



Dublin City
Baile Átha Cliath

“Not Just Something From the Rare Oul Times ...”



Social Inclusion Handbook
A Guide for Staff

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Contacts and Sources

Want To Know More?

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Foreword

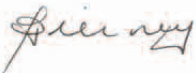
I am pleased to present this Social Inclusion Handbook for the staff of Dublin City Council. It marks another step in the process of promoting social inclusion in Dublin City.

This guide will assist management and staff in identifying and understanding the issues, terminology and initiatives associated with social inclusion.

Through a greater understanding of these issues you will be better equipped to deliver services with inclusiveness at the core of its thinking.

I would like to thank the Social Inclusion Unit for their time and effort in putting this handbook together and believe it will be of great benefit as we continue to foster the social inclusion process.

It is only through social inclusion that everyone can achieve a better quality of life.



John Tierney
City Manager

The Constant Risk ...

"I used to think I was poor. Then they told me I wasn't poor, I was needy. Then they told me it was self-defeating to think of myself as needy. I was deprived. (Oh not deprived but rather underprivileged) Then they told me that underprivileged was overused. I was disadvantaged. I still don't have a dime. But I have a great vocabulary."

Jules Feiffer, American cartoonist in the 1960s

What This Is

This Handbook has been developed to help Dublin City Council staff in their day-to-day work.

We'd like it to fulfil two basic roles:

- to raise staff awareness about social inclusion and poverty ... and particularly as they impact on the lives of many Dublin people
- to give staff a sense of what's being done to address these critical issues and to provide them with further information, contacts and sources

In all of this we want Council staff, in all areas and at all levels, to recognise that their part of the Council's business is both affected by, and has an impact on, the circumstances of people across the city who live with exclusion on a daily basis.

The Handbook begins by giving a basic explanation of what we mean when we talk about social exclusion and poverty. In doing that, a constant focus is kept on how they both impact on and are to be found in Dublin.

It then goes on to give a sense of a number of things, both nationally and locally, that are being done to address exclusion.

A brief look is then taken at some linked policy areas and, finally, a number of useful contact details and information sources are given.

Patricia Cussen
Social Inclusion Manager
August 2007

Spelling it Out

Since 1997 we have been working to this definition of poverty in Ireland:

“People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalized from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society”.

Source: National Anti-Poverty Strategy



Social Exclusion: What Do We Mean By That?

Basic Principles

In modern Ireland the terms “social exclusion” and “poverty” are often used inter-changeably. They are strongly inter-related ... but aren’t the same thing.

The Idea of Poverty

Poverty is the more traditional concept and is commonly understood to relate to the lack, or even total absence of money. We all have that understanding of what “being poor” means. It’s important to recognise however that there’s no set measure of poverty as there is for weight, or temperature, or distance. Instead people are seen to be poor in terms of their position relative to other people. That means the notion of poverty changes over time and from place to place.

In Ireland we have well-developed ways of measuring poverty. Put simply, people are deemed to be in poverty if they bring home (including benefits etc) 60% or less of the average income. In 2005, at the most basic level, that meant a single adult bringing in less than €193 per week was deemed to be in poverty. Nearly one-person-in-five in Ireland (19%) fell into that category.

Basic financial poverty doesn’t however tell the whole story. Increasingly we’ve become interested in what people’s living circumstances are ... in what their “quality of life” is on a daily basis. To get a sense of this, we look at what are known as the “eight deprivation items”. Most people would see these items as basic building blocks for daily living, ie:

- one substantial meal each day
- chicken/meat/fish/equivalent in that meal every other day
- a “roast” or equivalent once a week
- two pairs of strong shoes
- a warm, waterproof coat
- new, not second hand clothes
- appropriate heating
- the ability to meet basic household expenses, without getting into debt

If people lack one or more of these basic items – through necessity, not choice – and are at or below 60% of the average income, then they are deemed to be in Consistent Poverty. In 2005, 7% of Ireland's population fell into this categories ...

