

St. Teresa's Gardens



Environmental & **E**mployment Project



Final Draft
June 2001

Introduction

The St. Teresa's Gardens Environmental & Employment Project was established in 2000 in the St. Teresa's Gardens flat complex in the south west inner city. This report documents the progress that has been made one year into the project.

Locality of St. Teresa's

St. Teresa's Gardens is a high density Local Authority flat complex, located off the Donore Avenue in Dublin 8. The estate typifies a disadvantaged inner city community that has suffered from years of neglect in relation to public investment in social, economic and environmental regeneration. Failure to address the crisis at an early stage and lack of planning have combined to form a ghettoised community blighted by incidents of anti-social behaviour such as drug pushing and petty crime, and high levels of drug use, early school-leaving and school absenteeism.

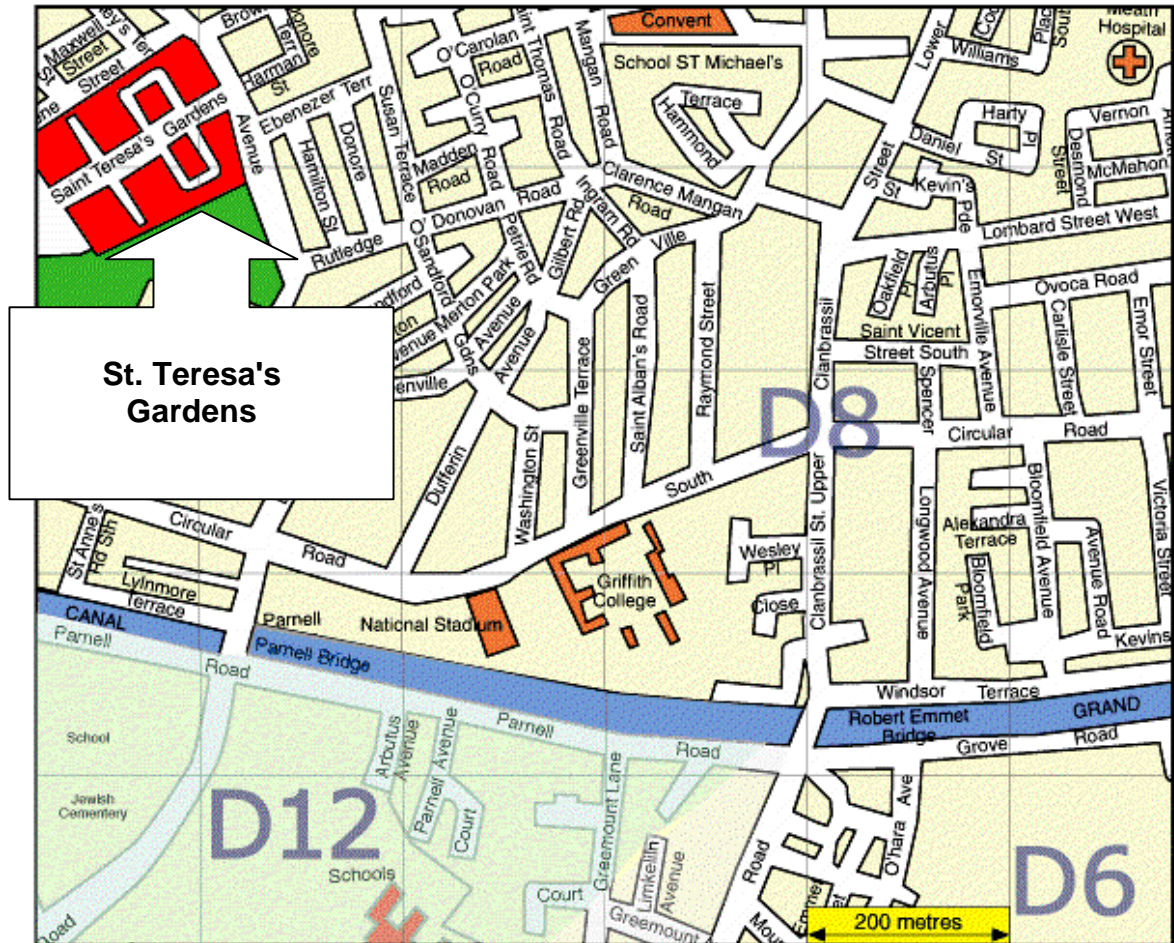
Residents have voiced their concern over the numbers of people using and supplying drugs and the early onset of cannabis use. Although the south west inner city area is well served for treatment facilities for drug users, the priority for residents is preventing young people from becoming involved in drug use in the first place. The community drug team has been offered an office in the flats and use of the community centre for extra curricular work.

Out of a total population of 913, it is estimated that 87% depend on social welfare as their source of income. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is also hidden unemployment within the flats, in cases where partners are co-habiting with lone parents. It is not uncommon for a person to be twenty years unemployed, and in fact, this is the average for the Jobs Initiative workers on the project. According to the Project Co-ordinator, some of the major obstacles impacting on the unemployment climate include low morale levels within the complex, so that even when jobs are advertised locally, there tends to be a low level of interest. Local unemployed people fear the loss of welfare benefits that would accompany a return to the workforce. Many have social difficulties and need training and support.

Although some supports have been made available to the community over the years, they were, by and large, offered by external agencies, such as the Vista Project and the Small Club. They operated from outside the flats and were not run by local people.

