

Enabling people to live life sustainably 'Thinking globally, acting locally'

World Social Work Day

IASW SEMINAR

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Wynn's Hotel



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The difference that makes the difference!



- The task - show how social workers are responding through their work in finding solutions to the effects of the current austerity.
- The focus should be on solutions and the particular slant that the social worker brings to finding/implementing the solution(s) whether individually or as a member of a team

Introduction

1. What do we mean by enabling people to live sustainably
2. How do we educate social work students to work with communities to achieve this aim?
3. Can a community development approach be applied to all social work settings with a view to fostering sustainable communities?
4. What can we learn from the growth of community gardens in inner city Dublin?



World Social Work Day 2014

18 March 2014 Worldwide

Social and Economic Crises – Social Work Solutions:



www.ifsw.org





Thinking Globally.....

1. What do we mean by enabling people to live sustainably

Towards a definition of sustainability



- Sustainability calls for a dynamic balance among many factors, including the social, cultural and economic requirements of humankind and the imperative need to safeguard the natural environment of which humanity is a part. *What is sought is the condition of 'human security' for all people.*
- The move toward sustainable lifestyles is not merely a matter of individual choice; it also **requires collective action and responsibility.**
 - (UNESCO, 1997 'Educating for a Sustainable Future')

Comhar SDC (Sustainable Development Council) - Principles for Sustainable Development

- *“ Sustainable development is a continuous process of environmental, social and economic development which aims to deliver wellbeing for people now and in the future. Sustainability is about considering economic, environmental and social concerns together and identifying synergies and trade-offs”*



- **Principles include:**

- **Social inclusion - should be promoted to ensure an improved quality of life for all**
- **Stakeholder participation- should be promoted at all levels of decision making**

(since January 2012 role performed by Comhar integrated into work of National Economic and Social Council (NESC) who are now charged with integrating sustainable development issues into its analysis of significant national challenges...

Some key behaviours for sustainable lifestyle



- Eco-improving your home
- Using energy & water wisely
- Extending the life of things to minimise waste
- Cooking and managing a sustainable & healthier diet
- Choosing eco products and services
- Travelling sustainably
- **Setting up and using resources in your community**
- **Using and future proofing outdoor spaces**
- **Being part of improving the environment**

Sustainable Lifestyles

- Sustainable lifestyles means “*rethinking our ways of living, how we buy and how we organize our everyday life. It is also about altering how we socialize, exchange, share, educate and build identities. It means transforming our societies and living in harmony with our natural environment*” (Taskforce on Sustainable Lifestyles, 2005/UNEP).



- Many of our choices – on energy use, transport, food, waste, **communication and solidarity** – contribute towards building sustainable lifestyles.
- **Information and education are essential, as well as the full participation of civil society**
- Social work **can and does** make a difference

Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund

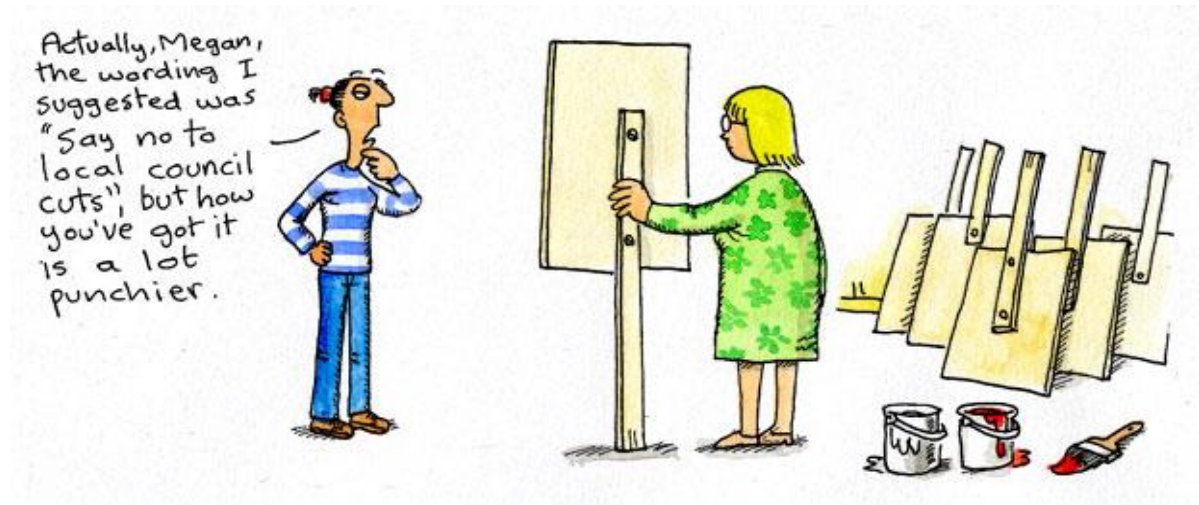
- Promotes sustainable development by assisting small scale, non-profit environmental projects at local level
- Active involvement of local communities essential - movement towards sustainable development can't succeed on a 'top down' basis alone (Unesco, 1997).
- Local needs will determine local priorities and actions but all part of the 'bigger picture' of national and global action for sustainable development
- Under Agenda 21 funding eg €400,000 provided by DOE in 2013 to 669 projects around the country - matched by funding from local authorities



(UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization) (1997) *Educating for a Sustainable Future – A transdisciplinary vision for concerted action*)

*Agenda 21 (21 for 21st Century) is a non-binding, voluntarily implemented action plan of UN re sustainable development – dates back to UN Conference on Environment & Development (UNCED) 1992

2. How do we educate social work students to work with communities to achieve this aim?



Fianna Fail Election Poster
1987



**HEALTH CUTS HURT THE
OLD THE SICK AND THE
HANDICAPPED.**

THERE IS A BETTER WAY—
Fianna Fáil

The Republican Party

Fine Gael leaflet
in response to
Labour/Fianna Fail coalition
announcement
that they intend
to introduce a
Property Tax
1994

Despite all of their
promises...

**THEY WILL
TAX
THE ROOF
OVER YOUR
HEAD**

**HOME TAX
RIFT GROWS**
Tensions rise
in Labour, FF



Read our lips
Dick Spring

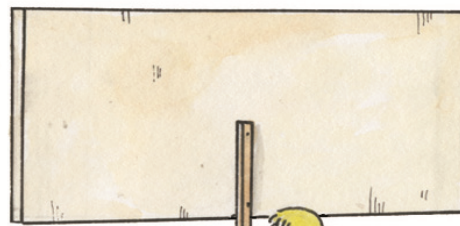
**LABOUR'S
PROPERTY TAX
IT'S OFFICIAL**

- Labour's plus bin for a **DEDUCTION** in income tax.
- Labour has **NO** plans to introduce a new property or house tax.
- Labour will **NOT** reduce mortgage interest relief - in fact we will **INCREASE** it while interest rates remain high.
- Labour will **NOT** introduce a Wealth Tax.
- Labour will **NOT** reduce VHI tax relief.

Labour promises in newspaper advertisements in November '93



Whilst I can find no fault in the logic of your argument, Megan, I do wonder if you could express it a bit more pithily.



- As social workers we're aware of the deprivation, poverty and huge inequalities in our societies

- We can't work in a vacuum

- Social work is a political activity – we're either part of the solution or part of the problem

I really believe in the power of making music as a force for good, class, health, social cohesion, inclusivity, self worth - they all benefit. Which is why I persevere in giving lessons to local kids. ...especially given the lack of resources available.

Well I admire you, Sue...



CORU – Social Work Registration Board

- Social Work values inform CORU's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers
 - Uphold human rights
 - Respect the rights and dignity of people
 - Pursue of social justice (www.coru.ie)
- To achieve these aims social workers have a responsibility to forge strong alliances with civil society and the independent community sector to address issues of poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and to work towards a sustainable lifestyle for all



Educating social work students to work with communities



1. Trinity College's Community Work module
 - Taught by social workers in community work posts
 - Emphasises importance of community work as a component of social work
 - Encourages students to consider using a community perspective in their future social work practice
 - Provides students with an understanding of the core skills and principles of community work.
2. Nine week summer placements in community settings for BSS second year students

Aims of Community placement

- To participate in a community-based social service and to understand its goals, ethos and procedures
- To understand how that service fits within a continuum of service provision and the links between social policy, agency services and practice
- To learn to see service users and their situations in holistic and ecological terms, to work collaboratively with them and to learn from them about the issues that affect the quality of their lives
- To acquire a working knowledge of relevant community resources and services
- To develop beginning practice skills including professional standards of behaviour, self-awareness and reflection in practice and most importantly the importance of COMMUNITY and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES





3. Can a community development approach be applied to all social work settings with a view to fostering sustainable communities?