From Poverty to Social Exclusion

It has also become increasingly clear that financial poverty is not the only thing that makes life difficult for many people. Social exclusion is the term used to describe the “condition” of not being able to participate fully in society ... of not being able to enjoy the good things in life. Very often that “condition” is due to people's lack of money or resources, ie they simply cannot afford the good things in life. Increasingly however it is also due to other influences. These can include:

- direct discrimination against particular groups or categories of people
- “physical” barriers such as a lack of transport or the absence of services or facilities in areas and communities
- people not having the confidence to literally step forward and participate in society and what it offers
- people lacking the skills or qualifications which may be needed for social and economic participation
- organisations working on the basis of “one size fits all” and not being geared to the particular needs of people from particular backgrounds or with particular service needs or problems



Picture Supplied By: Claire Pierce

From the Other Side of the Counter ...

“I don’t know who you are ... and you don’t know who I am

I don’t know the City Council ... nor your part in it

You don’t know what my life is like ... nor what I do

I don’t know what the Council does ... who’s in it ... nor how it’s
organised

You don’t know how my life and my community are organised ... if
they’re organised at all

You don’t know what brought me here ... nor how fearful I am

I don’t know what the Council stands for ... how you’ll treat me

I can’t even read these words ...

... so what’s that about you sorting out my exclusion ...?”

The Dynamics of Poverty and Exclusion

Poverty and exclusion aren't static things. They are instead dynamic, feeding off each other, usually in the form of a downward spiral. They're also strongly correlated with particular groups of people. These include:

Group	Poverty/Exclusion Issues They Can Face
Unemployed people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low incomes ... and possible deprivation • Prone to ill-health • Likely to live in poor housing
People with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems getting good jobs • Issues re accessing services and facilities • Higher living costs
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendency to be in lower paid jobs • Likely to have home/caring duties • Stereotyped re careers
Travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor housing conditions • Limited job opportunities • Face overt discrimination
Migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to have low paid, low-skilled jobs • Face overt discrimination • Risk of "ghettoisation"
Lone parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low incomes.. but face full child-rearing costs • Likely to be in poor housing • Restricted lives outside the home
Low educational achievers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self esteem and confidence • Limited job opportunities • Problems dealing with an increasingly literate and numerate society
Home-makers or carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited opportunities outside the home • Restricted job options • Low self esteem and confidence
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low incomes • Higher living costs (eg heating) • Loneliness and isolation
Homeless people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major problems re jobs and work • Poor health • Addiction and abuse risks

So ... What Do Things Look Like in Dublin City?

If we match the national averages as identified in the 2005 EU-SILC (Survey on Income and Living Conditions), then there will be some 91,700 people in Dublin City in Income Poverty. Beyond that, some measures or indicators of Consistent Poverty (as defined above and using 2002 Census figures) in the City Council area are:

Grouping	Consistent Poverty Position in Dublin
Overall total	• 7.0% of the population ... or 34,700 people
Lone parent households	• 27.2 % of lone-parent households ... ie 6,370 households in total ... 86% of which are headed by women
Children	• 10.2% of the 0-14 population ... or 7,630 children in total
Over 65s	• 3.7% of the over 65 population ... or 2,350 older people
Unemployed people	• 21.6% of those out of work ... or 4,925 people
People who are ill/disabled	• 17.4% ... or at least 3,070 people with disabilities or chronic illness
People with primary/no formal education in Consistent Poverty	• 10.1% ... or 7,565 adults
People in rented or rent-free housing	• 21.4% ... or 12,770 households
People with home duties	• 9.4% of those looking after the home or family ... ie 4,320 people ... 94% of whom will be women

What's Being Done in Response?

The National Picture

For a decade now, addressing poverty and exclusion has been a core government objective in Ireland. The first National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) was launched in 1997 and was rolled forward in 2002 via the “Building an Inclusive Society” document. During these years Ireland also became increasingly enmeshed in EU-wide anti-poverty/exclusion programmes. At the same time this work came to be accepted as part of government's mainstream business, and not just an “add on” to core programmes. The emphasis has also shifted from addressing social exclusion to promoting social inclusion. That puts a more positive slant on things ... and is one that's deliberately followed in the remainder of this hand-book.

