



*CELEBRATING 25  
YEARS IN  
COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION  
1993-2018*

**Annual Report**

**2018**

2018 was a very busy year for LCEN as they celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A number of celebratory events were held during the year including the very successful “Journeys” exhibition, Learning Neighbourhood workshop and the end of year gala event which attracted learners, tutors, co-ordinators and agencies.

LCEN continued the review of their governing structures and updated their workplan for 2018 which will inform their strategic plan 2019 - 2021

LCEN is a catalyst for change for those in our communities who are most marginalised and we are in the ideal place to support adult learners to progress through their lifelong learning journey. As such we have supported 260 learners to achieve their QQI minor awards and 6 have achieved major awards at levels three to six.

With the support of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board we continue to provide good quality education to all adult learners both for their personal development and for their progression along the education continuum.

Limerick City Regeneration continues to support LCEN by providing funding to employ an Education Development Worker who works across the city supporting learners and volunteer led adult education committees. Without these volunteers, who give of their time so freely, communities may not have access to adult education. Community Education Groups contributed to funding of the position this year together with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board who also provided financial support for this process.

LCEN continue to support six community groups in their preparation for re-engagement with QQI which will take place 2019/2020. Briefings with QQI and meetings with the LCETB Quality Assurance Team has given the groups practical options for re-engaging with QQI. In 2019 they will further explore the option of re-engagement as Outreach Centres of LCETB ensuring that certified learning is available and co-ordinated in local communities

The city-wide Art & Crafts exhibition “Journeys” was a wonderful collaborative project which involved 31 groups, LCEN members, LCETB staff and learners from across the city.

Again, I must mention the volunteers who work tirelessly in their communities around adult education and on behalf of those communities say a big thank you to all.

*Helen Flanagan*

*Chairperson*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1. Annual Review**
- 2. Networking**
- 3. Celebrating 25 years in community education**
- 4. Supporting Quality Assurance in Community Education**
- 5. Promotion of Community Education**



## ANNUAL REVIEW

LCEN held the second of their review sessions in January this year facilitated by Suzanne Kyle, Aontas CEN co-ordinator. The aim of this session was to update the structure of the LCEN and develop a realistic workplan for 2018. During the session members identified goals for 2018 which included review of membership, updating of governance structures in line with new Governance code and plans were put in place for a number of events to celebrate LCEN's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## NETWORKING

### Aontas Community Education Network

LCEN hosted a meeting of Aontas CEN in June this year. A Review of the work of Aontas Community Education was facilitated by Noel Fitzgerald. Presentations from Larkin Unemployed centre on maintaining values in challenging times and a sharing of learning on Erasmus study visit by Caroline McEntee (Killucan Area Services) were followed by small group discussions on the challenges for the Community Education Network in the future.

### Clusters and Local Networks

Local networks have been developed and expanded in Southside, Northside and City Centre. These networks, supported by the LCEN met 3 to 4 times this year to share information, exchange ideas on courses and good practice of community education.

Changes in the planning requirement for LCETB programmes led to the decision to hold the city-wide cluster meeting in October to plan for calendar year 2019. Three pre-cluster meetings were held in the Northside, Southside and City Centre attended by groups (geographical and special interest) who came together to plan for 2019 to explore the merits and challenges of working on an area-based application process going forward. Following the citywide cluster meeting the three local area networks came together to share information on their application for courses

### LCETB Community Education Review Consultation

Co-ordinators, Learners and Tutors from community-based settings took part in consultations as part of a process review of LCETB Community Education Programme. Sinead Doody, who conducted the review presented the draft recommendations for discussion to the co-ordinators and tutors at a meeting held in the LEDP in June.