Within the flats, the Residents' Association previously sponsored a Community Employment (CE) scheme with 15 workers, and although this was successful in organising summer projects for the children, it did not have the capacity to undertake more radical regeneration of the area. Members of the association were motivated to address local needs, but were not trained in managing CE workers and supporting their training needs. There was a lack of clarity around roles on the sponsor body, and the CE scheme eventually floundered.

Map of south west inner city



Development of the Project

The idea for the Environmental & Employment Project emerged from the residents who saw the need to harness the collective energy of local people in the flats to bring about social, economic and environmental renewal. Along with the residents, there was a number of local development organisations operating in the area that recognised the extent of the problems being experienced by the estate. Among these were the South West Inner City Network (SWICN), a community network; and the Dublin Inner City Partnership, an area-based local development company.

In September 1998, a significant piece of research sponsored by SWICN sparked interest in tackling the problems of the estate. *'Integrated Services Project, St. Teresa's Gardens'* (Brudell, 1998) made several recommendations as to how the regeneration of the area should be approached. It emphasised the need for greater integration of services delivered to the local community.

On foot of the document, a planning day was held in February 1999 with residents of the flats, statutory representatives and the voluntary sector, facilitated by DICP and

supported by SWICN. The main question asked was what was needed for the complex. Issues like graffiti and the appearance of the complex were high on the agenda. An investment proposal emerged for the Environmental & Employment Project, and this was later submitted to both DICP and the Dublin Employment Pact for consideration.

The proposal falls within the remit of the Dublin Employment Pact, which focuses on the needs of the long-term unemployed and those at risk of exclusion. The Pact's four priority areas are combating long-term unemployment; youth unemployment and education; social economy; and policy and co-ordination.

A key theme of the proposal was the essential requirement of community ownership:

"The community has suffered for too long from the failure of well-intentioned solutions to their problems prescribed by outside agencies. The community feels that they are best placed to identify their own social, economic and environmental priorities. Any development that excludes the participation of local people is another waste of public resources. The regeneration of St. Teresa's should begin with local people, their knowledge, their ideas and their actions."

It outlined a work plan that contained very specific aims:

- Upgrading outside play areas so they would be suitable for football and basketball.
- Development of a children's adventure play area.
- Employment of a warden to supervise and maintain public areas.
- Setting up green space, garden development and graffiti co-operative.
- Setting up community social enterprise co-op and workspace.

Implementing all of these tasks necessitated the employment of staff. Overall it hoped to address the low self-esteem of the community in the flats, and people's perception of the complex, by tackling anti-social behaviour. It aimed to motivate local people to be proud of their area. It planned to improve the physical appearance of St. Teresa's Gardens and the quality of life for tenants, enhance co-operation between local groups, create employment, increase solidarity in the community and create a feeling of safety within the estate.

Local Development Programme funds of £80,000 were committed to the project through the Dublin Employment Pact, to be administered by Dublin Inner City Partnership. This was to cover the employment of a Co-ordinator, administrator and recurrent costs for the project. Dublin Corporation agreed to provide matching funding 'in kind'.

The Dublin Employment Pact was founded in 1998 to represent the region's social partners: statutory agencies, local area partnerships and voluntary and community groups. It aims to create alliances of key players to encourage growth, increase employment and enhance social cohesion.

Dublin Corporation is the local authority for the area, with responsibility for public housing estates such as St. Teresa's Gardens. At present it is implementing a number of regeneration plans in Dublin city, including Integrated Area Plans, and the Area Regeneration Programme. It will also play a key role in the newly-announced RAPID initiative.

Dublin Inner City Partnership is a local development organisation operating in the inner city with a brief of tackling long-term unemployment and improving quality of life for local residents. It was set up in 1991 under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP).

Delivery of the Project

Once funding was committed, a Management Committee was established to oversee the project. This was a much stronger body than anything that had preceded it in the flats, owing to the broad range of representation that included Dublin Corporation, the Garda Síochána, the Vista Community Development Project, the local Boxing Club, South West Inner City Network and the St. Teresa's Gardens Residents' Association. This 'interagency' approach is viewed in a positive light as contributing to the success of the project, and signifies an attitudinal change among the resident population, who were previously wary of engaging with external agencies. It is indicative of greater levels of trust and goodwill between the various sectors.

The Management Committee meets on a monthly basis and the residents themselves play a central role. The Corporation's Regional Manager for the South Inner City has recently joined the Committee, a move welcomed by the Project as an indication of the Corporation's greater commitment to its success. The structure and management of the project has been described as 'local development in its truest sense' because it gives local people the assistance to run their own project. A healthy balance has been achieved within the project, since it is run by the community with the necessary supports from outside agencies. In this way, local people develop management and organisation skills, which will leave them in a better position to expand services in the longer term. In other words, the community will be left with an indigenous skills base as a result of the learning that is taking place through the project.

