
- 62.5 per cent of tenant households had incomes below 50 per cent of the national average in 2001, as compared to 20.4 per cent of the general population. These data also indicate that the DCC tenant households have become poorer, relative to the general Irish population since the mid 1990s
- Households consisting of two adults and four or more children have the highest income poverty levels. The levels of income poverty are also high amongst single adult and lone parent households accommodated by the City Council
- Compared to adults, children accommodated by DCC experience particularly high levels of income poverty.
- Tenant households headed by an employed person experience lower levels of income poverty than other Dublin City Council tenant households but significantly higher poverty levels than equivalent households in the general Irish population.
- As a result of the large number of lone parent and single adult households in the City Council tenant population, households of this type make up the majority of income-poor tenant households

Although the DCC North West Inner City tenant population encompasses a larger area than the NWIC as defined in this study, the tenant profile of DCC's North West Inner City is nonetheless an excellent indicator of the socio-economic profile of the population, with which this study is primarily concerned.

Of the total Dublin City Council population, 7,248 or 10.9 per cent live in the North West Inner City housing area. There are 2,900 Dublin City Council properties in the North West Inner City. This constitutes 12 per cent of Dublin City Council's housing stock. 53.3 per cent of the housing stock consists of flats. The remainder is senior citizen accommodation (16.5 per cent) and houses (30.2 per cent). The average rent (in 2001) was €30.23. This constitutes an average 11.2 per cent of the total weekly household income. 1,059 are single adult households and 440 are households with two adults and no children. A single adult heads 19 per cent of households with children. A woman heads 55 per cent of households. 9.8 per cent of head of households are in receipt of a disability payment. 3.2 per cent of households could be termed large families, i.e. 2 or more adults and 4 or more children. 2,453 (33 per cent) of the total tenant population in this area was aged 18 or less in 2001.

Table 2: Household types in the DCC North West Inner City Tenant Housing Area

Household Type	Number	Per cent
1 adult	1,168	22.6
2 adults	572	11.1

² Comparisons made with national figures in the DCC / Housing Unit profile are based on Census figures from 1996.

3 or more adults	200	3.9
1 adult + children	1,591	30.7
2 adults + children	865	16.7
3 or more adults + children	774	15.0
Total	5,170	100

Source: Dublin City Council / Housing Unit

The population of 5 – 17 yr olds among the tenant population in DCC's North West Inner City area stood at 1,902 in 2001. This can be used as an approximate estimation of the 10 – 21yr old population in 2005 for the whole of this area, which means that among the DCC tenant population approximately 17 per cent of young people are between the ages of 10 – 21 yrs.

Table 3: Age groups of DCC North West Inner City tenants

Age group	Number	Per cent
0 – 4	551	7.4
5 – 9	685	9.2
10 – 14	603	8.1
14 – 17	614	8.3
18 – 27	893	12.1
27 – 37	885	11.9
37 – 46	956	12.9
47 – 64	1,224	16.5
65+	1,005	13.6
Total	7,416	100

Source: Dublin City Council / Housing Unit

According to the tenant profile, the average total household income in 2001 was €281.77. 62.9 per cent of households in the North West Inner City housing area live below the 50 per cent income poverty level and the North West Inner City housing area contributes 7.6 per cent to the incidence of overall income poverty in Dublin City Council households.

Table 4: Sources of Income of all Individuals aged 18 and over in the DCC North West Inner City Tenant Population

Sources of Income	Per cent
Employed	27.7
Unemployment Assistance long-term	17.0
Unemployment Benefit short-term	1.9
Disability Payment	10.6
One Parent Family Payment	17.8
Community Employment Scheme	3.2
Contributory & Private Pension	12.7
Non-Contributory Pension	4.8

No income	14.7
Other	5.1

Source: Dublin City Council / Housing Unit

According to Dublin Inner City Partnership, educational disadvantage is especially evident at primary level. The majority of pupils in the 41 primary schools located in or around Dublin City Centre come from the most educationally disadvantaged communities in the Country. Up to 20 per cent qualify for Special Needs and an even larger number qualify for Learning Support. Somewhere between 70 and 80 per cent are below the National average in reading and mathematics. A substantial number display poor attendance, a disinterest in education, inappropriate behaviour and low self-esteem. Many drop out of the school system at an early age. There is a need for psychological assessment in Inner City schools but the National Educational Psychological Service is insufficient to meet demand and the cost of private assessment is prohibitive to disadvantaged schools. Over 90 children out of 100 assessed in 10 Inner City schools in 2001-2002 qualified for special help. In addition, there is a high turnover of staff and schools are regularly losing teachers who have received specialist training.

Low school attendance is recognised as the root cause of many of the other problems facing the education sector particularly in the Inner City. Of 12 Inner City schools, 106 (86 per cent) of second year students were absent for five full days or more in one month while the figure for first years was 60 per cent (Second-level Schools Network research, 2003). A CTA Needs Analysis of the RAPID areas within the Inner City (1999), links early school leaving to anti-social behaviour in the area, the presence of some dysfunctional families and a lack of role models in terms of educational success. This report identified boys in the 14+ age group as being particularly 'at risk' and in need of youth work activity and support. Lack of such support has created a perception among residents of the area that young people are 'out of control' and this is directly related to drug misuse and anti-social behaviour. A multi-agency response targeting both the young people and their families is strongly recommended by CTA.

Although DICP acknowledges that educational attainment has improved dramatically since 1996, it also states that this apparent improvement could be skewed by the movement of professionals into new private apartment complexes in the Inner City. Progression to third level education in certain local communities is almost negligible, according to development workers based in Local Authority flat complexes and DICP estimates that only 3 per cent of Inner City Local Authority tenants progress to third level, compared with 50 per cent of the general population in the Dublin Region. In addition, literacy problems in the Inner City are widespread – 63 per cent of second level students are behind the average reading age (DICP, 2004).

Survey Findings

Identified Concerns for Youth in the Inner City

A number of issues arose as being of concern or importance to young people in the NWIC. Of these, the two most common concerns are:

- the lack of constructive activities or *places* to go
- personal safety.

While the younger age group (under 14) would like to see:

- more activities – both sporting and recreational
- they also appear to be more content to ‘hang around’ the flats than the older group (14+ yrs).

Those over 14 yrs:

- Are deeply unhappy with the lack of a place to go as they are subject to accusations of anti-social behaviour and therefore police harassment when they ‘hang around’ the flats.
- They also claim that early pregnancy and high crime rates among young people in this area are related to boredom from lack of things to do and places to go other than the stairwells of the flats.

Personal safety was identified as the major issue among a large proportion of questionnaire respondents. This echoes the concerns of some service providers working directly with young people who have noted that there is a fear of being beaten up, or among young women, of being raped.

However, an attempt to follow up on this during focus groups with those who completed the questionnaires, yielded conflicting results, particularly among the young males, who were unwilling to provide concrete examples of what they meant by ‘concerns around personal safety’. This may be a function of the focus group setting, in which young people are unwilling to lose face. It is nonetheless evident that **bullying** is a major issue among males, while the **fear of being attacked** (sexually or otherwise) is prevalent among females. It is difficult to know how much of this fear arises through hearsay and parental concerns for children. However, ‘personal safety’ was explicitly mentioned too often in individual questionnaires to be discounted as a minor issue and is therefore, a matter which requires further exploration by youth workers on the ground.

Some of the young males who were interviewed at the boxing club on Dorset Street feel they are taking control of their own personal safety by learning to box, while a significant number of girls mentioned an interest in kick-boxing or self-defence classes. In general, **most young people seem to feel safe within their own area** – their own area being defined as a very small space, usually around the perimeter of their own flat complex. They also feel safe moving outside of their own area during the day, provided they are with a group of friends. Night time is considered to be ‘dodgy’ and they feel it is safer not to roam around the streets at night because ‘outsiders’ are around, including ‘junkies’.

Drugs are seen as a major problem, particularly in the DDH area. Concerns around this issue are twofold:

- the younger group is intimidated by ‘junkies’, by whom they are afraid of being mugged
- the older group is clearly concerned about peer pressure.

Awareness of the risks associated with drug use is not the issue as many of these young people have been exposed to problem drug use in the area for most of their lives. However, once they reach a certain age it is evident that they are being pulled in a particular direction by the desire to 'be popular' or just 'fit in'. This is evidenced by the fact that those under the age of 14 do not like to see the older young people drinking alcohol while many young people from the age of 14 yrs onwards were willing to admit to such drinking, although they do not view this as being problematic in the same way as drug-taking.

Vandalism and crime is a concern to young people mainly because they feel they can't have anything in the area unless it is fenced off or gated to keep outsiders away. The main problem is people using open spaces to drink or take drugs. There were some concerns around environmental pollution i.e. dirty streets although this is not considered to be a major problem.

Females generally expressed greater concerns around **schoolwork, homework** and **exams** although younger males in individual interviews also indicated that they would like some help in this regard. **Finding employment** was a prevalent concern among those in the senior cycle classes and those already out of school. Lack of opportunities in the area despite massive regeneration is an issue on which some of the older young people focused.

Lack of free contraception was identified as an issue in particular by older females, some of whom are already young mothers. General peer pressure associated with being a teenager was also noted among the girls i.e. the need to have the latest 'things' such as clothes, make-up and mobile phones.

Young People's Concerns – some examples quoted

- *'There is nothing to do and nowhere to go e.g. no clubs so people are just sitting around getting into trouble' (female, 14 yrs)*
- *'I don't like the way the police search me for nothing. They shouldn't have the right to do that.... I don't appreciate being stopped every night'. (male, 14 yrs)*
- *'There are a lot of bad people and gangs who rob phones and hurt you' (male, 12 yrs)*
- *'We are afraid of all the joy-riders & drug addicts' (focus group – second year females)*
- *'There are a lot of dark lanes where anything could happen to you' (female, 17 yrs)*
- *'Junkies and alcoholics concerns me most because you don't know what they are going to do'*
- *'You can't have anything. People come in from outside and wreck the place' (focus group, second year males)*
- *'We got a new basketball and football court. It's good for little children but for boys aged 16-25 who do drugs there, which shouldn't be happening' (female, 16 yrs)*
- *'I find it very hard to get a job when possible employers find out where I am from' (female, 15 yrs)*

Current Services and Facilities

The following outlines the services and facilities that are currently available in the NWIC area:

- **St. Vincent's Trust** has a remit for the North Inner City but it also takes statutory referrals so its participants could come from anywhere in the City. The majority do come from the Inner City and generally they are formally classified as 'at risk' of early school leaving (ESL). St. Vincent's Trust is a community education service offering five types of service. The two relating to youth are the High Support School and the

Community Training Centre, both of which, target early school leavers. The aim of St. Vincent's CTC is to progress young people towards employment from pre-school to 21. It also provides supports in terms of two full-time workers, a child psychologist as well as an education and employment links officer. There is some recreational element to St. Vincent's but primarily it is an educational centre. St. Vincent's also organises occasional summer programmes and the schools organise some activities as well but this is ad hoc and seasonal.

