



The Reco

Ballymun's Central Youth Facility
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Activities Report

September 2007 to August 2008

BALLYMUN REGIONAL YOUTH RESOURCE

A YOUTH WORK APPROACH TO YOUTH WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

PROGRAMME MANAGER'S INTRODUCTION



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BRYR is now over 9 years old. We have 22 full-time, 8 part-time, 6 Community Employment and 2 Job Initiative staff and last year about 1,200 young Ballymunners participated in our 7 work programmes.

We have been able to build our organisation with financial resources provided mainly through the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF): set up as a part of the National Drugs Strategy in 1998. With these core resources we have fashioned an organisation around the principles of youth work.

In reflecting on the efforts of BRYR in the year under review I observe the voluntary involvement of so many young people in our work. I gain satisfaction and encouragement from the many positive contributions by BRYR both to the lives of individual young people and to the environment we adults create and nurture for them.

I would like to congratulate the staff, volunteers and my fellow Board members on the achievement of engaging over one-quarter of our total target group of the 10-21 year-olds in the area. Besides my role as Chair of BRYR I have been fortunate to get involved directly in the work and have witnessed at first hand the consistent dedication of the staff and volunteers to our young people. especially the emphasis on more vulnerable young people. The unswerving focus on vulnerable young people within the YPFSF target group is a credit to BRYR.

In 2008, we invited people and organisations with an interest in young people to become members of BRYR. I would like to formally welcome these 91 people and organisations. In 2009 we hope to implement many measures to encourage your participation.

2009 presents two major additional challenges for BRYR. Like everybody else living and working in Ireland we will have to operate in an extremely unpredictable financial environment. The prospect of major repair work to The Reco will also be tough but I am confident that the staff, volunteers and Board are as resilient as the people of Ballymun and that BRYR will yet again overcome such challenges to keep the focus of our energies on the welfare and development of our young people.

Brian Mongey
Chairman, BRYR

The need for Youth work, with its emphasis on informal and consistent relationships, has never been greater. Youth Work's capacity to reach out and engage means that it plays an important role in supporting young people through a happy and successful transition to adulthood.

A good youth worker is confident, committed and competent. Good youth work creates constructive relationships in which the young person feels it to be voluntary, nurturing and safe. I feel that BRYR's staff and volunteers have now established this type of significant presence in the lives of many young Ballymunners.

In BRYR we organise our work around 7 work programmes:

- **Outreach:** street-based youth work focused on supporting individual young people
- **Youth Groups:** clubs and open activities
- **Developmental Arts:** arts clubs and special projects
- **Information & Communications:** using modern ICTs to support youth work
- **Training, Development & Volunteer Support:** raising standards and access to resources for youth work in Ballymun
- **Advocacy:** promoting young peoples' interests
- **Facilities:** developing and managing youth facilities.

This Activities Report refers to the operational year, September 2007 to August 2008.

Donnacadh Hurley
Programme Manager, BRYR

The need for youth work has never been greater
- Donnacadh Hurley

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF REGENERATION

Young Ballymunners are growing up in the biggest building site in Ireland. The Regeneration plan is now past its half-way point and the physical landscape is dramatically changed. The majority of people who lived in the old flats have new homes.

We have a tremendous amount of new and up-graded community facilities such as the Leisure Centre and Trinity Comprehensive. The Reco, Ballymun's Central Youth Facility, is a jewel in the crown of regeneration. Three years on and our dream of a youth-centred top quality facility is a reality. Unfortunately, The Reco is suffering from a major fault: it appears that a high concentration of a mineral

called "pyrite" in the in-fill under our floor is causing the floor to heave and to damage all that sits on it. We will need to vacate the building for around 4 months for repairs.

At the time of writing there is a legal battle in the high court about who is to blame between the builders and the providers of the in-fill. This wrangling causes uncertainty, but so far this challenge has yet again demonstrated the determination and resilience of the people in BRYR.