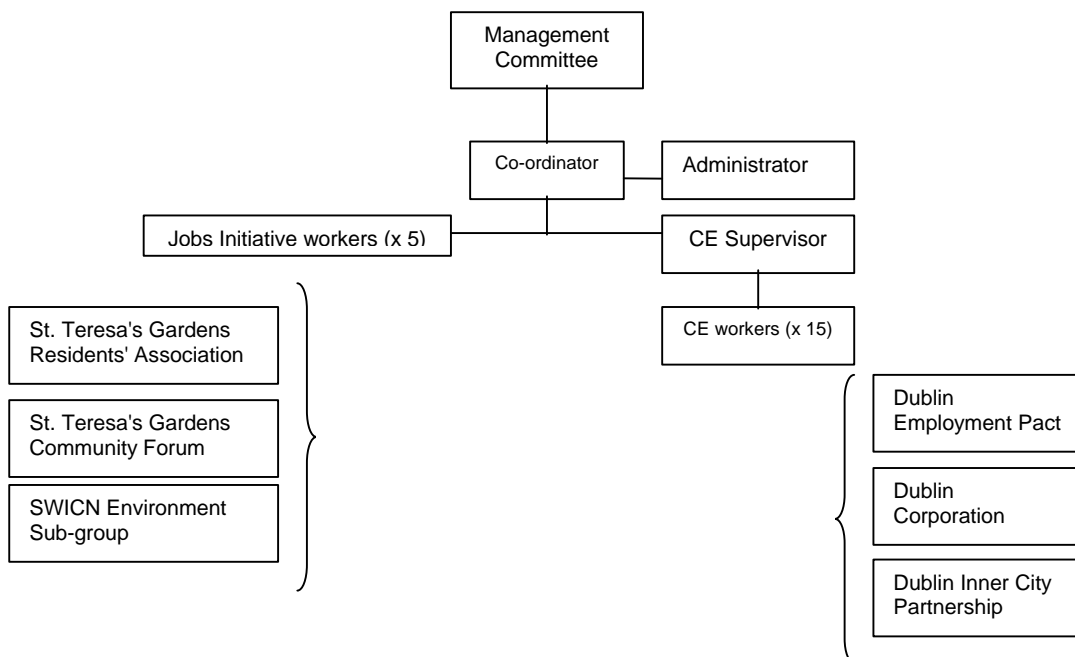
The Project Co-ordinator reports in writing on a monthly basis to the Management Committee, and quarterly reports are submitted to DICP. External evaluation will be carried out during 2001.

Three further groupings are seen as complementary structures: the Community Forum, Residents' Association, and the SWICN Environment Sub-group.

The Community Forum comprises all statutory, community and voluntary service providers in the locality, along with residents of St. Teresa's Gardens. It is a forum where issues can be raised and agencies and residents can work together to solve problems. It was developed as a way of overcoming obstacles to regeneration that had arisen between the various sectors.

A Residents' Association has existed within the flats for some time, but last year was the first year in which community elections were held to fill the 16 membership places. The community and Dublin Corporation worked together to organise a democratic 'secret ballot' election, facilitated by SWICN, as a way of ensuring that the association would be representative of the entire population of the flats. It is believed that these community elections are the first of their kind in Dublin. Local people were given information on the voting procedure and invited to nominate candidates for election. Dublin Corporation published a brochure describing the process. Preparatory work was carried out during the year, and the elections were held in November 2000. A turnout of 28% was considered very high, from a community that has some experience of voter apathy. The Corporation deals with the Residents' Association on all Corporation matters.

SWICN is the local community based network for the south west quadrant of the inner city, where St. Teresa's is located. The network saw the need to build capacity in all the flat complexes in the area and was concerned about low levels of participation by local residents. The SWICN Environment Sub-group supports the development of the Project in a number of ways. It facilitated the community elections and organised Estate Management Training for the project. DICEP and the Corporation jointly provided financial support for the training course, which promoted capacity building to assist local people to participate in the changes in their area.



Employment

In line with the employment strand of the project, local people were offered jobs on the Whole-time Jobs Initiative. Along with the Project Co-ordinator, an Administrator manages the office, which is based in the flats.

Jobs Initiative

Jobs Initiative positions were advertised locally, and all five men who were recruited live in the flats. SWICN is the Managing Agent for the JI workers, and the Jobs Initiative Co-ordinator based in SWICN looks after their training and support needs. Mainstreaming of positions will be an important element of the programme.

The five JI workers have undergone a range of training courses during their first year on the project. Two workers successfully completed an Football Association of Ireland (FAI) accredited Level I Soccer Coaching course, out of 36 people who had initially applied. Fourteen local people did the uncertified introductory counterpart. The fact that both JI workers completed the Level I course, which included a training session over an entire bank holiday weekend, indicates their level of commitment to the programme.

Five workers completed a Health and Safety course and all attended the initial Advanced Health and Safety course but it was cancelled due to an insufficient number of participants. This shows how the training opportunities of individual workers on the Environmental & Employment Project can be affected by a lack of participation by other scheme workers.

Two Jobs Initiative workers are participating in a Return to Education course in Warrenmount Community Education Centre. All five workers completed a Home Maintenance course that covered domestic electrical maintenance. One Jobs Initiative worker, himself a qualified painter, has trained other workers, resulting in a very high standard of the work being carried out.

All five workers and three of the Community Employment Workers are presently enrolled on a new training course called MAST, which stands for Maintenance Application Skills Training. The 14 week course will cover a wide range of personal and career developments.

MAST Programme	
Week 1	Programme introduction, orientation and group dynamics, skills analysis, career planning, CV design.
Week 2	Interview techniques, job search skills, manual handling (HSA certificate), workplace safety, basic first aid (HSA certificate).
Weeks 3-6	Basic first aid, garden design and maintenance (City & Guilds Cert.), manual handling certification, mock interviews.
Weeks 7-10	Painting & decorating (City & Guilds Cert.), basic first aid, time management, stress management, garden design and maintenance, first aid certification, job incentives.
Weeks 11-14	In company placement.