- **The Dublin Christian Mission (DCM)** has engaged a large proportion of young people from the Markets Area over the years. Its remit is for all age groups and its catchment area is the whole of Dublin City. According to the DCM, young people from Greek Street and Ormond Square tend to come to DCM rather than going to MAYS. The DCM offers an after-schools project 5 days of the week for primary and secondary school children between 7 – 18yrs. They all come every day except if they have football training etc. There are youth clubs in the evenings. There is a tots club, a club for 8-12 yr olds, a club for 13 – 15 yr olds and one for 16+yrs. These are available one evening per week each. DCM takes groups on a rotation basis to the swimming pool in Finglas but it has become more difficult now because the pool has been refurbished and groups of young people are no longer wanted at the pool. Outdoor activities such as hill-walking, camping, fishing etc. and summer projects are also available through DCM.
- **Catholic Youth Care** has a remit for the whole of the North Inner City. It provides support mainly by listening. It helps organisations to fill in funding applications and to organise activities. It also provides training / facilitation for youth workers on youth issues.
- **The CDVEC** has a remit to work with unaccompanied minors. At present there are no unaccompanied minors living in the NWIC area but they may be attending schools there. CDVEC provides English language assessment and referral as well as specialised programmes and computer classes. In addition, CDVEC runs summer schools every year for unaccompanied minors. There are also psychiatric services for asylum seekers and refugees. CDVEC does not have any remit around recreation or youth services or drop-in except for the summer projects. There are dedicated services for this client group but in terms of youth work per se, it would be dependant on project workers. SPIRASI also provides a health promotion programme for unaccompanied minors. CDVEC and CDYSB recently put in a proposal to Youth Affairs in the Department of Education and Science for a youth worker for unaccompanied minors to either do something specifically with them or to integrate them. They now have matching funding from the EU- EQUAL Programme so something can be set up.

The Markets Area

- **The Markets Area Youth Service (MAYS)** provides mainstream and targeted activities located in the MACRO building, based on young people's voluntary participation. The emphasis is on personal development and experiential learning, mainly through sport, creative arts, digital media and training mediums. The remit is for 10 – 20 yr olds but the focus is on 13-16 yr olds because of a lack of resources. There are approximately 25-30 young people between the ages of 15-18 yrs accessing MAYS. It provides health programmes (mainly for girls), drama (run by volunteers); a music programme and an informal drop-in programme for young people that are not necessarily ready for structured programmes. This enables youth workers to find out what the needs of this group are. MAYS also offers film-making, football (in Finglas – they can't use Aughrim St. because of the expense), job-support and one-to-one support sessions dealing with

life experience rather than preaching to young people. These sessions can lead to referral to other services.

- **MACRO** sponsors summer projects for general youth (120 from the Markets area). Smithfield ice rink is also available for free for 2 days for families from the Markets Area. Each household gets four tickets and the community provides supervision on a voluntary basis.
- **Step-by-Step** (SBS) operates in the Markets Area. Officially it works with young people from 5 – 12 yrs but in effect, younger and older children access the services. This is because SBS is open to working with the younger siblings of participants and on an irregular, informal basis with older children who have already been through SBS. The catchment area for SBS is the Markets Area but referrals come from the schools so young people may in fact come from outside the area. The schools that are dealt with predominantly are St. Paul's junior school and George's Hill. Because these schools take children from outside the Markets Area, there are some young people attending SBS from Dorset St. and Dominick St.

Step-by-Step originally ran programmes just for children and had little or no contact with families. This has now changed and there is more work with families. The ethos is about starting the children young and letting them grow up with the programme. SBS provides programmes in the afternoon and then whatever family support is needed, which is often just about being at the end of a phone. SBS fills the gaps and also acts as a liaison with the schools.

- **St. Anthony's Football team** also operates in the Markets Area and most boys from the area are involved in it. The Majorette group is currently active but is 'homeless' and is using the DCM Hall to practice. There is a wrestling club off Linen-Hall St., which is used by a small number of boys from the Markets Area who are interested in wrestling. There are two boxing clubs that are used by the boys from Markets – one near the bus depot at Constitution Hill and one in Broadstone.
- **The Crinian Youth Project** (Drugs Intervention), based in Sean McDermott St., has a remit for the Markets Area and the after-school project in Blackhall Place, which caters for 52 primary school children has a number of participants from the Markets Area.

DDH Area

- **DCC Sports Development Office** has a remit to engage young people at risk in sustainable sporting activities in the DDH area. This has involved Basketball, Soccer, on-site activities and water-polo. The Sports Development Office puts in a plan but may not be able to go ahead with it because of lack of funding, lack of volunteers or lack of interest. According to the Sports Development Officer, there is limited access for sporting activities. Although plans for the Dominick St. Community Centre are underway, this will be restricted initially to those from the area. It is hoped that the boxing club on Dorset St. will be refurbished in the long-term and if this happens it may be opened up to the wider community.
- **Hardwicke St. Community Centre** provides a number of centre-based activities for young people including a fun club for 4-11 yr olds two nights of the week, Arts & Crafts for 6-10 yr olds and then for 10+ yrs; there is a drop-in for 10+yrs and the majority are between 10– 16yrs. There is a computer drop-in for all ages; a homework club for over 10s; Mosaics for 16+yrs; basic computer courses; IC3 training – digital community project; and drama for 10+yrs. There is also a homework club run by a group of nuns in the centre. Young people from Hardwicke St. go to swimming & snorkelling classes

in Belvedere, organised by the Sports Development Officer of DCC and they also access the football and basketball facilities in Mountjoy Square. Once the Early Learning Centre behind the community centre is completed, the football pitch, also behind the centre will be refurbished if funding comes through. Summer projects are organised by local volunteers.

- **The DIME project** is also in Hardwicke St. and is run out of the Vietnamese Centre. This is a diversionary youth project run by Foróige and the Gardaí and caters for 'at risk' young people in the area. There are 14 'at risk' young people accessing direct services through the project and 37 receiving mainstream support. This includes a counselling service, hill-walking and other outdoor activities.
- In addition, young people from Hardwicke St. access the **youth club on North Great George's St.**, located in Oznam House, which is owned by St. Vincent de Paul. Oznam House also caters for after-school projects and homework clubs run in conjunction with DIME and is utilised for this purpose by young people from the Hardwicke St. Area.
- At the moment there are **no facilities in Dominick St. apart from YouthReach**. However, according to residents no local young people access YouthReach in Dominick St. It is hoped that the new community centre, when it is built, will provide numerous activities for young people. Originally, Flat no. 172 was the crèche and Flat No. 2 was the Digital Hub, but both have been closed for some time due to lack of volunteers and other issues.
- **St. Mary's playschool in Dorset St. is currently being refurbished** by DCC at a cost of €117,000 and it is hoped that once the refurbishment is complete, it will be available for a wider range of services, including after-school projects in the afternoon and a facility for young people to use in the evenings. A tenants association has been set up in Dorset St. by DCC comprised of 10 people and they are in the process of setting up a pilot youth group, to provide arts & crafts, computers etc. An application was made recently to CDYSB to start off the project. Matching funding from DCC might be available and residents are hoping for a flat to be allocated specifically for youth work in the near future.

Local facilities – the views of Service Providers and Young People

Service providers almost unanimously feel that there is very little available for young people in the NWIC area. Although the Markets Area is better catered for in terms of a youth service, there are very few social or informal outlets and no suitable, well-resourced outdoor sports facilities. At the moment any service has to travel to facilities, including playgrounds. SBS travels to the playgrounds in Sean McDermott St. and Phoenix Park. Broadstone has a playground but it is not particularly suitable. Kings' Inn Park is permanently locked, while Blackhall Place has a pitch, which exclusive to members. Some of the boys use Smithfield Plaza to play football but it not suitable for that purpose. In the Markets Area, it is becoming more and more difficult to find space to 'just be kids' and to get into 'safe' mischief so now, according to service providers, they're getting themselves into serious mischief.

The DDH part of NWIC forms an 'interface' area between the North East and the North West Inner City and consequently tends to fall between service provider boundaries. According to many service providers, this interface area is very weak in terms of social capital and community infrastructure compared with the North East Inner City and the area further North West towards Stoneybatter. Apart from good drugs intervention, there appears to be little else in terms of dedicated services or family support in the area.

The most common response given by young people when asked what they do in their spare time was *'hang around'* either in the flats or parks or around the City Centre. This was more often the case in the Dominick St. and Dorset St. area and to some extent, Hardwicke St., than in the Markets Area. They also *'climb into broken down buildings and mess around'*. Some as young as 14 yrs of age acknowledge that they *'get drunk sometimes'*. Generally they argue that there is *'nowhere to go'*. The older age group (over 14 / 15 yrs) in the DDH area is quite emphatic that there is *'nothing to do except hang around in the towers (of the flats) and to drink'*. There is a lack of awareness of the services that are available and a concern that they will not be allowed to use what is there.

The boys like to play football where they can. The boys from the Markets Area spend a lot of time in and around the Kevin Barry football pitch while boys from Hardwicke St. tend to go to Belvedere for football training and use the facilities at Mountjoy Square. A significant number of boys from all areas specifically mentioned Cabra as a place they hang out and play football and they feel there is more to do in Cabra because there are football pitches and open space. The girls spend a lot of time in each others' houses – especially the older girls – listening to music etc. They also like to go shopping in the City Centre. Watching TV is a major pastime for both genders as is the cinema. A lot of young people like to go swimming but they say they are not able to go as often as they would like. Dance machines in the amusement arcades are a big draw for the under 15s, particularly the girls, while video-games are an attraction for younger boys.

Other activities that are undertaken less frequently but which are of interest to young people include snooker/pool, basketball, cross-guns, aerobics/gym, dancing classes, music lessons, internet cafes and roller-blading.

Do available facilities meet local needs?

There was an emphatic 'no' to this question by all respondents.

There are some excellent services, both statutory and community-led but for the most part, what is there is completely under-resourced so that while they contribute to meeting the needs, they fall far short. It is evident that the NWIC area – in particular Dominick St., Dorset St. and Hardwicke St., has been neglected for a long time and the youth issue cannot be isolated from the social context in which, the lack of youth services is a reflection of the neglect of the area generally.

Despite a lack of political commitment in the past, recent regeneration and improvements to the physical infrastructure are welcome and there is a sense of optimism among community representatives and service providers that 'things are beginning to happen', particularly in terms of capital projects. While the younger age group is also optimistic, the older young people (15+ yrs) are somewhat cynical about youth services and facilities and they do not really believe that anything constructive will happen in time for them or in some cases, for their children.

Lack of resources is identified by all as the greatest barrier to the provision of services and facilities. In particular, lack of 'place' is identified by all respondents as the key deficiency while lack of youth workers is a prevalent concern among service providers and community representatives.