### Learning Neighbourhood Workshop

***“Learning Neighbourhoods aims to benefit residents by taking the learning city concept to the neighbourhood level. The programme aims to assist local education networks and organisations to showcase and develop lifelong learning opportunities. “(Cork Learning Neighbourhood Report)***



***Reps from Belfast, Bristol, Cork and Limerick at Learning Neighbourhood workshop***

LCEN organised a Learning Neighbourhood workshop which provided information to groups on a Learning Neighbourhood concept, which was piloted in Cork over the past two years in four locations, and explored the development of learning neighbourhoods in Limerick City. Denis Barrett, Lifelong Learning Coordinator outlined the concept of a Learning Neighbourhood and gave an insight into the experience of learning neighbourhoods in Cork and the type of events held by local communities. Members of the LCEN who travelled to Cork to meet with groups in Mayfield and Ballyphehane shared their thoughts on what they learned on the day. Small group discussions explored the value of learning neighbourhoods for groups in Limerick and also discussed the possibilities for developing learning neighbourhoods in the city.

# CELEBRATING 25 YEARS IN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN) celebrated 25 years in community education. This was an important milestone and a testament to communities where community education has thrived in good times and bad over the last 25 years. A series of celebratory events were held throughout the year which reflected the diversity, creativity and strong community-base of adult learning in Limerick City.

## Launch 25-year celebration

**“We will never stop learning. Education is never wasted, if you do not use it you will lose it”**

Myles Breen launched the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Limerick Community Education Network at the Belltable on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March where he spoke about the importance of supporting and encouraging learning. He was accompanied by his mother Bridie who at 97 is still learning and attending Line Dancing and Bridge



*Myles and Bridie Breen with LCEN members at launch of 25-year celebration*



*Presentation to LCEN member Josephine Sheedy and Catherine Aylmer, Development worker at LCEN 25-year celebration*



*Kay Flanagan, Mary Flannery*



*Mary Hamilton, Jan O'Sullivan, Eithne Cunneen*

## Gala end of year 25 Year Celebration



LCEN held a gala event to celebrate the end of a successful year of celebration of 25 years in community education. The event was attended by 120 people including learners, co-ordinators, agencies and local politicians. Guitar groups from across the city entertained the crowd as they arrived. The Southill Roses choir from Colvert Court performed two numbers from their repertoire and QOP/St. Saviours Creative Writers entertained the audience with their creative pieces on Limerick Community Education and their experience of learning in their course. A feature on the night was the exhibition of learner stories from learners across the city who gave an account of their journey in learning in community-based settings and how they have grown in their own lives by being involved in community education.



*Mary Hughes, Stephanie Ryan Brosnan, Margaret Fitzgerald, Northside FRC, Tom Kearns Southill Mens Shed*



*Learners from Moyross Adult Education group*

# CELEBRATING 25 YEARS IN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

## “JOURNEYS” EXHIBITION OF ART AND CRAFT

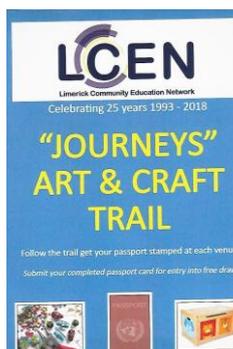


*Very interesting journey with a wonderful variety of art, crafts, lovely helpful community spirit in all centres”*

*“This is the best thing to happen for a lot of us who are just trying to do what we can to change ourselves”*

LCEN organised a very successful Art & Craft Exhibition “Journeys” in April this year. 120 learners participated in the event which was launched in the Engine Room by local artist and volunteer Tom Prendergast. A number of signature pieces created to celebrate LCEN’s 25 years in community education were featured in the Engine Room. Following the launch learners were given a passport card which they used when following a trail across the city to experience art and craft in a number of locations including Moyross, Watchhouse Cross, North Star Project, St. Mary’s, Our Lady of Lourdes and Gaelscoil Seirse Clancy in Galvone.

Thirty-one groups were involved on the day and tutors from across the community education programme together with learners and co-ordinators ensured that this was a very successful and enjoyable experience for everyone.



