21st Adult Education Colloquium and closing 'EAAL Project' event

Non-formal adult education as a strategy for reacting to changes

3 and 4 October 2017

Vertikala (Pipistrel Vertical Solutions), Vipavska cesta 2, Ajdovščina

Community Learning as a way to react to changes

Catherine Aylmer/Jimmy Prior
Limerick Community Education Network

Cofinanced by:

[Logos and links to co-financing organizations]
Importance of Community Education in Limerick City

- High unemployment
- Educational attainment levels low
- Early school leaving above the national average
- Third level participation below national average
- These figures are higher in many estates within the city
- Community Education appeals to adult learners who are least likely to engage with formal education
Community Education in Limerick City

• Takes place in community settings across the city
• Recruitment is carried out by community groups
• Three strands:
  • Basic Education – Literacy & numeracy
  • Non-formal
  • Accredited
• Supported by the LCETB (Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board). Funding provided for tuition
• Relies to a large degree on employment schemes and volunteerism
• Chronically underfunded
• Many providers are LCEN members
LIMERICK CITY COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRES

CE - Limerick City

Map of Limerick City showing various education centres.
NUMBER OF COURSES PROVIDED IN COMMUNITIES CITY WIDE

- Basic Literacy: 178
- Certified: 61
- Non-formal: 328
COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN LIMERICK
SOCIAL VALUE OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN LIMERICK

• Positive educational experience
• Progression opportunities
• Quality of life issues including physical & mental health benefits
• Promoting volunteerism
• Community engagement/active citizenship
• Participation in Local, Regional, national associations and networks
• Inter-generational impact
• Life long learning
Limerick Community Education Network

- LCEN is a network of community, voluntary and statutory groups involved in the provision of community based adult education in Limerick city
- Community Led
- Established in 1993
- Purpose: Sharing of information and ideas and working collaboratively to ensure:
  - Good practice
  - Resourcing of community education
  - Local awareness of community education e.g. through use of media, citywide registration week
- Provision of training and support for members
LC EN MEMBERSHIP

GEOGRAPHICAL COMMUNITIES
- Moyross
- Southill
- St. Mary’s
- Our Lady of Lourdes
- Limerick city CDP
- St. Munchins
- Northside FRC
- Garryowen
- Queen of Peace
- St. Saviours

STATUTORY BODIES:
- LCETB
- PAUL PARTNERSHIP

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
- ADAPT
- LIMERICK WOMEN’S NETWORK
- DORAS LUIMNI
LCEN ACHIEVEMENTS

• Celebrating 25 Years of Limerick Community Education Network in 2018
• Launch of LCEN website
• National Aontas Star Award winners 2012
• Publication of research-Social Value of Community Based Adult Education in Limerick City (2012)
• Support for establishment and maintenance of QQI Quality Assurance Centres
• Cross community support and sharing of resources
• Citywide Learner Registration Week
• Citywide learner events
• Support for Learner voice on the national learner forum
FACING CHALLENGES IN TIMES OF CHANGE

• Regeneration 2008

• Recession – Impact on communities

• Digital Divide

• Adapting to changes in National, Regional and Local Structures
Regeneration - Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

• Displacement of Families
• Community Capacity (community leaders left their community)
• Consulted not consultation

Opportunities

• Funding initiatives to support training of residents/community leaders
• LCEN engagement with Regeneration – educational needs analysis
Recession Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges
• Increase in unemployment
• Change in policy from social inclusion to activation

Opportunities
• Engaging with hard to reach (e.g. Men’s Shed initiative)
• Ensuring that community based education continues to be funded and recognised as part of the FET strategy
Digital Divide - Challenges and Opportunities

**Challenges**
- Introduce ICT to communities who were removed from digital age
- Provision training and resources

**Opportunities**
- ICT Steering group (local partnership and community)
- Secured funding for computer training rooms through local businesses and Government
- Provided training in ICT in local communities
Changes in National, Regional and Local Structures - Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

• Capacity building for local learners to participate in national regional, local structures
• Statutory recognition for the importance of bottom up approach
• Funding
• Community engagement
Changes in National, Regional and Local Structures - Challenges and Opportunities

Opportunities
Ensuring the community voice and learner voice is heard
Voter Education/Active Citizenship
Lobbying
World Café
Setting up Limerick and Clare community education forum
Representation by community residents on local and regional committees (Public Participation Network)