

Annual Report 2011



Navan Travellers Workshops Ltd trading as

Meath Travellers Workshops

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Foreword

2011 was a very challenging and busy year for Meath Travellers Workshops Limited. A substantial amount of time was taken up accommodating and adapting to the changes in the Community Development sector in Ireland.

Throughout the year a national conversation took place between the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs and Traveller organisations around the country on how to handle these changes and by the end of the year a National Traveller Partnership was formulated.



This new body will act as an umbrella group and funding conduit for Traveller projects in Ireland. MTW will be playing a crucial role in this new initiative to ensure Traveller led services and projects continue to deliver on the ground with the funding and support necessary. We are determined to see this new development as a positive move for MTW and Traveller projects nationally. MTW will retain autonomy over its budget and work plan and we will also be able to develop closer working relationships with other Traveller organisations.

We have continued to work hard to improve the situation of Travellers in County Meath while maintaining strong and effective links with the different statutory and voluntary organisations. Following on from the previous year, in 2011 we expanded on our main priorities of Training and Employment and the preservation and promotion of Traveller Culture and Heritage. The principles of Social Inclusion and Community Development inform all of our work and this continued in our constant work in the additional areas of Health, Education and Accommodation.

In 2012 budgetary cuts will affect everyone, both staff and stakeholders. We are confident we will meet these challenges bravely and practically and emerge as strong, effective and as relevant to all our stakeholders in the future.

Lastly, I would like to express sincere gratitude to everyone involved in the Meath Travellers Workshops, the Directors, staff, volunteers and everyone in the Community who has offered their support and advice over the years to us and we look forward to this continuing into the future.

Joe Reilly
Chairperson

Childcare and Education

Pre-School



The pre-school children enjoy a slumber-party camp out in their class

The Pre-School sessions cater for 10 Traveller and settled children in the 3-5 year age group. It is a well-run and well-equipped facility which provides a comfortable and safe environment for all our attending children. This year, our pre-school and after-schools swapped rooms. The younger group moved to the smaller room and the afterschool settled into the bigger room. This was due to the increased demand for the after-school programme this year. The change has worked out well with both groups happy in their new locations.

The service is overseen by the Early Childhood Education Co-ordinator, Marie McDonagh. Marie is assisted by a Community Employment worker. The Preschool curriculum includes various methods of play, arts and crafts, music and cooking. Cooking is particularly enjoyable for the children and takes place every Friday. So far the group has made a wide range of delicious treats such as mini pizzas, gingerbread biscuits and flapjacks. Outdoor play is an important part of the children's day, our outdoor play area is fully utilised with children enjoying activities such as building birds nests. There was great excitement in December when the children had a very special visitor; Santa arrived on the Ho Ho Ho Bus. He met all the children and gave each of them a present. It was a lovely morning and everyone, staff and children have great memories of it.



Is it really him? Meeting a very special person on the Ho Ho bus!

After-school

The 20 children in our care are supported by a full childcare team. The children receive support in completing their homework; learn arts and crafts and play games. The children receive a hot meal and a light snack, should they want it, before going home. We have a new cook in the kitchen who is working out fantastically well! The healthy eating programme is being followed and the children are enjoying the variety of food being served. Every Thursday afternoon the after-school group enjoy a cooking class. All ingredients used are seasonal and the food ranges from savoury to sweet. Limited staff numbers has meant that outside trips, e.g to the library are less frequent than we'd like. At Christmas, the after-school children also met Santa. For this visit Santa made himself at home in our Barrell

Top wagon and it's hoped he can fit in some time next Christmas to spend even more time in the wagon where he will be able to meet even more children.

Flying High to Celebrate Diversity!

On the 24th March the MTW after schools group joined a number of community groups from across the county at the Hill of Tara to launch the Kite Project marking the EU Week against Racism in County Meath.



*Reaching for the sky –
Our afterschool group take part in the Kite project*

The Kite Project was facilitated by local artist Mark Smith and brought together a number of other groups from a variety of settings including Rehabcare, Meath Youth Federation, Girl Guides and Mental Health Services. Each group designed their own kites to celebrate diversity in Meath. The Kites produced displayed messages of unity, solidarity with positive symbols and images. It was a brilliant experience for all involved. Our after school group did us proud on the day with some very colourful and imaginative kites.

The Crann Support Group

Crann Support Group administers the finances of the Little Angels childcare services. The Crann group support 11 different community groups throughout the county. This back up and support has ensured the children have the opportunity to avail of the excellent service provided by the Little Angels childcare staff. Crann also support access to knowledge, expertise and training that ensures this quality is maintained.



