

**County Wexford Community Workshop (New Ross) Ltd.
Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford**

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1975, a group of concerned parents, friends and business people wanted to do something about the lack of disability services around Wexford county, which resulted in the Community Workshop being incorporated that year and commencing operation on 26th July 1976 in the Legion of Mary Hall, New Ross. The services are governed by a voluntary Board of Directors comprising local residents and parents of people with disability.

The Board is supported by a Centre Manager with a multi-disciplined team of more than 20 employees, training and working with in excess of 90 service users in a relaxed, happy and friendly environment. The service caters for pre-school children and adults with an intellectual disability and special needs, generally with a mild or moderate level of disability, although development is planned to extend into the more severe and profound levels.

The guiding philosophy of the Centre is that people with a disability should have equal rights, dignity and choice, including equality of opportunities and full participation as equal members of society. Continued support is provided for the lads if they wish to be involved in sports through the Special Olympics in swimming, golf skills, pitch 'n putt, soccer, bocce, basketball and bowling.

At the moment we are providing services in :

- Pre-School
- Training
- Sheltered Occupation
- Day Activation (Resource Centre)
- Residential Homes & Apartments

The Department of Health and Children through the Health Service Executive (HSE) provides the main funding to operate all of the services. As a registered charity (CHY 5932) funds are still raised through organised events, collection boxes and donations, to purchase additional equipment to improve the services. The workshop element also provides a small profit from the varied activities, although it cannot be considered a commercial enterprise.

The HSE, the statutory body responsible for providing disability services in the South East area, usually refers individuals to the Centre. Other referrals also occur from elsewhere, although the HSE must assess each individual and agree acceptance with the Centre management.

Development of new services and enhancements to the various current services is a continuous objective, subject to prior acquisition of additional funding in most instances. A particular focus for the future is the

need of more accommodation, be it low support and respite homes, semi-independent living or for the elderly.

Additional future staff resources have been recommended to ensure continued improvement in the quality of our services, for the overall health and social benefit of our service users.

DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

- 1976 Commenced operations in the Legion of Mary Hall, New Ross.
- 1978 Moved to Marshmeadows premises in February 1978. The land donated by Mr Tom Walsh (RIP), Auctioneer; backfill provided by Mr Tom McGrath (RIP), Oakland Quarries and the building constructed by Mr O'Keefe, 5 Counties Hotel.
- 1979 Premises formally opened by Mr Charles Haughey, Minister of Health & Social Welfare.
- 1992 Purchased Ard Alainn as a group home to house 6 people in a low support, homely environment.
- 1994 Day Activation service commenced at Marshmeadows.
- 1995 Commenced renting a house in Priory Street, New Ross for a varying number of residents to live semi-independently.
- 1999 Day activation service moved to purpose built Resource Centre at Pondfields, New Ross with a capacity for 40 to attend.
- 2002 Opened second group home at Millbanks, Rosbercon to house 5 residents, plus one respite bed.
- 2004 Cúnamh Mhuire Pre-School in the New Haughton Hospital grounds transferred from New Ross Mental Handicap Association.

VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

Vision

It is our vision that all service users and staff will achieve the highest possible levels of participation and involvement at work, in the community and society in general by the enhancement of and commitment to their rights, wants and needs, opportunities and future aspirations.

Mission Statement

The mission and purpose of CWCW New Ross is to promote the full integration of people with disabilities into their communities based on the concepts of equal rights and opportunities, dignity and choice. This is achieved through the provision of a quality set of services tailored, as much as possible, to the needs and wants of individuals in order that they achieve their maximum potential.

This organisation believes that a quality service provided in a safe and secure environment must have objectives that are **VALID**:

Visionary
Appropriate and Accessible
Laudable
Identified
Dignified

SERVICES PROVIDED

Pre-School

The Cúnamh Mhuire Pre-School situated in the New Haughton Hospital grounds was included in our services from January 2004. It was formerly under the auspices of the New Ross Mental Handicap Association. Work continues to upgrade the facility, which is co-located with a community pre-school, including a new safe play area.

Rehabilitative Training

The training programme is monitored and approved by the HSE, with regular accreditation facilitated every two years by an external assessment body. Subjects include Information and Communication Technology, Independent Living Skills, Self-Advocacy, Compensatory Education, Sewing, Horticulture, Art, Catering, Health & Safety and Preparation for Work.

Certification through the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and Integrated Assessment System (IAS) are available, and Supported Employment is obtained locally. A daily attendance allowance (funded by the HSE) is paid weekly direct into the trainees' bank accounts.

