



# Community Work Ireland

## Annual Report 2016



# Table of Contents

Chairperson’s Note .....	2
CWI Central Group .....	2
Introduction .....	3
CWI Values .....	3
CWI Funding and Staffing.....	3
Goal 1 Supporting and Promoting Community Work.....	5
<i>Strategic Priority 1 To embed community work in the design, development, implementation and monitoring of relevant programmes, policies, structures and practices .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Strategic Priority 2 To resource community work and CWI members through the collaborative development of information and analysis and representation of core issues on existing, new and emerging structures. ....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Strategic Priority 3 To provide networking and learning opportunities for community workers and other stakeholders .....</i>	<i>9</i>
Goal 2 Organisational Sustainability and Development .....	10
<i>Strategic Priority 4 To consolidate and develop the CWI membership .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Strategic Priority 5 To ensure the sustainability and further development of CWO .....</i>	<i>10</i>

# Chairperson's Note



On behalf of Community Work Ireland, which I have had the honour to chair during the year under review, I am happy to present to you the CWI Annual Report 2016. As has been the case for other years, 2016 was a very busy year for Community Work Ireland as we worked to achieve the ambition reflected in the strategic plan.

I am delighted that CWI was successful in its application for continued funding under the Support Scheme for National Organisations (SSNO). This now means that core funding is secured until June 2019. However, I am also aware that the demand for CWI work outstrips the capacity of the organisation and increasing

resources remains a key priority.

In 2016, the All Ireland Endorsement Body published the All Ireland Standards for Community Work. This was an important milestone for all of us engaged in community work in Ireland and one the work and contributions of CWI staff and members made possible. CWI organised its first Summerschool for community workers in 2016 and this was another important milestone, providing the opportunity for those engaged in community work to debate and discuss issues of the day.

In addition to these the report presents an overview of a rich tapestry to work and initiatives during 2016. I thank all including our funders who supported them. Thanks to the CWI 2016 Central and Community Sector Group members for their engagement and commitment. Finally, and most importantly, particular thanks to Ann and Rachel, our joint coordinators for their work and commitment both to creating the conditions that made it all possible, then do what was required and follow up on outcomes and thanks also other the other staff who supported them.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anastasia Crickley".

## CWI Central Group

The CWI Central Group is the board of directors of the organisation. Central Group Members for 2016 were:

- Áine Deeley
- Anastasia Crickley
- Joe Donoghue
- Siobhan McLaughlin
- Jamie Gorman
- Oonagh Mc Ardle
- Mick Mooney
- Obert Makaza
- Patricia Brennan
- Ronnie Fay
- Valerie McFarlane

**Thanks to all CWI Central Group members for their commitment in 2016**

# Introduction

Established in 1981, Community Work Ireland (CWI) is a national organisation that promotes and supports community work as a means of addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality, promoting, protecting and advancing human rights and ultimately achieving social change that will contribute to the creation of a just, sustainable and equal society.

The CWI is a membership organisation. Its membership comprises individuals and organisations involved in community work at local and national level. There are currently approximately 800 individual and organisational members of CWI.

## CWI Values

CWI values reflect the values of community development and it is these that underpin the work of the organisation. Community Work Ireland believes in and is committed to the values outlined below and as set out in the All Ireland Standards for Community Work:

- **Collectivity** – Working in a collective way that emphasises the right of members to collectively influence the work of the organisation. A collective approach requires practitioners to focus on the potential benefits for communities rather than focusing only on benefits to individuals. CWI believes in and is committed to collaboration and partnership approaches to achieving common goals;
- **Community Empowerment** – Community empowerment involves an approach which leads people and communities to be resilient, organised, included and influential;
- **Social Justice and Sustainable Development** – Promoting a just society involves promoting policies and practices that challenge injustice, poverty, inequality, discrimination and social exclusion, and valuing diversity of identities and approaches. Promoting a sustainable society involves promoting environmentally, economically and socially sustainable policies and practices;
- **Human Rights** – In seeking a society where human rights and equality are realised and discrimination is addressed, community development is reinforced by human rights mechanisms and frameworks, processes and standards for the protection and promotion of human rights for all;
- **Equality** – Promoting equality and challenging inequality and oppression
- **Anti-discrimination** – CWI is opposed to discrimination in all its forms and is committed to working to eliminate discrimination;
- **Participation** – Participation is rooted in the self-identification of needs and interests, the formulation of responses by the community or group concerned and is central to their ability to continue to influence outcomes.

CWI is committed to putting these values into practice underpinned as they are by those of professional commitment, integrity, transparency in governance and team approaches to decision-making. The voice of CWI members is central to all CWI work.

## CWI Funding and Staffing

The Scheme of Supports to National Organisations (SNNO) continued to provide core funding to CWI for 2016, supporting the employment of staff and overhead costs.

In mid-2016, the SSNO funding period came to an end and CWI successfully reapplied for support for the period July 2016 to June 2019.

Rachel Doyle and Ann Irwin share the position of CWI National Co-ordinator. An administrator was employed for two days per week for much of 2016.