*There's always time for a pose!
Some of our girls on the Youth project*

Youth

Our Youth Work department is overseen by a youth work co-ordinator Kay McCabe and two assistant youth workers. Kay and one of the assistant Youth Workers, Michael Mac Donnacha are employed by Involve (formerly National Association of Traveller Centres). Kay is one of over 20 Youth Workers placed in

Traveller projects around the country. This link works very well for MTW Ltd as it allows us to share ideas by meeting up with lots of other Traveller youth groups around the country. The other Youth Worker is CE Participant Marie O Shea.

The calendar highlight for many in MTW Ltd is our Summer Project, which is now running for nearly 30 years and is the longest project of its kind in Ireland . Over the years we have developed a schedule of trips, games, sports and drama that children enjoy and look forward to.

Other activities that keep the Youth Office busy include the boys and girls youth groups, football tournaments, Cooking and healthy eating classes, First Aid and Youth Café. This year the Youth workers ran an Art competition themed 'A Traveller's Life' and it was open to all the schools in the Navan Area from 4th class -2nd Year. The Youth Team had a great response for this and displayed all the entries on MTW Open Day during Traveller Pride week. In 2011 the department expanded and started hosting two Youth group nights in the Unity Centre in Windtown as well as the regular one in MTW premises. We now operate a Drop-in Youth Café on a Monday night in Windtown from 6-8pm where we do everything from cooking, playing board games and Art and Crafts.

The Youth Project also takes part in important competitions like Show Racism the Red Card and this is also done at the Youth Café. The Youth Project also operates on a Wednesday where a specific Activity or Programme is run for 8-10 weeks. These Programmes are chosen by and for the young people. The Programme being run at the end of 2011 was a First Aid Course in conjunction with The Civil Defence in Navan.



Feathered Friends

Coming up in 2012 are such projects as Bike Safety and Babysitting Certificate to name but a few. This expansion worked well and introduced our service to a new neighbourhood of young people. On a Tuesday night the Youth work Team operates a 'Girls Only Group' in Meath Jigsaw's new facility The Hub on Brews Hill in Navan.

A young men's group is in the early stages of development on a Thursday morning dealing with many Traditional values in the Traveller culture and heritage such as Tin Smithing and Horse Care. There are over 90 Young people on our books with a regular turnover of 30-40 young people a week. With new Projects being added in Trim's Ray Café and in the NYPD facility on the Commons

Road in Navan these numbers are bound to increase in 2012.

The Youthwork team undertakes training regularly ensuring good practise and high skills in all levels of their work. Some of the training undertaken this year includes; Diversity in

Youthwork, Best Practice in Youth Work, Respect Training, ASIST, Youth Mental Health Training, “Let Someone Know” training and a Flexibus driving course.

Community

United Nations Visit

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights visited Ireland from the 10th to the 15th of January 2011. The objective of the visit was to study the Irish Government’s efforts and challenges to alleviate poverty both domestically and internationally. During the visit, Ms Magdalena Sepúlveda, an independent expert, collected first hand information about the living conditions of people experiencing the worst forms of poverty in Ireland and examined how the Government is addressing their situation, in particular through the provision of social protection. She visited Traveller accommodation with Navan initiatives being used as examples of good practice. The areas she visited was one of the successful Traveller group housing schemes and the award winning St Patrick’s Park Halting site, which owes its success to the partnership approach to the development of the area, by Meath County Council and local Travellers.



*UN visitors meet Michael and Ellen McDonagh, also pictured James O Leary
CEO of INVOLVE*

A Traveller Focus group met with her in Meath Travellers Workshops, in the CYWS Hall. Ms Sepúlveda had the opportunity to talk to a number of Travellers who work in the community. They covered topics such as Accommodation, Education, Health, Employment, Youth work, Community development, Identity and Social Status. Michael McDonagh said “We are delighted to be asked to take part in this study as it highlights that our organisation is recognised as a credible and vibrant advocate of Traveller Rights locally, nationally and also at an International level”.

During her visit to Ireland, Ms Sepúlveda also studied the impact of the economic and financial crisis in Ireland; examining the measures taking by the Government of Ireland to counter the adverse effects of the crisis. Meath Travellers Workshops are proud to be involved in this important visit.



