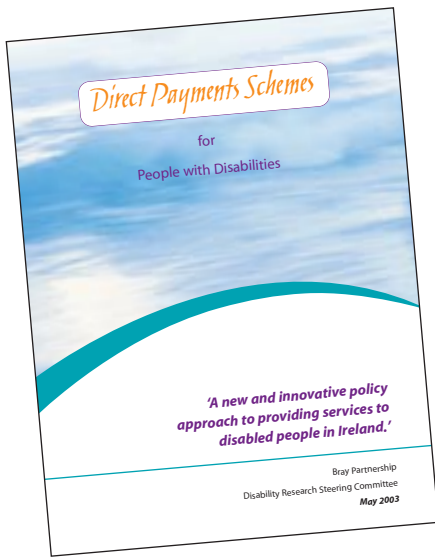


NOTICEBOARD

Information for Older People in Bray

Bray Partnership's Older People Cluster Group, a network of local groups providing services for older people in Bray, is currently working on producing an Information Card and a Safety Booklet for people living in the Bray area, both of which will be available in the New Year.

Direct Payments Schemes Report Published



A report has recently been published by Bray Partnership following a piece of research on direct payments schemes for disabled people. Direct payments involve relevant statu-

tory agencies giving cash to people with disabilities to purchase their own support services directly. The research was initiated by Bray Partnership's Disability Cluster Group, a network of local disability groups and service-providers. You can find out more on our website at www.braypartnership.ie in the publications section.

Researching Bray's Childcare Needs

Bray Partnership is currently completing a comprehensive piece of research examining needs and issues relating to childcare in Bray. The research was carried out in three stages including a survey of the needs of parents with children in local pre-schools and primary schools. Following on from this, a consultation process was undertaken with local children between the ages of 7-10 and a meeting was held to ascertain the views of local stakeholders in the area. Wicklow County Childcare Committee funded the research and a report documenting the findings will be launched in early 2004.

Christmas Crackers at Signal Arts

Looking for last minute Christmas presents? Why not drop into Signal Arts Centre in Albert Avenue in Bray? From Monday 15th to Monday 22nd December, the centre will be selling a range of unique hand-crafted goods

which you can peruse over a glass of mulled wine.

Dormant Accounts Fund

Funding is now available to groups undertaking local projects from the Dormant Accounts Fund. The overall objective of the fund is to ensure that dormant accounts monies are disbursed in a manner that optimises their effectiveness and assists the personal, educational and social development of persons who are economically, educationally or socially disadvantaged or persons with a disability. Further information on the funds can be obtained online at www.dormantaccounts.ie

BRAY PARTNERSHIP WEBSITE:

Our website www.braypartnership.ie has a 'Latest News' section as well as a 'Noticeboard' on the site. We would be delighted to include information/photographs from local groups about their activities.

If you wish to publicise a forthcoming event, however large or small, we will include it on the next update of our website. Contact Michelle in the Partnership by email: michelle@braypartnership.ie

Community Administrative Support Centre

(An Initiative of the Dargle Community Alliance)

This new service provides administrative support to all community groups in the Bray area including:

- Typing of minutes and general correspondence.
- Addressing of envelopes and labels.
- Photocopying.
- Posters and flyers.
- Help with funding applications.
- General secretarial and administrative work.

The service is based in the Lewis Room, Madeley House, Florence Road, Bray. TEL: 211 6808
Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm

Comments, contributions and/or feedback on the newsletter are welcomed. Contact Michelle Rogers, Bray Partnership, 4 Prince of Wales Tce., Bray, Co. Wicklow. TEL: 01 286 8266 FAX: 286 8700
Email: michelle@braypartnership.ie

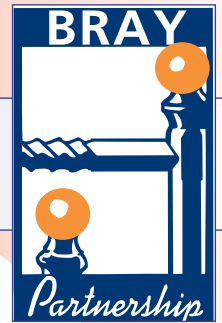
This newsletter is available in Braille, large font, on cassette or disk on request.