Significantly, the Project has arranged for the course to be delivered in St. Teresa's Gardens. While making it easier for Jobs Initiative and Community Employment participants to take part in the course, it also gives the project the opportunity to develop the garden/grotto area through the garden design and maintenance module, and

develop some community flats through the painting and decorating module. The course will have fifteen participants with seven coming from projects in the south inner city. All aspects of the course will be delivered in St. Teresa's, including the theory elements and information technology training. Childcare allowances are paid to parents on the course. The start date is 16 July 2001.

A separate element related to the employment strand was the establishment of a database of unemployed people within the flats, recording their skills levels and work preferences. The Project Co-ordinator set up this system to act as an informal job club. Connections with private businesses are made to try to meet both local employers' labour needs and the work needs of residents, for example, Gem Construction, under contract to repair the roofing in St. Teresa's, was requested by Dublin Corporation to hire local labour. Using the database, the company was able to recruit 12 people from the flats for this contract, and have even offered to retain some workers.

Construction of the football pitch is due to commence on 8 May 2001 and the Corporation has asked the contractor to agree a percentage of local labour.

Two further courses were delivered simultaneously over an eight week period. These were Front Line Stock Management and Front Line Purchasing. The twenty course places were open to all residents from St. Teresa's. The professionally delivered training included a work experience module; on-the-job training was provided, for example, in HB Ice-cream. The courses concluded in June 2001. Tanaiste Mary Harney will present certificates to the participants, who included five Jobs Initiative workers and four Community Employment workers as well as residents, on July 12th 2001.

<p>The Whole-time Jobs Initiative is a Government employment programme providing full-time jobs in the social economy for a period of three years. In order to be eligible for the programme, workers must be over 35 years of age, 5 years unemployed and living in the inner city.</p>
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In March 2001, almost one year after the recruitment of the Jobs Initiative workers by the project, the Community Employment scheme was established. Although the Residents' Association had sponsored a CE scheme during the 1990s, it had experienced difficulties and eventually ended. It was decided to make use of the management structure of the Environmental & Employment Project in sponsoring a new CE scheme. CE workers will be involved in youth services, information, publicity, fund-raising and caretaking. The Project has recently applied for CE Innovative Project status from FÁS, which would give it greater flexibility in the use of the scheme and training budgets. It was felt that innovative status would help address the needs of local young people.

In recognition of the high levels of long-term unemployment within the flats and problems of educational disadvantage, a special pre-CE course was organised in which local residents were invited to participate. This was a new course designed to help people who would not be ready to go directly onto a CE scheme. The course was advertised locally, and twenty people participated. It was organised by Connolly Information Centre in the Coombe - an Inner City Employment Service centre - and took place in St. Teresa's Gardens. Presentations by the Project Co-ordinator, FAS and the CE supervisor aimed to give potential CE workers an understanding of the type of work to be undertaken, and the obligations of both the workers and the sponsor body.

All participants were offered a progression option after the course, either on the new CE scheme, on a training course, or referral to another organisation. At the time of writing, the majority of the CE scheme places have been filled, and participants have commenced work. The remainder of the fifteen places will be filled shortly.

The Community Employment Programme is a Government employment programme that provides work experience and training for long-term unemployed people. Scheme participants usually work for 20 hours per week for a one year period, with some exceptions, in the community and voluntary sector.

Putting in place this staffing structure and upskilling them for the specific workload was essential to the delivery of the second strand of the project, the environmental component.

Environment

Work carried out by Jobs Initiative and Community Employment workers concentrates on improving the physical environment of the flats, maintaining the paint work and developing green areas. Through collaboration with Dublin Corporation, they keep the environment free of graffiti and reduce damage to property.

Over the course of its first year of operation, the project can boast a number of substantial achievements in the environmental sector:

- Estate Management Training for 14 residents
- Spring planting of 2,000 daffodil bulbs
- Anti-graffiti painting around the flats
- Summer Fun day in 2000
- Renovation of community centre flat
- Renovation of flat in Prime Time programme
- Development of CCTV proposal with Corporation
- Newsletters produced
- Database produced
- Directory of Corporation services
- Development of football pitch

Estate Management Training

Fourteen participants took part in a 10 week course (2 hours per week), which included a residential weekend module. Participants were drawn from people on the project's Management Committee, the Residents' Association and other tenants. The purpose of the training was to build capacity so that the group would be able to effectively manage the project. Content included adult education and study methods; background to estate management; models of tenant participation; local Government structure; committee skills; decision making; mediation; networking; negotiation skills; record keeping and report writing; conflict resolution and evaluation. The residential workshop gave an overview of the 10 taught modules. The course was organised by the SWICN Environment Sub-group and delivered by Community Technical Aid. It was funded by DICP and Dublin Corporation.

Significantly, since the training ran before the community elections, it was instrumental in encouraging participation in the election process and gave local people a better

understanding of roles and responsibilities at committee level. Some residents who had completed the training were subsequently elected to the Residents' Association.

Ten people from the Project are involved in facilitation with Community Action Network, the residents' group and Dublin Corporation to develop an 'Estate Agreement' between the residents and Dublin Corporation. It will cover reaction times, maintenance, allocations, infrastructure (such as play areas), and community development. The development of the 'Agreement' was described by the Project Co-ordinator as a project within a wider training programme. At the time of writing, consultation is taking place on content, roles, and responsibilities. The training with CAN will also cover areas such as negotiation skills. The course will begin in September 2001, continuing into 2002. There will be a public launch of the agreement on completion.