Navan Shamrock Festival

Meath Travellers Workshops again played a crucial role in this event in 2011. The opening of a dedicated festival office in Navan Shopping Centre mean that some pressure was taken off us but we were still involved in a lot of the of the organising of the festival including the parade logistics and volunteer management. The festival held a week of events around the town culminating in the biggest and most successful St.

Patrick's Day parade the town has ever seen. Needless to say, the Workshops also entered a fantastic float!

Planning and Debate Day

An important discussion day was held on June 20th in the Unity Centre in Windtown. An open invitation was issued to all Travellers in Navan and all friends, members, staff and management of MTW. The seminar focused on the work of Meath Travellers Workshops, what it has done in the past, is doing at present and most importantly, will do in the future. All stakeholders talked about what issues are affecting Travellers in Meath today and how MTW can play a role in tackling them. Feedback from the event was very positive with many people attending asking if we can hold another similar day in the future. Issues that ranked high for people were help dealing with suicide, Traveller identity and outreach programmes to encourage more local Travellers and settled people to become involved in the Workshops work. A big thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to a lively and constructive debate.

Breaking the Pattern – International Exchange

Interaction with other peer groups, at home and abroad is very important to us. In July of this year, 10 young women representing Meath Travellers Workshops Ltd travelled to an important conference in Karlstad, Sweden. The Navan group joined up with Kurdish and Gypsy women for an international project called “Breaking the Pattern” which examined women's roles in each community. They spent their time having fun and invigorating discussions about what it means to be a young woman today through a full schedule of presentations, seminars and workshops. In August 2012, MTW will be returning the favour by hosting a similar international seminar for youth workers in Navan.



Honestly.. it was very hard work! The MTW group with their Swedish colleagues

Social Inclusion Week

This is the second time this week has been marked in Meath and for the second year MTW played a vital role in its organisation. On Friday 21st of October Meath Travellers Workshops worked in conjunction with Involve youth project in organizing an Information Fair in Navan Shopping Centre. This provided an opportunity for local groups and departments to advertise their activities and meet members of the public in a relaxed and informal manner. We felt it was a great success. It was a credit to all the participants that all the stands looked so well and there was a high level of engagement with the public. The shopping centre were very please with the way it was run and I think this will stand to us next year if we attempt it again. Meath Travellers Workshops also wrote the candidate profiles for the online election and carried out some publicity the week before.



Our Lucky Leprechaun, Anne!

and Meath Travellers Workshops.

Intercultural Workshop in Vienna

In November our secretary, Ann spent a week in Vienna at an Intercultural Training Workshop. Ann is also a member of a national committee in the Irish Girl Guides and it was in this capacity Ann was invited to take part in the international initiative. The week looked at creative methods of working with disadvantaged people, with some emphasis on working with the disabled. 22 people from all over Europe took part in workshops, classes and exercises all designed to get the most out of the group you are working with. Ann found it exhausting but tremendously worthwhile and feels a lot of the tools and skills she learned will be of benefit in her work with the Girl Guides

Open Day – Traditional Traveller Trail

As part of Traveller Pride Week (5th to 9th Dec) we decided to open a Traditional Traveller Heritage Trail around the building. It was a great success. Four school classes came and some members of the public. The building looked very well and all MTW members put the work in to make sure the day went very well. Visitors were met by traditional music playing from the Barrell Top wagon, they were shown around the wagon and the history and meaning of its parts were explained. The groups then moved on to the tent which housed some of our collection of old photos.

The pre-school displayed all our youth activities, there were displays around the building, our tinsmiths explained their work in the shed and the visit was ended by hot non-alcoholic punch and a mince pie. Following on from the day we had a follow up request from one of the schools, An Bradan Feasta in Laytown, asking us to come to visit them, they enjoyed the Open Day so much.



Welcome to MTW!



Michael McDonagh receives his award

Traveller Pride Awards

All of MTW were very proud when our manager, Michael McDonagh received a Traveller Pride award for his work on behalf of the Travelling Community. On December 6th, the third Traveller Pride Awards were held in Dublin and attended by President Michael D Higgins and prominent Irish personalities. Traveller Pride Award winners were singled out for their contributions locally and nationally to Traveller's

heritage. Michael was presented his award by Niall Crowley of the Equality Authority. rights, employment, sports and

Family Support

Meath Travellers Workshops Ltd continues to provide Family Support. This is particular to Traveller families seeking support when dealing with statutory agencies such as HSE and the Dept of Education.

Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Over the past two years we have linked in with the Midlands Mediation service and have played a role in attempting to bring about reconciliation and conflict resolution with a number of families in the area. This type of work doesn't always seem to get a high profile until an explosion takes place. We continue to link in with the service which has proved to be of mutual benefit.