Talk About

NUMBER 4
Autumn/Winter 2003

Local Development News and Views



Message from the Manager

Dec. '03 marks the end of the first phase of Bray Partnership's current Area Action Plan. Much has been achieved during this period with many local groups and individuals being supported by the Partnership to pursue a range of social and economic issues they identified as relevant to their progression. A number of important initiatives were also developed and moved forward including projects relating to Traveller men, older women, people with disabilities, homelessness, and ethnic minorities. The past three years presented some more challenging times, not least of which was the substantial reduction in the Partnership's core budget this year. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Partnership, through the ongoing commitment of people involved in programme-related activity, has maintained a clear focus on working to address situations of disadvantage and exclusion affecting key target groups in the Bray area.

In this issue of **Talk About** you can read about our activities and local Partnership-related projects. On page 2 is a brief account of the mid-term review carried out by the Partnership of its work programme 2001 to 2003. The purpose of the review was to document experiences and learning in the period and the outcomes will inform our future work. Like many other groups around the country, Bray Partnership has recently commenced the detailed preparation of a follow-on implementation plan for the years 2004 to 2006 which will be completed early in the new-year - more information in the next issue of **Talk About**.

Seasons greetings to all.

Peter Brennan - Manager

Who we are and what we do

Bray Partnership is one of 38 local development companies in Ireland. Set up in 1995, Bray Partnership aims to tackle social exclusion using an 'integrated' approach which brings together local community groups, statutory organisations, social partners and elected public representatives to address social exclusion by devising local solutions to locally identified issues.

VISION STATEMENT: Bray Partnership believes that the well-being of communities is best achieved through the active engagement of all to combat social disadvantage and enhance the quality of life in the area.

Inside this Issue:

Mid-Term Review

Bray Job Initiative Programme

Local Projects and Initiatives

Noticeboard



REPORT IDENTIFIES 119 HOMELESS PEOPLE IN BRAY

A recent research report found that at least 119 people from Bray, including 24 children, were homeless during the week of the 24th-30th March 2003. The count shows that, by any chosen measure, Bray has a large-scale homeless problem for a town of its size.

The report drew on the experiences of a wide range of key stakeholders and provides a clear strategy for tackling homelessness in the area. The priority recommendations show the need to develop a range of accommodation options including emergency accommodation, transitional housing and permanent accommodation.

Support services for people at particular risk of homelessness are also identified including people with mental illness, ex offenders and drug users.

"This report not only shows the high level of homelessness in Bray" said Davin Roche, Bray Partnership "but also shows how we can tackle this issue head on. The report charts a

continued on page 6

NEW ADULT EDUCATION HANDBOOK FOR BRAY

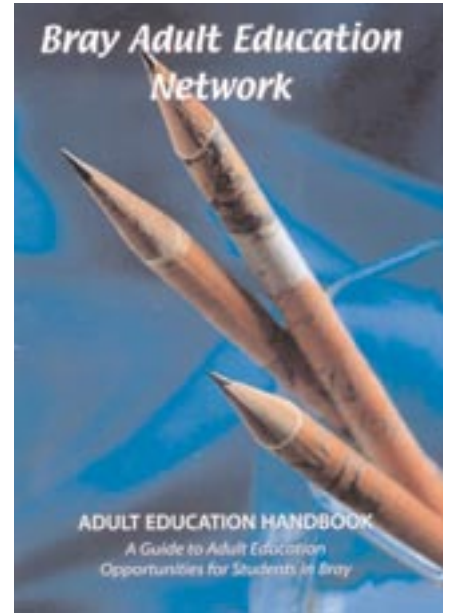
The publication of a new handbook, funded by Bray Partnership, will be a welcome development for adults in the Bray area who are considering returning to education and training.