Spring Light 2000

Spring Light 2000 featured the planting of 2000 daffodil bulbs by project workers and local school children between the ages of 8 and 12 years. The Project linked with a local school to achieve this target.

Anti-graffiti Painting

Jobs Initiative workers have undertaken painting of the outside of flats to keep them free of graffiti. Although the Corporation carries out general painting every seven years, this is often vandalised, contributing to a dilapidated appearance. Workers noted that young people are now less likely to vandalise premises because they know the people involved in the upkeep. The project is proud of its record of keeping walls clean, giving an example of one particular area, which was painted by them last Easter and has not needed attention since.

Jobs Initiative and CE workers will also assist artist Simon Coking, who has been contracted by Dublin Corporation to undertake mural painting projects with young people in flat complexes in the south west inner city. Art work will be developed along Cork Street and within individual flat complexes.

Summer Fun Day

A Summer Fun Day for children and families ran in 2000, taking over from the former summer project. Through the Environmental & Employment Project and the Community Employment scheme, the annual summer project for St. Teresa's has been re-established. It will run for four weeks during the month of July. Also in 2001 the Project has organised a three-day Summer Festival towards the end of July, incorporating live bands, novelty sports, open air discos, challenge matches, etc.

Renovation of Community Centre

Workers have completed a home décor course. The project undertook to paint the community centre free of charge as a trial run. Dublin Corporation was, by all accounts, impressed with the results. It is hoped that this experience may put them in a strong position for tendering for the renovation of some of the other community development flats, two of which are double units.

Renovation of flat in Prime Time programme

A number of the flats that featured in the RTE Prime Time documentary have since been renovated through a collaborative effort between JI workers and the Corporation. The programme also raised issues around the needs of residents, in particular, health care needs for elderly people. The Environmental & Employment Project is negotiating with the Health Board to locate a Public Health Nurse once a week in the flats. Other service providers, for example the VEC, have been approached to provide an on-site service for local people.

Development of CCTV proposal with Corporation

The Project is in negotiation with Dublin Corporation around its plans to introduce CCTV monitoring cameras in the public areas of the flats. The Project welcomes the installation of the system as a way of preventing damage to property, e.g. bin shoots have previously been set on fire, and other anti-social behaviour is prevalent. It is seen as a way of monitoring the infrastructure (not individuals) and of deterring crime rather than detecting the culprits.

The Residents' Association of St. Teresa's Gardens would like local people to be involved in monitoring the cameras, as occurs with a similar project operating in Ballymun flats. Dublin Corporation has not made a commitment to handing over monitoring to local people; this will be done centrally from Civic Offices for the time being.

Both statutory and community sectors agree on the value of CCTV as a way of creating a safer, cleaner estate. However, the issue of monitoring is highly sensitive. If monitored centrally by the Civic Offices, residents might feel they are being subjected to a 'big brother' scenario. On the other hand, in such a high density estate, complications might also arise if local people effectively monitor their neighbours.

Newsletter

A newsletter has been produced and circulated, advising residents of developments within the complex.

Database

The project developed a database for job seekers. Local jobs are advertised with the project, and links are made with suitable unemployed people. This can reduce the anxiety associated with a return to work, since it cuts down on the formal job application and interview procedure, which can be an intimidating process. The extra assistance given to unemployed people by local staff has proven successful.

Directory

A laminated directory of Dublin Corporation services for St. Teresa's was produced and delivered door to door, so that local people have a ready list of departments to contact regarding maintenance work.

Development of football pitch

Two Jobs Initiative workers have been trained in soccer coaching. Ideally, the Project would like these workers to have a role in managing the pitch and training local young people. Dublin Corporation has agreed a contractor for the work and it is hoped it will commence before summer 2001. Last year, the contractor who had been selected

withdrew from the tendering process and the development of the pitch was unfortunately postponed.

In addition to these developments the project, in co-operation with other local service providers, was instrumental in organising a visit to the complex by President Mary McAleese on 27 April 2000, and the visiting reliquary of St. Therese of Lisieux, which was in the flats on 26 April, both of which events served to boost morale within the community.

Other Activities

The Environmental & Employment Project has facilitated the Donore Community Drug Team in the Community Centre (No. 133-134) for one evening per week. The Donore Community Drug Team is running a family support programme for relatives of those with serious addiction problems. The programme has been running since April 2001.

The Project has also worked with the Residents' Association to facilitate the setting up of a Health Board outreach clinic. The idea came from discussions at Integrated Services Process and Community Forum Level, which pointed to the fact that for various reasons some people in St. Teresa's Gardens were not making contact or keeping appointments with the Health Nurse / Baby Clinic / Family Development nurse, etc. The Health Board has agreed to run a clinic once a fortnight to cover all these services. In addition, a General Practitioner will be in attendance at this clinic once a quarter. The service will operate from the community centre from September 2001.

Level of Investment

It was anticipated that the first year's running costs for salaries, overheads and capital would be in the region of £80,000, as per the following breakdown. Dublin Corporation agreed to make an equivalent investment in kind.

Projected Costings	Year 1
Salary Costs, Co-ordinator and Administrator	31,800
Advertising Post	1,000
Overheads inc. electricity, heating, phone, stationery, postage, accountancy and training.	14,700
Capital costs inc. photocopier, IT equipment, furniture, materials for up-grading greening areas.	32,500
TOTAL	80,000

There was some underspend during the first year, with the balance being brought forward into year two.