Local mediation has taken place with the support of MTW and in negotiation with An Garda Siochana. The mediation can be a long process where dialogue begins to take place with family representatives. This dialogue can only take place in the absence of violence and in a safe and neutral environment.



You don't have to be mad to work here. but....

Our services are now being called upon by families all over the North East Region. This area of

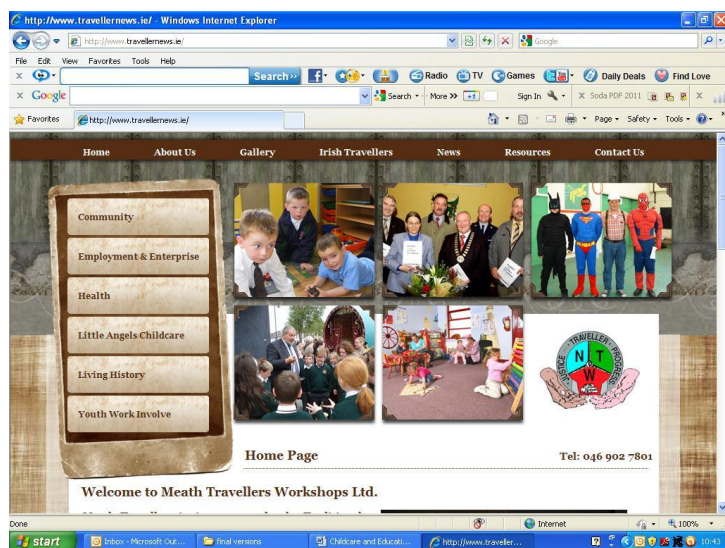
work is vital but can and does infringe on other work demands in the organisation. However, with this type of support it is sometimes necessary to give it a high priority and quick action to attempt to prevent an eruption of violence. Mediation can sometimes simply be a clarification of communication with the facilitation of a third party.

Alternatives to Violence Project

In 2012 Meath Travellers Workshops plans to hold several workshops under this programme which will work with anyone who wants to find ways of resolving conflict without resorting to violence. We will be working with Traveller men of all ages and asking them to consider the underlying causes of friction and violence and exploring practical ways of dealing with situations of violence by working things out in a non violent way. An AVP workshop takes 2-3 full days and explores five pillars of AVP: affirmation, communication, co-operation, community building and transforming power. We envisage that graduates of these workshops will then in turn become trainers of the programme in their own right.

Information Services

The Information Office in MTW Ltd has a very busy workload. The Information Officer came back from maternity leave in April and has since been assisted by a member of CE staff. The office, produces the MTW newsletter every two months, generates press releases and runs a media monitoring service. The office is also responsible for producing many reports and booklets to promote our work. In 2011 these included: the annual report, various promotional flyers and a pull up canvass banner for use at exhibitions and outside displays. The office has also taken over minding and updating our mobile displays which are themed on MTW's different areas of work and are incredibly useful when we are asked to visit other groups.



www.travellernews.ie

In September we were delighted to launch our dedicated news website. This is a stand alone website which has sections detailing all our activities, facilities, news and achievements. It is a very attractive and colourful site which is easy to navigate and can be updated easily and efficiently from the Information office. The information department is also responsible for updating and expanding our heritage website www.travellerheritage.ie . More details of this project is listed in the heritage section of this report.



MTW Ltd. Mobile Information and Support Service

Due to lack of funding this service came off the road in March. A lot of time has been spent this year exploring different options on how to address this. In November and December talks moved on considerably with the Citizens' Information Board with a view to them funding a Traveller specific service in Navan and Trim. Meetings have been set up in January 2012 to finalise

Mobile Information Van – soon to be back on the road! budgets so there may be light at the end of this tunnel soon. Following advice from the CIB our two identified Information Providers undertook a course in Navan Citizen's Information Office in order to prepare to take the service back on the road.

Outreach Work

An important part of the Information Offices work during 2011 was engaging productively and positively with several local committees. These included: Meath Social Inclusion Measures Group, RAPID and the Cultur Intercultural Committee. Our presence on each of these groups allow us advocate on Meath Travellers behalf and also informs us of what other groups are doing. From this engagement meant we have stroke up very good practical relationships with other organisations which compliments our work greatly.

Health

All Ireland Traveller Health Study

The launch the "All Ireland Traveller Health Study, Summary of Findings" in September 2010 confirmed the poorer health experience of members of the Traveller Community compared to the settled community. It highlighted various specific areas for concern and made several recommendations for action.