The Adult Education Handbook, which is produced by the Bray Adult Education Network, is specifically geared to meet the needs of Bray students and should be an invaluable resource for adult learners and information-providers alike. The Bray Adult Education Network is

made up of statutory and community groups working with adult learners in Bray.

Useful information contained in the handbook includes details of adult education opportunities in Bray, where to get financial support and information, including for specific groups such as people with disabilities and Travellers, with comprehensive information on further and higher education, access programmes, study skills techniques and childcare options.

Reference copies of the handbook are available in local libraries.



SURVEY OF ISSUES FOR LOCAL ESTATES

Bray Partnership's Local and Community Development Cluster Group provides an opportunity for local groups to meet and discuss common issues, exchange information and make recommendations to the Partnership Board. Following a presentation from the County Environmental Awareness Officer, the group identified a number of environmen-

tal issues such as grass-cutting, provision of skips in estates, encouraging recycling and composting, that it would like to see addressed locally. The cluster group will be sending a questionnaire to residents associations and estate management groups in Bray to identify the key issues facing local residents. They will be organising a meeting with groups early next year to discuss the findings and to liaise with Bray Town Council.

BRAY PARTNERSHIP REVIEWS ITS PROGRAMME

Bray Partnership, which is now mid-way through its 6-year strategic plan 2000-2006, has just completed a mid-term review of its work to date.

The review took place over a two-month period, consulting widely with key stakeholders including statutory agencies and local groups and individuals connected with the Partnership's programme. The results of the review, which will inform the programme for the next three years, will be compiled into a report for distribution to local groups and organisations.

Local Employment Service Network

Bray Partnership Local Employment Service Network provides confidential information, advice and support to unemployed people within the community who wish to return to work. We provide a one-stop-shop where unemployed people can learn about all the options available to them and which option best suits themselves and their family.

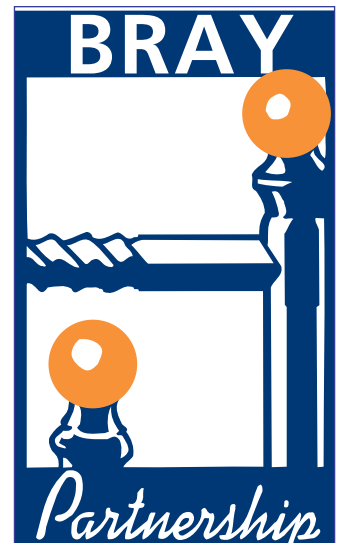


You can use the Local Employment Service if you are:

- Long-term unemployed
- A dependant partner of an unemployed person
 - In receipt of a One Parent Family payment
 - In receipt of disability allowance or benefit
- An early school leaver
- A member of the Traveller community

Our Contact Points are open Monday - Thursday 9.00am-5.00pm and on Friday 9.00am -1.00pm and are located at:

- Bray Youth Information Centre, 1 Brennan's Parade. Tel: 276 5917
- Wicklow Trade Union Centre for the Unemployed, 97 Rear Main St. Tel: 204 2964
- St.Fergal's Resource Centre, 107 Oldcourt Avenue. Tel: 282 8898



DISABILITY DOESN'T F-STOP HERE!

The launch of the Disability Doesn't f-stop Here exhibition in the Mermaid Arts Centre represented the culmination of a year of hard work by 30 disabled people in producing 55 black and white photographs to raise awareness of disability issues. The project was the brain-child of the Bray Partnership's Disability Cluster Group who identified the need to increase awareness of disability issues in the town, using a creative arts medium.



For those of us who are not au fait with photography speak - the f-stop represents a type of opening on the camera lens! Depending where you set the f-stop, you can use it to focus from a number of different perspectives. The idea behind the exhibition was to 'open' people's minds to new images of disability and dispel the myth that 'disabled people are different'. Ronnie Drew was the special guest in attendance at the launch and he entertained everyone with both poetry and song. Ronnie

remarked on the fact that success in the arts is not about being famous but about dedication, commitment and hard work, which was reflected in the work on display. Deirdre Ridgeway, a professional photographer, facilitated the members of three local groups, Bray Lakers, Marino School and RehabCare, in learning all aspects of photography. The organisation of the exhibition involved a lot of dedication and hard

work by members of the groups involved.