There has been some difficulty in quantifying the Corporation's precise contribution to the project. It provides paint and materials to the JI workers involved in renovation work or anti-graffiti painting, but it is also making large investments in the football pitch, roofing and sewerage systems. Some developments are taking place under distinct Corporation plans (Area Regeneration/Precinct Improvement), and the football pitch had been planned prior to the establishment of the Environmental & Employment Project.

The Corporation appears to calculate total levels of investment in the estate, as distinct from in kind investment in the project. The Regional Manager noted that the £80,000 in

kind contribution would comprise annual investments over a number of years. He did not, however, rule out contributions specifically targeted at assisting the work of the project, while acknowledging that the material costs for renovations were not a significant expense.

At the time of writing the report, DICP had agreed to support the co-ordinator's salary for the 2001 year and overheads for the project, but the position of Administrator is unclear, although funds are being sought from other sources.

Analysis of Benefit

This section analyses the benefits of the project from the perspectives of the participating agencies and individuals.

Worker's Perspective

Workers are gaining valuable training and work experience on the project, a very significant achievement considering the high rate of long-term unemployment within the flats. JI workers average about 20 years unemployment. There appears to be a regular training programme in place for workers, with options of undertaking more advanced levels as they progress.

Participation in the project fosters a work ethic within the community. The two JI workers interviewed spoke enthusiastically about their ambition of developing a local maintenance co-operative, and of their potential involvement in managing the new football pitch. Involvement in the Project can give workers a sense of dignity and pride in their achievements.

The Project adopts a positive attitude to supporting workers' progression and is clear about potential opportunities for future work. The Jobs Initiative Co-ordinator explained that progression is being addressed by the project as a longer term ideal, and that it may take place 'within the project', if, for example, some positions are mainstreamed into Social Economy jobs. In this way important skills would not be lost to the community. The Project Co-ordinator commented that it would be possible for Jobs Initiative workers to access jobs in the open market at present, owing to the buoyant economy, but that they would not be able to compete for private sector jobs in the long-term. Using the time on the Jobs Initiative to upskill workers will place them in a stronger position to compete in the open labour market on a long-term basis.

Management Committee

The Management Committee has an understanding of the needs of JI workers and the context in which the project is being developed. Members have also gained skills both through the experience of managing and through the training that was organised for them. From the Committee's perspective, the staff team is viewed as being very committed, and the work targets are being met. Negotiation skills are also being learned, and the project can highlight inadequacies and prompt action. The Project benefits from the openness of workers to undertake new things.

Community Perspective

The most apparent and immediate benefit to the community is the physical regeneration of the environment of the estate through renovations carried out by JI workers. Incidents of vandalism have been dramatically reduced.

This has had the knock-on effect of raising the community's morale, which was evident through the large turnout for the community elections for the residents association.

From the community's perspective, the relationship with the statutory sector has improved. Residents of the flats benefit from an enhanced response to maintenance issues through the Project.

Training made available through the programme, such as the Front Line Stock Management and Front Line Purchasing courses, is available to other local residents who are not directly involved in the Project. One of the Project's aims was to target youth unemployment, and the provision of accredited work-related training is seen as an effective means of addressing this. Such training also has a work experience element that would further enhance participants' chances of progression to relevant employment.

The Project Co-ordinator emphasised the importance of accredited training for young people. The availability of work in the present economy is tempting adolescents to leave school early and start earning an income. Many parents feel under pressure to allow their children to work. School Principals have noted that part-time work is affecting students' performance in school. However, a lack of qualifications will leave people in a vulnerable position in the long-term. Courses such as Front Line Purchasing and Stock Management, with in-built work experience, give young people skills that will stand to them in years to come.

The wider community of the south inner city also benefits as the project develops as a skills base. An example of this is the proposed secondment of the Project's youth workers to other local initiatives, namely the Breakfast Club and the Donore Education Network (DEN), both Vista projects. Previously the community of St. Teresa's had to rely on external projects providing services to the flats, but it has now become a resource in its own right to the community of Dublin 8.

Dublin Corporation

Dublin Corporation agrees with the underlying ethos of the project, which is seen as empowering local people and building their capacity to participate in the management of their estate. It recognises the obvious benefits to the workers involved in the project in offering local long-term unemployed people a pathway back to work. There are also tangible benefits to the community as a whole, including the reduction of graffiti and a cleaner environment.

And apart from these tangible benefits, there are obvious benefits of giving ownership to local people, such as building confidence of the community.

The Project can also benefit the Corporation, by enabling it to more effectively deliver its plans. Although it is innovative to St. Teresa's Gardens, the work practice is not exclusive, and could potentially be replicated in other areas.

The links that Dublin Corporation has developed with both the Project and the Residents' Association will help it to deliver its programmes, such as Area Regeneration, in a more co-ordinated and effective way. The Area Regeneration Programme has three strands; the first was installing the central heating in the flats, which is just finishing. The second strand was roof repairs, while the third, the Precinct Improvement Scheme, qualifies as an 'all encompassing' element whereby the Corporation can undertake any remaining regeneration related to the exterior of the flats. This could include planting, development of the courtyard, or introducing limited access to blocks. The proposal for CCTV is being implemented under Precinct Improvement. All of these initiatives are carried out in consultation with the Residents' Association.