"When elephants fight, it's the grass that gets trampled on"
East African Proverb

Check out our brand new Web Site at www.bryr.ie

CORE VALUES

- Equal respect for all young people – never give up on anyone
- Protection and nurturing of young people in Ballymun between the ages of 10-21
- Professionalism in our support of young people
- Encouragement of voluntarism
- Open and honest communication
- Optimism for the future of Ballymun

I would rather work my socks off than do anything dishonest again in my life.
- Outreach Participant

Work is love made visible.
- The Prophet, by Kahlil Gibran

The core belief underpinning BRYR's work is that every young person has the power within themselves to live a positive life; that the environment in which young people grow up shapes and moulds their welfare and development and; that positive relationships with and between young people are at the heart of their wellbeing.

OUTREACH

The Outreach Team has 4 full-time and one half-time Youth Workers. They are supervised by a Senior Youth Worker and have the support of many volunteers and sessional workers. Outreach is about reaching out to young people, especially those who are most marginalized from the benefits of mainstream society, by creating relations of trust. With trust and their voluntary engagement we are able to offer professional friendship, advice, information and support in connecting with services, resources and constructive activity.

STREET-BASED YOUTH WORK

After 8 years of 4-nights-a-week street work, recognition levels and trust levels are excellent. On an average night, when the weather is okay, we meet about 100 young people. 3 of the 4 nights are referral-focused and the fourth concentrates on street games/sports. Last year about 450 referrals were recorded. The Outreach Team runs 4 complementary trust-building group activities:

1. 6-WEEK GROUPS

Targeting street groups of mostly 15-18 years-olds we build trust over 6 outings per group. In total 16 groups participated last year.

This is not the same as other clubs, we do things in this, and in the others we just play pool.
- Outfit participant

2. STREET GAMES / SPORTS

Taking place once or twice each week the street games & sports have been so successful that in 2009 we will concentrate more of our contact-building on this type of activity. We will continue to target groups and individuals with an increasing emphasis on more cost effective local activities now available in Ballymun.

STREET GAMES & SPORTS
Our team brings sports equipment into designated areas. This includes footballs, basketballs, tennis equipment, swing ball, skipping ropes, playing cards, Frisbees, golf clubs etc.
We encourage young people to play some new games but mostly we bring back old games that they may have left behind. Young people, once they get over the initial feeling of embarrassment, appear to enjoy them. Most of the time, when we leave areas the young people continue to play on.

3. STREET ART

Two evenings a week a team of Outreach Workers, Artists and Volunteers facilitate art activities in selected open areas from April to October. The 2-hour sessions continue in each area for about 6 weeks and last year there were 9 different groups. It attracts lots of attention from our core target group. For example, one group created a major mural project (see photo below) and several months after its completion it is graffiti-free and a matter of pride for the young people.

4. OPEN FRIDAY

For about three hours on Friday evenings and hosted by the Outreach Team, The Reco is open to over 15s, with free movement and several activities and chill-out spaces. Average attendance is about 40-60.



OUTFIT 4

Eighteen 17-21 year-olds in an intensive one-year mentoring and support programme. Engagement, although highly challenging for some individuals, was good and substantial progress noted. Last year we completed the 4-year term of funding from the Irish Youth Foundation, for which we are very grateful. We are now receiving funding from the Drugs Task Force for Outfit 5 and beyond. Outfit 5 started in September 08.

Before I started Outfit I was kicked out of school, kicked out of FÁS and then I joined the Outfit programme. I didn't like it at the start but then when things started to happen for me and my life started to change I said I'd stick with it and to date I'm after making a lot of progress in my life and back in FÁS and doing very well.
- Outfit participant



OUTFIT VIDEO
This year we made a video that gives an insight into Outfit; it is especially aimed at young people who may be interested in signing up to the project. Log on to www.bryr.ie and follow the connections to see an online version or contact info@bryr.ie to request a disk version.

STREET EDUCATION

is highly informative and effective if done well. It involves structured conversation with our specially trained staff on topical issues such as "Drugs, The Law and Young People" in December; "Sexual Health" in March, and; "Registration for Jobs" in June.