Resource Centre

A purpose-built, modern activity centre in the quiet Pondfields area of New Ross is available for part-time or full-time attendance. Varied activities are available such as art, craft, reading, writing, pottery, word processing, music and dancing, healthy eating, keeping fit, swimming, carpet bowls, pitch and putt, gardening and development of personal skills. Local outings and trips are arranged, plus other activities within the community. A chiropodist and hairdresser regularly provides services and the Centre allows other community groups to use the premises for their activities such as courses and meetings. The emphasis is on keeping the group as physically active as possible for as long as possible. The Resource Centre remains open throughout the summer holidays.

Residential

There are two low support homes housing 11 people, plus one room for temporary respite use. Social Care Workers encourage residents to develop skills and to live as independently as possible in a homely setting. Evening and weekend outings are arranged plus occasional short holidays.

In addition there are 3 apartments in New Ross for 4 people to live semi-

independently, with a Care Assistant providing whatever minimal support is required during weekday evenings. The purpose-built units were funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government through the Capital Assistance Scheme, in association with Wexford County Council.

Sheltered Occupation

Previously known as sheltered work, the supervised activities in the enterprise section consist of Trophy Making & Engraving, Sewing & Letter Printing, Picture Framing, Catering, Woodworking and Packaging & Assembly.

Individuals can also avail of some of the training modules should they wish, and as for the training programme, a daily attendance allowance is paid weekly into personal bank accounts.

POLICIES

Purpose

CWCW New Ross is committed to providing services for people with intellectual disabilities to meet their own individual needs as expressed by them or with the help of an independent advocate.

Values

The values that underpin the services provided include the principles of rights, integrity, dignity, responsibility, honesty, timeliness, respect, safety, confidentiality and good appearance and behaviour.

These values apply to everyone from service users, through staff and contracted personnel to management and the Board of Directors. Failure to abide by the values as expressed in the Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedure will lead to appropriate action being taken.

Rights

Every service user has the right to receive a professional service in a safe and trouble free environment, with participation in the way that their individual programme or activity is developed. The Centre has a policy for the Promotion of Rights of all service users.

Prospective Service User Profile

Other than for the pre-school, the Centre normally provides a service to adults with a mild or moderate intellectual disability (sometimes combined with a physical or mental health condition) from the age of 18 years, living in the county areas of South West Wexford, East Waterford, South East Kilkenny and South Carlow. The maximum capacity of people is dependent on space, funding and staff resources in each of the activity areas.

Development of the day services for the New Ross area is planned in association with the Health Service Executive to include adults with a severe and profound disability, which occurs now on an as needed basis.

OBJECTIVES

Application to the Centre

Referral to the Centre is usually by the Health Service Executive (Disability Services), other agencies and/or via applications made direct to the Centre Manager. In the latter instance should an applicant not be accepted, an appeal could be made to the HSE Area Co-Ordinator of Disability Services. People joining direct from school will usually have completed a period of work experience and familiarisation at the Centre to ensure that they wish to attend and they will achieve the greatest possible benefit from the service.

Admission to the Centre

Prospective applicants will normally have visited the Centre previously with their parents/guardians and normally after a short trial period will join one of the programmes at a mutually agreed date. Administrative and transport arrangements are made in advance in conjunction with family members or guardians.

Individualisation of Training Programme

When a new Trainee joins the Centre their individual needs and interests are used to formalise an Individual Training Plan (ITP). Thereafter reviews/assessments are carried out every three months and their parents are usually invited along once a year to participate and discuss progress. Some particular parts of the training that can improve a Trainee's quality of life are Self Advocacy, Compensatory Education, Information & Communication Technology, Horticulture, Health & Safety and Independent Living Skills. In many of these areas, certification can be attained through the Integrated Assessment System (IAS), under the auspices of the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), with the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) available also.

People joining to attend the Sheltered Occupation or Day Activation programmes will, as far as possible, have their needs and wants catered for to achieve the maximum outcome and potential, which may also include availing of such training as computers, horticulture and art.

Work and Training Conditions

The working and training day is from 9.00 to 4.00, Monday to Friday, with a morning tea break and an hour for lunch and recreation. Time is also allowed for attending to personal needs and using individual lockers. The Centre is open for 46 weeks each year, with 20 days fixed annual leave plus 10 public

holidays. A holiday list covering 12 months is distributed at the beginning of the year to all service users and staff, showing the times and dates of closing and reopening, plus the breakdown of annual and public holidays.

Freedom of Information

Access to information is available to all authorised service users, their parents or guardians and staff, and it is stored securely in personal or training files. With signed permission details are also provided to the National Intellectual Disability Database, with the Centre Manager responsible for dealing with all requests for information. A Freedom of Information Policy and Data Protection Principles are in place.