The lack of physical infrastructure was highlighted in 'Good Neighbours', the 2002 report on the area by Community Technical Aid (CTA, 2002). At present there are very few options within the area in terms of physical space for young people to meet and socialise or to engage in sport and recreation. The Markets Area has the MACRO building but some service providers note that this can be quite restrictive in terms of providing young people with their own 'space'. In addition, it is relatively expensive to rent rooms there. There are so many physical constraints in the Inner City and facilities are located, in general, outside of the area. For the younger age group (under 15yrs), this means sport & recreational activities must be organised and travelled to, while for the older

age group, there is nowhere to congregate securely and constructively so that meeting up together means hanging around the flats, which causes problems with both residents and the police.

In the past, young people could meet their own needs to a certain extent e.g. kicking a football around or going to the swimming pool etc. Now, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to take their own initiative as the options for unsupervised, informal activities are shut off to them. Ironically, urban regeneration is leading to a decrease in physical space for them to just hang around, while insurance considerations mean that many facilities such as swimming pools will not allow groups of young people in without adult supervision. Parks and previously open spaces are being closed off with locked gates to prevent young people getting in and the wealthy commercial and State institutions around the area go to great lengths to prevent young people from 'trespassing'. All young people, according to service providers, need opportunities for unsupervised play or adventure in a safe environment. This has become severely curtailed in the Inner City so that young people are now engaging in unsafe activities through boredom and lack of alternatives.

Lack of youth workers means that despite new community centres or youth projects, the needs of young people are not being met. Volunteers alone cannot undertake youth work and there is an immense need for fully resourced long-term youth workers who can develop a relationship with young people in each area and run appropriate programmes based on the expressed needs of young people in that particular area.

The young people who are currently engaging in some programmes with youth workers are extremely positive about the experience but say they want more. For example, the mixed informal drop-in session, which takes place in MAYS one evening per week is extremely popular but every single young person in attendance wants more of the same i.e. more evenings and at the weekends. This is also true of the Hardwicke St. Community Centre drop-in, where young people comment that they *'want somewhere to go that the doors aren't locked most of the time'*. Currently, resources do not allow for the further development of successful initiatives such as these.

Furthermore, the needs of detached youth are not being met on any level. While scarce resources are used to develop programmes for young people who voluntarily engage, those who are unaware of the services or who are simply not in a position to pro-actively involve themselves disappear entirely from the view of service providers. Street youth work is the key to identifying this group in the first instance and secondly to look at innovative ways of engaging them in youth services. The Sports Development Officer in the DDH area has been pro-active in seeking out young people where they are e.g. by bringing footballs to the flats and starting games and at the same time getting to know the young people who hang around there. However, a Sports Development Officer with limited resources for the provision of sporting activities cannot be expected to take the place of dedicated street youth workers who should, in effect, be developing relationships with these young people and referring them on to services such as those provided by the Sports Development Officer. The Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYPs) that operate in the NEIC area were offered as models for working with detached youth by a number of service providers.

A number of service providers feel that funding requirements hamper mainstream services in their efforts to meet the needs of youth at risk and detached youth. In other words, service providers have to develop programmes, which aim at the funding rather than at the needs of young people. This is because short, sharp projects, which deliver a 'product' at the end, such as digital or multi-media programmes are favoured by funders. Youth services are therefore put in a position of having to develop such programmes to attract funding, when the needs of young people most at risk are far more basic. Indeed, many of those who are most in need are not yet in a position to engage with such programmes. This reflects a fundamental flaw in the provision of funding rather than a fault on the part of service providers.

There are a limited number of homework clubs and after-school support - this is inadequate to meet the needs of the area. Consequently, there is a very high-drop out rate from the schools. Early school leaving is very much linked to anti-social behaviour and so there is a real need to provide support for young people in this regard. The lack of positive options in the area is leading to widespread peer-led alcohol and drug misuse. Unless quality daytime activities such as either learning or training are provided for young people, detached youth and subsequent anti-social behaviour will be a natural consequence.

According to many service providers and community representatives and also to young people themselves, there is very little, or nothing at all available in terms of skills training i.e. something that would give young people the potential for income generation. Personal development and health education are also neglected to a large extent because of under-funding.

The lack of services or facilities for young people with disabilities was re-iterated by many service providers as well as the inaccessibility of such services that exist in the area. With regard to unaccompanied minors, the problem is lack of awareness of what is available. In theory, any service available to young Irish people is available to young unaccompanied minors but the services are not necessarily meeting the needs of this group because they are not being accessed. Work needs to be done with the existing services around awareness, integration, interculturalism and outreach to unaccompanied minors. Although support groups don't necessarily make themselves available to unaccompanied minors in terms of translation, advertising in hostels etc. the Health Board has dedicated project workers to refer unaccompanied minors to services.

The lack of leadership programmes for young people from the NWIC region is identified as another area where needs are not being met. Due to a lack of resources, there is a whole group of young people not being tapped into that are wasted resources, not just in terms of youth leaders but as future community leaders. It is important to engage these young people now, so that they can reach their potential as leaders or they will be very quickly lost as a resource to youth service provision.

According to some service providers and community representatives, the problem is one of getting young people to access what is there. This is an issue of perception. Young people will say there is 'nothing to do and nowhere to go' if what is there does not appeal to them. However, if a service does not appeal to them, then by definition, it does not meet their needs and amounts, in effect, to 'nothing to do'. This is particularly the case for the over 15yr olds. While it is somewhat easier to provide activities and diversions for young people up to the age of 14, as long as there are sufficient youth workers, youth leaders and volunteers, it is very difficult to meet the needs of young people who are 15yrs and over within the confines of a community centre, which is generally located in the heart of a flat complex. These young people want somewhere to go in the evenings and at the weekends, whereas residents do not want young people hanging around at these times. Supervision is also an issue and community centres generally do not have the resources to stay open at times, which suit older young people. In addition, community centres are restricted to young people from a particular flat complex – this does not encourage mixing or integration among young people from the wider area.

Many service providers also note that the needs of young people are not being met because there is a lack of integration in terms of service provision. According to some, there is no co-ordination and too much politics so that decisions are made but there is little implementation because of a lack of accountability. We are asking communities to co-operate with one another but at present, the service-providers cannot even co-operate. Until it becomes a statutory obligation to integrate services, there will be duplication and gaps in service delivery and the needs of young people will not be met. This is the current challenge to existing services according to many respondents.

Other areas of the City were cited as examples of problematic service provision where a number of agents provide the same or a similar service to the same age group without any co-operation between them, leading to duplication on the one hand and a gap in services on the other because none of them are available in the evenings. It was also noted that integrated service provision is the only means by which to encompass both mainstream and targeted youth. Some services are considered to be *'too targeted'* at present and not broad enough for the general population.

A further example of the need for integration as identified by a number of service providers is the gap between services for younger children and those provided by youth services. Children are, in some cases, hanging around on the street from about 6 yrs of age and by the time youth services begin at 12yrs or thereabouts, it is almost too late for some of them. On the other hand, many youth service providers are unwilling or unable to cope with 16-21 yr olds because of bullying and anti-social behaviour. A continuum of co-ordinated services from early childhood into late teens is required, which can only be guaranteed by integrated service provision.

Views on improving services and facilities

The answer to this question is almost always 'more resources', specifically in terms of youth workers.

Service providers say that youth workers are needed to support the services and facilities that already exist. They also emphasise that year-on-year funding is very debilitating in terms of youth work and there is a need for long-term investment, in particular, to provide youth workers on a stable basis. In addition, most service providers point out that services cannot be improved without a physical space in which to locate such services.

Hardwicke St. already has a new community centre but badly needs youth workers – at least one to be permanently placed in the centre and one for street / detached youth work. Dominick St. will shortly have a new community centre and will be in the same position. Although community representatives hope to provide their own activities for young people from the area, youth workers are also needed to provide outreach support. Refurbishment of the Dorset St. playschool as well as the expected allocation of a flat, means that there will be some (limited) facilities for young people. Again, they will need the support of youth workers for evenings and street work to engage older detached youth.

MAYS is in need of greater resources including youth workers but also an increased programme budget to broaden the service and make it more attractive to young people. Although the service has been running successfully on a limited budget, any youth club or service in the area necessarily competes with other more popular or attractive activities such as internet cafes with unlimited access to the internet and video games, pubs and outdoor drinking. In addition, clubs are required around the area to provide *activities* so that MAYS can focus on providing *services*. Because of the lack of sporting opportunities and because the youth service is centre-bound, MAYS has had to develop indoor pursuits such as digital projects, arts etc. According to MAYS, any physically-limited centre-based youth service requires more interesting content and some capital expenditure on equipment e.g. for film, video, media, indoor sports etc. On the other hand, the CTA report 'Good Neighbours' (2002) identified the need for small grants for basic things in each area and these could be followed up on.

Integration is key according to many service providers. There is no need for a new service. Rather, there is a need for existing services to pool together and to work with families / communities to provide a more comprehensive service for young people from the area. Time and resources should therefore be given to developing strategies to integrate to respond more effectively. For example, CDYSB could work with the DIME project in Hardwicke St. to improve the service that already exists. Integration should adhere to a community development approach

so that the communities and not just the agencies are involved in developing comprehensive programmes and supports.

Accessibility needs to be improved as services and facilities are currently not open at the right time, particularly for older youth. They need to be open in the evenings and at weekends, catering for 'at risk' or troublesome young people but not excluding others. The solution to most of the problems is to keep young people occupied at times when they are most likely to be getting into trouble. In this regard, there should be a greater level of targeting for young people under the age of 12. At present, this group is falling through so that by the time they reach the age of 12, it becomes far more difficult to engage them. More activities should be provided for this age group to get them engaged and to keep them engaged into their teens.

All services should develop policies relating to particular target groups e.g. young people with disabilities and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. Training should also be provided to enable youth workers and volunteers to pro-actively assist in the integration of all young people.

An increased awareness of existing services is required. There is a lot of work going on but because of the lack of co-ordination and co-operation, communities do not know what exists for them. Services need to let people know what is there. In this regard, putting leaflets through the door is pointless. Word-of-mouth is the only way to pro-actively encourage people to participate so people should be knocking on doors – preferably people who are known within the community.

Dublin City Council should make the spaces that are there available for use i.e. it should consider where development is going and in what context instead of reaping short term gains. This is beginning to happen now with Smithfield. However, DCC also owns some houses on Henrietta St. on which it has Compulsory Purchase Orders. These could be developed for Inner City youth work. This is important in the context of rent for facilities and services. For example, Step-by-Step is paying €38,000 in rent for 16,000 square feet of space. Free space is badly needed and City Council has the option to use a number of key sites for long-term gains in terms of Inner City youth.

Efforts should be made to engage the statutory and commercial institutions within these areas in the life of the community. Most of the institutions surrounding these young people have no connection whatsoever with the locality e.g. the Law Library, Blackhall Place etc.

There is a need for community Gardaí who get to know the community and especially the young people. This is particularly important in Dominick St. and Dorset St., where accusations of anti-social behaviour cause problems between adults and young people.