The recommendations of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study are summarised below:-

- A strategic action plan should be set out, with a firm commitment to implementation, targets and timeframes.
- Adequacy of accommodation is essential to ensure health improvement for Travellers.
- Improve educational outcomes and opportunities to be on a par with the general population within 10 years.
- Strong attention should be given to adult education.
- Address issues of negative stereotyping about Travellers and promote a more rounded understanding. Including a National exhibition of Traveller culture.
- Develop an appropriate employment policy for Travellers.

- Health & education professionals have a module on “Traveller health status and customs” in their curricula.
- Hospitals with a significant Traveller catchment population should include a section on Travellers in their staff induction programmes etc.



Important reading at the launch of the Health Study report

The findings of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study were saddening, but not surprising to the community. A total of 10,618 families took part in the study (9,056 families in the Republic of Ireland and 1,561 in Northern Ireland). The Traveller population on the island of Ireland is estimated as 40,129 (using the average family size in Republic of Ireland as 4 and Northern Ireland as 2.5)

Some key facts are highlighted below:-

Traveller Life Expectancy –

- Travellers are dying younger than general population.
- The gap in life expectancy between Traveller women and settled women is 11.5 years, (slightly improved from the 1987 study figure which was 12).
- The gap in life expectancy between Traveller men and settled men is 15.1 years, (worse than the 1987 study figure which was then 10 years difference).

Mortality

- Traveller women have three times the mortality rate of the general population and Traveller men have four times the mortality rate of the general population.
- Suicide in the Traveller community is 6 times the rate of the general population.
- Infant mortality (death rate) is 3.6 times the rate of the general population.

Main causes of death:

- Heart Disease / Stroke – 25%
- Cancer – 19%
- Respiratory Disease – 13%

Social Determinants

- 4.8% of Travellers in ROI and 14.5% in NI either employed or self-employed
- In ROI 38.5% of 30-44 year old Travellers and 25.8% of 45-64 year old Travellers had primary education only
- In NI 26.2% of 30-44 year olds and 18.4% of 45-64 year olds had primary education only
- The majority of respondents, (75.9% in ROI and 94.3% in NI), lived in family units of 5 or less.
- Difficulty in reading in 28.8% of Traveller families in the ROI and 33.5% of NI families

Lifestyle

- Of those tested in the last 12 months a quarter were diagnosed as having High Cholesterol and over a third had High Blood Pressure.
- 66.3% said that illicit drug use is a problem in the community.
- 30.9% Travellers said price is a factor which prevents them to eat healthy.
- Overall there is a 15% higher rate of smoking among Travellers compared to the general population.

Adult Health Services.

- Barriers identified were waiting list (62.7% ROI and 46.8% NI), embarrassment (47.8% ROI and 50.1% NI) and lack of information (37.3% ROI and 28.6% NI)
- Complete trust in health professional (41.0% ROI and 34.6% NI) was lower than general population (82.7%)

Value of Primary Health Care for Traveller Projects

Health Information

- 83% of the Travellers interviewed said they got their health information and advice from Primary Health Care for Traveller Projects and the Travellers organisations.

Women's Health

- 25% of Traveller women compared to 13% of general population had a breast screening.
- 23% of the Travellers had Smear test compared to 12% of general population.



*Michael McDonagh discusses the Heath Study
with Pavee Point's Martin Collins*

Social Capital

- Importance and pride in Traveller identity and culture
- Very good support within family and community
- Extended family networks
- Strong sense of community
- Empowerment of Traveller women
- A community open to adapting to change
- High level of trust within the Traveller community relative to the settled

How the All Ireland Traveller Health Study has influenced the work of Meath Travellers Workshops?

The organisation has long realised the affects of the 'wider determinants of health'* on Travellers' health experience. MTW continues to promote activities that support Travellers in their day to day lives, encourage representation on issues affecting Travellers, portray a positive image in the community along with celebrating Traveller culture and heritage.

**wider determinants of health* model links living and working conditions to health include influence on health of issues like accommodation, income, education, service access, environment and employment.

Community Development Health Worker

Louise Levins has been employed as Community Development Health Worker since late 2005. The position is split between supporting the work of the Meath Primary Health Care Project for Travellers employees and working directly with her colleagues in Navan Travellers Workshops.