Supervisors and Key Workers

Individuals will have a Supervisor or Key Worker (for training) who is the first point of contact to discuss their training, development and/or any personal difficulties or issues. The Supervisors or Key Workers will, if necessary, discuss issues with the Assistant Manager, Training Officer or Centre Manager for resolution and record them on the relevant personal or training file. Parents or guardians will be informed of serious or sensitive issues as appropriate.

External Training

External training is arranged by way of work experience in the Sheltered Occupation area and externally in the community, e.g. garages, shops, offices and factories. The employer/provider and the individual are required to complete a report on attendance and performance, and the relevant Key Worker or Training Officer monitors the work experience.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for CWCW New Ross clearly defines 11 standards including dress, use of bad language and bullying, followed by the actions to be taken should the Code be breached. All service users are made aware of the Code during induction and understand that it is valid at all times whilst in the Centre, on the transport provided or on an organised trip or holiday.

Unauthorised Absences

Parents are requested to inform the Centre about any planned or unplanned absence, preferably in writing or at least by telephone initially. Sickness in excess of 3 days should be covered by a Doctor's certificate. Unauthorised absences will affect the payment of the attendance allowance. Leaving the Centre without permission is a breach of the Code of Conduct and presents

difficulties for safety, in particular in the event of a fire or other evacuation of the premises.

After Training

There are several possible outcomes and placements following training and for each Trainee these will be identified and agreed at the appropriate stage through regular reviews of their Individual Training Programme. Such outcomes will include Further Training, Sheltered Occupation, Supported Employment and Occupational Enhancements.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints from service users are normally addressed through their Supervisor or Key Worker in the first instance, then on to the Training Officer or Assistant Manager, or Centre Manager if resolution is not possible in the earlier stages. All serious matters will be fully documented and held on a personal file, with parents being informed as necessary. Should a parent wish to complain, it would normally be direct to the Assistant Manager, Training Officer or Centre Manager, Board of Directors or Health Service Executive as appropriate.

The Centre has policies for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment & Bullying to ensure that all parties are protected and supported fully when such instances are reported.

Service Users in the Marshmeadows Facility have their own self advocacy group that meets every week, with feedback provided to management for action and/or assistance. This forum was the catalyst for having a pedestrian crossing installed on the main road outside of the Centre. The lads have also reformed their social club under the auspices of the Arch Club, that meets every other Thursday evening.

ENVIRONMENT

Physical Facilities

The CWCW New Ross facilities include rooms for Information Technology, Independent Living Skills, Compensatory Education, General Training, Craft, Kitchens, Sewing and gardens around various properties for practical Horticulture. Leisure and communal facilities available are dining rooms, televisions and videos, pool table, carpet bowls, indoor putting, table tennis and a basketball area, with the local track and park adjacent to the Centre for exercising and relaxation. Necessary visits are allowed into New Ross to the shops, Post Office and banks, and for medical or dental services. There are two mini-buses for planned or ad hoc use, both fitted with a wheel chair lift and two 7-seater people carriers.

Maintenance Procedures

The Centre is committed to a high standard of cleaning and maintenance of the buildings, grounds and equipment, to ensure continual performance and the health and safety of all service users, staff and visitors. Regular checks of the building structure, oil, gas, electrical and fire systems are carried out and documented through the Safety Audit process. Safety is the responsibility of everyone and reporting potential risks and maintenance needs is encouraged.

Financial Arrangements

Trainees attending the Training programme receive an attendance allowance provided by the Health Service Executive and paid through the Centre for attendance and authorised absences for 52 weeks of the year. The same amount is paid to people attending the Sheltered Occupational area and payment is made by electronic credit transfer weekly to a personal bank or building society account.

Insurance

All of the Centre's buildings, grounds, vehicles and equipment are covered by insurance, which is reviewed annually or as changes dictate; cover is also arranged if required for temporary events such as day trips and short holidays. CWCW New Ross is indemnified under its policies for Public and Employer's Liability. Our passenger vehicles are insured under the HSE fleet policy.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of all the service users, staff and visitors is of paramount importance to the Board of Directors. There is a Safety Statement that contains many provisions for the protection of individuals and procedures for identifying and resolving possible risks of injury. Individual properties also have an Ancillary Safety Statement that complements the main document. Responsibility for day-to-day health and safety falls to the Centre Manager, assisted by the Assistant Manager who is a qualified Health & Safety Representative.

A Safety Committee comprising of service users and staff meets regularly to discuss safety issues and make recommendations for improvements.

In the event of a medical emergency there is always a member of staff in attendance who is a trained First Aider; first aid boxes are also positioned in all of the key areas. Should it be necessary local doctors and hospitals will be used and parents/guardians informed of the occurrence as soon as possible.

