

BWRA NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLINACURRA WESTON RESIDENTS' ALLIANCE

THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

Over 300 postcard submissions for The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP) were handed in to the Office of Regeneration (OoR) at the LEDP on the 5th December.

The postcard were delivered by a delegation from the Ballinacurra Weston Residents' Alliance (BWRA) and the Kincora & Carew Parks Concerned Residents Action Group (KCPCRAG) and accepted by Ann Cahill of the Office of Regeneration.

Residents were given 11 days' notice by the OoR that submissions were being sought for the LRFIP, which had been dropped anonymously outside resident's homes on 23rd November. The BWRA and our affiliates in Limerick Regeneration Watch had expected that more notice would have been given, but

we did manage to visit most homes in the "regeneration" area before the deadline with our postcard campaign, explaining to residents what it was about and inviting them to make a submission, which read as follows:

"I, the undersigned, call on Limerick City & County Council and the Office of Regeneration to immediately reform the failed structures for Community Participation in the regeneration process and local Estate Management. I support the holding of community elections to directly elect resident representatives onto reformed and empowered local regeneration and Estate Management committees. The present policy of participation by invitation-only must be replaced by a more democratic and accountable system. Residents have a fundamental Human Right to participate in the decisions that affect our lives."



ABOVE: L-R Kenneth Robinson and Pat Begley of the KCPCRAG with Matt Collins of the BWRA, delivering the postcard submissions to the Office of Regeneration at the LEDP on the Roxboro Road.

“With such short notice we didn’t have time to call to everyone’s home; it took us nearly 5-hours alone just to do one side of Lenihan Avenue because so many people want us to explain what was in the plans to them” said Matt Collins, Chairperson of the BWRA.

“Residents weren’t happy that the plan was left outside their doors with the opportunity to ask anyone questions about it. This plan was launched in September and there was plenty of time for the Office of Regeneration to go door-to-door and speak to residents. They didn’t even have the decency to contact residents whose homes are being targeted for demolition. Most residents told us that they didn’t have a visit from regeneration staff in years” said Matt.

Cathal McCarthy, Chairperson of the Weston Gardens Residents Association (WGRA) and PRO with the BWRA said that there was almost unanimous support for the postcard campaign.

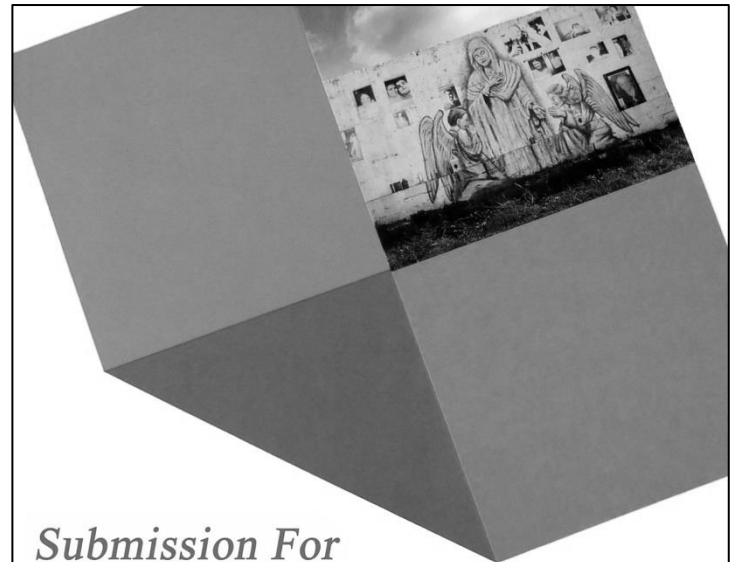
“We only had one refusal and that was because the person thought we were from the Office of Regeneration; we didn’t get a chance to explain what it was about, we just got an earful before the door was slammed in our face. There is a lot of understandable anger towards regeneration out there, but most people knew who we were and were more than happy to support the campaign” said Cathal.

Postcards were also distributed in Southill by KCPCRAG and in Moyross by the Moyross Residents’ Alliance.

The BWRA and WGRA also made a formal submission for the LRFIP which outlined the case for adopting a Human Rights based approach to community participation. The 36-page submission also raised residents’ concerns over derelict/boarded houses, Physical Regeneration, Safety & Security and Community Gardens.

Hard copies of the joint submission were sent to the Limerick City & County Manager, Conn Murray and to the Director of Home & Community (Regeneration), Oliver O’Loughlin.

“We delivered them in person to City Hall on 13th December with a letter to both of them, but we didn’t receive a reply. If this is a sign of things to come then we will have to up the ante in 2014 with more protests outside their offices” said Matt.



Submission For Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan

BALLINACURRA
WESTON
RESIDENTS
ALLIANCE

Weston
Gardens
RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION

*Safe and sustainable communities can only
be delivered through real and meaningful
community participation and partnership*



Submission available online at www.bwra.blogspot.ie



**The Ballinacurra Weston Residents’ Alliance
wishes all our members and supporters
A Happy Christmas & A Peaceful New Year
nollaig faoi shéan is faoi mhaise**

The Right to Participate in the decisions that affect our lives is a fundamental Human Right. Community participation needs to be real and what we have at the moment is a bit like the sign language at Nelson Mandela’s funeral; it looks real to everyone else, but we, the people that it’s meant for, know better. It strikes us as bizarre that we are recognised by government Ministers and Departments, EU organisations and institutions, we even receive funding from the Council’s Environment section, but the Office of Regeneration refuses to work with us. This year the BWRA had some success with our nomination of Cathal McCarthy as the *Limerick City Community & Voluntary Forum’s* representative on the Council’s Environmental Strategic Policy Committee, we hope that 2014 will see an end to invitation-only participation and selective inclusion.