

**THE DARNDALE BELCAMP
OBLATE GRANT PROGRAMME
FINAL IMPACT REPORT**

COMMISSIONED BY

ssgt | **st.stephen's
green trust**

REPORT PREPARED BY
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“Our strategic plan is a great asset and I’m not sure if we would have been able to do a strategic plan at this time if the SSGT had not been available to us. I would hope that we will be able to use our strategic plan for further funding applications to the HSE and others.”

Dermot Gough, The Dales Centre, August 2017

“We would like to thank the Oblate Grant Programme and St. Stephen’s Green Trust for their support and for putting their trust in Darndale Belcamp Village Centre. Without this support, many of our services could not have been developed and there would still be unmet needs within our community. We believe that the services provided by us have improved the quality of life for all members of the community and we also acknowledge that without the belief, encouragement and support we received from all of our funders and partners, none of it would be possible.”

Linda Hayden, Darndale Belcamp Village Centre, August 2017

“There’s no doubt the funding over the years helped keep our vision alive, was the catalyst of movement that helped RASP survive and culminated in RASP providing a better service and obtaining new premises in a mainstream environment.”

Pat Hanna, RASP, August 2017

“Linking us with the grant worker has had a lasting impact in our centre. It enabled us to gain knowledge in how to apply for grants, it linked us with groups that we otherwise would not have known or approached and it effectively has left us with wonderful long-term grants from the Ireland Fund that have made an incredible difference to the centre.”

Kelda Barnes, Darndale Childcare Centre, August 2017

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INTRODUCTION

This report captures the overall impact of the Darndale Belcamp Grant Programme 2006-2017 which was funded by the Oblate Congregation and administered by St. Stephen's Green Trust, with the aim "to support groups and organisations working with residents of the Darndale Belcamp Parish who are affected by issues of poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion."

Overall, €1,294,852 was allocated over the 12-year period, of which €1,138,852 was grant allocations to 42 organisations and development support to these organisations and €156,000 (14%) was administration grants to support the overall work.

St Stephen's Green Trust began its work in Darndale Belcamp some years before the inception of the Oblate Grant Programme through our General Grant Programme. We were aware of the high level of disadvantage in the area and the commitment of the Congregation to those on the margins of society and were pleased when the Oblate Congregation asked us to partner with them in 2005 to develop a small grants programme focused on improving the lives of the residents of Darndale Belcamp. The Grants Programme was funded from part of the proceeds of the sale of Belcamp College.

In addition to grant-making to organisations and groups, the Trust has also been involved directly in the Darndale/Belcamp community. We initiated a Community Survey of the needs and aspirations of the local community, and established a grant writer post in the community as well as a governance project.

The Darndale Belcamp Oblate Grant Programme was one of very few geographically-focused small grants programmes in Ireland and the Congregation's decision to allocate some of the proceeds of Belcamp College for the benefit of the local community was both pioneering and a reflection of their core values. Documenting the detail and outcomes of the grant programme provides useful learning for future place-based grant programmes and we hope this report contributes to knowledge in the sector.

We greatly appreciate the support of the local community organisations and individuals over the years of the grant programme and we wish them well in their valuable work. The grant programme would not have been possible without the commitment of the Oblate Congregation and we are grateful to them for trusting us to distribute their funds.

This report explains the background to the grant programme, it presents an analysis of the expenditure, it reflects on the interim evaluation which was carried out in 2013, it includes feedback from grantees and it highlights some achievements of the programme over the period.

Orla O'Neill
St Stephen's Green Trust
October 2017

2 BACKGROUND

The geographical boundary of the Darndale Belcamp Parish broadly overlaps with the electoral boundary of Priorswood C, with a population of 4,863 people (CSO Census 2016 preliminary figures). This represents an increase of 8% since 2011, which followed an increase of 27% in population over 2006, largely from the recently developed Northern Cross area, it is very likely the bulk of the population increase comes from this area.

Priorswood C is a very young area and is one of the most economically disadvantaged areas of Ireland. Unemployment rates at the time of the CSO 2011 Census were 26.9% for males and 25.8% for females.

The Oblate Congregation has been present in the area since 1893 when Belcamp College was established as a Juniorate (preparatory education for priesthood). It subsequently became a well-known boys' boarding school. The listed building was designed by Kilkenny-born architect James Hoban, who was responsible for the White House in Washington. The College Chapel had Harry Clarke stain glass windows, portraying the mysteries of the Rosary and 12 Irish saints, including Kevin, Patrick, Brendan, Brigid and Colmcille. Following the decline in numbers in the 1990s, the Congregation decided to close the school, and the last pupils finished in 2009.