What should a Regional Youth Service Offer?

Two issues emerge as a matter of priority in terms of a Regional Youth Service in the NWIC area:

- the need for youth workers
- the need for a location from which to provide services.

The **first priority for a new youth service is clearly youth workers** – specifically outreach to support existing services and street work with detached youth. There is a real need to support and develop what already exists in the area. There is no need to create a new service but rather to integrate the services and provide some direction. Service providers are emphatic that youth workers should enhance and not duplicate what already exists because there are people who have worked hard in different areas that need support to fill gaps but do not need to be 'taken over'.

All service providers feel that interpersonal relationships between youth workers and young people are key in setting up a youth service and successfully maintaining it. Youth workers must gain the trust of young people before beginning to work with them. The model that has worked successfully

for MAYS could be expanded for the Markets area and replicated successfully in the Dominick St., Dorset St., Hardwicke St. area i.e. employ youth workers who are highly visible in the area and who develop a strong relationship with the young people by being present and available to them. Youth programmes will then evolve dynamically based on the needs of young people, which will become apparent to the youth workers in a relatively short space of time.

This requires dynamic and innovative youth workers who can adapt their skills and deliver what young people want. The skills required for an Inner City area may be different from those required in an area with physical space. A youth service in the Inner City is competing with consumer experiences such as internet cafes, video games, amusement arcades, as well as drinking etc. Young people need to be attracted to the service, which will only happen if youth workers can identify what is needed and deliver it. MAYS follows a dynamic approach to programme development. Young people are attracted in to a drop-in through word-of-mouth and community contacts. Street-work, advertising and the community newsletter also works. Word-of-mouth works particularly well because the Committee members are from the area so they have good links into the community and they let the service know what is needed. Once young people are in the door, youth workers explore with them in an informal way what their needs are.

Most importantly, service providers note that the provision of youth workers without a programme budget is a pointless exercise. Inevitably, proper funding for a youth service will be key to its success, while having youth workers in the area without the means to run activities or programmes will not work because young people will lose interest. In this regard, any new service should provide small first-phase deliverables to enhance confidence and build profile e.g. a project or a group receiving a grant. There should be targeted measures that meet a need in a particular flat complex to gain credibility.

It is also important that youth workers have excellent links with informal and formal educational services in the area to identify those most at risk youth because otherwise, those out of school fall through. Dedicated street youth workers are required to develop relationships with these young people in order that they can refer them on to appropriate services.

The second priority issue – the need for a place to go – is also crucial. The common theme among all respondents and especially among young people themselves, was the need for a place to go to feel safe, where they can hang around without being accused of anti-social behaviour – in other words, a dedicated youth centre. It is evident in particular from the responses of young people 15 yrs and over that a drop-in centre, which does not lock up early in the evening and at weekends is badly needed. As noted above, community centres cannot meet this need because of the lack of staff, insurance costs and also in some cases because of their location within flat complexes. All respondents identified the need for a place to go at the weekends and in the evenings, when young people are most at risk.

This poses a real challenge in terms of service provision, not least because of budget constraints but also because of the very prevalent territoriality between the areas within the NWIC. Each community wants young people to be able to access services 'on the doorstep', somewhere they can have a say in what is happening and can feel safe allowing their children to participate. This came through very clearly in discussions with residents in Dominick St., Dorset St. and Hardwicke St. They do not want their children - particularly those who are under 15yrs - to go outside the immediate area to access services without adult supervision from the community. Each community centre wants at least two youth workers – one to be based in the centre and one for street work and outreach.

However, while outreach youth workers to support existing services provide a solution to the issue of territoriality, many service providers doubt whether a regional youth service can successfully provide services without a physical space from which to do so. In the event that a place does become available at any time in the future, its location will therefore be of vital importance. Only a

'neutral' venue will attract participation from all areas within the NWIC. In the short-term however, much can be done by innovative youth workers to enhance the integration of young people within the NWIC and to break down the fears and barriers that have arisen from years of territoriality and parochialism.

Service providers suggest that an integrated services model should be employed, providing communication and co-ordination for all services working with young people in the area. Young people at risk would therefore be jointly identified and supported by a range of services. While preventative services are the ultimate aim, crisis intervention is also required. A holistic approach is necessary, including family support and family projects so that a youth service is placed in the context of a young person's whole life. This will also ensure that parents don't view a youth service as a baby-sitting service and that young people don't view it as something apart from the rest of their actual life.

Also in this regard, many service-providers note that the development of youth services should be community-led, so that the community can provide its own answers. This is the case with MAYS where community input is provided by community representatives on the Management Committee and by youth workers with strong links into the community. If a Regional Youth Service provides a form of 'umbrella group' for common issues - joint funding applications, co-ordination and integration - then it will be welcomed by the community. However, if it is perceived to be a central 'controlling' mechanism, then it might not work because each area is a very distinct neighbourhood and there is a fear of being 'taken over' by a centralised/statutory agency. It is therefore necessary to work with each community to develop flexible strategies based on the needs in each area and a strong regional to local working relationship would be required. Models used in the NEIC area were suggested for the development of a Regional Youth Service in the NWIC.

Finally, the point was made by some service providers that Dublin City Council's plans may have a large effect on the Inner City population and therefore on any plans for a Regional Youth Service. DCC is looking at selling much of its tenant housing through tenant purchase and Public Private Partnerships. This may change the structure of the population, as there will be no security of tenure. According to some service providers, the design of a youth service, which does not take this into account, is fundamentally flawed.

Needs identified by service providers and community representatives

In terms of activities and programmes, service providers indicate that more mainstream provision is required to offer activities to young people e.g. clubs. This would take the pressure off a youth service having to provide *activities* and would free up qualified youth workers for targeted work. They could concentrate instead on providing services. The targeted work could be done by professionals and the mainstream programmes or activities run by volunteers.

Separate age groups are also required as older young people, especially girls do not wish to be with the younger age group. The older young people need secure drop-in resources, somewhere they can go to hang around and feel safe. 10 – 12 year olds need activities, something to divert them before they start hanging around the flats and taking drugs - something to give them a sense of achievement. They need to be allowed to take risks in a safe environment. They also need physical space without constantly having lines drawn e.g. in school, they're always being told not to run, don't go outside the lines. They need something adventurous but at the same time safe and not formal like school. They need new experiences and a challenge.

It was suggested by service providers that a Regional Youth Service should start off with some small but highly visible activities e.g. an adventure youth project such as those run by the Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYPs). It is important to deliver some short-term achievements in the initial stages so that people are attracted to the youth service – both participants and volunteers. Peer training and leadership programmes were identified as a means of providing a

personal link between the service and young people from the area. The DCC Sports Officer has had some success in this regard with a snorkelling training programme.

A system for linking unaccompanied minors into existing youth groups is required. Training is also required for staff and volunteers and a specific staff member should be appointed to ensure that services are pro-actively looking at interculturalism. There is also a need for specific nationality-based activities. There are services for health etc. but unaccompanied minors need something around recreation and sport. Health and sex education is also important but it should be culturally appropriate. Drug awareness may be an issue further down the line but does not appear to be a huge issue with unaccompanied minors so far. Literacy provision for unaccompanied minors and for the ethnic minority population in general is an area which requires some attention although this should be informal provision. More work needs to be done with young people around anti-discrimination - some work has been done on this by 'Youth Action Against Racism' (YARD).

The **needs identified by service providers and community representatives** generally fall under the following headings:

Health

- Healthy living and nutrition programmes – bad nutrition is endemic and means many young people in the area are unhealthy and unable to participate fully in sporting activities
- Health programmes are especially important for young women who may have low self-esteem and a poor self-image. Health & beauty programmes are also a great way to start with the girls because it develops from there into keep-fit, meditation, sexual health etc.
- Personal health is very important including sexual health as children are exposed to so much more at a younger age now in terms of drink, drugs and sex.
- Inner City young people are different in terms of their health to young people in the suburbs who have physical space. Often their physical health is neglected leading to problems with social and mental health.
- There is a real need to teach hygiene to young people

School/Homework Support

- More breakfast clubs are needed.
- Homework support and after-schools is particularly important. CASP provides a good model for developing such support in the area.
- After school projects such as drama and team games are also required to encourage responsibility. After-schools work should not be done by teachers. They're tired and young people need a break from them. For after-schools, there should be highly energised youth workers. Schools completion is falling into this trap. A different set of skills is required for after-schools.

Sport & Recreation

- Outdoor sports are badly needed for development and for health
- There is a need for access to quality venues and investment in capital sports projects. The need for sport is acute because of health issues mainly because of a sedentary lifestyle. A new service has to be very pro-active in seeking out sporting opportunities because it is the City Centre.
- What is currently missing is adventure sports / outdoor activities. Everything is based around a project and a piece of work to produce a nice neat finished project, that satisfies funding criteria but in the end, the kids miss out. They need to be taken hiking or canoeing on a regular basis. Something should be done around angling – they live beside the Liffey and what is there should be utilised.

- There should be access to a high quality summer project for every child. They should go on all during the summer and should not be run by teachers. It should be youth workers or sports trainers. They need to get away from teachers and teachers need to get away from them! Community representatives would like a youth service to help with summer projects in terms of transport costs etc. Currently, the entire CDYSB grant is used to pay for transport during the summer project.
- Girls want keep-fit classes and boys want football and adventure pursuits.
- Unstructured free play is badly needed. Child development is different when they grow up in a small space like the flats. There is no stimulation. They need to be allowed to just be kids and to run around in as large a place as possible
- A multi-purpose SPACE is required
- If there was a swimming pool in the Fish Market, young people from all over would access it.
- Sports are a definite necessity but there should also be something for young girls who aren't interested in sport and are at risk of early pregnancy.

Informal education programmes

- Art & Culture needs to be developed among young people because there is a lot of talent that is being wasted.
- Computer projects,
- Classes on life skills e.g. parenting,
- Personal development is important. Give them as much information as possible and help them develop holistically. It is very important in the Inner City to work on personal development because of the inferiority complex and the lack of self-esteem.
- School should be broadened to encompass more than academic pursuits. It should be a wider education to encourage awareness and responsibility in young children.
- Environmental awareness is important and civic responsibility i.e. the responsibility they have to their own community and environment.
- They need experiences outside of their own experience e.g. music and film-making, things that don't rely on being able to read and write.
- Skills development is necessary for income generation e.g. young people would love something to do around car maintenance
- Creative and developmental activities are necessary – maybe even video games but with a learning dimension. Digital technology goes down very well in the Liberties and sometimes leads to further study
- A youth service needs to create a situation that promotes young people reaching their potential. There is a need to act immediately or the next generation will be lost.
- Drugs awareness and sex education need to be promoted informally

Employment / job support

- A new youth service should offer employment support, job counselling, training,

Counselling / support groups

- Needs that have been identified through the health programme for girls (MAYS) are counselling and a support group. They need somewhere to go to just chat.

Needs identified by Young People

There is a relatively clear divide between the needs of those between the ages of 10 and 15 and those over 15.