# Strategic Plan

In 2016, CWI produced a new strategic plan. It sets out two overarching goals under which there are five strategic priorities:

## Goal 1

### Supporting and Promoting Community Work

CWI's goal is the achievement of recognition and validation by all stakeholders of autonomous community work as a value-based professional discipline and is appropriately resourced to achieve its objectives.

- **Strategic Priority 1** To embed community work in the design, development, implementation and monitoring of relevant programmes, policies, structures and practices
- **Strategic Priority 2** To resource community work and CWI members through the collaborative development of information and analysis and representation of core issues on existing, new and emerging structures.
- **Strategic Priority 3** To provide networking and learning opportunities for community workers and other stakeholders

## Goal 2

### Organisational Sustainability and Development

CWI's goal is a sustainable organisation, recognised, acknowledged and resourced as the national organisation promoting and supporting community work with an active and engaged membership base.

- **Strategic Priority 4** To consolidate and develop the CWI membership
- **Strategic Priority 5** To ensure the sustainability and further development of CWI



## Our Communities: Framework Policy for Local and Community Development

*Our Communities, the National Framework Policy for Local and Community Development*, was published in January 2016. Despite indications from the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government that there would be significant changes to the draft policy framework following the consultation process<sup>1</sup>, there were few changes to the published policy.

The Department acknowledged that there were flaws in both the process and the framework policy itself but explained that presentation of the framework policy to cabinet and its publication was expedited they presented in a bid to get it approved before the General Election.

Community Work Ireland voiced significant concern to the then Minister Ann Phelan at the process underpinning the policy and had two subsequent meetings with the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government. In response, the Department held a National Forum to discuss the Framework Policy and to consult on the approach to be taken on November 23rd.



Community Work Ireland wrote and circulated a Brief and organised a pre-meeting the evening before for members to discuss strategy. The Forum was addressed by Minister Simon Coveney, Minister Catherine Byrne, Paul Lemass and others. CWI National Co-ordinator, Rachel Doyle, also addressed the opening session.

The Forum was attended by many CWI members and other stakeholder and the discussions reflected their concerns at the under-resourced nature of community work, the importance of independent community work and of funding programmes facilitating the type of community work outlined in *Standards*.

The Framework Policy and the report of the Forum deliberations are available [here](#).

Subsequently, the Department established a cross-sectoral Working Group to develop an implementation plan. Community Work Ireland have two representatives on the Working Group and CWI member Ronnie Fay is also a member representing the Community and Voluntary Pillar.

<sup>1</sup> Read the CWC/CWI submission here - <http://communityworkireland.ie/making-a-submission/>

Strategic Priority 2 To resource community work and CWI members through the collaborative development of information and analysis and representation of core issues on existing, new and emerging structures.

### Commissioning & Competitive tendering

The issue of commissioning gained pace in 2016. Based on the CWI publication, *In Whose Interests? Exploring the Impact of Competitive Tendering and Procurement on Social Inclusion and Community Development*, published in December 2015, CWI continued its work in this area. We made presentations at a number of workshops and seminars including to the Donegal Public Participation Network in Letterkenny and to the network of Family Resource Centres.

Drawing on the publication, we made a [submission](#) to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in March in response to their public consultation on Commissioning Human, Social and Community Services.

In April, CWI successfully applied to the St Stephen's Green Trust for a follow-up project to *In Whose Interests?* This project set out to use primary research methods to explore the impact of competitive tendering on community work under the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme.



### CWI Newsletter, Community Work News

CWI produced two issues of the CWI newsletter, *Community Work News* in 2016. This is an important forum for members and others to highlight good practice locally, nationally and internationally.

### Members' Briefs

In 2016, CWI issues a number of briefs on issues of relevance to members, including a brief on the key elements in the Programme for a Partnership Government and on the main elements of relevance in the Budget.

### Representation

#### Refugee and Migrant Work

Community Work Ireland continued to work with the Migrant NGO Coalition established in 2016. The CWI approach is to ensure that a community work approach to working with migrants is embedded in the government's approach.

#### Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals provide a very useful framework for drawing together the wide range of issues of interest to community workers. CWI member, Jamie Gorman, continued to represent Community Work Ireland on the NGO alliance.



In November, CWI members co-organised the international conference, *Community Development for Sustainable Development: Placing Community Development Values and Practices at the Heart of the Sustainable Development Goals*, in Glasgow with the European Community Development Network.

#### National Structures

We continued to engage with the Community Platform and the Community & Voluntary Pillar. CWI continued to be the Community Platform lead with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and we attended a number of at bi-lateral meetings in that role.

## International Linkages

We continued to be represented on the Boards of the European Community Development Network (by Oonagh McArdle) and the International Association for Community Development (by Anastasia Crickley). Many thanks to our reps for sharing their time, expertise and commitment.

## Submissions

In efforts to ensure that community work and the concerns of CWI members are reflected in all relevant policy development, CWI made a number of submissions in 2016.