The Anglo Irish Province of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate religious congregation (the Oblates) managed the Catholic parish of Darndale Belcamp on behalf of the Archdiocese of Dublin since the time of its constitution in 1972. In 2004 the Oblates sold Belcamp College, along with 204 acres for €105m.

As part of the exit strategy from the area in terms of its involvement in education, the Oblates originally expressed its wish to invest €2m back into the community through a small grants programme. The Congregation had a connection with St Stephen's Green Trust (SSGT / the Trust) through its then chairman, Fr Paul Byrne OMI.

Operation of the Grant Programme

SSGT spent an initial period in 2005 researching the needs of the area through published reports and consultations with key stakeholders. It designed a small grants programme and launched the initiative to all eligible community groups at a public meeting at the end of 2005 and the first grant round opened in January 2006. Grant allocation decisions were made by SSGT Trustees initially at quarterly grant allocation meetings (annually from 2010), and the Oblate Congregation had an option to have a representative present at the meetings.



Initially it was agreed a minimum of €200,000 per annum would be spent in the area in grants over a 10-year period (2006-2015), through a spend-down endowment managed directly by the Oblates. However, in 2011 the Congregation decided to scale back the small grant programme in Darndale to focus on other priorities and the annual available fund was reduced to €50,000 per annum. Discussions in 2013 about the value of the community grant-writer role which was funded from within the overall €50,000 allocation, led to an increase of €4,000 per annum ringfenced for that role. An extension of this support for 2016 and 2017 was agreed and this was supplemented by grants from the Community Foundation for Ireland and from Northside Partnership. The total value of the Darndale Belcamp Oblate Grant Programme between 2006 and 2017 was almost €1.3m.

The Grant Programme was focused at a local level and was available to a wide range of groups and organisations in Darndale Belcamp or groups whose main beneficiaries were resident in the Parish. Grants were awarded for projects ranging from core costs to training, sports activities, refurbishment, literacy programmes to community clear up. Following expenditure of the grant, each organisation was asked to submit a written report on how it was spent and the difference it made.

SSGT Direct Work

In addition to administering the grant programme, SSGT also worked directly with organisations in the Darndale Belcamp area. Following consultation with the community through the Nurture Development Report¹, it was agreed the Trust would commission a comprehensive community survey, including a needs analysis for the area. The Trust issued an open invitation to the community to nominate people to the Steering Committee for the Community Survey and a total of 16 people from a range of organisations served on the Committee between 2007 and 2010.

In 2008, a consultant was engaged to implement a comprehensive Community Survey which used local researchers to ask 120 questions in c. 450 households. There was also a separate youth survey. The Darndale Belcamp Community Survey (June 2009) by Donagh MacArtain is available on the SSGT website. It had been envisaged this process would inform the development of a five-year strategic development plan for the area but following discussions with the Steering Committee, a more organic approach to driving change at a local level was adopted. This was known as the Next Steps Initiative; however, progress was slow and a decision was taken that local groups should revert to the recommendations of the 2009 Community Survey .



¹ St Stephen's Green Trust consultation on the terms of reference of a needs analysis & strategic plan for Darndale/Belcamp (May 2007), Nurture Development

Although there has been no review to assess if organisations did take on board the expressed priorities of the local community in their strategies and operational plans, several significant initiatives were subsequently initiated around the physical space and environment, a key issue for the local community.

Community Grant Writer Support

The SSGT Grants & Development Director became very familiar with the work and development level of the organisations and groups involved, partly because of the small geographical footprint of the Grant Programme and also because of the length of time spent working in the area. It became apparent that some groups required support in making the application for the SSGT grant. Many required support in diversifying their sources of funds, particularly where grant aid was given for core activities, and in developing their organisational structures and governance to support this.

In order to meet this need, SSGT employed a Community Grantwriter in 2007 to work on a flexible basis with sports organisations in Darndale Belcamp to support them in making grant applications and sourcing funds for their clubs. This work included developing their financial processes, setting up financial administration systems, opening bank accounts and providing grant reports to funders, depending on the needs and capacity of the organisations, specifically their experience of grant applications and their level of organisational development. The work was carried out on a consultancy basis, c. 2 days per month.

Following an internal review in 2009 when the benefits of the Grantwriter support were documented, it was decided to extend the initiative to three days per month and make it available to all organisations in Darndale Belcamp. This extension to three days per month from 2010 coincided with a very difficult period for the community and voluntary sector. Budgets were cut significantly in all organisations due to the economic recession. The value of access to technical support for organisational development and income diversification together with implementation of the requirements of the Charities Act was established both in the Burtenshaw Kenny Associates Darndale Belcamp Grant Programme interim evaluation of 2013 and in a subsequent high-level review of the Community Grantwriter initiative in 2016.