The exhibition has travelled and been displayed in Wicklow County Council, The Special Olympic Village in the RDS, Eyre Square Gallery in Galway and Cork City Library. A number of sources of funding were secured for the project including the Bray Partnership, Co. Wicklow VEC and the European Year of People with Disabilities.

LOBBYING FOR SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Almost 80 people attended a public meeting with Co. Wicklow TD's on 1 July 2003, organised by the Bray Partnership Disability Cluster Group.



The issue for discussion was the lack of services for people with learning disability who have turned 18 years of age and finished school. The gap in service provision involved a significant number of people with learning disabilities nationally with 13 young people in Bray being affected. Three deputies attended the meeting: Deputy Billy Timmins, Deputy Mildred Fox and Deputy Liz McManus. All of the deputies pledged their support, acknowledging that the lack of services was very serious and that it was having a major impact on the individuals and families concerned. Elaine O'Reilly representing Bray Lakers presented the deputies with 2,500 signed petitions. A number of service-providers in the area were also present and gave inputs at the meeting. A further meeting was organised the following week between Minister Dick Roche and parents and

group representatives. The long-term strategy was to have the proposed Disability Bill enacted to give disabled people the 'right' to services. The short-term strategy was to have immediate funding in place to provide appropriate services for school leavers in September.

Following lobbying efforts at both local and national level, the Minister for Health announced a further investment

of €50 million in disability services to the end of the year. Of this, €15 million has been earmarked for learning disability services to provide 600 day care places throughout the country.

Arising from these concerns, the Bray Partnership Disability Cluster Group is currently embarking on a new and exciting research project which will involve a profiling/mapping exercise of people with learning disabilities in the Bray area who have completed or are about to complete school and turn 18 years of age. The profiling exercise will examine the demographics, social care and life-long learning needs of this particular group. Funding has been secured from a number of sources including Comhairle, the National Disability Authority and the East Coast Area Health Board. The findings of the research will provide baseline information on the service needs of people with learning disabilities in the Bray area. It is anticipated that the research findings will ensure effective planning of services locally, avoiding the crisis situation that occurred this year.

LOCAL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Secretarial Services for Bray Community Groups

The Community Administrative Support Centre, which provides secretarial and photocopying services to community groups in Bray, has had a busy year. The centre has now been used by over 50 organisations, providing services such as the design and production of posters, newsletters, invitations and booklets, setting up databases and creating mailing labels. The photocopying service has proved particularly popular, charging only 2 cent per A4 sheet. Design work is free of charge, apart from a minimal charge to cover the cost of paper used.

"The centre is a fantastic service", says Pauline Murray of Bray Mental Health Association. "I don't have the time or the computer skills to do all the secretarial work. The office is so convenient to get to. I'm very pleased I found you."

The support centre was the brainchild of the Dargle Community Alliance, which identified the need for a secretarial and photocopying service to help voluntary organisations and volunteers in Bray who might not have the skills or the nec-

essary equipment to produce this kind of work themselves. With the financial support of Bray Partnership, FAS and NDP, the service opened in October 2002 in Madeley House in Eglinton Road in Bray. If you are involved in a local community group and would like to find out more, you can call into the centre or contact them on 01-2116808.

The WEB Project for women over 45.

The Women's Equality in Bray (WEB) project opened its doors earlier this year

offering new possibilities for women in the 45-plus age group. The project works with women over 45 who want to play a more active part in the social, economic and political life of their community. For some this may be acquiring new skills for the workplace or recouping on opportunities missed in education, and for others it is a means of finding out about the resources available to them in



their local communities, finding a direction for themselves and planning ahead for the future.