The acceptance of mainstreaming is very clear in the new National Development Plan 2007-13, “Transforming Ireland”. Social Inclusion is one of the Plan's five priorities and its eight programmes have been allocated 27% of the 183.7 billion planned NDP spend.

Early 2007 also saw the launch of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, 2007-16. Commonly known as NAPinclusion it deliberately complements the NDP and takes a life-cycle approach, focusing on the following:

- children
- people of working age
- older people
- people with disabilities
- communities

The Dublin City Council Picture

For several years Dublin City Council has been to the forefront of local government-led social inclusion work. The Council established the country's first Social Inclusion Unit and continues to address, both directly and indirectly, social exclusion across the city.

The achievement of social inclusion is a core principle within the Dublin City Council Corporate Plan 2005-09. Following on from this the City Council have developed a specific Social Inclusion Strategy, 2007-2009. Central to that Strategy is the belief that everyone in the Council, and every part of the Council's business, can do something to improve the levels of inclusion across the city.



An Agenda for the City:

Social Inclusion Strategic Guidelines

The Council's Social Inclusion Strategy sets 10 guidelines for combating social exclusion in its work across the city.

The Council will:

- Ensure that Social Inclusion is embedded in its corporate planning and will incorporate Social Inclusion indicators in the review and monitoring of corporate plans
- Ensure awareness of Social Inclusion amongst DCC staff at all levels
- Promote public awareness of the range of services offered by Dublin City Council and the role of the Council in combating social exclusion in the communities it serves
- Enhance the accessibility of the full range of Dublin City Council services
- Enhance the accessibility of the built environment and public facilities in Dublin City
- Support equality and diversity in the workplace
- Support local democracy and participation. Ensure that local and city planning is informed by effective consultation with local communities, through proactive and targeted engagement and support
- Support the development of inclusive and sustainable communities
- Strategically promote Social Inclusion amongst all agencies working throughout Dublin City
- Contribute to the development and co-ordination of Social Inclusion policy at national level

The City Council's Social Inclusion Unit

The Council's Social Inclusion Unit has been in place since 2000. Located within the Department of Community and Enterprise, it takes the lead in developing the Council's social inclusion agenda. The Unit analyses the causes and effects of exclusion and disadvantage in Dublin and develops strategies in response.

The Unit works within the contexts set by the national policies and strategies outlined in the national picture, making sure they are brought to life at the local level. It raises awareness of social inclusion issues across the Council and supports the development and implementation within Council Departments of policies, programmes and projects which improve social inclusion. Among the Unit's initiatives have been a regular social inclusion newsletter, the rolling out of an annual Social Inclusion Week in April 2007 and development of poverty & social exclusion awareness training for the City Council's Human Resources Induction Course.

The Unit also continue to promote their Social Inclusion agenda externally. They support a large number of projects throughout the City. This support comes in many forms including financial, steering group support and advice.