By 2016 SSGT was of the view that SSGT was no longer the most effective organisation to manage this technical support and a more appropriate mechanism should be found. In late 2016 SSGT established a partnership with Northside Partnership to second a Community Grantwriter on a two-year contract. The support is now extended to all organisations in the Northside Partnership area and works from the NSP offices in Greendale c. 1.5 days per week. Between 2015 and 2018 funding for this Community Grantwriter role will be through a combination of support from each of the Oblate congregation, Community Foundation of Ireland and Northside Partnership.

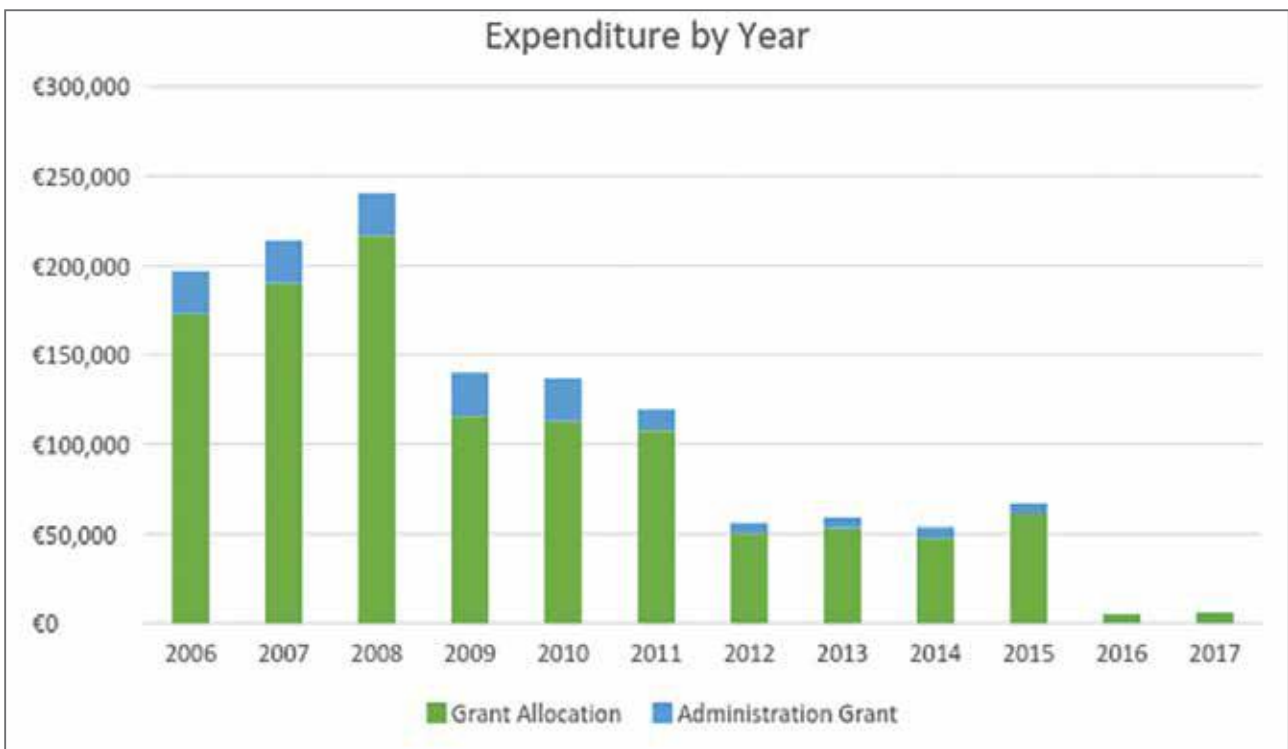
3 ANALYSIS OF GRANT ALLOCATIONS

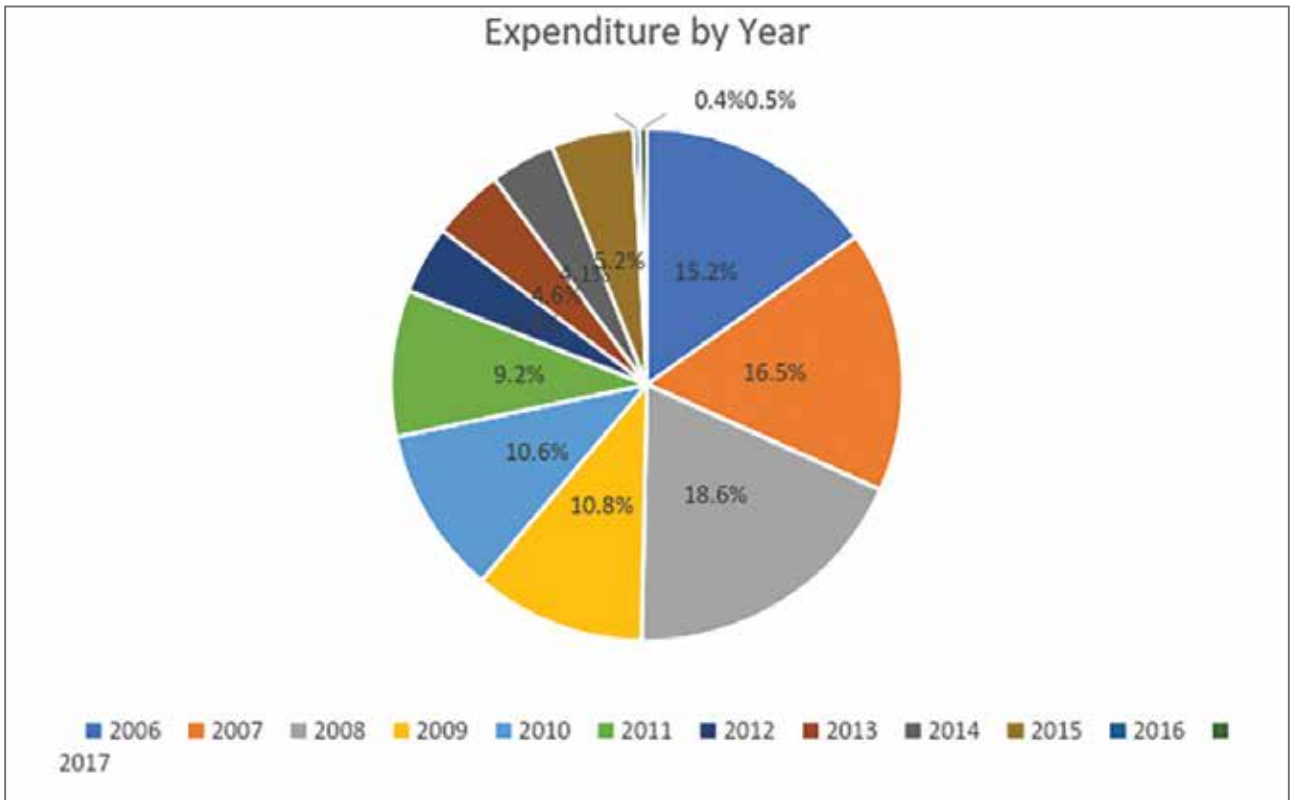
In total, the value of 203 grants and development support over the 12 years of the grant programme was €1,138,852. Combined with administration grants of €156,000 this gives a total value of €1,294,852.

Allocations by Year

The bulk of grant allocations took place in the initial years of the programme as shown in the tables and charts to follows:

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Grant Allocations	€173,050	€190,064	€216,720	€116,100	€112,920	€107,500
Administration Grant	€ 24,000	€ 24,000	€ 24,000	€ 24,000	€ 24,000	€ 12,000
Total	€197,050	€214,064	€240,720	€140,100	€136,920	€119,500
Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Grant Allocations	€50,000	€53,033	€47,465	€61,000	€5,000	€6,000
Administration Grant	€6,000	€6,000	€6,000	€6,000	€ -	€ -
Total	€56,000	€59,033	€53,465	€67,000	€5,000	€6,000