Yeah, it got me off the blocks and back into school so as I could get my Leaving Cert; go back to college because I want to be a youth worker and help other young people the way you's have helped us. It got me off the blocks and tablets.
- Young person supported by Outreach



OUTREACH HEADLINES

Work Programme	Numbers involved
Street work	4 evenings a week
Referrals	c. 450
6-week groups	16 groups x c. 10 per group
Street art	50 sessions x c. 15-30 participants each
Outfit 4	18 participants
Open Friday	40-60 participants per week

YOUTH GROUPS

The Youth Groups Team has 4 full-time Youth Workers and 2 CE staff. Backed by sessional workers and volunteers, they are the core of BRYR's group-based youth work. Together with the Arts Team last year they worked with over 700 individual young people.

AGE-SPECIFIC WORK

We now organise much of the Groups and Arts work according to the age of the young people. Those from 10-12 years-old are encouraged to join the Cadets (see box); junior groups within Activities Clubs such as CITY and Roundabout, or selected open activities and projects. 13-14 year-olds are best suited to traditional youth clubs of about 8-12 members who generally know each other and meet on a regular weekly basis for developmental work: next year we hope to build up to 6 of these clubs, which will be called Early Teens or "ET Youth Clubs".

Over 15's face issues of a more adult and individual nature. Frequently they turn to trusted Youth Workers for advice and support.



CADETS CLUB

This youth club had exceptional activity last year. Formed in February for 10 to 12 year-olds its membership grew to over 80 by June.

There is a focus on physical activity; meals in our health-promoting restaurant; development of good group dynamics and; individual support.

Next year we will reduce the numbers to a more manageable 50 with 4 sub-groups (2 of girls and 2 boys) who will have two afternoon sessions per week in these sub-groups and an open session on Fridays for all 50.

SUMMER ON THE SEA

Last summer, BRYR contracted Neptune Sports in Clogherhead to provide 50 day outings for Ballymun young people.

Supported by BRYR's minibuses this was an affordable option for many voluntary groups who took up the offer of using these days for their members. About 500 young Ballymunners in total availed of this opportunity over the summer.

YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15 OR OVER

are offered similar clubs – last year there were 9 of them. However, there tends to be inconsistent attendance among this age group who begin to have more mobility and adult-type challenges in their lives. So we are now moving towards "open" clubs and special projects or activities of particular interest to this age group. For example, Monday and Friday evenings from 40 to 60 young people visit The Reco for food, music, information, chill-out space, fitness activities and some structured talks. Meanwhile the Music Club has special performance gigs and Roundabout's older young people are focused on productions.

For the 15s+ there is increasing emphasis on supporting them as individual young people with issues of a more adult nature; health, school/training, work, accommodation etc. Frequently young people in this age group turn to trusted Youth Workers for advice and support.



COULTRY YOUTH CLUB

In 2007 a group of adults connected with the Neighbourhood Centre in Coultrey (one of the main areas of Ballymun) set up a new youth club.

BRYR collaborated with their initiative by providing some funding support, training and allocating an experienced Youth Worker to help out. The club now has 50 members and 3 sessions per week in Woodhazel Terrace.

"I really enjoy working with the young people. I have to say this summer was the best summer I ever had. I am really looking forward to staying involved. I also want to thank all the staff who look after me when I'm there – it is much appreciated."
- Michael Nolan, Volunteer

DEVELOPMENTAL ARTS

The Developmental Arts Team comprises 2 Youth Arts Worker positions, (divided among three people), 1 CE staff and many sessional and volunteer workers.

Our Arts programme is now divided into 4 Activity Youth Clubs:

- Music Club
- Arts Club (visual arts, design and crafts)
- CITY (creative IT)
- Roundabout Youth Theatre

Altogether these activity clubs have nearly 400 members. They are characterised by long term commitment and interest in particular art forms. While the immediate focus is the art activity, the underlying objective of organising these clubs is the same as all our youth work.

The gigs are great in The Reco. Getting ready makes you focus and work hard. And even if you make a mistake, no-one slags you.