The project is funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform under the National Development Plan Equality for Women Measure and is the brainchild of a consortium of local voluntary, community and statutory organisations in the Bray area, led by Bray Partnership. The success of the work to date has been due in no small measure to this practical collaboration and the resources and skills offered by a wide range of community groups and service-providers in the Bray area.

The project will run until mid-2005, with the focus very much centred on reaching women where they are at and enabling them to be instrumental in articulating the reality of their lives, so that in the long term, through the practical delivery of meaningful responses at a variety of levels, we can improve opportunities for all women.

If you would like to find out more about WEB or link in with any of the project's ongoing activities in a way that meets your needs, contact Margaret Agnew in the WEB office on 01 286 7153.

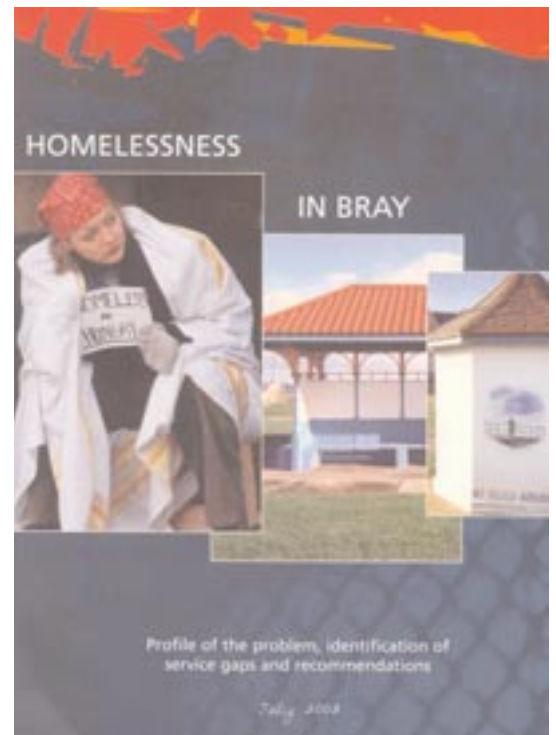
REPORT IDENTIFIES 119 HOMELESS PEOPLE IN BRAY

continued from page 1

The research was commissioned after the problem of homelessness in Bray was raised by community groups affiliated to Bray Partnership. A committee, including representatives from Bray Partnership, East Coast Area Health Board and Bray Town Council, co-ordinated the research project. Core funding and support for the work was provided by Bray Partnership, East Coast Area Health Board, the Combat Poverty Agency and Wicklow County Development Board.

Local agencies and the Bray Homelessness Forum are working to progress a number of issues identified in the report. Bray Town Council, for example, has increased the number of one-bed units in its next planned housing development to cater for older single men. The East Coast Area Health Board is co-ordinating more flexible rent allowance support for homeless people in liaison with Bray Town Council.

A full copy of the report appears on our website: www.braypartnership.ie or contact Davin Roche at the Partnership on 01 2868266, email: davin@braypartnership.ie



TRAINING IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

An important part of Bray Partnership's support for local community groups is our Community Development Training Programme.

Courses provided have included Management Committee Training, Health and Safety, Making Fundraising Applications, Running Successful Fundraising Events, Community Arts, and the Active Citizenship Training Programme, which facilitates participants to become active citizens, particularly through thoughtful use of their power as voters – in preparation for the local elections we plan to run the Active Citizenship Programme Facilitators Training course early in the new year for local people who would like to deliver this training in their own communities.

Looking forward to 2004, we're currently putting together a new programme offering training that community groups have asked us to provide. For more information, contact Eileen Byrnes at the Partnership.



Participants on our recent Community Arts Workshop

"It was a great help; I would not have applied only for it." participant on Writing Successful Fundraising

Applications. A number of participants on this course went on to make successful funding applications following the course.