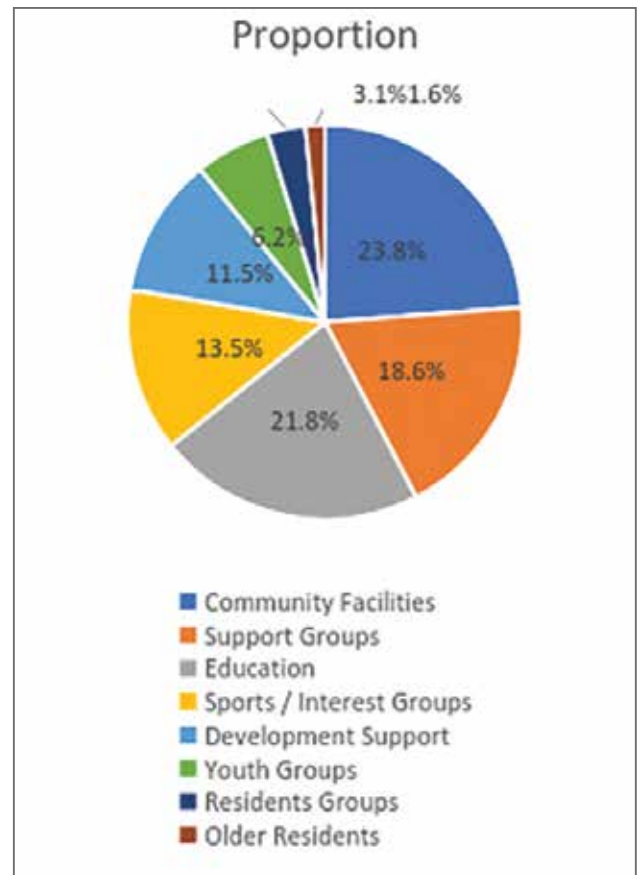
Allocations by Type of Organisation

Grants were allocated to 42 organisations. This is in addition to development support (grant writer and governance initiative) that was provided to many of these organisations. The 42 organisations represented a range of types of organisations as shown in the table to follow:

Type of Group	Benefactor	Type of Group	Benefactor
Community Facilities	Darndale Belcamp Village Centre	Sports and Interest Groups	Club Express (Dance)
	Darndale Park Renewal Group		Coolock & District Pigeon Racing Club
	Mustard Seed Darndale		Darndale Boxing Club
	New Life Centre		Darndale Junior Football Club
Education Providers	Colaiste Dhulaigh		Darndale Rovers Football Club
	Dublin 17 School Completion Programme		Priorswood Football Club
	Furthering Traveller Education Committee		St Francis Moatview Football Club
	Jigsaw Childcare Centre		Traditional Kenpo Karate Darndale
	OLI Junior School	Support Groups	Darndale Belcamp Moatview Family Support
	OLI Senior School		Darndale Belcamp Resource Centre Ltd
	RASP Ltd Laneview Learning Centre		Darndale Discovery Centre Community Training Centre
St Francis Priorswood Junior School	Newtown Cooperative Housing Society		
Groups for Older Residents	Active Age Group		Northside Community Law Centre
	Darndale Belcamp Senior Citizens Group		Northside Partnership
	University of the Third Age (U3A)		Parents Training Together
Residents Groups	Belcamp Estate Steering Committee		Pavee Point
	Darndale Tenants and Residents Association		Preparing for Life
Youth Groups	Darndale Belcamp Young People's Activities		Society of St Vincent de Paul
	Media Initiative Collective	St Michael's House	
	Sphere 17 Regional Youth Service	The DALES Centre	
		TravAct	

As shown in the table and chart to follow, the highest allocation by type of group was to community facilities, followed by support groups and education groups.

Group Type	Allocation	Proportion
Community Facilities	€281,000	24.7%
Education	€248,500	21.8%
Support Groups	€211,644	18.6%
Sports / Interest Groups	€143,410	12.6%
Development Support	€130,698	11.5%
Youth Groups	€70,100	6.2%
Residents Groups	€35,500	3.1%
Older Residents	€18,000	1.6%
Total	€1,138,852	100.0%



Allocations to Organisations

Total grant allocations to organisations over the 12 years of the grant programme in order of grant size are listed in the table to follow. In most cases the total amount comprises a number of separate grants, awarded for similar or different purposes.

Organisation	Allocation	Organisation	Allocation
New Life Centre	€200,000	Darndale Park Renewal Group	€10,000
OLI Junior School	€110,000	Northside Partnership	€10,000
Darndale Belcamp Village Centre	€69,000	Priorswood Football Club	€8,500
Sphere 17 Regional Youth Service	€61,100	Coolock & District Pigeon Racing Club	€8,000
Darndale Junior Football Club	€57,200	Parents Training Together	€8,000
OLI Senior School	€52,500	St Michael's House	€7,500
The DALES Centre	€44,300	Active Age Group	€5,200
Jigsaw Childcare Centre	€43,700	Furthering Traveller Education Committee	€5,000
Belcamp Estate Steering Committee	€34,000	Media Initiative Collective	€5,000
RASP Ltd Laneview Learning Centre	€33,500	TravAct	€4,500
Preparing for Life	€33,000	Darndale Belcamp Young People's Activities	€4,000
Darndale Belcamp Resource Centre Ltd	€26,224	St Francis Priorswood Junior School	€4,000
Darndale Discovery Centre Community Training Centre	€19,320	St Francis Priorswood Senior School	€3,500
Darndale Boxing Club	€18,440	Pavee Point	€3,000
Society of St Vincent de Paul	€17,300	Darndale Belcamp Moatview Family Support	€2,500
Colaiste Dhulaigh	€16,800	University of the Third Age (U3A)	€2,300
Darndale Rovers Football Club	€15,650	Mustard Seed Darndale	€2,000
Traditional Kenpo Karate Darndale	€13,650	Northside Community Law Centre	€2,000
Dublin 17 School Completion Programme	€13,000	Darndale Tenants and Residents Association	€1,500
St Francis Moatview Football Club	€11,970	Newtown Cooperative Housing Society	€500
Darndale Belcamp Senior Citizens Group	€10,500	Total (excludes development support and administration grants)	€1,008,154
Club Express	€10,000		

4 IMPACT OF THE GRANT PROGRAMME

Overall the impact of the grant programme to the Darndale Belcamp area was very significant and very positive. Impacts are presented in terms of impacts to the overall area and positive impacts to the lives of residents. Findings from the interim evaluation are also included.