Community Work Definitions

- ❖ *Community development is a process of collective action undertaken by the members of a community in order to deal with a problem or need in their community*

(Combat Poverty Agency, 2007)



- ❖ *Community work is concerned with enabling people to improve the quality of their lives and gain greater influences over the processes that affect them*
(Marjorie Mayo, 2011)

- ❖ **The 4 E's Model – ENCOURAGE, ENABLE, ENGAGE, EXEMPLIFY**

(See Centre of Expertise on Influencing Behaviour/DEFRA (2011) Framework for Sustainable Lifestyles')

Towards Standards for Quality Community Work - AN ALL-IRELAND STATEMENT OF VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND WORK STANDARDS

- Value 1. Collective Action
- Value 2. Empowerment
- Value 3. Social Justice
- Value 4. Equality and Anti-discrimination
- Value 5. Participation



Community Work Standards

- **Promote sustainable development.**
- Ensure the active participation of local people in identifying needs & developing responses and promote the active participation of relevant agencies/ parties to ensure an integrated & coordinated approach to local development.
- Promote transparency in all aspects of work so as to ensure effective communication & sharing of information.
- Encourage development of strategic planning with projects, groups & services with whom we work.
- Ensure that resources are targeted at communities which are most marginalised & excluded.



(EHB Community Workers Group, 2001)

Social Work as Community Work – working *with* people rather than *for* people



- History of Irish social workers as community workers and youth workers – approx. five left in Dublin area moving to new agency as Family Support Network workers. Some community workers in CDP outside Dublin staying with HSE
- Empowering communities to help themselves
- Value system of enabling, empowering, involving community, changing systems, team work, co-operation
- Use of community work approaches and attitudes integral to way of working

Some examples from social work practice, utilising community work principles



- **Medical social work**
 - AIDS Liaison Forum/HIV Services Network
 - Bereavement Counselling Service
 - CanTeen
 - Headway
 - Let's Face It
- **Mental Health**
 - Shine – Schizophrenia Ireland
 - The Eolas Project
- **Local Authority Social Work Service**
 - Carers' Association
- **Child and Family Services**
 - After care groups - EPIC (Empowering People in Care)
 - Family Resource Centres
 - Youth People at Risk (YPAR) projects
 - 'Spectacle of Defiance'
 - 'Changing our Futures'
 - Fostering community gardens; anti littering campaigns; campaigns around refuse/recycling/water charges
- **Probation**
 - Ballymun 'Runners'
 - Pathways
 - Strengthening Families Programme

The slide features a solid green background with several overlapping, semi-transparent white circles of varying sizes on the left side. The text is centered and rendered in a white, sans-serif font.

Acting locally....

4. What can we learn from the growth
of community gardens in inner city
Dublin?

Common Areas of Community Led Social Innovation (UNEP.org)

- **Creative Communities for Sustainable Lifestyles** identifies best practice, makes policy recommendations on grass root social innovations for sustainable urban living in Europe as well as Brazil, India, China, and parts of sub-Saharan Africa.
 - Identified eight common areas of community led sustainable lifestyle projects, one of which was
 - **Urban Vegetable gardens, run by community groups**
 - Others included cooperative purchasing groups, local trading exchanges, children centers and nurseries, car pooling, Community agriculture exchanges, connecting urban and rural producers, elderly community care, run by and for senior citizens to support each other
- <http://www.sustainable-everyday.net/SEPhome/home.html> for inspiring projects and scenarios



Community Gardens as one example of sustainability

- Knockanrawley Resource Centre, Co. Tipperary was first CDP to have organic community garden attached to project
- The garden was established in 1997 on .75 acres and has been granted a 99 year lease
- The garden was set up “*as a resource to engage and train individuals and to increase awareness of environmental issues and sustainable development in our community*” (Changing Ireland, 2008 Issue 27:10)



Community Gardens in Ireland Today

- National Community Garden Network
<http://communitygardennetwork.ning.com/>
- Dublin Community Growers
<http://dublincommunitygrowers.ie/>
- Now, in one square mile area of the North Inner City
 - The NEC Farmers Hill Community Garden
 - **Mud Island Community Garden**
 - Summer Row Community Garden
 - Dunne Street Community Garden



Mud Island
community garden





In the beginning . . .