TRAINING RUN BY BRAY COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

Women into Business Programme: providing training for women who have been out of the workplace for some years and want to develop new skills, identify business opportunities to suit their circumstances, and set up and manage their own business.

Computer Training: Basic and ECDL for people in receipt of the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance.

Business Seminars: on topics such as taxation, marketing and advertising on a limited budget for clients of BCE.

Pre-Enterprise Training Programme: operating as a Community Employment Scheme, this course is designed to give people with business ideas the necessary skills to develop their ideas and turn them into viable businesses.

BOP to IT: the Bray Older People to IT Project, run with Bray Active Retirement Association, Bray Partnership and the East Coast Area Health Board, helps to unlock the mystery of the PC for people over the age of 55. A number of volunteers have been recruited and trained to visit people living in residential care to help them to use email and the internet.

"Before the course I had never used a computer; now I can send emails and surf the internet with ease."

Participant on the BOP to IT course.

For more information on upcoming courses offered by Bray Community Enterprise, contact Eithne Gunning on 01 205 0111.

Are you thinking about setting up your own business?



Talk to Bray Community Enterprise

Bray Community Enterprise provides a number of services for people who wish to set up their own business, and are unemployed, or in receipt of One Parent Allowance or Disability Allowance:

- Start your own business courses
- Help in evaluating your business idea
- Help in preparing your Business Plan
- Inform you of registration requirements with Revenue Commissioners and Companies Office
- Signing onto Back to Work Enterprise Allowance
- Help in promoting and marketing your business
- Continued support and advice after you have commenced trading

**Bray Community Enterprise,
4 Prince of Wales Tce.,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow
Telephone 205 0111**

JOB INITIATIVE WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY

What is Job Initiative (JI)?

Job Initiative is a FAS Labour Market Scheme providing full-time work for people aged over 35 who have not had regular employment in the last five years. The scheme, which is managed by Bray Partnership, has been operating in Bray since 1998 and although it started with 35 participants, due to current government restrictions the scheme now has 17 participants based in 13 local community and voluntary organisations.

June Murphy, Creche Worker, Little Bray Family Resource Centre



June works as part of the Childcare Team in the Little Bray Family Resource Centre, which provides a warm and safe environment where children under 6 years of age can develop social skills. The crèche caters for up to 14 children at any one time and parents and guardians are also encouraged to participate in the Resource Centre's programmes and activities. Niamh Wogan, Project Manager at the Resource Centre, feels that having a full-time worker in the crèche provides continuity for the people who use the service. It also allows June to pass on the skills she has acquired to the Community Employment participants, thereby supporting them in their work. June has successfully completed a range of training in the past few years including First Aid, IPPA Basic Childcare and ECDL. She is currently receiving training in developing childcare policies and in the near future will be taking part in the East Coast Area Health Board training on the implementation of the Child First child protection guidelines.

George Harding, Caretaker, Ballywaltrim Sports Facility (BSF)

The Ballywaltrim Sports Facility is located at the Hollybrook end of the Southern Cross Road and provides sports facilities including nine football pitches and changing and shower facilities for nine sporting clubs and schools in the Ballywaltrim area. The facility is used by up to 1000 people every week, made up of home and away teams, supporters and parents. In the summer period the BSF is even busier with evening matches taking place.

George's job involves marking pitches, the upkeep of the changing rooms, supervision of the facility during matches and general maintenance to ensure the smooth running of the facility. One of the main benefits George sees in being involved in JI is the opportunity to take part in training and he is currently studying for a Certificate in Safety & Health at Work in UCD.

David Grant, Chairperson of the Ballywaltrim District Recreational Users Committee, which manages the BSF on behalf of the user clubs, points out that the facility couldn't operate without Job Initiative: "JI has been of enormous help in developing and operating the facility as it needs dedicated staff, especially with regard to security and sports equipment maintenance and cleaning."

One of the great successes of JI in terms of this host organisation is that the experience gained with BSF has resulted in two previous caretakers moving on to take up positions as caretakers with local schools.