GROUPS / ARTS HEADLINES

Youth clubs	11	187 total members
Activity youth clubs	5	410 total members
Open activities		Weekly 70+ participants
		Annual c.390 participants
Collaborative Youth Work	150+	

MUSIC CLUB

The number of young people involved in music in The Reco has grown hugely in the last year. Music participants in INVENT, Open Friday, the Munch Samba School, The Reco Guitar School and bands that use the rehearsal space are coming together in one Music Club.

With designated space, including a sound-proofed rehearsal room, a wide range of equipment, and various organised tutoring there are now over 70 regular practitioners using the centre. Last year there were "open mic" gigs for members.

These are becoming a feature of The Reco with a great atmosphere for young people to showcase their talent in front of an audience of peers.

CITY

Communications through Information Technology for Youth has two dedicated rooms in The Reco. Because the first floor is not affected by the pyrites problem we were finally able to go ahead and develop these spaces. CITY Centre has 16 PCs and a large display screen and projector.

CITY HQ has 6 high-sec Macs: it is mostly for special project work such as digital music or video making. The CITY Activity Club is very popular: it has over 250 active members and growing.

Elaine and Bernie are great. I love coming into CITY.



INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS

Modern Ireland is changing at historically unprecedented rates. New ICTs, especially mobile phones, television and computers pose a fundamentally new threat and opportunity to our young people. These technologies allow information to flow to and from our children in unprecedented amounts and content. There are beautiful flows of information mixed with pornography, violence, commercialism and ideology – all of which easily by-pass parental and other adult gatekeepers. Youth work needs to consider modern ICTs in two respects:

- How to tilt the balance of influence of ICTs to being constructive?
- How to use ICTs to further our work?

VIRTUAL YOUTH WORK - 2009

- BRYR is starting to communicate through ICTs with young people. In 2009 we will begin an experimental "virtual youth work" project involving social networking by professional youth workers. We plan to develop guidelines and training modules for the youth work of the future.
- In 2009 the youth-focused www.BallymunYouth.ie will go online: with content management by young people it will have information and amusement items directed at young Ballymunners



KIDTRAX

Documentation and information work in BRYR is huge. Traditional paper-based methods do not permit efficient information gathering and usage. In June 2008 we purchased a computer-based system – Kidtrax - to record information about young people and their involvement in our work and to be the basis of an efficient communications system.

We started registering young people for Kidtrax in September and throughout 2009 we hope to formally register at least 700 individuals. This once-off comprehensive registration (including parental/guardian permission), and associated recording of their involvement with BRYR programmes will:

- efficiently gather critical information
- assist programme planning and individual support, and
- be a data base for mass and selective communication with young people and their parents/guardians

New ICT's, especially mobile phones, television and computers pose a fundamentally new threat and opportunity to our young people.

www.bryr.ie

We now have a live corporate web site. This one is meant for adults and organisations who are interested in our work and accessing support and resources for youth work. It describes all our work programmes and includes key documents (downloadable). It guides readers to opportunities for training and volunteering, access to resources such as The Reco, minibuses and music equipment and assistance with fund-raising.



ADVOCACY

BRYR believes that the environment in which young people grow and live shapes and moulds their welfare and development. BRYR sees itself as both a direct advocate of constructive change in that environment and as a resource to young people themselves to shape their own environment.

BRYR now has 9 years experience working with young people in Ballymun and has gained substantial insight and knowledge of their lives and the things that influence them. This experience fuels our input into many processes that affect individual young people and young people in general.

In practical terms we are now involved with advocating on behalf of 100's of individuals to gain and sustain access to mainstream services ranging from accommodation for homeless young people, through health services to involvement in constructive social activity. The Outreach Team alone recorded over 450 interventions of this nature for individuals in the last year.

BRYR's staff and volunteers are now making inputs to over 30 representative committees and working groups in Ballymun. Sometimes these can be slow-moving and bureaucratic processes, but in most cases they bring tangible benefits to our young people.

That was a bad weekend. They found me on the blocks and got me some food and a good place for a few days and after a while they got a place that I felt safe. They had to do a lot of work to find it, because a lot of those other places are not safe.