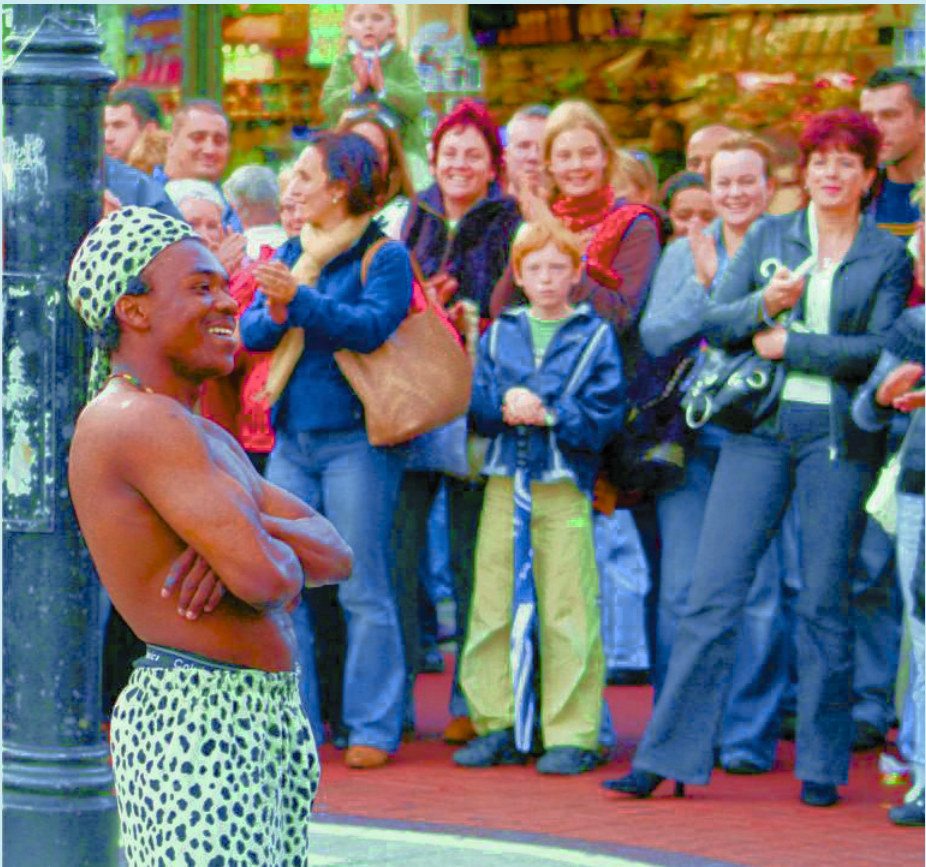
The Dublin City Development Board (DCDB)

The Council's Community and Enterprise Department also facilitates the work of the Dublin **City Development Board (DCDB)**. The DCDB brings together the public, private and voluntary sectors with the common aim of taking forward the social, the economic and the cultural development of the city. The DCDB has prioritised social inclusion work and makes sure its member organisations and agencies tackle these issues in coordinated and joined-up ways.

SIM (Social Inclusion Measures Group)

Improving the quality of life for people who experience poverty and exclusion in Dublin City is main objective of the Social Inclusion Measures Group (SIM), which was established in 2003, to coordinate social inclusion measures at a local level.

As a statutory sub group of the Dublin City Development Board (DCDB), the remit of the SIM Group is to focus on National Development Plan (NDP) funded measures, objectives of the National Anti Poverty Strategy (NAPs) and the activities of local development agencies, which include Area Partnerships, POBAL funded community groups, the RAPID programme and the local Drugs Task Forces.



Picture Supplied By: Simon Farrell

RAPID in Dublin

The RAPID programme (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) was launched in 2001, targeting 46 different disadvantaged urban communities across Ireland. Nine of the communities selected are in Dublin City:

Dublin City RAPID Areas
Ballyfermot
Ballymun
Finglas
North-East Inner City
North-West Inner City
Northside
South-East Inner City
South Inner City (Central)
South-West Inner City

RAPID was set up with three basic aims:

- to target public spending at the RAPID areas
- to improve the delivery of public services in them
- to increase the opportunities for local people to contribute to the improvement of their areas

Each RAPID programme is overseen by a cross-sectoral, cross-agency Area Implementation Team (AIT). The AITs, aided by a RAPID Co-ordinator, drew up plans for their area which reflected the three basic aims listed above. Those plans continue to be reviewed and will look at issues such as crime and safety, family support, youth support, the physical environment, education, health and employment and training.

Something For Everyone... Something By Everyone

It's easy to think that social inclusion work is just for a specialist few in the Council ... that it doesn't really have much to do with the rest of us. That's not at all the case ... as the suggestions below show:

Service Area	Its Contribution to Social Inclusion
Housing and Residential Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better housing for people • Ability-to-pay reflected • Travellers' needs reflected • Estate management puts tenants at the centre of things
Roads and Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street lighting makes communities safer...reduces isolation .. gets people out-and-about • Traffic management reduces risk to people, especially children in otherwise risky settings
Environment and Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves and maintains public health
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good land use planning helps share out public resources • People's access to services are improved • Communities are provided with ranges of facilities • Crime and anti-social behaviour can be designed out • Affordable housing is provided
Culture, Recreation and Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places and communities look and feel better • Local health status is improved and maintained • Ability to pay for core services is reflected • Public leisure provision improves the quality of people's lives • Good services improve neighbourhoods • Libraries facilitate personal and community development • Higher education grants open education doors to people
Corporate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections give people civic control • Consumer protection prevents exploitation of the weak and vulnerable

Dublin City Council Initiatives

Virtually all Council Departments have developed initiatives that help improve the social inclusion of Council service users. Some of those initiatives are summarised below.