- The younger age group (10-15) wants sport & recreation – in particular, outdoor recreation but also computers – internet, graphics and video-games as well as music and video production.
- Older young people (15+) say they won't go to 'youth clubs' that provide 'activities' but they identified the other needs including: parent and baby groups, where parents can go to meet up in a safe environment with their children so that their children can socialise together at the same time as the parents are benefiting from a social outlet. Basic life skills such as nutrition, cookery, budgeting etc. were identified by young parents as important.
- Older young people would also like to see personal development courses, employment support, drugs and health awareness, nutrition etc. Packaging of programmes is clearly important as older young people do not want anything even vaguely reminiscent of school. In this regard, initial drop-in sessions are considered to be vital as this is where young people can identify their own needs.

It is evident that young women over 15 want separate activities. They appear to feel more comfortable pursuing programmes in Health & Beauty, sexual health and personal development in a single sex setting. There is a clear need (from the focus groups in particular) not just for sexual education but for personal development to allow the girls especially to make informed choices and to contend with peer pressure to have sex. The older girls would also like separate age groups because they don't want to be around 'kids'.

A significant number of young people – particularly those over 15 stated that they would not like a youth service to be run by people from the area who may have prejudice towards particular young people as well as 'favourites'. It appears in this regard that a balance of people from 'outside' and people from the community might work best. In addition, many expressed a preference for 'adults' to run activities or drop-ins rather than young people. This may be related to a fear of bullying.

The older group, particularly those who have already left school, clearly have fewer concerns for themselves than they have for the young children of the area whom they would like to see having better opportunities than they themselves had. Activities and facilities for young children were therefore high on the list of priorities. However, all of the older young people said that if a wider range of services was available beyond those of a youth 'club' e.g. employment support, they would avail of them.

In general, males would like to see more football and outdoor sports as well as swimming. Opportunities to mix with girls such as discos were frequently mentioned by older boys. Girls would like a gym and keep-fit classes, swimming and health and beauty courses. Schoolwork and homework appears to be somewhat more important to girls and they would like support with this, particularly the older girls. Girls feel that what is available is mostly for boys i.e. football pitches.

Young People's Expressed Needs

- Somewhere to go. There should be one club with things for younger people during the day and one for older young people in the evenings. It should have pool, snooker, table football, table tennis, internet, a kitchen etc. space to hang around, where doors aren't locked. Open in the evenings and weekends, much more than just two hours per week
- Sports, sports and more sports..... With proper facilities like astro-turf pitches and a multi-purpose facility as well as better training equipment
- Adventure sports like Rock Climbing, canoeing & water sports
- Swimming Pool
- Football pitches
- An accessible gym / leisure centre
- Discos / youth nite club / parties
- Trips away to Cavan and places like that
- Health & Beauty courses
- Bigger boxing club, with space for girls
- Somewhere to go to mix with other young parents – somewhere that the children can be supervised while their parents are also socialising
- Nutrition, healthy eating, cookery courses
- Surviving skills / life skills e.g. budgeting etc.
- Dancing & singing classes (girls)
- Drama classes
- Football leagues - competitions
- Playgrounds for kids
- An activity centre for kids
- Homework clubs
- Employment / job support (older young people)
- Sex education – access to contraception
- Creche
- Counselling – someone to talk to
- Better protection in the area for personal safety
- Fishing
- Summer projects
- Canoeing
- Film-making
- Motor Cycling – cross country; scrambling ; go-karting
- Personal Development
- Socialising
- Ice-rink
- Martial arts / self-defence
- Help with family problems
- Bowling
- Kick-boxing for girls and there should be boxing / kick-boxing for over 17s
- Hair & make-up and beauty classes
- More information about what is on
- Wide-screen to watch films and sporting events
- Pottery
- Computer games etc.
- Gaelic pitch
- Help for drug users
- Competitions with prizes like trips away

Quotes from young people

- *'Bring us on more trips or even just make the facilities a bit more available'*
- *'Something to do instead of just sitting in the flats'*
- *'There should be one thing on every day to do'*
- *'Let us in to places and you shouldn't have to pay if you live in the area'*
- *'We want activities to keep us off the street e.g. snooker, swimming, basketball, indoor soccer, trips and somewhere to chill out and a youth service to show us the rest of the country'*
- *'Gates put up so people who are unfriendly can't get into the flats'*
- *'We could get more money to go out and do projects and programmes instead of staying in the same building'*
- *'We want to be brought more places'*
- *'They could make the prices cheaper and put more things on for younger people'*
- *'Only a certain amount of people are allowed to go (to the club).... Bring more people to the club and let more in'*
- *'Less rules and regulations – somewhere to relax. Should be more fun and not like school'*
- *'We want somewhere SAFE to go'*
- *'Provide better education for people.... How to behave themselves because some people think that they can bully everyone they could, and there is not any protection or punishment'*

Should the service be Mainstream or Targeted?

All respondents unequivocally feel that a youth service should be mainstream and open access.

Separation does not work and all services should be integrated. Most feel that if young people considered to be 'at risk' are separated from mainstream youth, they will not develop and will always be isolated, excluded and stigmatised. In addition, all young people in a disadvantaged area are to some extent 'at risk' by virtue of where they live.

This question was put to young people in a simpler format so that while not necessarily understanding the definition of 'at risk' and 'mainstream', young people themselves feel that a youth service should be open to everyone equally.

It is clear based on the responses in this research that a Regional Youth Service should be both targeted and mainstream i.e. it should provide mainstream services for young people generally while at the same time targeting those most at risk. A holistic approach is required in which young people at risk are not separated from the social context in which they find themselves, or indeed from their peer group. The service should work with the family and all other youth services in the area to provide a continuum of support. Within this setting, those most at risk will be readily identifiable by youth workers and additional supports and services can be provided to this group without labelling or stigmatisation. The language of targeting should be avoided and a strong inter-agency approach is needed for referral. Home-School liaison is a good contact point and provides a good strategy for identifying youth at risk.

According to many service providers, a youth service necessarily attracts those most in need, so that even though there is an open access policy, young people at risk will self-select provided the service is meeting their needs. Furthermore, unless a youth service gets people 'in the door', many service providers query how targeting can be done effectively. There has to be some criteria and youth workers need to get to know young people first. A youth service should be flexible so that needs can be identified and met with appropriate services.

It needs to be flexible and identify specific problems. Services need to be there to identify those at risk and then there is a need for professionals to focus attention on individuals.

Dublin Christian Mission and Step-by-Step provide a good example of integrated services providing both mainstream and targeted provision. DCM provides mainstream after-schools projects but Step-by-Step is targeted. There is cross-referral between the two. Both services feel that most young people will need both mainstream and targeted attention at some stage in their lives.

Mixing of young people from both the mainstream category and the 'at risk' category is also considered to be beneficial for young people themselves. It is good practice to mix young people and there should be a service for everyone without labelling or problematising particular individuals. Self-esteem is affected if all stigmatised people are put together. Each group has something to share with the other and peer influence is also hugely important so the wider the mix, the better. There is a strong feeling that if young people are treated as 'at risk', they will always be 'at risk'.

Community representatives and service providers note that one of the inherent problems with a wholly targeted service is that young people who obey the rules look at others who are 'off-the-wall', see them getting everything and so they will misbehave to get in. Furthermore, if a service is targeted, there is a whole group not accessing the service who have nowhere within the area to go. Respondents feel strongly that any young person should be able to turn up to something and say they are interested in participating. If a targeted service is provided, young people from disadvantaged areas who are not categorised specifically as 'at risk' fall between services because they do not have the same opportunities as middle class young people and they cannot access a targeted youth service for 'at risk' young people. In an area such as the NWIC, it is too idealistic to say that a service should only be for 'at risk' young people because in this area, they are all 'at risk' by virtue of the fact that they are disadvantaged.

While there are services that should be provided for all e.g. a place to go, sport, recreation, activities, after-schools and homework clubs, job support etc. these can be provided, to some extent, by volunteers. Particularly at-risk youth could then be identified by professional youth workers and additional services could be provided to them or referral to other services within the area. This requires flexibility and versatile youth workers who can deal with problems as they arise. Running a drop-in diversionary programme does not require a professional. Professionals should be utilised to run specific programmes e.g. health for young people. Good quality voluntary-led resources should be used for mainstream programmes and then youth workers for the targeted programmes. Targeted youth could then also access mainstream programmes if they wanted to.

Many service providers note that in an ideal situation a youth service should be for all young people but that the resources are not given, with which to provide such a service. Scarce resources dictate the service and funding is usually allocated to targeted work but ironically, the most needy tend to be excluded because of pressure on youth workers to deliver for large numbers.

Leadership programmes are suggested as the best means of identifying at risk youth in the long-term. Once young people have come through a service and been trained as youth leaders, they will be particularly adept at identifying young people in the area who need targeted resources.

The needs of unaccompanied minors are similar to those of young Irish people and should be dealt with in the same service. They may not be considered 'at risk' of drug abuse, crime, homelessness etc. but there is nothing for them to do because they don't have parents to pay for the activities and so they fall through the gaps. There are also some concerns around prostitution among young females.

Although all young respondents, with two or three exceptions think a youth service should be for everyone, there is a major concern about letting young people in who are using drugs. There is a fear that this would spread drug use among a wider group. A number of responses in the questionnaires indicate that the way young people think this should be dealt with is to give everyone one chance and if they 'mess up' that they shouldn't be allowed back in again.

Mainstream or targeted? Young people's views

- *'The service should be for all young people in the area because they would all end up getting bored and breaking the law for fun'*
- *'For all young people because it is when people have no facilities to go to that is when they become disadvantaged'*
- *'For all..... because if there is nothing wrong with the person, what will he do – stand on the streets?'*
- *'Both because disadvantaged people need attention and we need to socialise and to stop being told to move by the Garda'*
- *'I think it should be for all young people so we can all mix in together and not be different'*
- *'For all young people because it wouldn't be fair if somebody can get in and other people can't'*
- *'I think this should be for everyone because kids who are having trouble at home should be able to forget their worries and just have a laugh with their mates for a few hours'*
- *'For all young people because it is very hard to get into any club, which is only for disadvantaged people. It puts young people under the influence of substance abuse etc. as they would like to join and these are the only ways they can join'*
- *'It should be for all young people, to be treated as equals. If people thought it was for the 'disadvantaged' they'd then be embarrassed to go'*

Volunteering

According to most respondents, the fact that there is no physical infrastructure doesn't mean there is nothing going on. There are numerous excellent (unpaid) community workers who work, to a large extent, behind the scenes, with no recognition. Often, these people get 'burned out' because they receive no support. If a Regional Youth Service is established, outreach youth workers who come on stream need to link up with these people and provide support to them. Despite the good work of some community representatives, lack of volunteers is a serious issue. In Dominick St. for example, both the crèche and the Digital Hub closed down because of lack of volunteers, while in Hardwicke St., there is only a small group of local women who volunteer and this is insufficient to offer the activities they would like to provide for young people.