YOUNGBALLYMUN

BRYR has promoted and supported the development of YoungBallymun since the idea was first mooted. In 2008/09 its 6 substantial services are becoming active.

This Atlantic Philanthropies/OMCYA-funded programme has set itself the goal of substantially improving the lot of under-18's in Ballymun. Last year YoungBallymun took over co-ordination of the highly effective Network for Assisting Children and Young People and the first elements of the new Jigsaw Youth Mental Health Service commenced.

BRYR continues to be represented on the Board of Directors and the Jigsaw Implementation Team. The latter service will see a major collaboration between health professionals and other sectors with interests in young people around mental health.

POPPINTREE YOUTH PROJECT

Last year saw the emergence of the Poppintree Youth Project from the merger of BACA and the Columban Youth Project. In 2009 PYP will move into the new Poppintree Community Centre, a state-of-the-art facility to be managed by DCC. This is a great opportunity for West Ballymun.



TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT & VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

This work programme is led by our Training and Development Officer and our Volunteer Support Worker.

TDVS has three key elements:

- **youth work training**
- **developmental support for organisations**
- **support to adult volunteers**

Several sessional workers, volunteers and indeed all BRYR staff support this work.

TRAINING

Training builds competence and confidence and helps sustain commitment in youth work. BRYR is now a FETAC Accredited Training Provider and our plans to establish ourselves as a provider of youth work training made substantial progress last year.

FETAC ACCREDITED TRAINING CENTRE

Last year we achieved formal recognition from the State awards authority FETAC as a training centre. This permits BRYR not only to offer training courses but to offer a professionally recognised certification.

Short Course Training Calendar

Last year, we offered 12 short courses on topics as varied as: Let's Beat Bullying, Child Protection Awareness, Cultural Awareness and Anti-Racism, Occupational First Aid and Managing Challenging Behaviour.

FETAC Certified Youth Work Training

Last year we provided training on *Working with Young People through Drama*, certified at Level 4 and two Level 5 modules: *Working with Young People and Work Experience* to a total of 36 adults. This year we are embarking on a major development of our training programme. We will offer the full level 5 Certificate in Youth Work.

Training for BRYR Staff

BRYR has a strong emphasis on staff development. We value the benefits to BRYR's work and the wider community of investment in our staff and volunteers. Since we started in 1999, a total of 24 of our staff are either currently on or have recently completed university level or FETAC 5-6 courses in youth work or closely related subjects

LEVEL 5 CERTIFICATE IN YOUTH WORK

In September 2008 we recruited 21 adults from around Dublin to participate in a full 8-module course that will last a year. Certification will permit employment at Youth Activities Worker level and marks a substantial step forward in our training programme.

The 8 modules are:

- Working with Young People;
- Work Experience;
- Communications;
- Understanding Youth Work;
- Young People and Society;
- Working with Groups;
- Substance Use – Issues for Youth Work, and;
- Outdoor Leadership and Safety

DEVELOPMENT

This is about raising the standard of youth work in Ballymun, developing Youth Work guidelines or policies and through supporting the development of voluntary organisations or projects.

In the last year we have further developed several guidelines and policy documents, which are mostly available to download from our web site: www.bryr.ie or on request.

Youth Work Guidelines and Policies

- "Do the Right Thing"
- Ethical Guidelines for Youth Work
- Guidelines for Outreach Youth Work
- Child Protection Guidelines
- Health & Safety Manual
- Garda Vetting Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Employee Manual
- Finance Handbook. Nearly completed

Support to Voluntary Organisations/ Projects

Last year BRYR supported the organisational development of four local organisations. BRYR administered the Small Grants Fund and Micro Fund (from the YPFSS). Last year 29 grants were made from the SGF, totalling €35,000 and 6 micro grants, totalling €3,500. BRYR also manages a range of equipment for use by local groups: 2 minibuses, music equipment, video equipment....

There was a lot of support on the course which was a great help to a lot of us."
- Maria Hayes, FETAC student

I have found that throughout the weeks in this course, I have brought something new back to my clubs each week, for example confidence in my self and my abilities, new games, new understanding in difficult situations. My confidence has grown since doing the course."