PERSONNEL

Staff and Organisational Structure

CWCW New Ross is governed by a 10 member voluntary Board of Directors, with a Centre Manager, Assistant Manager and 17 full-time and 4 part-time staff. The main activity areas each have a Senior Supervisor that reports to the manager on day-to-day responsibilities and operations.

Staff Training and Qualifications

Staff training is arranged to meet any legal requirement and/or change to techniques and training standards. The following qualifications and/or experience are normally required for the relevant positions:

- **Centre Manager** 3rd level education and 3 years experience in a Disabilities or Healthcare environment
- **Assistant Manager** 3rd level education or relevant specialised training qualifications, plus experience in Healthcare, Disabilities, Education or Youth Work
- **Instructors** Relevant specialised and training qualifications and experience in Healthcare, Disabilities, Education or Youth Work
- **Supervisors** Relevant specialised qualification and experience in Healthcare, Disabilities or Youth Work
- **Social Care Workers** Social Care qualification and experience in a residential setting, preferably for people with disabilities
- **Care Assistant** Social Care and or Child Care qualification with the relevant experience
- **Pre-School Leader** Child Care qualification and relevant experience

- **Administrators** 2nd level education and experience in business administration and accountancy
- **Driver** 'D' licence holder and experience with people with disabilities

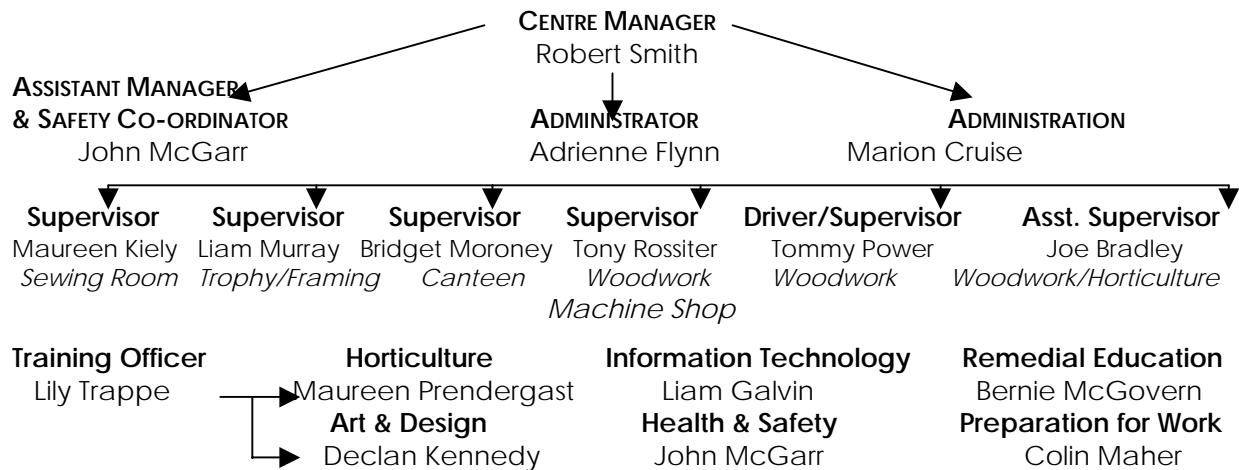
All staff must complete a probationary period and be medically and Garda cleared before employment is formally confirmed.

Performance Feedback

The organisation is committed to providing a quality set of services to meet the needs and aspirations of the service users. Part of the training programme includes Self Advocacy that encourages individuals to speak up for themselves, make choices and state what those choices are; issues and progress are discussed during assessments and reviews, and personal objectives agreed and measured. Parents, family members or guardians are free to speak or meet with the management, training or supervisory staff at any time to discuss an individual's progress or personal issues.

CO. WEXFORD COMMUNITY WORKSHOP (New Ross) LTD.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



SOCIAL CARE WORKERS

Ard Alainn

Betty Davitt & Ann Marie Fahey

Millbanks

Fiona O'Brien & Mary Nealon

RESOURCE CENTRE

Senior Supervisor

Maureen Rossiter

Staff Nurse

Anthony Rochford

Supervisor

Áine Bailey

Care Assistant

Mary Malone

CROSS STREET APARTMENTS

Mary Malone (Part-Time)

PRE-SCHOOL

Pre-School Leader

Anne O'Reilly

Care Assistant

Ann Harford

TEMPORARY/RELIEF STAFF

Care Assistants :

Lorraine Breen, Carol Fitzgerald, Bridget Malone, Yvonne Molloy, Emma Murphy, Eileen O'Neill, Lorraine Sinnott, Bridget Kennedy and Janet Roche

Social Care Workers :

Ita Gallagher

MAP OF LOCATIONS