### CWI Submission on the Action Plan for Rural Ireland

The CWI submission on the Action Plan for Rural Ireland was entitled, Supporting Community Development as an Approach to Advancing the Development of Rural Areas in Ireland. It highlighted issues of rural poverty and diversity and emphasised community work as a critical approach to building social inclusion and equality in rural areas. The submission can be downloaded [here](#).

### CWI Submission to the Dublin Inner City Taskforce

After consulting with CWI members in the area, CWI made a submission to the Dublin Inner City Taskforce calling for independent community work as an approach to address challenges being experienced in the area. The submission can be downloaded [here](#).

### CWI Submission to the Citizens Assembly on the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution

CWI made a submission to the Citizens Assembly on the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, calling for a referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, without replacement or amendment. The submission can be downloaded [here](#).

### Open Government Partnership

CWI made a submission to the Open Government partnership initiative entitled, *Enhancing Community Development - Enhancing Participation, Consultation & Representation*, focusing on the themes of increased citizen engagement and strengthened governance and accountability. The submission can be downloaded [here](#).

### Commissioning Human, Social and Community Services

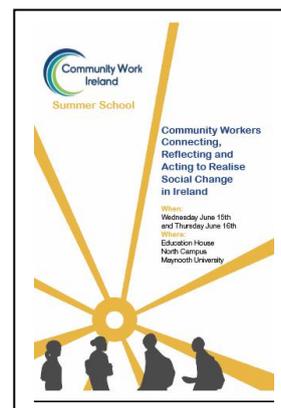
CWI made a submission to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on their draft document, *Commissioning Human, Social and Community Services*. Drawing on the work that CWI had been doing on commissioning and competitive tendering, the submission made the case for a derogation from any future plans to expand commissioning as a funding model to community development programmes and initiatives on the basis that the work carried out cannot be considered as a service to be delivered. The submission can be downloaded [here](#).

## Strategic Priority 3 To provide networking and learning opportunities for community workers and other stakeholders

### CWI Summerschool

For the first time a number of CWI members organised a Summerschool for community workers in Ireland.

The Summer School was held on June 15th and 16th at Maynooth University and was extremely successful, attended by over 50 participants. In all, 12 presentations, workshops and creative activities formed the basis of the 2-day event and feedback was very positive. A very big thank-you to the organising group for all their hard work.



### CWI Community Sector Subgroup

CWI held two meetings of the Community Sector Subgroup in 2016. This is the forum for discussing and developing positions on policy and is a critical feature of CWI's work. Issues discussed included the All Ireland Standards for Community Work, Our Communities: Framework Policy for Local and Community Development, Commissioning, Review of SICAP, LEADER, CWI Summerschool and CWI International work. A number of members undertook to represent CWI on a number of forums and for this we would like to thank them.

### Social Inclusion Forum

CWI collaborates annually with European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland to organise a series of workshops to support participation at the Social Inclusion Forum and to identify issues of concern to people affected by poverty and the organisations working with them. In 2016, CWI held two workshops in Mayo and Dublin. The main themes discussed were:

- The importance of community work and community development infrastructure
- The importance of progress and feedback
- In Work Poverty/Equality of Work
- Poverty and Rural Communities, Rural Isolation and Social Exclusion
- Poverty and Urban Communities/Contributing Social Issues
- Joblessness and Families in Poverty

Community Work Ireland supported a number of participants to attend and spoke at the Social Inclusion Forum in September.

### Workshops

#### Kildare LEADER Partnership

CWI responded to a request from Kildare LEADER Partnership to facilitate a workshop on Structure, Strategies and Approaches to Community Participation as part of their 1916 commemorations. There was a lively debate and discussion at the workshop which was well attended by community workers and others in Kildare.

#### Bray Partnership

CWI made a presentation on community work and participatory democracy at the Bray Partnership Christmas event.

# Goal 2 Organisational Sustainability and Development

## Strategic Priority 4 To consolidate and develop the CWI membership

### Membership

Membership is a critical feature of Community Work Ireland. Members provide the mandate for CWI activities and CWI works to represent issues of concern and to support the work of members. In 2016, CWI continued to work to support and maintain existing members and to recruit new members.

### Communication

We continued to communicate with members through emails, the CWI website, Facebook and Twitter, enhancing CWI communication systems.

## Strategic Priority 5 To ensure the sustainability and further development of CWO

### Funding

Community Work Ireland is core-funded by the Scheme to Support National Organisations. All requisite reporting was submitted on time and CWI was acknowledged for the work that it completed in 2016.

Funding under the first round of SSNO came to an end in June 2016. Community Work Ireland successfully reapplied for funding for the period July 2016 to June 2019, securing core funding for that period.

### Governance

CWI completed the review of its Memorandum and Articles of Association required under the new Companies Act and the new CWI Constitution was registered. The annual accounts were completed and submitted to the Companies Registration Office. Reports were submitted to the lobbying regulator and the register of charities.

### Strategic Planning

With the support of members, CWI completed the CWI Strategic Plan 2017-2019.

# Notes

Community Work Ireland is supported by the Support Scheme for National Organisations



An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála,  
Pobail agus Rialtais Áitiúil  
Department of Housing, Planning,  
Community and Local Government



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government supporting communities