Overall Impact to the Area

A key impact of the grant programme for the Darndale Belcamp area was that it significantly strengthened the skills, experience and governance of local organisations to progress to a level at which they could **access other matching or follow on funding to continue their work**, thereby safeguarding the long-term future and sustainability of many local organisations.

For example, following development support from the Grant Programme, Darndale Childcare Centre were enabled to access funds from the Ireland Funds that they would not otherwise have known of or have been in a position to apply for.

Another example is that following grant support for the Community Pride programme, Darndale Belcamp Village Centre are now seeking funding for a full-time manager with a view to pursuing a service level contract with Dublin City Council to maintain the green space in Darndale.

An example of **organisational development support** is the support given in 2015 to Dales Centre in the development of a strategic plan. The Dales Centre was supported in carrying out a collaborative exercise involving their board, staff, clients of the service and the wider community of Darndale. The end result was a very comprehensive and innovative plan which it was felt strengthened their organisation.



Another example of organisational development support is the assistance with HR and financial management that was given to Darndale Childcare Centre which enabled that organisation to build their management and governance structures.

A further example is grant support that was given to RASP for an external evaluation of their services. A recommendation of the external evaluation was that they move premises to a more mainstream location. This was implemented and has enabled RASP to provide a **higher level of service** than from their previous location.

Furthermore, organisations such as Sphere 17 were encouraged by SSGT to be **more proactive in planning projects and activities**

with other partners in the community. The legacy of this has been greater awareness of the work of other local organisations, development of positive working relationships, sharing of key resources and movement of staff between some local organisations.

Overall the grant programme achieved the aim that was stated at the outset which was “to support groups and organisations working with residents of the Darndale Belcamp Parish who are affected by issues of poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion.” In doing this, the grant programme succeeded in supporting the development of the Darndale Belcamp community support infrastructure.

These impacts are particularly borne out in a 2016 survey of organisations that availed of the grant writer support. 8 of 11 groups stated that their organisation had received financial grants or in-kind support it otherwise might not have received without the support of the Grantwriter.

Groups mentioned access to each of Dublin City Council and Mondelez Europe funding.

Specific benefits of the grant writer support in rank order of value were as follows:

- Information about grants available and suitable for your organisation
- Support in devising your strategy on grant applications
- Developing community organisational collaboration and networking, such as Arts Week
- Help with governance issues, such as risk assessment, governance code, charities regulatory authority, Companies Act etc
- Other organisational supports specific to your organisation
- Help with developing relationships with funders
- Report writing after grant has been spent
- Grant-writing support
- Supporting strategy around diversification of income



Positive Impacts to the Lives of Residents

Numerous positive impacts to the lives of residents of the Darndale Belcamp area are illustrated through the following examples of grant programme support. In many cases these positive impacts have continued beyond the life of the grant support.

Infrastructural / Capital Support

A number of organisations were enabled to deliver **new services** through capital support for equipment, renovations, etc. An example is Darndale Childcare Centre which would otherwise have been unable to replace flooring or buy necessary equipment.

Innovative Approach to Literacy Teaching

Support for an innovative literacy project in Our Lady Immaculate Junior National School resulted in a transformation of how literacy was taught which significantly changed children engaged in literacy, positively impacting on their motivation, enthusiasm and success. This then led to the Write to Read project which saw the project being brought to 8 more schools the following year and then a further 7 schools in the Dublin 17 area two years later. The project influenced literacy curricular development at a national level. There are many teachers in Ireland now teaching literacy in an innovative and exciting way and **thousands of children having a richer school experience and greater success academically as a result.**

Development of Well Being and Self Confidence of Children and Young People

Support to provide a broad range of after school activities immediately after school for pupils of Our Lady Immaculate Junior National School, including cookery, boxing, dancing, snooker, fitness for fun, soccer, games, yoga and music. Teachers reported that participation in these classes has a positive impact on pupils' confidence, socialisation and overall enthusiasm and enjoyment for school. Some of them have gone on to develop the interests that they first experienced in these clubs joining outside school clubs, e.g. the boxing club or the local soccer club or local dance and music classes. **This has contributed to their well-being and overall sense of self.**



Similarly, support for arts and health funding enabled Sphere 17 youth service to target young people with particular interests or needs in a way that directly resulted in positive outcomes related to their personal development and in other cases their capacity to **make more informed and proactive decisions regarding their health.**

Emergence of Parent Leaders

Parents were asked to come on board the Our Lady Immaculate Junior National School after-schools project to help run the clubs. This helped create great relationships between staff and parents and many of the parents went on to help organise other events and other projects in the school and some of them due to their experience in the clubs **went back into their own education**, some pursuing **community leadership programmes.** This contributed to building a sense of community in the Darndale Belcamp area and it helped the individual parents in terms of self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation.