SWICN

SWICN views the St. Teresa's Gardens project as a pilot, that can offer a model of best practice in community participation in the local development process. Plans are afoot to replicate elements of the project in other disadvantaged flat complexes, for example, Chamber Court. Targeting complexes one at a time allows for a concentrated effort to support regeneration.

Challenges & Issues for consideration

Quantifying Investment

As mentioned earlier, there has been some difficulty in quantifying the level of investment in the project, owing to the 'in kind' nature of the Corporation's contribution. This could be advantageous to the project, if it results in the Corporation making a larger overall contribution in the long run. However, the project should be seen as having a separate role and identity to the overall development of the flat complex. Efforts should be made to clarify expectations of both the community sector and the Corporation.

Targeting

When the project was set up a year ago, the original proposal contained clear targets that formed a work plan. Most of these targets have been met or in some way addressed. It would be a worthwhile exercise for all relevant parties to relook at the project's objectives and draft a new set of targets for the second year of operation.

Training

So far there has been a strong training element for the JI workers, and similar attention will undoubtedly be paid to the CE workers' needs. The feasibility of the development of the worker's co-operative was seen by SWICN to be contingent on a high level of supports in place for the workers, who would require new skills in order to compete as a sustainable business. The varying skills level within the group was acknowledged, and workers' willingness to undergo training was seen as a major contributing factor to the overall success of the project.

Training for other staff, such as the Project Co-ordinator, should also be high on the agenda, owing to the skill level required to run a project of this nature, and the expanding role it will play with the development of the workers co-operative. Expertise will be required in contracts, tendering, report writing, etc. Similarly, the administrator should be offered an opportunity to update skills.

The Management Committee should have a role in identifying what training is required and supporting workers to undertake it. Committee members themselves may require further training, at a more advanced level to the capacity building course already undertaken. The DICP funding commitment for 2001 contains a modest allocation for training and development, including overheads for the project.

Reporting

With regarding to strengthening the internal workings of the project, it was proposed that reporting, monitoring and feedback mechanisms could be improved between the different levels of the structure and the various agencies involved. Transparent information systems are central to the success of the project.

Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming JI positions is important to the project and the workers, who see themselves working in the community on a long-term basis. Workers have undergone relevant training to enhance their skills and enable them to compete for new positions. The project points to the need for local people to be involved in maintaining the football pitch in order to make best use of the facility, illustrating this with the example of a playground in Sheriff Street that is closed early in the evening when supervisory staff finish their day's work.

Both the Management Committee and JI Co-ordinator would have preferred a concrete agreement with the Corporation regarding the mainstreaming of positions after the 3 year period on the Jobs Initiative. There is also the continuing lack of clarity from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment regarding the future of the Jobs Initiative programme.

Dublin Corporation has not made a formal commitment to mainstreaming Jobs Initiative positions, but nor has it explicitly stated that it opposed to the idea. In considering the issue, the Corporation would be anxious that no displacement of existing positions occurs, and that any new positions created as a result of mainstreaming would work in harmony with existing local staff. For example, a Sports Organiser / Soccer Coach is already employed through the Vista Project with the support of the Corporation. The Corporation would like to see a greater integration between local organisations to avoid duplication of services. Any lack of clarity with regard to the future of the project and the JI workers should be addressed as early as possible.

The possibility of developing a separate Social Economy element to the project is under consideration. One suggestion was for a number of skilled JI workers to progress to a more commercial/profit-oriented element of the Project.

Roles

Owing to the complexity of the structures within the flats, there can be a lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities. Officially, the Corporation deals with the elected Residents' Association on all Corporation matters. But there is crossover in membership between the Residents' Association and the Management Committee of the Project. Again, while not necessarily damaging to the project, it does not encourage outsiders to see it as an independent entity. Hence any development taking place within the flats can be attributed to the Residents' Association or to the project. Both groups may benefit from an exercise to clarify roles and responsibilities.

There is also some confusion regarding which elements are developed within or separate to the Environmental & Employment Project. For instance, the project includes negotiations for the CCTV cameras as one of its achievements, but the proposal for CCTV was developed by the Corporation separately to the Environmental & Employment Project.

Linkages

Linkages with other local projects have been established, such as the Vista Breakfast Club, which is benefiting from a youth worker seconded by the St. Teresa's Gardens Project. Linkages of this nature are valuable and should be encouraged as they maximise the benefits from community development and enhance services to the community. The community in the flats tended to be insular in the past, but the Project has been a way of strengthening links with outside organisations, notably Dublin Corporation and SWICN.

Future Plans

The project has a number of objectives to meet in the immediate future. Firstly, there is the planned move from No. 198 to 162, a ground floor flat.

Other objectives for 2001 include tree planting projects and the development of green spaces.

The mural painting programme for 15 young people with artist Simon Cokey and Art Squad will take place over the summer. This course, which commences on May 15, will include photography and art.

An amenity park is being planned with the Old Folks Committee; Dublin Corporation has asked its Parks Department to design the park. This will be a low maintenance amenity area, possibly maintained by JI workers. Horticulture training will be provided for workers.

The project will also explore emerging possibilities in the social economy.

The Environmental and Employment Project in conjunction with St. Teresa's Residents Association, has been successful with a funding application to the South Inner City Drugs Task Force. The grant, which amounts to £800,000, will fund a Drug Education Programme for 10-16 year olds in St. Teresa's, as well as creating further awareness around drug issues. The programme will also help build self esteem, improve confidence and develop public speaking skills.