- Catherine Donnelly,
FETAC student

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Engaging individual adult volunteers is a challenging and emotive aspect of modern youth work. Spontaneous heart-led commitment is now being tempered by higher demands and fears of accusations, litigation and heavy responsibilities. A number of organisations have noted declining voluntarism. However, BRYR with the considerable benefit of a dedicated Volunteer Support Worker has been able to engage over 40 individual adults in the last year. This ranges from involvement in our very busy Board of Directors, through specialised inputs such as music tuition, to volunteering as assistants to Youth Workers. Our experience is that, though challenging, the provision of thoughtful supports including training, does bring forth and sustain valuable commitment from volunteers.

Training provides opportunities to validate participants' experience. It can often be the beginning of a journey for a career in youth work. It is great to see people from the local community reach their potential."

- Laurence Van der Haegen,
Training & Development Officer

MARIA MC LOUGHLIN IS STUDYING THE H DIP IN COMMUNITY AND YOUTH WORK AT MAYNOOTH COLLEGE

"I am on a 12-week placement here at BRYR. My experience here has proved invaluable and has allowed me to work on my objectives effectively and monitor my performance. The hands-on experience has allowed me to embrace the profession, understand the true nature of the occupation and link theory to practice. I have been allocated a satisfying amount of responsibility and have been treated as a team member from the very beginning. I have established effective working relationships with both my supervisors and co-workers who have shown me enormous amounts of commitment and support. I have been challenged to take risks, try new things and learn from my mistakes. The supervision I have received has encouraged my self-development and has provided me with opportunities to observe and review the exercise of professional skills by experienced practitioners".



TDVS HEADLINES

Short course training	12 courses
Long course training	3 FETAC modules 36 trainees
Staff on/completed university or FETAC main courses	24
Youth work guideline & policy documents	11
BRYR volunteer register	45
Assisted grants (SGF and Micro Fund)	29 (€38,500 total)

YOUTH FACILITIES

THE RECO

Open 3 Years and the Going is Good

We have achieved our main objective: The Reco is a convivial, safe place for young people and it attracts the numbers and type of young people we set out to engage. There are about 500-700 young visitors and about 100-150 adult users per week. We are now open about 70 hours a week, including Saturdays, and the restaurant has been a great success. Reaction to the building continues to be positive and there is a good mix of activities run by BRYR and other organisations.



FOOL'S GOLD

Pyrites, or Iron Sulphate, is sometimes called "fool's gold" because it is a mineral that looks a bit like gold.

Unfortunately it has another deceptive quality: when mixed in too high a concentration with in-fill from quarries it can cause expansion of the in-fill when under a floor. And this appears to be what is happening in The Reco.

Rising floors are pushing up plasterwork and partition walls – slowly but surely! The legal wrangle over who pays for the repairs gobbled up a lot of BRYR management energy in 2008 and most importantly it has held us back from the full fit-out and furnishing of our beautiful building. We even had to move out for a week to permit some tests and there is now a delay in the repair work for at least another 6 months.

Hopefully in 2009 we will move to temporary facilities out the back and the building will be put right.

Meanwhile we are planning to take advantage of the repair work to make some internal changes that will permit an enlarged restaurant and customised space for our new Music Club.

THE SPORTS AREA

This area is to the rear of The Reco, it includes an all-weather hurling/camóige pitch, (convertible into three 5-a-side soccer pitches), and a tarmac area.

BRYR acquired a Sports Capital Grant (Lotto) of €270,000 and BRL developed the space.

It was scheduled to open in the spring of 2008, but this has not happened due to an inability to acquire a license to operate.

The plan is that Holy Spirit Schools will use it during school times and it will be managed by BRYR outside these hours.



Sylvia and Noel and all the staff make you feel good when you come into the reception.