At present, there is a very weak volunteering structure. According to some, the model that has been used up to now is the 'charity model', which, rather than empowering people, creates a situation where people in the community have no confidence in their own ability to help themselves. In addition, the introduction of the CE scheme reduced the number of unpaid volunteers as it became apparent to community representatives that youth work is a job like any other and deserves payment. According to community representatives people want to be paid for what they do because they cannot afford to be voluntary anymore. Local people are also afraid of getting 'roped in for the long-term' and consequently, are unwilling to put their names forward. Some people want a break from their own children and view a service as somewhere they can safely leave their children. Finally, some note that people are willing to volunteer but there is no *place* for them to run activities.

There is no short-term solution to the problem of lack of community volunteers. Hardwicke St. Community Centre, DIME and others have canvassed the areas in which they work for local

volunteers without success. It therefore became a choice for service providers between providing a service with outside volunteers or not providing it at all.

MAYS attracts volunteers from the Volunteering Ireland website. They tend to be 25 – 35, well-educated and looking for a short-term volunteer experience. It is very difficult to get them to commit for the long-term or even for a year. It requires a lot of work to train these volunteers and youth services have to tailor-make the experience for them. There is a need for a full-time volunteer trainer with a good budget and there are models available that could be used. Hardwicke St. operates an evening drop-in for young people utilising the services of outside volunteers. St. Vincent's Trust is trying to encourage integration by training volunteers from the gated communities to work on youth literacy. Students from UCD and TCD are giving their time to volunteer in youth clubs but they gravitate towards the clubs that are functioning well because they don't want to be 'just baby-sitting'.

In order to attract community volunteers, there has to be a long-term plan, which incorporates incentives such as training, and which affirms and gives confidence about taking a leadership role. Training is vital because it shows respect for what people are doing. It means that they are valued enough for someone to offer them something in return. Also, many people in the community think that this kind of work is only for educated people. Training shows them they can also do it but it should not be too formal. Youth work is being professionalised so that it is moving further away from people. Often, people in the community feel intimidated by the need for qualifications so training should be provided at a suitable level and in a non-threatening way i.e. not in a lecture format, to attract them.

There is definitely scope for attracting volunteers from the community through training but it has to be more interesting than just 'child protection' for example. Training should be innovative and provide an award system e.g. nights or weekends away, which could also then be used as part of the training. Volunteers need ongoing support. They should be brought together at regular intervals to discuss their experiences and share their learning. For those who wish to expand their training as youth leaders, the Liberties College offers a practical and hands-on two-year course, which gives qualifications up to FETAC Level II.

When canvassing for volunteers, the service should be specific about what it wants volunteers for. There is no point in asking for 'volunteer youth workers', as this doesn't mean anything to most people. People should be given a list of the activities and services that will be on offer and asked if they feel they have anything to contribute to any of the specific areas. A youth service should reflect the activities that the community wants and then match volunteers with the activities. Potential volunteers should also be informed of the time commitment it will involve so they are in a better position to assess whether they can contribute. Lack of time is a much greater factor now for most people than it was 10 years ago. However, as with young people, if community members feel that the service is worthwhile and likely to succeed, they will be more inclined to get involved. In this regard, short-term deliverables are considered to be important e.g. if an existing community group is supported for a particular activity or event, this will raise the profile of the youth service and increase co-operation. Community representatives also note that a broad or mainstream service might attract a broader range of volunteers. The people who are selling the idea of the youth service and volunteering need to strongly believe in it to enthuse the volunteers. There is a need to make people believe that by their participation and involvement they can make a difference.

A volunteer development programme was suggested by a number of service providers to co-ordinate efforts. DIME is currently in partnership with Slí Eile to develop a community volunteer programme. There are 25 volunteers working with DIME at present but none of them are from the community. They also hope to have a second worker starting soon to work with families in the area with funding from the Dormant Accounts fund. Family support is crucial in terms of attracting volunteers and it is hoped that this will provide greater links into the community.

DCM finds that community volunteers have a much better rapport with the young people because they know them so well but that this can be double-edged. There is an issue of the suitability of volunteers for working with young people. Local people often won't adhere to confidentiality principles and there can be a lot of gossip. Also, if there is trouble, they will withdraw e.g. after Halloween, some volunteers were unwilling to continue working with young people because they had been so troublesome. However, there is always a need for a balance between community support and outsiders in any service. It can't be just a case of empower and then withdraw because there are always internal prejudices within a community that need the more rational / dispassionate input of an outsider.

Step-by-Step achieves a balance by 'drafting in' volunteers for particular activities. There are three local people working in SBS on a CE scheme (paid). They canvas for volunteers for particular events and people in the community, especially the women, are quite willing to do this.

Family support is a link into the community that might encourage participation. Working with parents develops confidence and interest. Once parents see that the programmes and activities are of benefit to their children, they may be more likely to get involved. If services are willing to match the time of volunteers with resources, communities may be encouraged. Family days and summer projects are good incentives. If parents show any interest, training could be offered, particularly if they have a specific skill such as drama or music.

Community contacts should be utilised to their fullest potential. People from the area who are known and trusted are required to knock on doors and not just to leaflet-drop. People will help if they or young people are going to benefit but they need to be informed of what is going on. Word-of-mouth is the most effective form of communication in a community context. Residents' Committees have recently been set up in Dominick St. and Dorset St. and these may provide an ideal link into the communities.

With regard to youth leaders, leadership programmes should be provided for young people who have actually participated in a youth service and come up through it as a recipient of services. A number of models for this type of programme exist in the City e.g. the Neighbourhood Youth Projects. Qualifications tend to put young people off because their self-esteem is so low. They need role models and this is where peer training is so important. Leadership training should be part of the remit of youth workers. Any leadership training programme should start in a small way and aim to develop leaders in the long-term. Success with one or two will engender further success as role models evolve for young people. This has worked well in terms of sports development where there are now trained snorkelling instructors from the community. Community representatives note that it is important to '*get young people in the door first*'. Leaders can then be readily identified by youth workers.

There is a need to be creative about tapping into the resource of young people themselves. MACRO tried unsuccessfully to get a CE scheme for youth / activity leaders, which would have provided both activity leaders and training for the leaders themselves, therefore offering double benefits. In not reaching these young people, their creativity is lost. Older young people from the area working with those who are younger helps to build confidence and self-esteem among both age groups. However, this should be balanced against the expressed desire of a significant proportion of young people to have adult supervision to avoid bullying and people from outside of the community to avoid favouritism and prejudice.

There is definite interest in leadership / volunteering in a youth service among young people. This was evident in both focus groups and from questionnaire responses, in which young people who are interested in volunteering gave their contact details. This should be followed up on immediately in order to maintain the interest generated by the research. According to CDVEC, it is not difficult to find volunteers from within the ethnic minority community. There is expertise among

the ethnic population but it needs to be explained to people why their involvement is necessary and wanted. Tallaght Intercultural Action has run summer programmes, which have been very successful at getting parents involved.

Suggestions for encouraging young people to volunteer or to become youth leaders include the creation of a youth festival to celebrate the value of young people, instead of always portraying them in a negative light. Smithfield could be used as an arena to highlight the positive side of youth.

On Integration between the areas

It is very clear that there is a definite line drawn between the Markets Area and the DDH area in the minds of both young people and adults in the communities as well as among service providers. Identity is a complex issue and each area is considered to be highly parochial. While there is some evidence of informal socialising between young people from Dominick St. and Dorset St. and possibly Hardwicke St., there is no evidence that young people from the Markets Area socialise with young people from the DDH area outside of school or other formal settings, nor indeed that they wish to do so. When asked how far they would go to access youth services, the younger age group from Hardwicke St. said they would be happy to go to Dominick St. and Dorset St. but weren't quite sure where the Markets Area is. Similarly, the older age group from the DDH area seems to identify more closely with the other two streets within their area than they do with the Markets Area. The Markets Area itself is quite self-contained and if anything, is identified more closely in the minds of both residents and service providers with the area further West beyond Smithfield towards Stoneybatter. Young people from the Markets Area generally do not mix at all, particularly towards the DDH area.

It is however, clear that the territorialism so evident in the two different areas is perpetuated by parental concerns on the one hand and by years of acceptance of the status quo on the other. The term 'parochial' has found its way into common usage even among young people, as a means of describing an accepted mentality and way of life without any discussion of whether this is in the best interests of young people themselves. There appears to be an unwillingness to explore the received wisdom that underpins this parochialism such as 'they all take drugs up there' or 'they won't let you in down there'.

More positively, the stigma that attaches to certain flat complexes is beginning to break down and so there is more integration now between Dominick St. and Dorset St. and to a certain extent, Hardwicke St. Service providers also find that young people from all areas will mix around particular events i.e. formalised, structured activities such as sporting competitions although generally not through normal social activities. In addition, young people will mix if they have relations i.e. family that has moved into a different area. It is evident however, that there is some fear about straying too far away from their own 'patch' because there is a likelihood of 'getting battered' by young people from other areas. There are issues around bullying and the fear of being beaten up, which become particularly prevalent at certain times of the year e.g. Halloween. Bullying is a legitimate concern, identified repeatedly by questionnaire respondents and young people are very aware of personal safety when they go outside of their area. In general however, young people say they are happy to move within the NWIC, as long as their friends are with them. Among the older group, some actually expressed a desire to 'get outside' of the area, where 'everyone doesn't know your business'.

In response to questions about the possible location of a new Youth Service, all of the young people said they would use the service if it was to be within the NWIC area as long as it is worthwhile i.e. if the services and activities were of interest / benefit to them. For example, they currently go outside of their area for football training and matches, competitions etc. Many young people from a wider area also use the Sean McDermott St. swimming pool. A significant number of young people asked whether they would be 'allowed' (by service providers) to use a youth

service. They claim to have been turned away in the past because they don't fit the criteria e.g. they are not from the catchment area.

Some service providers acknowledge it is possible that young people do mix from different areas in more informal ways, which is not necessarily evident to adults or service providers. One service provider explained the apparent anomaly between adult and youth perceptions by saying that it is the adults / parents / service providers who are parochial and politically-minded about where a youth service should be located or identified with while community representatives say that it is a question of parental permission i.e. they would not allow younger age groups (10 – 14) to go outside of the area unless there was adult supervision provided from within their own community.

Most service providers feel that it is a good challenge to young people to get them to move outside their immediate area to develop confidence and self-esteem. However the lack of *place* to mix is clearly a problem. Young people have no experience of mixing because they have nowhere to go to do so. Some suggested that if a new service is managed carefully i.e. allotted times are given to different groups from different areas for particular activities, this will encourage groups from each area to attend. It was also suggested that if young people were brought to a new and *neutral* location in groups from their own area at first, this would encourage a more natural flow and mix over time.