Enhancement of the Environment and Development of a Sense of Hope

Darndale Belcamp Village Centre was supported in developing a Community Pride Project to maintain the open green space within Darndale and to address anti-social behaviour, graffiti and illegal dumping in the local area. Part of this included purchase of a graffiti removal machine which has succeeded in eradicating the problem of graffiti. The Community Pride Project had a long-lasting impact **to both the environment and the sense of community** as the Village Centre now works in partnership with nine other organisations including local schools to host ‘Community Clean-up Days’.

Another local organisation RASP was supported in transforming a derelict piece of land at the back of their former premises on Belcamp Lane into a landscaped green garden space. This garden was subsequently used as an outdoor café, an extra classroom, a recreational space for barbeques and a place for reflection for staff and clients. RASP felt that that the garden gave staff and clients hope in their challenging environmental situation, reminding them that things could be better and they were worth more. The garden also had an impact on their clients, who could now see beyond the waste, burning tyres and rats they had encountered at the entrance to the former premises.



Horticulture and Market Gardening Skills Development

In the early years of the grant programme, RASP were provided with a grant towards the refurbishment of a large greenhouse in North County Dublin that they used as part of their horticulture programme. This programme led to a market gardening initiative whereby RASP participants sold their horticulture produces to local shops. This provided invaluable work experience and had an impact in participant homes, as participants shared their new skills with their families, growing tomatoes and potatoes. Unfortunately this programme ceased soon after grant programme assistance ceased.

Young Traveller Engagement

Grant programme assistance enabled Sphere 17 youth service to forge effective relationships that supported meaningful engagement with local Travellers long after the specific project funding was spent.

Support for Vulnerable and Isolated Residents

Darndale Belcamp Village Centre was enabled through grant programme assistance to deliver a support network for housebound or isolated older people living in the local area. This service offers outreach support, home visits and repair services. The Care & Repair service has since developed into a social enterprise, Handy Helpers, which provides a low-cost cleaning and maintenance service for older people in the Dublin 17, 13 and 5 areas. The Village Centre was also supported in refurbishing the Golden Years Senior Centre building which provides services to older residents including day care, meals, social events, interest classes and daytrips to a base of 1,050 registered members.

Findings of the Interim External Evaluation

In 2013 Burtenshaw Kenny Associates was commissioned to carry out a limited evaluation of the grant programme between 2006-2013. The report is available on the SSGT website. This process included consultations with 18 stakeholder organisations and an online survey in addition to review of relevant documentation. The main findings of this evaluation relating to impact were:

- A broad range of activities and outcomes can be identified from the individual groups and organisations funded through the grant funding. In terms of social impact, the funding has made a significant difference to the work of the groups in the area. A very clear and quantifiable example of this is the remarkable improvement of literacy performance in the first and second classes in the Junior National School. Smaller scale examples concern the funding to the junior football club and other sports clubs which engage so many children and young people and which play important roles in children's lives.
- Overall, 86% of groups felt their grant enabled them to provide a greater range of activities or services. Also, 90% of groups felt the grants helped them improve the quality of the service they provided. 90% of groups said that their grants paid for activities that would not have been funded through other sources. The Grant Programme has made a significant difference in many of the areas and issues identified through the Community Survey. It has increased volunteering, improved the environment, and provided new and improved opportunities for training and development. However, only a quarter of respondents to the online survey thought that the Grant Programme has contributed to improving safety in the area.

5 LEARNINGS

The Burtenshaw Kenny Associates 2013 evaluation reflected on the following learnings from the grant programme for SSGT:

- From the outset of programmes, SSGT should have exit strategies in place. These should include ensuring that the objectives of funded projects, where appropriate, can continue to be addressed past the lifetime of specific programmes.
- SSGT should re-consider an area wide plan when managing a geographically based grant programme. Grant recipient outcomes could then be aligned with the area outcomes. The role of other funders and agencies (both statutory and non-statutory) should be considered in this planning.
- SSGT should consider setting targets for leveraged funding as part of their planning process.
- Regular and planned evaluation should be part of future grant programmes.
- As part of the strategy to leverage and diversify funding, SSGT programmes in disadvantaged areas to consider initiating a Grantwriter type scheme.
- In order to demonstrate effectiveness, the Grantwriter Scheme should systematically document the grant applications, receipts and leveraged funding supported by the scheme.
- The Grantwriter Scheme could be extended further to encompass providing organisation development advice and guidance.
- SSGT should develop mechanisms to share their knowledge of grant recipients, in order to facilitate funding from other sources.