The **City Manager's Department** plans to web-cast (a web-cast is a broadcast of sound and pictures over the internet) City Council meetings. The Council's web-cast will be in place by the end of 2007 and will help make the Council and its business more open and transparent for the citizens of Dublin.

Planning has appointed two Planning Information Officers to fill an identified 'gap' between Planning Department and the community.

Engineering has put in place a series of responses which include the following:

- a Waiver Scheme in respect of waste charges for low income households and in cases of hardship
- flexible arrangements for householders to clear waste charges arrears in weekly or monthly installments
- a Green Bin/Green Bag collection service for dry recyclable materials for all households at no additional charge
- extensive recycling facilities across the city free of charge, ie 13 bring/recycling centres, 120 glass banks and 4 green waste reception centres
- a free-of-charge bulky household waste collection service
- a graffiti removal programme
- five Rapid Response Mobile Units to remove dumped materials from laneways, open spaces, etc
- Extensive public awareness campaigns to promote recycling, water conservation and anti-littering
- a Green Schools Officer to promote best environmental practices among schoolchildren
- Tidy District competitions, promoting good environmental practices across the city
- Home composting bins provided at reasonable cost to householders to promote recycling

Motor Tax might be seen as an “inclusion-neutral” service but its initiatives here include:

- free (ie “no cost”) driving licences to drivers who are 70 or older
- motor tax exemptions for people with disabilities
- translation of a number of forms into different languages
- a pilot programme providing dedicated internet access in local libraries to the Motor Tax on-line website for people without internet access at home

Roads and Traffic meanwhile are:

- upgrading all pedestrian crossings in the city to full MID (Mobile Impaired and Disabled) standards (tactile paving, wheelchair dishing and audio tactile units)
- extending the Quality Bus Corridor network, which improves access for all, particularly those who aren’t car owners

Housing and Residential Services continue to play a pivotal role in increasing social inclusion across Dublin. Some of the basic, traditional ways it does this are:

- provision of housing for rent for lower income households
- rent levels based on people’s ability to pay
- training in budgeting and management skills provided for tenants
- facilitation of affordable housing for lower income households
- involvement of tenants in estate management
- consultation with tenants on Council plans and proposals
- focused work with groups which traditionally experience acute social exclusion, eg Travellers and ethnic minorities

The **Housing Welfare Section** is Dublin City Council's social work service. Some of their services include:

- to provide a confidential, social work service to tenants, tenant purchasers and potential tenants of Dublin City Council
- to meet the combined needs and welfare of the tenant, Dublin City Council and the local community
- to put clients in contact with appropriate services, such as the Health Service Executive, child protection services or money advice services
- the Neighbour Mediation Service, which is independent, strictly confidential, non-confrontational, voluntary and free of charge. Mediation is a way of resolving disputes using a neutral third party

Travellers Section

- Tenant Participation Course completed in Labre Park Halting Site. This model to be extended to other sites
- Traveller Specific employment scheme being initiated by Dublin City Council

Affordable Housing

- Dublin City Council provides Affordable Homes (Apartments and Houses) through the Affordable Housing Scheme
- Affordable housing was set up to help lower or middle-income households, who cannot afford to buy a home on the open market
- Under the scheme new homes are sold at a discount which means prices are much lower than general property prices. If you sell the property within 20 years, you pay back a percentage of the sale price to the local authority, which is known as claw back

Shared Ownership

- Dublin City Council operates Loan Schemes for the purchase of homes for first time buyers (some exceptions. e.g. marital break-up where an individual is left without equity from a pre-owned dwelling)
- The principal loan currently available is known as Shared Ownership and is available to eligible applicants who are purchasing on the open property market in the City and also to applicants who have been successful in the selection process for Dublin City Council's Affordable Housing Scheme. Dublin City Council also operates an Annuity Loan Scheme

The Housing Maintenance Section provide the following services, over and above the normal Housing Maintenance function of maintenance repair and upkeep of our Housing stock.