Newcomen Court,
plans for social
housing on
hold....indefinitely



*“At Newcomen bridge
Father Conmee stepped
into an outward bound
tram for he disliked to
traverse on foot the dingy
way past **Mud Island**”*

(James Joyce’ s Ulysses)





The Campaign gains momentum. . . Larkin
Unemployed Centre, Blooms Day June 2010





After extensive lobbying of local council, licence granted by DCC in October 2011



Dublin City Council fence the site



First meeting in 'Mud Island'



Funding applied for Assessed for grant



Grants received from Agenda 21, Community Growers Fund
Croke Park, An Taisce, and Dublin City Council

Work begins on site



Free horse
manure

Free soil from
Abbey Theatre
production of
Brien Friel's
'Translations'



'Raising the shed' party



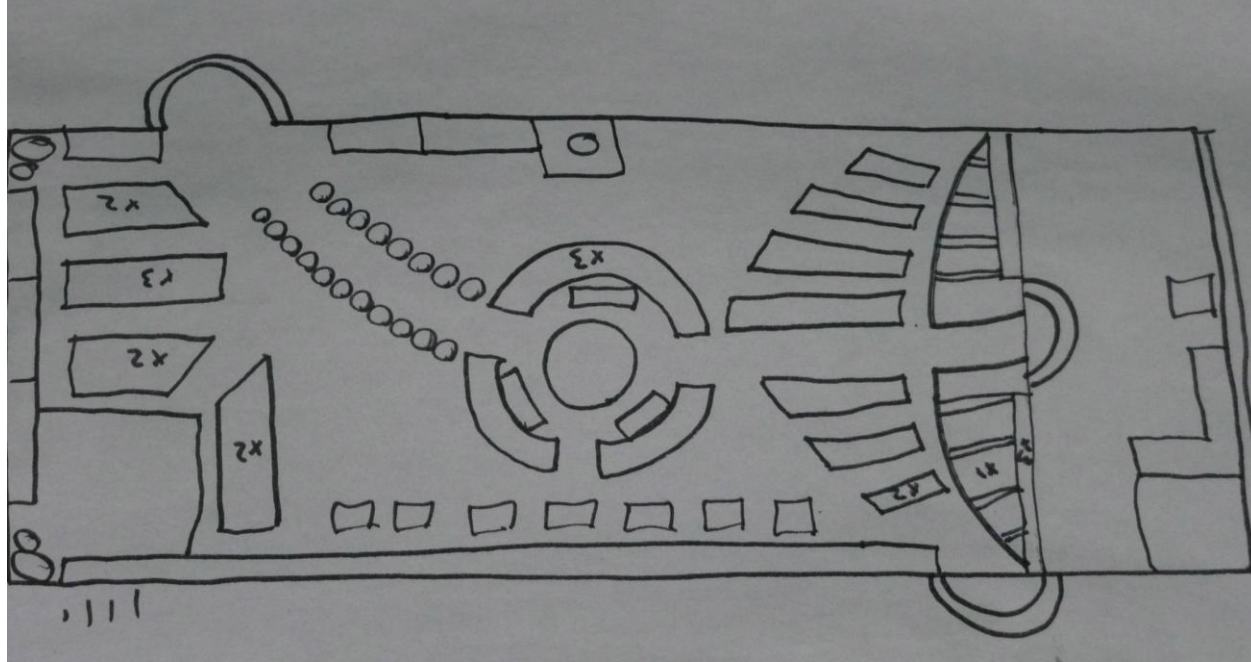
Christmas
2011



The
design



begins
to take
shape



January
2012



Spring 2012



Good use made of election posters!







Child labour!



Gardening workshops



June 2012, with Joan, head gardener, Botanic Gardens walled garden



June 2013, Rob, Green Friends-Ireland gives a 'Get Growing' Class

2nd Open Day, Blooms Day June 2013



Open Day June 2013





Today the garden is
a source of
recreation,
education and
sustainability for
the local
community



References/Resources

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- Claiming Our Futures - <http://www.claimingourfuture.ie/>
- Community Workers Coop <http://www.cwc.ie/>
- Combat Poverty Agency (2007)
http://www.combatpoverty.ie/publications/submissions/2007_Sub_CommDevDisadvantageCDP.pdf
- O'Devaney Gardens Community Development Forum <http://joelee.ie/portfolio/inside-out-outside-in-stories-from-odevaney-gardens/>
- Spectacle of Defiance & Hope <https://www.facebook.com/spectacle.defiance>
- Social Work Action Network <http://www.socialworkfuture.org/about-swan/regional-swan/ireland/240-swan-ireland-introduction>
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- DEFRA (Dept. for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs UK) (2011) /Centre of Expertise on Influencing Behaviour 'Framework for Sustainable Lifestyles'