Part of the role within Navan Travellers Workshops involves representation at various local, regional and national groups related to issues affecting the community. These include meetings arranged by the Traveller Health Unit, the Local Traveller Health Advisory Committee, the North East Regional Traveller Drug & Alcohol Group, the National Traveller Health Network and the National Traveller Suicide Awareness Project.

During 2011 many groups felt the effects of budgetary cuts and have sought ways of trying to support and maintain their networking along with focussing energy on the possible.

Another part of the role is working with colleagues to support them in developing health related learning opportunities and initiatives, like the Men's Health Group. Louise linked with the Navan Travellers Education Centre to support the uptake of SafeTALK training programme (suicide alertness for everyone) with participants there.

During the late summer Louise participated in the men's tin smithing course with a view to recording the process for the future. This has lead to the development of a book "The Craft of the Tin Smith" which we expect to obtain funding to publish during 2012. Louise comments that "it was a great pleasure to work recording the tin smithing process and the group were terrific the group engagement and camaraderie confirmed for me the link between cultural experiences and positive mental health"

Employment and Training

Community Employment Programme

Our Community Employment Programme provides a viable work force for all sections of Meath Travellers Workshops.

During 2011 the CE programme offered work experience and training to 21 participants in the following areas:



In December, members of the Workshop visited the Horse Project in Tallaght

- Childcare
- Youth Work
- Community Development
- Heritage
- Reception/Clerical
- Cleaning and Maintenance
- Library
- Information
- Administration

All participants receive hands on work experience in their area, as well as FETAC certified training throughout the year. This programme is designed to increase progression into mainstream employment and fulltime education and training. During 2011 participants gained certification in subjects such as Childcare, Business Admin and Reception Skills, Security, Manual handling and safety training and Payroll training. Going forward into 2012 there will be a focus on core skills for learners that need to improve on areas like reading, writing, communications and IT skills.

Additional Training

MTW also strive to provide our staff and CE participants with holistic and life skills courses which we feel will be both educational and beneficial. One of these courses we ran last year was a Suicide Assist Course . Unfortunately this topic is becoming more and more relevant to the Traveller and wider community in Meath. Here a participant explains her experience on the course:

“Recently I completed a course called “Assist”. When I heard that the course was about suicide I was very worried that it was something I would have great difficulty with. I had experienced an attempted suicide in my own family and be-cause of this I thought that I wouldn’t be able to listen, not alone talk about suicide in a group. I couldn’t have been more wrong! The people giving the course were mindful of the feelings of the group and were aware that nearly every family in Ireland have experienced the devastation suicide can bring. Far from being a very sad course, it was full of good humour and we had many laughs! It was given in a way that made us all feel comfortable. It was probably the most rewarding course I’ve done and I think everyone who has the opportunity should do this course. You’ll be glad you did!”

CE Supervisor Changes

In 2011, Daphne Van Baten our CE supervisor left to resume her previous work as a youth worker. Daphne spent 18 months as CE supervisor and before that she spent a year working on the MTEI programme. Daphne moves to the Jigsaw youth project in Navan so we hope she won’t be a stranger!

Peter Martin replaced Daphne as CE supervisor. He has been a great addition to the MTW team, showing himself to be as approachable as he is conscientious. Welcome aboard Peter!

Work Experience Opportunities for Students



Two work experience students from Youthreach show off their new tin skills at the MTW open day

Volunteers and Students regularly request placements with our organisation. Following on from a Volunteer Management Training course we attended through Meath Volunteer Centre, we have now in place a simple contract to ensure that the expectations of the volunteer and ourselves are clear from the outset.

For students on placement, there is a structured plan in place to explore and enable them to see all areas of our work. After which they are encouraged to

decide themselves if they would like to plan and deliver an initiative in a particular area. During 2011 we

facilitated placements from the following institutions: Navan Youthreach Foundation, Progression and Hi-way Café, Kells Youthreach, Cavan IT, NUI Maynooth, BTEI, Athlone IT and the Probation Service.



Leisa from MTEI help you!

Meath Traveller Employment Initiative

MTEI Has had a productive year we managed to get 12 clients into Employment/Temp Contracts. Clients also completed various training course like manual handling and Door and Static Security. Some client went back to Education thru various courses that the VEC ran therefore the clients are improving their skills and making them more job ready.

The MTEI Service helps Travellers who are looking to get into employment holding one to one meetings, identifying their skills and interests and matching them to suitable job roles. We also

offer advice on appropriate training and Education opportunities. We also support the individual with pre-

employment guidance and support, supporting with application process (cvs, cover letters, interview skills and preparation)

We also contact employers on the behalf of the jobseeker therefore giving the employer a background of the candidate before interviewing and selling them to the employer.