- Neighbourhood Warden Service in our new housing estates in Ballymun
- Window Replacement Loan to our tenants which is interest free
- Adaptations and alterations to tenancy dwellings for elderly and disabled persons
- Provide extensions for disabled persons and to families in overcrowded situations
- Provision of new gas central heating systems in all tenancy dwellings where required, which includes service and maintenance repair
- Provide documentation such as Tenants Handbooks, Maintenance Repair Handbooks, Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure Booklets, Housing Allocations Booklet and the do's and don'ts with regard to Fire Safety in the Home

The Council's **Homeless Service** makes a major, specific contribution to improving social inclusion in the city. The Service liaises with both the city-wide Homeless Agency and the HSE and in its own right also:

- manages three emergency /supported accommodation hostels and buys in access to a range of privately-provided accommodation
- provides a Nightbus service for rough sleepers
- works to help permanently resettle people who have become homeless
- manages some 40 units of transitional and permanent supported accommodation

The Council's newly-established **Children's Services Unit** has as its priority the inclusion of all children in the life of the city. Some of the ways it will take this forward include:

- "child-proofing" of all Housing, Development and Sports services
- looking at the children's dimensions within support given to homeless, Traveller and migrant communities
- structured play opportunities provided for children during the summer, including play days, a fun roadshow, an art programme and a gardening programme
- a planned approach to improving opportunities for children's play and their access to open space
- provision of high quality, well-equipped play areas
- involvement of children and young people in Council consultations and decision-making eg Comhairle Na nÓg

The Council's **Community Development** section consistently prioritises social inclusion across Dublin.

Among the actions here are:

- a community-based adult education programme which focuses on developing skills, eg home décor, managing on a budget, cookery, art, aromatherapy and child development in communities with the greatest needs
- recreation programmes in a number of centres, eg Sheriff St, Pearse St, East Wall, Blackhall Place, Hardwicke St, and George's Place
- low-cost summer projects for children
- welcome packs to introduce and welcome new tenants to their area
- home visits by a liaison officer to vulnerable old people
- the Lord Mayor's "Passport for Leisure" card initiative which offers reduced rates and discounts in both Council and private commercial facilities

Human Resources have improved social inclusion by:

- discussing with Glen College Special Needs Training Centre, Chapelizod how some of their trainees might be employed by the Council, on work experience initially but with a view to moving into full employment
- developing an EQUAL project with the LGMSB (Local Government Management Services Board) and the Dublin Employment Pact which will produce an Interview Skills Pack for use by General Operatives and Craft Workers who are competing for internal promotion (the 2004 Workplace Review showed that this group did not have confidence in the interview and selection processes and this pack will try to bridge this gap)
- addressing literacy issues within the Council through the **Return To Learning Programme**

Corporate Services initiatives include:

- Over-the-Phone Payments, Touch Tone and Web Payments which help people with disabilities to interact better with the Council
- a Hearing Loop System in the Customer Services Centre and the Fire Alarm Warning Device for visitors with hearing difficulties in the Civic Offices
- a “Soft Skills” Training Course for Customer Service Agents is also being devised with the IPA and the Council’s Training Unit: it will include guidance to staff when dealing with social inclusion issues

The **IS Department** is taking forward a number of projects which will make the Council and its services more accessible. In all of these, people’s access to, and competence in, IT/ICT will be reflected.

City Architects continue to build in community and user consultation as a key part of the design process for all City Council projects.