The Project has been involved in the SWICN community festival - Celebration of Youth - and is organising a one-day event in St. Teresa's, called 'Festival of Fun'. This year, it hopes to expand the festival and is exploring the possibility of bringing a carnival into the flats during the summer.

Through the SWICN Environment Sub-group, Dublin Corporation is in negotiation to fund a one year contract for a Tenant Capacity Building Worker to assist local residents' associations to develop. St. Teresa's Gardens will be one of the complexes to benefit

from this new position. SWICN will work with the Residents' Association to enhance members' managerial and organisational capacity.

Dublin Corporation is for the first time employing a manager dedicated to a flat complex. This will mean that one person will be solely responsible for management of the flats. This innovative idea was a result of combined pressure from various community sectors. The person will be available from a local office in the flats five days per week. The position is also shared with Weaver Court/Chamber Street flats.

Dublin Corporation is engaging Community Action Network (CAN) to act as facilitators between the Corporation and the Residents' Association to draw up an estate agreement, which will list the level of service tenants can expect, such as response times. The agreement will also detail the specific responsibilities of residents.

Discussions have taken place with the Connolly Centre, an Inner City Employment Service centre based in the Coombe, to open an office one day per week within the flats.

A Family Support Group for families with experience of drug use problems will operate from the centre shortly. The group applied to the Project to request use of the premises.

The Health Board has confirmed that a Public Health Nurse will be available in the community centre on a monthly basis, starting at the end of May. A GP will be available to the community every two months. People who have mobility problems or experience difficulty in travelling to health service will be able to make use of this ground floor service. This has been facilitated through the SWICN Environment Sub-group.

References

Brudell, P. (1998) Integrated Services Project St. Teresa's Gardens. South West Inner City Network. Dublin.

Gates, P. Draft of Environment and Employment Project Proposal for St. Teresa's Gardens South West Inner City March 1999. Submitted for funding to the Dublin Employment Pact.

Other Sources:

Interviews with Brian Kenna (Co-ordinator) and Brian Murphy (Secretary); Evan Moore (Chair); Alice Griffin (JI Co-ordinator); Matt and Tony, Jobs Initiative workers; Dick Whelan (Regional Manager, Dublin Corporation).

Appendices

Timeframe

Timeframe	
Mid-1999	Management Group Established
June 1999	FÁS approval of JI places
Jan 2000	Start of Project Recruitment of Co-ordinator
March 2000	Review Day for Management Committee JI roles identified Administrator Employed
April 2000	Tree Planting Day
May - June 2000	All 5 JI positions filled
July 2000	Tenant Participation / Capacity Building course completed
Oct 2000	FAI Football Coaching course completed
Dec 2000	Home Maintenance course completed
Nov 2000	Community Elections
March 2001	CE Scheme Commences
April 2001	Purchasing and Stock Taking Training

News Release

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PRIMETIME DOCUMENTARY: ST. TERESA'S GARDENS 25/01/01

The Primetime Documentary on St. Teresa's Gardens shown last night presents a somewhat grim and depressing view of life in the South Inner City complex. The programme is dominated by stories of unemployment, drug addiction and poor social coping skills. While this is a true and accurate portrayal of life for many people in St. Teresa's, where official statistics show that 87% of people depend on some form of welfare support it is of course not the full picture! There is a strong and vibrant community willing and capable of building the social and physical infrastructure needed to improve life for the people of St. Teresa's. However it is important to point out that without a committed programme for the complex from statutory agencies such as the Health Board, Dublin Corporation, Youth Services, VEC, etc. the work carried out by local volunteers and the few community people employed in the area can not be sustained.

Brian Kenna of St. Teresa's Gardens Environmental & Employment Project says that "the Primetime programme will help focus state agencies attention on the problems experienced by many residents in the complex" and hopefully prompt greater intervention at a time when central government has the money and resources to make a difference. It we wait until things get worse and the economy takes a down turn, then areas like St. Teresa's will go under very quickly. What's needed now is:

1. Improvements in the physical environment such as the much promised (by Dublin Corporation) All Weather Football Pitch and Children's Play Area, to provide an alternative to joyriding and drug misuse.
2. The local delivery of an integrated programme to combat welfare and social problems.
3. A comprehensive youth service which would address the lack of youth programmes and develop a policy to target the growing number of "Youth at Risk" in St. Teresa's.

Brian Kenna

Committee Members

Environment & Employment Project Management Committee

Evan Moore	Chair
Bobby Neill	Dublin Corporation
Mick Hiney	Garda Siochana
Ger Doherty	Vista Project (to be confirmed)
Brian Murphy	Secretary
Martina Kenna	Member
Joe Fagan	Member
Carol Fitzgerald	Member

Staff

Brian Kenna	Co-ordinator
Carmel Carter	Administrator

Residents' Association

Martina Kenna
Brian Murphy
Matt Fagan
Brian Hynes
Bill Kelly
Brian Kenna
Carol Fitzgerald
Darren Murray
Rose Carr
Kris Taylor
Eddie Dowdall
Ger Devereaux
Paul Bird
Vicky Fagan
Vivienne Lennon
Evelyn Fagan
Mick Hiney (Community Garda)
Mick Doyle (Community Garda)

Community Forum

Health Board
Dublin Corporation
Garda Siochana
Community Sector

Cllr. John Gallagher
Cllr. Catherine Byrne
Cllr. Mary Mooney