Grant recipients were asked for suggestions for how things may be done differently if they were to roll out a similar grant system again. Feedback was as follows:

- The recipients welcomed the fact that the Grantwriter was situated in Darndale and felt that this provided the SSGT with more accurate information on community needs. However, some wanted more face-to-face contact, to actually come out and see what's going on with the money provided by SSGT.
- Some recipients welcomed the relatively straightforward approach to funding applications by the SSGT. However, some (particularly smaller organisations) suggested making the application process a little bit more user friendly and continue the grant writer support.
- Bring together all the organisations who were benefiting from the SSGT fund to hear what is going on the ground and to get ideas from each other and build a stronger sense of community.

One grant recipient noted that a small, locally focused funder is uniquely positioned to see the merit, or otherwise, of proposed local initiatives, and they can use their influence to encourage local organisations and groups to consider changes, new approaches, for example in relation to governance as required.

Other grant recipients advised that should SSGT be in a position to continue the work that the best value would be gained from the support of the grantwriter to organisations as that links to other grants and financial supports; to continue to support around governance and link to the charity regulatory authority etc. Groups themselves get so involved in the everyday running of their services that sometimes it can be hard for them to take a step back and make sure that they are up to date on all the regulatory aspects of their operations.

Another grant recipient organisation noted that there can be value in grant support for project overheads even if only in part as sometimes that can make the difference to an organisation surviving or going under.

6 CONCLUSION

It is clear from the feedback from grant recipients that the Darndale Belcamp Grant Programme was a very worthwhile undertaking for each of the Oblates and SSGT. The grant programme and the direct work carried out by SSGT had a very positive impact to the Darndale Belcamp area, to the individual community groups, to the development of community infrastructure and to the well-being of families and individual residents who benefited from supported projects.

There is substantial evidence of organisations accessing additional funding and supports outside of the SSGT funding over the period of the Grant Programme. They clearly attributed their success to the support from the SSGT and the Grantwriter Programme in particular.

In addition to supporting community groups and organisations in achieving goals at a set point in time, many were supported in developing to a level whereby they could continue to access further funding and meet the governance criteria required for that. The SSGT has incorporated the learnings from this Programme into its work and internal practices. At the Darndale Belcamp community level the SSGT response to the 2013 evaluation led to the grant writer role being embedded within Northside Partnership. This is evidence of the Partnership's recognition of the value of the work and is a hugely beneficial legacy of the overall work, particularly as 66.7% of respondents to a SSGT survey in 2016 rated the grant writer support as continuing to add value to their work.

The less tangible benefits of the Grant Programme can be difficult to capture. People working at the community level clearly felt that their work was valued through the support provided through the Programme, particularly when resources were very scarce. Their views are expressed in the quotes in this report.



“The community grant writer programme has linked us with grants that otherwise we may not have been aware of. Having a person to talk to it has meant we can ensure that we only apply for grants that are best suited to our organisations needs instead of wasting valuable time applying for grants that don’t match our needs or that we don’t match in terms of criteria. It has also been a good way to link the various community groups and support them in collaborative work. It is a wonderful support, thank you.”

Anonymous Respondent to the SSGT Survey of Grant Writer Support, 2016

“The impact has been huge, far reaching and is still on going. I hope you realise the deep and lasting difference that you have made to so many families in this community. I saw first-hand all that you facilitated and set in motion right throughout the school community for teachers, parents, all staff and of course most of all, of the children. That is immeasurable and invaluable. It is amazing to think that all that was set in motion here in literacy and maths is now having a significant influence in many schools throughout Dublin and other places. Schools should be exciting, fun, energising and creative places where children experience many opportunities to express themselves, to develop to their full potential and to feel a sense of belonging and value. Thanks to support from organisations like SSGT, we can say our school is such a place. Thank you, thank you thank you.”

Breda Murray, Our Lady Immaculate Junior National School, August 2017

“I believe that focused efforts of the Trust to use both their bespoke funding relationships and their unique local understanding, to support and develop good governance locally, is something that has benefitted many groups. In our case, I feel it prepared us for the significant governance developments in the sector that were to come, not least in appreciating the value of good governance for all stakeholders. In my view, this may well be the longer-term legacy of the grant programme.”

Mick Ferron, Sphere 17, August 2017

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