RECO HEADLINES

Weekly young visitors to The Reco	500-700
Average age of young visitors	14
Daily fresh meals	60-90
Weekly adult visitors (connected with youth work)	100-150
Weekly scheduled activities in The Reco	55-59
Proportion of activities run by BRYR	60%

The Reco is a convivial, safe place and it attracts up to 700 young people a week

THE RESTAURANT

It opened in November 2007. It emphasises healthy and attractive nutrition prepared by a professional chef with excellent health & safety standards. It has achieved its financial objective of paying for all cash costs (labour, ingredients, small items, capital items) and providing fresh-cooked meals with a waiting service.

The average is now around 60-90 meals per day and the restaurant has become a major contribution to the experience of users of The Reco. We hope to expand to offer lunch services to young people in school next year and hopefully, when the pyrites issue is resolved we can get on with moving this project towards its full potential.



The Reco Youth Restaurant Menu

Home-made soup of the day
Tomato and Basil

Roast chicken with all the trimmings

Home-made Meatballs

Veggie Burgers

Spaghetti Bolognese

Freshly made Pizza Slices

Chefs' Salad

Desserts

Fresh Fruit Salad

Apple & Blackberry Crumble

Fruit Mousse

Apple & Pear Tart

Custard or fresh cream optional on all desserts

ST PAPPIN'S YOUTH CENTRE

It continues to be well used by three main groups: the Southern Ireland Pool Federation, the Boxing Club and Munch Samba Band. SIPF now has 10 tables in the building and uses it substantially. Soon the boxers will move to their new custom-built facility in Poppintree Community Centre and the available time will be taken by SIPF.

THE NATIONAL POOL ACADEMY

BRYR, with Maria Place, helped the Southern Ireland Pool Federation to prepare a detailed proposal to BRL for a National Pool Academy to be built in Ballymun. BRL have provisionally allocated a magnificent space under The Plaza. With 25 tables, a world-class stadium, training facilities, juice bar and a media centre for recording and transmitting live competition, this could be a great facility for Ballymun and indeed Ireland's thousands of pool enthusiasts. The emphasis in the design and business planning for the Academy is on creating a convivial, health-promoting and financially viable space. For more on this contact us for the promotional brochure.



BRYR'S ORGANISATION

PERSONNEL

The heart of BRYR is our employees and volunteers. Good youth work needs good energy from our people. So, for employees and volunteers, just as with young people, we try to create a culture of conviviality, respect and purposeful action. Our employee/volunteer development, supervision and general personnel policies are dedicated to this challenge while also responding to the legal requirements on an employer.

Staff are organised in teams:

- Management
- Finance, Administration and Personnel
- Training, Development & Volunteer Support
- Outreach
- Youth Groups
- Arts
- Facilities

BRYR encourages team working, and within teams each project, group or initiative has a designated leader. Each team has an agreed work programme, normally revised and reported on each term, and a set of guidelines or policies for reference. We complement this with a substantial staff development programme, with 24 of our staff having completed or currently participating in third level or FETAC 5/6 education and training courses. This structure encourages a good balance of initiative, creativity, responsibility, support and coherence in our work. It permits youth workers and other staff to apply individual initiative, while offering a support and a clear policy framework.

GARDA VETTING OF NEW STAFF / VOLUNTEERS

In the last year we processed 53 Garda Vetting applications by new employees and volunteers. This process has become routine, but there are still delays averaging 6-7 weeks.



FINANCE

Overall, income streams were secure in the financial year, 2008. Expenditure was in line with budget leaving minor surpluses, with the exception of the delayed fit-out of The Reco. However, with the economic downturn and revised budgets BRYR is concerned about income for 2009. Early indications are that we can expect reduced income of up to 8%. This will place serious strains on our capacity to sustain programmes.