A number of service providers point out that the neutrality of any venue for activities is the key to encouraging a mix of young people. This has been ignored in the past. Some agencies have tried and given up because it is done the wrong way and consequently it is unsuccessful e.g. a football competition is organised in one flat complex, a small group of young people goes from another flat complex and they're terrified. It ends up in a running battle. Once they have this bad experience they decide they don't like the young people from the other area and the parents decide that it doesn't work. Young people need to experience mixing at a neutral venue, where they can realise that they're actually all the same. For example, when they go to Cavan or other places like that, they meet young people from other areas and make great friends because outside of their own area, they have the chance to realise that they're all the same. Currently, there is no integration between the services so mixing young people is not attempted in any cohesive or positive way. People are not giving them a shared identity. Because the services have been so unsuccessful at mixing them, Halloween turns into a hugely traumatic event for all communities, which hardens attitudes.

Youth workers in MAYS and in DIME suggest that time and effort is required to get young people to mix but that it does happen in the long-term. The Sports Development Officer has also had some success in the DDH area at getting young people to mix. Again, the skills of youth workers will be key in this regard. If a quality service is offered with structured activities and a safe environment, young people will travel and they will mix as long as it is done in the right way.

A further issue for integration is the increase in new private apartments in the area. Many service providers note that there is instability because people in the private apartments are relatively transient and aren't putting down roots in the community. To date, there has been little or no communication with the gated communities.

As a general rule, service providers suggest that is more beneficial to integrate young people from an early age before fears increase and barriers arise. Integration becomes more difficult as young people reach 14+yrs because it is more important to them to be part of a fixed identity and also because they have not been exposed to other experiences.

Integration - New communities

There is very little by way of integration going on between ethnic minorities and the indigenous communities. Service providers note that any integration, which does take place, is predominantly

through the schools or through formal / structured activities e.g. MAYS. There is no other forum through which, young people of different ethnic backgrounds can engage. This happens for a number of reasons. Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds may be living in the NWIC area but attend schools outside of the area that are considered to be less disadvantaged. Similarly, young people from ethnic minority backgrounds who live outside the area may attend schools inside the NWIC area but have no other engagement with young people from the NWIC area. This is particularly the case with Mt. Carmel's. Consequently, service providers suggest that any new service would have to pro-actively engage young people from ethnic minority backgrounds rather than just stating an open access policy.

It was evident talking to young people that intercultural education and training is badly needed, particularly among the older group of young people who tend to repeat all of the stereotypical urban myths about 'the blacks' and 'the Chinese' that they hear from adults. Comments from young people such as '*Newcomers are mainly foreign and don't get along*' and '*more foreign people are coming and Irish teenagers don't get along with them*', were indicative of such attitudes. Service providers acknowledge that much of the mis-information about ethnic minorities and negative stereotyping comes from parents and adults in the community. The young group (10 – 13yrs) were more open-minded and had a real desire to be inclusive. This may be because this age group has been exposed to a certain level of ethnic minorities for much of their lives. Despite initially stating that 'the blacks are taking over', they recognise the immigrant population is, in some cases, as disadvantaged as they are.

While integration does not present a problem in crèche or playgroup facilities or indeed in primary schools, it is less well developed at secondary school level. In the school focus group with fifth year girls, a clear pattern of non-integration was apparent even in the seating arrangement that the girls themselves chose and in questionnaire responses. Males generally were less inclined to make overt discriminatory comments either in questionnaire or focus group responses than females. Evidence from secondary school focus groups indicates that the progressive nature of primary school integration should be developed and supported as far as possible. As noted above, it is apparent that attitudes begin to harden from 14yrs onwards and it is far more difficult to encourage integration after that point.

There is no interface with the non-national community to encourage integration and consequently, opportunities for integration are badly needed in the area. Currently young people don't get a chance to meet with ethnic minorities outside of school. This is partly because there are very few young people of ethnic minority background living in the flats. They tend to live in the private apartments. Because there are so few opportunities outside of school for mixing, young foreign children have to be pro-active and try really hard to 'break-in' to established friendship groups. Discrimination is because of lack of awareness and education. The NYP in in Summerhill Parade ran a programme and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds pro-actively involved themselves by knocking on the door to find out what young people were doing. This is however, quite unusual. Nonetheless, a number of multi-cultural groups exist, which could be tapped into to enhance integration.

Service providers note that it is not so much racism that exists as apathy or indifference. A newly marginalised group has been thrown in on top of a traditionally marginalised community that already has enough challenges. Irresponsible politics also appeal to the racist sentiment. People cannot be expected to celebrate diversity when they can't even celebrate their own community. There is an over-riding feeling of unfairness. On the positive side however, young people can be more open-minded than adults.

It should also be noted that lack of integration is not just to do with prejudice on the part of the indigenous community. Young foreign children tend to have different priorities. For example, they are intensely concerned about schoolwork and consequently, they are pushing up the academic standards. Ethnic minorities also have different cultural outlets e.g. they spend time with the older

generations - they don't always have to be with young people. However, it is evident from the responses of young people from an ethnic minority background that they would appreciate more opportunities to integrate with young Irish people outside of school. One 13yr old commented that *'Social worries (concern me most) because I am not originally from Ireland and am finding it difficult to make friends outside school'*.

There are some particular concerns around young unaccompanied minors in hostels as they are completely outside of any mainstream activities. Something needs to be organised for them so they can integrate into the mainstream. Unaccompanied minors tend to mix together by nationality, not by the area where they live.

Conclusions

1. The concerns of young people

- A number of issues arose as being of concern or importance to young people in the NWIC. Of these, the two most prevalent concerns are the **lack of constructive activities or places to go** and **personal safety**. Personal safety was identified as the major issue among a large proportion of questionnaire respondents, although follow-up on this issue was hampered by an unwillingness, particularly on the part of young males, to discuss the issue.
- Those over 14 yrs are deeply unhappy with the lack of a place to go as they are subject to **accusations of anti-social behaviour** and therefore **police harassment** when they 'hang around' the flats.
- **Drugs** are seen as a major problem, particularly in the DDH area. Concerns around this issue are twofold: The younger group is intimidated by 'junkies', by whom they are afraid of being mugged while the older group is clearly concerned about peer pressure.
- **Peer behaviour and attitudes** on issues such as teenage pregnancy were also highlighted.

2. Existing Services and facilities

- There is **very little available for young people in the NWIC area**. Although the Markets Area is better catered for in terms of a youth service, there are very few social or informal outlets and no suitable, well-resourced outdoor sports facilities. Currently, any service has to travel to facilities, including playgrounds.
- The DDH part of NWIC forms **an 'interface' area** between the North East and the North West Inner City and consequently tends to **fall between service provider boundaries**. This interface area is very **weak in terms of social capital and community infrastructure** compared with the North East Inner City and the area further North West towards Stoneybatter.
- **Young people generally 'hang around'** either in the flats or parks or around the City Centre.

3. Are existing services meeting the needs?

- **The answer to this question is 'no'**. There are some excellent services, both statutory and community-led but for the most part, what is there is completely under-resourced so that while they contribute to meeting the needs, they fall far short. It is evident that the NWIC area – in particular Dominick St., Dorset St. and Hardwicke St., has been neglected for a long time and the youth issue cannot be isolated from the social context in which, the lack of youth services is a reflection of the neglect of the area generally.
- Despite a lack of political commitment in the past, **recent regeneration and improvements** to the physical infrastructure **are welcome** and there is **a sense of optimism** among community representatives and service providers that 'things are beginning to happen', particularly in terms of capital projects. **While the younger age group is also optimistic, the older young people (15+ yrs) are somewhat cynical about youth services and facilities** and they do not really believe that anything constructive will happen in time for them or in some cases, for their children.

- **Lack of resources** is identified by all as the greatest barrier to the provision of services and facilities. In particular, lack of 'place' is identified by all respondents as the key deficiency while lack of youth workers is a prevalent concern among service providers and community representatives.
- The **needs of detached youth** are not being met on any level.
- **Funding requirements hamper mainstream services** in their efforts to meet the needs of youth at risk and detached youth.
- The needs of young people are not being met because there is a **lack of integration** in terms of service provision.

4. On improving local services

- More resources are required specifically in terms of **youth workers**.
- Services cannot be improved without **a physical space** in which to locate such services.
- **Integration** is key. There is no need for a new service. Rather, there is a need for existing services to pool together and to work with families / communities to provide a more comprehensive service for young people from the area. Time and resources should therefore be given to developing strategies to integrate to respond more effectively.
- **Accessibility** needs to be improved as services and facilities are currently not open at the right time, particularly for older youth.
- An **increased awareness** of existing services is required.

5. What should a Regional Youth Service Offer?

- **Youth workers** - the first priority for a new youth service is clearly youth workers – specifically outreach to support existing services and street work with detached youth.
- **A location** from which to provide services: The common theme among all respondents and especially among young people themselves, was the need for a place to go to feel safe, where they can hang around without being accused of anti-social behaviour – in other words, a dedicated youth centre.
- **An integrated services model** should be employed, providing communication and co-ordination for all services working with young people in the area. Young people at risk would therefore be jointly identified and supported by a range of services.
- **More mainstream provision** is required to offer activities to young people e.g. clubs. This would take the pressure off a youth service having to provide *activities* and would free up qualified youth workers for targeted work.
- **A system for linking unaccompanied minors** into existing youth groups is required. Training is also required for staff and volunteers and a specific staff member should be appointed to ensure that services are pro-actively looking at interculturalism.

- Service providers and community representatives identified needs under the following headings: **health, school/homework support, sport & recreation, informal education programmes, employment/job support and counselling.**
- There are some clear age and gender differences in young people's responses – **younger ages tend to place considerable emphasis on sport and recreation** whilst **older groups tended to highlight social, parenting and employment needs.** Older young people (15+) say they won't go to 'youth clubs' that provide 'activities'. They want somewhere to go to socialise i.e. a dedicated youth centre and they identified a range of services that would attract them to a youth service including health programmes, job support and counselling. Many of those consulted expressed a strong desire for opportunities to travel outside the area to other regional and national locations as well as abroad for adventure and for events such as competitions. Young women express a greater interest in school and homework support along with parenting and cooking skills development
- **Overall, young people expressed themselves as being very interested in accessing appropriate, relevant and well-organised youth services and activities.** Whatever their stated priorities were or whatever their age or gender, those with whom we engaged were strongly supportive of the need for such a service. Despite their comments and perceptions regarding the location and geographical remit of such a service, they expressed themselves as willing to engage so long as activities were well managed, focused and relevant.
- The **young people** consulted **feel strongly that they need to have a say in what happens in the youth service,** how it is run, who engages and what services are offered and to whom. Ensuring that young people are actually consulted on an ongoing basis and have demonstrated impact on decision-making is important in building a profile and a sense of ownership for the intended service.
- Those young people consulted who are currently engaged with the Markets Area Youth Service expressed themselves as being very happy with the service but constantly referred to the need to have **more drop-in services**

6. Mainstream or targeted?

- There is **overwhelming agreement that a youth service should be mainstream** and open access. People in the area want a service that offers mainstream activities while at the same time targeting those most at risk. While there are services that should be provided for all e.g. a place to go, sport, recreation, activities, after-schools and homework clubs, job support etc. these can be provided to some extent by volunteers. Particularly at-risk youth could then be identified by professional youth workers and additional services could be provided to them or referral to other services within the area.