Heritage

In many ways our Heritage programme is the jewel in the crown of MTW's work. It certainly attracts the most interest from the public both Traveller and settled and is as enjoyable as it is important.

Travellerheritage.ie

Our ground breaking website, www.travellerheritage.ie still attracts on average over 2000 visitors per month. The site was totally redesigned in 2010 and the early part of 2011 was spent updating the photo section and ironing out a few tweaks. During 2011 we were lucky enough to be given a private collection of photographs from the photographer John Hulme. They are beautiful and attracting a lot of attention on the site. We hope to secure another larger private collection this year. In total we now have nearly 1000 photos in our online archive.



Traveller Tales

MTW intend to add an exciting new dimension to our online heritage programme. We have applied to the Heritage Council for funding to enable us to record older traditional style



Michael McDonagh tells a tale to local school children

Traveller story tellers. We aim to record 10 older Travellers in their homes recounting old stories that would have been popular around campfires of times past. The footage will then be available on our new online video channel, "Traveller Tales". This channel will sit beside our current heritage site. The video will be hosted on YouTube and then linked to the new story telling site at www.travellerheritage.ie/travellertales. We feel that Traveller Tales will help preserve the skill of story telling and the stories themselves among the Travelling Community and will build on Meath Travellers Workshops excellent reputation as an accessible and trusted resource for anyone interested in learning about Traveller

heritage.

Living History

Our Barrel Top wagon forms the centre piece of our Living History project. The wagon, complete with story teller, tin-smith, campfire and tent brings this part of Traveller culture to life in an entertaining and educational way. The Living History project has visited a number of

schools, traditional fairs and organisations over the past year. This project has become very effective in delivering its message. The funding for the Crossroads project, of which the Living History forms part, comes from Pobal. This year we added a “shelter tent” to the Living History project. This tent is used to house our photographic exhibition.



During 2011 our Living History project visited the following fairs and schools: Navan Shamrock Festival, Dundalk IT, Darndale School, St. Francis School Coolock, Tullyvin Fair Cavan, St Michael's Loreto Navan, Dunderry Fair, Pavee Point, Navan Town and Country Fair, Scurlogstown Haymaking Trim, Gaelscoil na Camóige Clondalkin, St Anne's Primary School Navan, Scoil Mhuire Navan, Trim Childcare Centre, Involve Summer Camp Navan, Muff Fair, Moynalty fair, Ardee Fair, Mullage Fair,

Dunshaughlin Fair and Eureka School Kells.

Traveller Heritage Park, Carnaross, Kells, Co Meath

In 2006, farmer Bryan Kearney bequeathed a large part of his farm to Meath Travellers Workshops. With nearly 70 acres of land to fill, MTW decided to commission a Feasibility study which would help us decide what to do with the property. This report looked at all aspects of our current work, our strengths, weaknesses and the layout of the land. Most importantly it looked into what would benefit the Travelling community but also considering the local people of the area. This research was carried out through discussion forums which included Travellers and locals from the area. The report also compared what was on offer in other heritage parks around Ireland. We feel that our Traveller Heritage Park will be a unique experience for all visitors both Traveller and the wider community. It is our aim



The old farmhouse on the Carnaross land

to provide a valuable interactive, educational and entertaining facility.

Future Plans

- Allotments and produce for sale
- Horsemanship, stabling and pasture facilities
- Tinsmithing workshops
- Tin craft production for sale
- Tea shop for visitors
- Traditional skills workshops

- Traveller Heritage exhibition
- Experience living as a Traveller from the 1950's and sleep in a shelter tent or barrel top wagon
- Housing the Traveller Heritage Photographic archive
- Training and conference facilities



A film crew from "My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding" films our tinsmith group

Tinsmith Skills

During the summer we started our tin-smith courses. 6 Traveller men attended every week for 10 weeks and learned skills which led them to making their own buckets, jugs and other items. Meath Travellers Workshops are now in the process of gaining official FETAC certification for this unique programme. Currently MTW are working with FAS to introduce the first accredited Tin Smith course to Irish learners, in particular to Traveller learners. As part of this progression, our Health Worker, Louise Levins has spent some very busy months putting together a step by step manual of all the methods of

tinsmithing that are being taught on our course. The manual is easy to read with each step photographed and explained. It makes an interesting and maybe a vital read for anyone interested in the topic. An emailed copy is available from Meath Travellers Workshops.