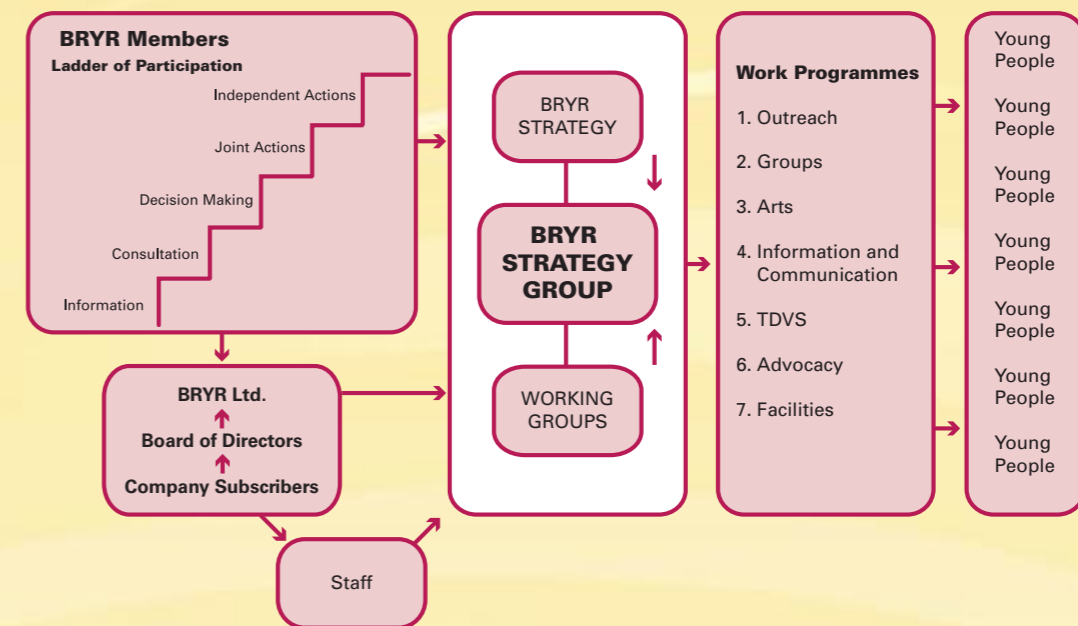


STRUCTURES

From the start of 2008 we began implementing the recommendations of the Review of Management. Our Board of Directors functions well and in 2009 they will be joined by the new Strategy Group.

The Board members in 2008 were: Brian Mongey (DCC and Chair), Hugh Greaves (BLDTF), Stewart Dowie, Tony Byrne, Louise Fitzpatrick and Maria Place (all community reps.). Bill Mew was the Liaison Officer from CDYSB in attendance.

MEMBERS AND THE LADDER OF PARTICIPATION
In 2008 we began recruiting members to BRYR and now boast just short of 100. In 2009 these individuals and organisations will be provided with plenty of information and encouraged to develop their participation at all levels of the "Ladder".



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BRYR is a vehicle for the efforts of many people and organisations wishing to contribute to the lives of young people in Ballymun. We are an entity that collaborates and receives the support of many individuals and organisations. I would like to acknowledge these contributions to youth welfare and development and on behalf of young Ballymunners to say "thank you".

The staff and volunteers in BRYR have shown wonderful commitment since our foundation in 1999. The confidence to engage young people was always there and professional competence has demonstrably grown in the last year.

I would like to acknowledge the fact that The Ballymun Local Drugs Task Force, the City of Dublin Youth Services Board and Dublin City Council/Ballymun Regeneration Limited have gone well beyond their critical role in funding and been wholehearted, energetic collaborators in the growth of BRYR.

I would like also to draw attention to the government agencies and their people behind these bodies. These include the City of Dublin VEC, the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht

Affairs, The National Drugs Strategy Team and the National Assessment Committee of the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund.

Networks are sometimes seen as talk shops, but in our experience they are critical to making state and community investment work for young people. Ballymun is forging ahead in this type collaboration and I would like in particular to acknowledge the members of: the Ballymun Youth Development Group, Ballymun Network for Assisting Children and Young People ("The Network"), the Ballymun Partnership, BCON, RAPID and Safer Ballymun

I would also like to acknowledge the growing collaboration with YoungBallymun, The Ballymun Job Centre/LES, Trinity Comprehensive, Youthreach and the CTCs.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the collaboration with many community groups and clubs and concerned individuals, of which there are too many to mention, in the work for our young people.

Brian Mongey
 Chairman, BRYR