Brendan Farrell & John Keating, Groundspersons/Caretakers, St. Peters Parish

Brendan and John's work involves the on-going daily maintenance of the cemetery, church and parish hall in St. Peter's Parish in Little Bray. St. Peter's is a very busy parish providing a focal point for community activity and the hall is used by a large number of groups providing services for 500-600 people on a regular basis for activities from homework clubs for children to the Young at Heart club for older people.

Liz O'Grady, the Parish Administrator, feels that having Brendan and John as full-time workers on JI has been a huge asset to the everyday upkeep of the parish grounds and property. They have recently participated, as part of the staff team, in the painting and decorating of the interior of the church itself - this was a huge task and their contribution was indispensable. With four masses at the weekend attended by up to 1500 people, on-going maintenance and upkeep of the church provides a vital service to the community. The cemetery receives a large number of visitors every week from Bray and

other areas and without the JI participants the high standard of maintenance of the graves and surrounding areas could not be maintained.

Other Job Initiative participants working in local community and voluntary groups include:

Dermot de Barra (Beautiful Bray Association),
Ann Booth (Dargle Community Alliance),
Brendan Earls & Marie Greene (Little Bray Family Resource Centre),
Fintan Fehily (Holy Redeemer Parish),
Philomena Gummersbach (Open Door Day Care Centre),
Audrey Kelly & Kathleen McCann (Little Bray Community Centre),
Helen Kinsella (Bray & North Wicklow Womens Network),
Marie Lally (Wickow Trade Union Centre for the Unemployed),
Eleanor Phillips & Davnat O'Reilly (Signal Art Centre),
Aileen Ryan-Bonney (Bray Tourism)

WICKLOW COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE (WCCC)

Established in 2001 the Wicklow County Childcare Committee (WCCC) works to encourage, support, guide and improve childcare in County Wicklow and to maintain a sense of the 'big picture' so that all children in County Wicklow will have access to a range of high quality childcare that will nurture their development.

If you have any queries about childcare and after school care in the county, contact the WCCC on (0404) 64455, by email at wccc@eircom.net, or fax on (0404) 64444.

WICKLOW COMMUNITY PLATFORM

Wicklow Community Platform (WCP) is an independent network of local and community development organisations that actively promotes social inclusion in Co. Wicklow. The 'Platform', as it is known, has over 30 member organisations ranging from groups working with Disabled People and Travellers to locally-based Community Development Projects and Family Resource Centres. At present, WCP has approximately 20 Bray-based member organisations including Bray and North Wicklow Women's Network, Bray Travellers Development Network, Bray Youth Services, the INOU Bray and North Wicklow Branch, Marian Pre-School and Family Centre, St Fergal's Resource Centre and Little Bray Family Resource Centre.

The aim of WCP is to create opportunities for disadvantaged groups in Co. Wicklow to contribute to the development and implementation of policies on issues that impact on their lives. WCP has representation on a number of committees with a

remit for developing public policy within the County, including the Housing and Corporate Estate Strategic Policy Committee and the Community, Cultural and Social Strategic Policy Committee of Wicklow County Council. In addition, WCP is represented on Wicklow County Development Board and Wicklow County Childcare Committee. Through its involvement on these committees, WCP can highlight the needs of disadvantaged groups in the County and advocate for policies from Local Authorities and other state agencies that prioritise those most in need.

One of the benefits of being a member of WCP is the opportunity to network with other individuals and organisations that actively promote social inclusion in the County. WCP is planning a number of seminars on various themes relating to social inclusion in 2004. The seminars will give current WCP members and other interested organisations the opportunity to discuss concerns and identify 'positions' that WCP should adopt on the various committees where it has representation. For further information on the proposed seminars or in relation to WCP in general, please contact Ronan Tierney, WCP Resource Worker, on 087.2068729 or by email at wicklowplatform@eircom.net