The Council’s **Library & Archive Services** have a long-established tradition of directly addressing exclusion across the city. Nearly 194,000 people are members of the free library service and just some of the Service’s other initiatives include:

- a purpose- built accessible mobile Learning Bus, fitted with PCs which delivers outreach IT-related training
- the “Websmart” internet training programme, delivered in 21 branch libraries across the city
- free public internet access and computer learning at all branch libraries
- an open Digital Learning Centre based in Ballyfermot library
- the use of libraries to take forward various “e-government” initiatives, making Council services more open and accessible

- two fully accessible mobile library units which visit sites citywide including schools, sheltered housing complexes and individuals at home with mobility problems
- a variety of projects addressing accessibility issues such as awareness training for staff, the introduction of hearing loop systems and optical scanners and “talking books”
- a series of responses to the growing ethnic diversity of the city, including multi-lingual book collections and language learning
- literacy-oriented programmes for young people
- extended library opening hours

The Council's **Development Department** meanwhile contributes to greater social inclusion within Dublin by:

- leasing Council-owned land to community and sporting groups at abated rents
- including a Community Gain element in the disposal of some development sites
- the use of Tax Incentive Schemes to support Urban Regeneration



Picture Supplied By: Lucy McMahon

“Who Else Is In The Field?”

Social inclusion covers a wide and complex territory. It isn't an area that's occupied just by local government. Some of the other “players” in the field include:

- **Partnerships:** There are 8 Area based Partnerships within Dublin City Area. They provide a local response to long-term poverty and unemployment and promote social inclusion
- **Combat Poverty Agency:** government-funded body which researches poverty and exclusion, develops anti-poverty measures, raises public awareness of the issues and gives policy advice to government
- **Equality Authority:** independent body set up in 1999 which champions people's rights for equality as laid down in Irish legislation
- **National Consultative Committee on Racism and Inter-Culturalism (NCCRI):** an independent, expert body charged with developing an integrated and strategic approach to fostering inter-culturalism and preventing racism in Ireland
- **National Disability Authority:** an independent body which promotes and secures the rights of people with disabilities. It advises government, carries out research, sets standards and codes of practice and monitors their implementation
- **Office for Social Inclusion:** office based in the Department of Social and Family Affairs which coordinates government's social inclusion activity and monitors progress against plans and targets

In my Department we could ...

(Example in bold)

Reflect this exclusion issue	By doing this
Issue: People with low levels of literacy struggling with official documents and particularly with forms	Action: Train staff to “recognise the signs” of literacy problems and encourage them to help customers fill in forms when appropriate
Issue:	Action:
Issue:	Action:
Issue:	Action:
Issue:	Action:
Issue:	Action:

Top Tip: The Literacy Agenda

As Council staff we often communicate with people who are in poverty or who are excluded in some way. Many of those people will have literacy problems – at least one-adult-in-four in Ireland has difficulties in this area – yet a great deal of our Council communication with them is via the written word ... letters, forms, notices, signs and advertisements. Before we write anything we need to be clear in our minds about the following:

- **Who** will be reading this?
- What do they **want** to know?
- How much do they **know already**?
- What do they **need** to know?

We also need to be aware of the realities that:

- only 4% of readers will understand a 27-word sentence at the first reading
- 75% will understand a 17-word sentence
- 95% will understand an eight-word sentence (ie one like this!!!)

Good practice tells us that we should:

- Worry about typewritten sentences that run to more than two lines on the page
- Keep paragraphs short, ideally around 50 words
- Limit each paragraph to one idea
- Try to average no more than 15/20 words per sentence
- Remember that: “Big minds use little words, little minds use big words!!”
- Put action in our verbs and identify the doer: “The Council will build 20 houses next year” rather than “Twenty houses will be built next year”
- Tie in with our readers’ experience ... try to understand their beliefs and how they came by them
- Avoid jargon and acronyms ... very difficult in local government

- Use lists/bullet points to split information up
- Avoid “fuzzy” words such as “facilities”, “conditions”, “situations”, “functions”
- Not use long words when short substitutes will do: for example we should use “end” instead of “terminate”, “try” instead of “attempt”, “fair” instead of “equitable”, etc

“Mind Your Language” ... Getting the Terminology Right

Because it’s underpinned by complex issues, social inclusion has tended to develop a language and terminology of its own. We’ve looked at that earlier in this Handbook. But it’s also important that we’re comfortable with other, associated terms and concepts. Some of the more commonly-used ones are:

Diversity: the differences among people in terms of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. By harnessing these differences we can create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, everyone’s talents are fully used and we can achieve what we set out to achieve.

