

Submission from the National Federation Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee to the Research Sub-Committee on the Living Options Project (Where we Live)

A True Home

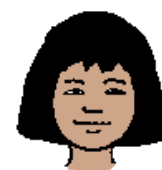
Where we Live

- People's lives are changing all the time. People are now moving from living in congregated settings to living in their own community.
- **Where we Live** is about our whole life as citizens of the world - our relationships, our social life, our community, our home and all the connections that give each of us a good life.



For Services – Supporting each one of us to live in the community

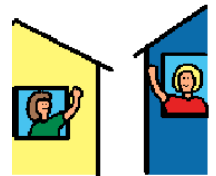
- I would like to start off by introducing myself – hello, my name is I am the person you provide a service to. I would prefer not to be called a “service user”.
- I would like you to walk with me – spend time with me, get to know me as an individual. I would like you to know about my hopes, my dreams, my gifts, my passions, my likes, my dislikes. It may take some time to do this but it will help us to get to know each other.



- I would like you to support me to develop relationships and connections in the community where I'm going to live. The community relationships that we nurture over the years can support us to live in our own homes all through our lives.



- I would like you to support me to keep up my relationship with my family
- It's important that I live in a place (in a community) I am familiar with – otherwise I won't know anyone. I don't want to be lonely and on my own all the time. I want to be healthy and happy and have fun in my life and I want to be able to ask for help from a neighbour or a friend when I need it.

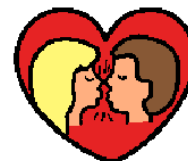


Our Home

- Each one of us needs to be able to choose who we live with and where we live (the place and the building) and be supported to do this.
- Our needs change over our lifetime, for example, at different stages of my life I may want to:



- Live with my family
- Live on my own
- Live with friends
- Live with my partner



- I would like you to offer me the choice of where I live at any stage of my life and support me to do this



My Story – J

- I lived with my mother until 2006.
- Then I moved into private rented accommodation.
- I now live on my own in a council house.
- It was a big step for me.
- I now chair the local residents association and I'm more involved with my own community.

My Story – M

- I moved from my parents' home into a group home.
- Nobody asked me where I wanted to live.
- Nobody asked me who I wanted to live with.
- I had to share my bedroom with another person.
- The first time I met my room-mate was at the bus-stop.
- Living in a group home didn't work out for me so I'm now back living in my family home.
- I would prefer to be able to live independently of my family.

Developing Connections: Between Services and Community

- It's important for services and communities to have a reciprocal (give-and-take) relationship.
Is there something that you as a service can share with your local community, a sports hall, a mini bus, space for a community group to meet, partnership in a



funding application?

- Sometimes services seem to hide from their community. Services have lots to give to the community – they need to be able to show how they can give by, for example, getting involved in:
 - Local Learning Networks
 - Cleaning up the local beach
 - Tidy Towns Committee
 - Local Task Groups e.g. a group like the Gold Star Task Group in Cashel which looks at making the town of Cashel more accessible for people who have a disability
 - Local fundraising initiatives (e.g. co-operate with sourcing funding for your local community, flag days, filling bags in local supermarket etc.)
 - Music, arts and drama groups
 - Developing a community garden
 - There are lots of opportunities to contribute to your community, you just have to go out and look for them.
- If we want to create opportunities for each person moving into the community we need to spend time developing links with the community e.g. social clubs, sports clubs, scouts/girl guides, Foroige clubs, youth clubs, etc.
- And we need to create opportunities for each person to get to know their neighbours in the community, the people they will meet every day, the people who will help and support them to live a good life.





A True Home Gives Us

- Physical shelter and sustenance
- Emotional security and stability
- A centre in which to form relationships
 - A shelter in the time of storm
- Opportunities to grow and create
 - Roots and belonging
 - A sense of identity
 - Memories

Darcy T. Elks (2008)

In our house, everyone is there by choice, and
all care for each other.

It is our home and we are all at home there.

*Zipperelen & O'Brien, Cultivating Thinking
Hearts (1994)*

National Federation Community Participation & Inclusion Sub-Committee (and guests who attended meetings):

*Yvonne Bohane, Kildare
Karen Brennan, Kildare
Olwyn Butler, Dublin
Mary Carty, Waterford
Richard Collins, Clare (Chairperson)
Roisin Deery, Meath
Theresa Doyle, Kildare
Catherine Devine, Dublin
Ann Finlay, Kildare
Mary Gavin, Dublin
Patricia Greene, Dublin
Martine Healy, Meath
Brian Hogan, Clare
Angela Hynes, Cork
Rosemary Kearns, Galway
Aine Kerr, Dublin
Mary Lannon, Dublin
Grainne Lee, Kildare
Kareena McGeeney, Kildare
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21st September 2009