Management and Staff of Meath Travellers Workshops Ltd 2011

<p>Board of Directors Joe Reilly – Chairperson Nathanya McDonagh (Vice Chairperson) John McDonagh Catriona McDonagh Jenny D’Arcy Kathleen Connors Marie Daly Anne Hyland (Company Secretary) Paddy Pryle (Treasurer)</p> <p>Additional members for the Board of Management Barbara Bolger Leonard Callaghan Louise Clinton Caroline O Keane Catherine McGlone</p>	<p>Staff Manager - Michael McDonagh Secretary - Anne Hyland Finance Officer - David Murray Little Angels Childcare co-ordinator - Marie McDonagh Youth Work Co-ordinator – Kay McCabe Youth Worker – Micheal Mac Donnacha Community Development and Heritage Worker – Ellen McDonagh Community Development Health Worker – Louise Levins Community and Development and Outreach Worker – Sinead Burke Community Employment Supervisor – Peter Martin MTEI Facilitator – Leisa Colligan There are 21 Community Employment Participants working in MTW Ltd.</p>
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Meath Travellers Workshops

Navan Travellers Workshops Ltd trading as Meath Travellers Workshops is a voluntary Community Development Organisation. Since 1965 it was been a partnership of Travellers and Settled people working together to improve and enhance the social and economic situation of the Travelling community in Co. Meath.

Our Mission Statement

Meath Travellers Workshops is proud to be a Traveller-led community development organisation that is approachable and accessible to all.
We cherish and promote Traveller values and identity, and through partnership, training and education, seek to promote equality for all.

The aims of Meath Travellers' Workshops are:

- To prevent the erosion of the economic base of Travellers.
- To enable participation of Travellers in the Education system.
- To develop Programmes that will encourage ownership and empowerment.
- To promote respect for Traveller identity and culture.
- To provide sufficient validation to create an atmosphere of self-determination and reduce dependency.

Our Credo is as follows:

“We recognise that meaningful change for Travellers can only take place when we have both the skills and confidence to organise ourselves and articulate our own needs and this Organisation can best achieve this by supporting the appropriate inclusion of Travellers with area-based Programmes of Local, Social & Economic development”.

Statement of Director’s Responsibilities:

Company law requires the Directors to prepare Financial Statements for each year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company for that year. In preparing those Financial Statements, the Directors are required to:

Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
Prepare financial statements on a going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper Books of Account, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts 1963 to 1990. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Acknowledgements

Funding & Support

The continued work of Meath Travellers Workshops relies on funding and support from a wide range of sources which is crucial to our operations. We appreciate both the funding and our excellent relationships with all our sponsors. Some of these include:-

FAS, HSE, Pobal, Dept of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, Leargas “Youth in Action” Programme, National Development Plan, the Heritage Council, the Loreto Foundation, Meath County Council, County Meath VEC, Meath Partnership, Involve, Crann Support Services, Department of the Environment and Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform.

Links to other organisations

We are also delighted to link in with local, regional, national and international

organisations. Some of these include:-

Local *Cultur, Navan Springboard, LTACC (Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee), Local Traveller Health Advisory Committee, Comhairle Na nOg, SIM (Social Inclusion Measure) group, Meath Child, Youth and Family Support Forum, Meath Youth Federation, St Mary's Parish, Claremont Stadium, Meath Local Sports Partnership, Rapid, Navan Girl Guide, Meath County Childcare Committee, Kells Peoples Resource Centre, Trim and Navan Family Resource Centres, Navan Library, Navan Town Council, Navan Shamrock Festival, Rehabcare, Meath Primary Healthcare Project, Navan Travellers Education Centre, Unity Centre Windtown, Meath Interagency Strategy for the Support and Delivery of Services to the Traveller Community, Joint Policing Committee, Citizens Information, Jobmatters, Dunderry Fair, Youthreach, Scurlogstown Olympiad Trim*

Regional *Traveller Health Unit, Regional Traveller Drugs & Alcohol Forum, Traveller Suicide Working group, Regional Drugs Voluntary Cluster Group, Border Counties Childcare Network, Dundalk Institute of Technology*

National *National Travellers Health Network, Barnardos, Irish Traveller Movement, Pavee Point, The Wheel, National Traveller CDP Network, National Travellers Health Network, National Traveller Health Study, Traveller Specific Drugs Initiative,*

International *Fritsforvaltningen Karlstad Kommun Sweden and Grenzenlos, amongst many others.....*

And we must not forget... **Thank You!**