Equality: in day-to-day terms, this means providing equal opportunity in terms of access to employment, training, promotion and career development to all employees and job applicants across what are known as the “nine grounds”, these are gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community. It’s now “the law of the land”.

Ethnicity: the shared things such as language, religion and traditions which contribute to our identity. We can see ourselves as an ethnic group ... or be seen by others as such. Typically members of an ethnic group will develop symbolic markers of their ethnicity, eg eating habits, clothing or customs.

Interculturalism: the interaction between majority and minority cultures which fosters understanding and respect, making sure that cultural diversity is recognised and catered for.

Race: contrary to belief, there is no biological dimension to race. It is instead a social construct used to classify people.

Racism: discrimination and exclusion, mostly aimed at minority groups, based on the belief that some “races” are inherently superior to others

Social Cohesion: the “condition” of having individuals and communities all enjoying an acceptable standard of living whilst being free from poverty, discrimination and exclusion ... a core, stated aim of the EU



Picture Supplied By: Collette Kirwan

Top Tip: Poverty Impact Assessment

Poverty Impact Assessment (PIA) – sometimes also called “poverty proofing” – is a process where public bodies look at the impact a project, policy or programme is likely to have on people who are socially excluded or in poverty. Ideally it is applied at the design stage but it’s equally valid to apply it to things that are already in place and well-established.

A basic approach to PIA could follow this this template:

Assessment Questions ...	Responses to the questions ...
Project, programme or policy being assessed?	
Which group(s) will it particularly impact on?	
Will it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce poverty or exclusion? • Lessen their effects? • Help prevent people falling into poverty or exclusion? • Address issues which lead to poverty or exclusion? • Actually increase poverty or exclusion? 	
What needs to be done in response to the issues raised above?	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. Etc.
Any other relevant issues?	

Contacts and Sources

Age and Opportunity

Tel: 01 8057709

Email: info@olderinireland.ie Website: www.olderinireland.ie

Combat Poverty Agency

Tel: 01 6706746

Email: info@cpa.ie Website: www.combatpoverty.ie

Comhairle Citizens Information

Tel: 01 6059000

Email: info@comhairle.ie Website: www.comhairle.ie

Equality Authority

Tel: 01 4173333

Email: info@equality.ie Website: www.equality.ie

Forum of People with Disabilities

Tel: 01 8786077

Email: inforum@indigo.ie Website: www.inforum.ie

Irish Traveller Movement

Tel: 01 6796577

Email: itmtrav@indigo.ie Website: www.itmtrav.com

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism

Tel: 01 4785777

Email: nccri@eircom.net Website: www.nccri.com

National Disability Authority

Tel: 01 6080400

Email: nda@nda.ie Website: www.nda.ie

National Women's Council of Ireland

Tel: 01 8787248

Email: info@nwci.ie Website: www.nwci.ie

Pavee Point

Tel: 01 8780255

Email: pavee@iol.ie Website: www.paveepoint.ie

National Council for The Blind of Ireland

Website: www.ncbi.ie

National Association of Deaf People

Tel: 01 8723800

E-mail: nad@iol.ie Website: www.nadp.ie

Focus Ireland

Website: www.focusireland.ie

Online Access to Services, Information & Support (OASIS)

Website: www.oasis.gov.ie/

European Social Network (ESN)

E-mail: info@socialeurope.com Website: www.socialeurope.com

Office For Social Inclusion (OSI)

Tel: 01 7043851

E-mail: osi@welfare.ie Website: www.socialinclusion.ie

National Adult Literacy Association (NALA)

Tel: 01 8554332

E-mail: literacy@nala.ie Website: www.nala.ie



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