7. Volunteering

- At present, there is **a very weak volunteering structure.** However, this does not mean that there is nothing going on.
- There is **no short-term solution** to the problem of lack of community volunteers. In order to attract community volunteers, there has to be a long-term plan, which incorporates incentives such as training, and which affirms and gives confidence about taking a leadership role.
- A number of suggestions are put forward by both service providers and community representatives including **a volunteer development programme to co-ordinate efforts.**

Community volunteers can have a much better rapport with the young people because they know them so well but outside volunteers and youth workers are also necessary to ensure a balance.

- **Community contacts who are well known and trusted should be utilised** to their fullest potential in order to link in with the community for volunteers
- **Leadership programmes** should be provided for young people who have actually participated in a youth service and come up through it as a recipient of services. There is definite interest in leadership / volunteering in a youth service among young people.

8. Integration within the NWIC area

- Whilst young people expressed themselves as being wary of engaging with other young people from outside their own area this appears to have much to do with perceptions around personal safety, oft-repeated assertions of adults, urban myths regarding other areas etc. **Young people admitted they have little difficulty mixing in school or indeed outside school so long as the activities are well organised and managed** – in the latter case by ‘outsiders’ – those perceived to be neutral and not pushing particular local agendas.
- Identity is a complex issue and each area is considered to be highly parochial. It is very clear that there is a definite line drawn between the Markets Area and the DDH area in the minds of both young people and adults in the communities as well as among service providers. While there is some evidence of informal socialising between young people from Dominick St. and Dorset St. and, possibly, Hardwicke St., **there is no evidence that young people from the Markets Area socialise with young people from the DDH area outside of school or other formal settings**, nor indeed that they wish to do so.
- It is clear that the **territorialism** so evident **in the two different areas is perpetuated by parental concerns** on the one hand and by **years of acceptance of the status quo** on the other.
- **Young people from all areas will mix around particular events** i.e. formalised, structured activities such as sporting competitions although generally not through normal social activities. In addition, young people will mix if they have relations i.e. family that has moved into a different area.
- **Young people will use the service** if it is to be within the NWIC area **as long as it is worthwhile** i.e. if the services and activities are of interest / benefit to them.
- **Young people need to be challenged to move outside their immediate area** to develop confidence and self-esteem. However the lack of *place* to mix is clearly a problem.
- The **neutrality of any venue for activities is the key** to encouraging a mix of young people. This has been ignored in the past.
- Youth workers in MAYS and in DIME suggest that **time and effort is required** to get young people to mix but that it does happen in the long-term.
- **This research confirms the view that young people are more likely to mix together more effectively and without much difficulty at an earlier age.** Young people under the age of 13/14 expressed themselves as being significantly more open to mixing with their peers from other areas and cultures than those over this age. At later age ranges, it appears that attitudes have hardened considerably with young people appearing to adopt

many of the attitudes and preconceptions expressed by adults. After that, attitudes harden and there is an expressed fear of going outside your area, reflecting more closely the attitudes expressed by adults during the research.

- There are **clearly different agendas in operation** regarding a central or 'neutral' youth centre or drop-in centre. Given the views expressed, such a centre, to be accessed by all young people from the general area, is both desirable and feasible but will inevitably take time and effort to achieve with youth workers developing an appropriate agenda on this issue over time.

9. Integration with ethnic minority communities

- There is **very little by way of integration** going on between ethnic minorities and the indigenous communities. Any integration, which does take place, is predominantly through the schools or through formal / structured activities e.g. MAYS. There is no other forum through which, young people of different ethnic backgrounds can engage.
- **Intercultural education and training is badly needed**, particularly among older young people
- It is apparent that **attitudes begin to harden from 14yrs onwards** and it is far more difficult to encourage integration after that point. The young group (10 – 13yrs) were more open-minded and had a real desire to be inclusive.
- There is **no interface with the minority communities** to encourage integration and consequently, opportunities for integration are badly needed in the area.
- Lack of integration is not just to do with prejudice on the part of the indigenous community. **Young foreign children tend to have different priorities.**

Recommendations

- **Develop a youth worker focused active agenda in the overall area as soon as possible** – there is a clearly demonstrated need, a fledgling agenda, good will from young people, an agenda of past experiences and activity and the possibility of building a common agenda for the whole area within a relatively short period of time. Building up a good working relationship with local youth, regularly consulting with them and reporting back to them will, in our opinion, overcome many of the expressed initial reservations and hesitations about ‘mixing’ locally.
- **Support initiatives and activities already underway in the area** – it is important from a number of perspectives that whatever initiatives are undertaken, they should link into and build upon those activities and structures already in place. This includes those activities/organisations involved in sport, general youth work, vocational training and schools linked.
- **Feed back to all participants in this research is vital** – throughout our research, the young people with whom we spoke expressed strong scepticism that ‘anything will be done’ or that the timeframes for any new initiatives would be too long and would be vaguely located ‘in the future, sometime’. It is therefore crucial to feed back key information on what is happening with this initiative to those who participated. We recommend that the outcomes of the research be communicated back to all structures and groups consulted, including young people. This might usefully be done as part of a structured seminar involving young people in the immediate future time frame.
- **Follow up immediately with interested young people** – a number of young people expressed their interest in becoming involved with specific activities and initiatives. They provided contact details and it is our recommendation that this should be followed up on as soon as possible in order to maintain the momentum generated by the research.
- **A dedicated youth centre is necessary** – Considerable consensus building work will need to be undertaken over a relatively short period of time in order to achieve a commonality of approach and perspective but it was clear to us that the good will as well as the need and enthusiasm for such a centre youth exists. Specific initiatives to overcome, for example, parental resistance will need to be undertaken. Suggestions for the possible location of a youth service include Oznam House at Mountjoy Square, Fr. Matthew Hall and the site of the run-down MAXOL garage on Bolton St.
- **There is a demonstrated need for street work by youth workers** – this is required to engage with young people over the age of 17 as it is virtually impossible to access them through schools, youth clubs etc.
- **There are a number of ‘short-term deliverables’** – these will build commitment and ownership and a platform for the longer-term agenda – examples cited include, for example, a football league, parenting skills and travel.
- **Liase with other initiatives and processes in the area** - ICON has set up the Young People At Risk (YPAR) Group, A mapping exercise is currently being undertaken of youth services for at risk youth and how they work. This includes the DDH part of the NWIC area but not Markets. YPAR has three separate committees dealing with three age groups i.e. 0 – 5yrs; 6-11yrs; 12-18yrs. They are attempting to set up an inter-agency group providing a co-ordinated response to youth at risk in the area. All voluntary agencies are on board and they are trying to get the statutory agencies involved. This is a group that the Interim Working Group could link with quite effectively around the provision of youth services, at least in the DDH area.

- The URBAN project in Ballyfermot is supporting a Youth Friendly Health Service project. Given the expressed needs around health in the NWIC area, this project could provide a learning experience for the proposed Regional Youth Service.

References

Dublin City Development Board (2005) Inclusion is Everyone's Business, Dublin

Housing Unit and Dublin City Council (2002) Dublin City Council Tenant Profile, Dublin

Appendices

Questionnaire for Young People

Questionnaire for Service Providers

Youth Services in Dublin's North West Inner City

Questionnaire for young people living in the North West Inner City *

* For the purpose of this study, the North West Inner City (NWIC) area is defined as Dominick St., Dorset St. Hardwicke St. and the Markets Area

GENERAL

1. What age are you?

2. Do you live in: (please tick one box)

Dominick Street

Hardwicke Street

Dorset Street

Markets Area

Other (please specify)

3. How long have you lived here?

4. Do you like living in this area?

Yes No

5. Do you think young people moving into this area recently, mix well with people who were born and grew up here?

Yes No

Please give your reasons for saying yes or no:

6. What concerns you most as a young person living in the Inner City? (e.g. social issues, personal and family issues, schoolwork, employment, safety, health etc.)

7. Please tick where the young people that you are friends with (outside of school) come from:

Dominick Street

Hardwicke Street

Dorset Street

Markets Area

Other (please specify)

8. Where do you go to meet with friends?

9. What do you do in your spare time?

SERVICES / FACILITIES *

*** For the purpose of this study, services and facilities means ANY organisation, group, club, project or building (run by the Government or the community) that provides young peoples' services for**

- Sport & recreation
- Social, personal and health issues
- Counselling
- Personal development
- Employment support
- Young peoples' rights

10. Based on this definition of services / facilities, what is there for you as a young person in the area? Please list the services / facilities that you know of:

11. Are these services / facilities what you want?

Yes

No

Please say why: _____

12. How do you think these services / facilities could be improved for you and your friends?

13. What services / facilities do you think are needed in the area that are not provided yet?

14. If a new youth service was being set up, what kind of services / facilities do you think it should offer to you?

15. Do you think a youth service should be for all young people of the area, or should it be mainly for young people who are especially disadvantaged e.g. at risk of substance abuse, homelessness, poor education, unemployment etc.? Please say which option is better and why:

16. Would you be interested in volunteering or becoming a youth leader in a new youth service? If yes, please give your name and contact details below:

If you have anything you would like to add, please use the space below:

Thank you for your time!

Youth Services in Dublin's North West Inner City

Questionnaire for service providers working with young people in the North West Inner City (NWIC) area*

* For the purpose of this study, the North West Inner City Area is defined as Dominick St., Dorset St., Hardwicke St. and the Markets Area

GENERAL:

1. What is the name of your organisation/group? _____

2. Do you work with young people in the NWIC area? (please tick as appropriate)

Dominick Street

Hardwicke Street

Dorset Street

Markets Area

Other (please specify)

3. Do you find that young people from the NWIC area mix and socialise together outside of school?

Yes No

4. Do you find young people moving into the NWIC area mix well with young people who grew up in the area?

Yes No

3. What services do you provide for young people in the NWIC area?

4. What other services or facilities are available for young people in the NWIC area?

7. In your opinion do the available services / facilities meet the needs of young people in the area?

Yes No

Please say how they do meet the needs OR why they do not meet the needs of young people:

8. How do you think these services / facilities could be improved to meet these needs?

9. What services / facilities do you think are needed in the area, that are not currently provided?

10. If a new youth service was being set up, what kind of activities / facilities / services do you think it should offer? **(please list in order of importance)**

11. Do you think a youth service should be for all young people of the area, or should it be mainly for young people who are especially disadvantaged e.g. at risk of substance abuse, homelessness, poor education, unemployment etc.? (Please state which option you think is better and say why):

12. If the youth service was to be for all young people, how do you think the needs of young people with more specific problems could be met within the overall service?

13. What would you suggest is the best way to identify volunteers for a new youth service?

If you have anything you would like to add, please use the space on the back of this sheet.....

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Thank you for your time!