## QQI RE-ENGAGEMENT

LCEN members attended several briefings on re-engagement with QQI and validation of programmes. Re-engagement for groups will take place in the last quarter of 2019 and 2020. A number of meetings were held with the LCETB Quality Assurance Team and the FET Director to explore the options for community groups maintaining certified learning in the communities. Following these meetings 5 voluntary management groups agreed to work with the LCETB to re-engage as outreach centres of the LCETB which will allow them to retain their identity as a QQI centre and offer certified learning in their local centre. One group has opted to re-engage as a QQI centre. Walter Balfe, QQI met with LCETB and LCEN members in December and a Memorandum of Understanding will be drafted for discussion in the new year.

## QQI CERTIFICATION

**LCEN facilitated a citywide external authentication in July. 260 learners received certificates in Healthcare, Childcare, Beauty, ICT, Youth and Community 6 Development, Fitness and General Learning.**

**6 Learners received major awards in Healthcare, Childcare and General Learning.**

**Awards ceremonies were held in Northside, Southside and City Centre.**



## TRAINING

### QQI Business System training

LCEN provided two training sessions on the QQI business system training for 12 community education workers. They also provided training on maintenance of Quality Assurance Systems to each group on a one to one basis.

Training was also provided to 6 members of LCEN on induction of learners.

Maire Lynch, LCETB Q.A. officer provided training on new updated templates developed by LCETB for use in the community. Updated templates were circulated to staff.

### AONTAS CEN Collaborative Training

2 LCEN members attended online course on collaborative education for community education provided by An Cosan.

Participants on the course explored the principles and practice of community education and lifelong learning and identified practical approaches to quality assurance and governance and share best practice regarding QQI programme validation and re-engagement

### QQI Information Workshop for Learners

LCEN Development worker in collaboration with LCETB Adult Recruitment and Guidance, BTEI, Literacy organised an information session for learners attending QQI courses citywide. Presentation on QQI awards, progression routes and supports available to learners were outlined. Feedback from learners was very positive and it is hoped to run a session in 2019.

## PROMOTION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

### Recruitment of Learners

Registration for classes took place in September this year. LCEN worked with community groups to promote and recruit learners for both accredited and non-accredited courses. Open Days, Community fairs, local media were used to promote the variety of courses available across the city.

Southill and St. Saviours targeted new learners in the new housing developments in their area which lead to an increase in numbers of learners attending classes locally.

Garryowen held a very successful coffee morning in their new premises in John Street which also attracted new learners.

Northside FRC held a community fair where adult education courses were promoted.

## AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Limerick Regeneration within Limerick Council for their ongoing support and funding

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board for their support through funding and provision of tuition hours and for other projects and initiatives throughout the year.

AONTAS who have been supportive of our work throughout the year.



*Southill Women's Group with Mayor Stephen Keary at Launch of Lifelong Learning Festival*

### FET FAIR



*LCEN MEMBERS – PROMOTING COMMUNITY EDUCATION AT THE FET FAIR*

LCEN were one of the exhibitors at the FET fair organised by LCETB Information and Guidance Staff held in April 2018 during Lifelong Learning festival. Exhibitors from part-time and full-time programmes as well as FET colleges provided information to learners on the variety of programmes available throughout the Further Education Service. Learners were on hand to showcase their work. LCEN members gave out bookmarks and information on courses available in communities across the city. They also gave information on their upcoming citywide event "Journeys" Exhibition

### LCEN IS REPRESENTED ON:

Aontas Community Education Steering Group

AONTAS Community Education Network

AONTAS Executive Committee

Limerick Lifelong Learning Steering Committee



*Niamh O'Reilly CEO AONTAS with LCEN Members at CEN Meeting*



*LCEN Members (Josephine Sheedy, Mary Hughes, Eimear O'Connor, Yvonne Lane, Mary Flannery, Lorraine O'Donoghue, Angela O'Flynn, Helen Flanagan, Kay Flanagan, Jimmy Prior, Catherine Aylmer)*

## **LCEN MEMBER GROUPS**

### **ADAPT**

**Garryowen CDP**

**Limerick City CDP**

**Moyross Adult Education Group**

**Northside FRC**

**Our Lady of Lourdes**

**Queen of Peace CDP**

**Southill**

**St. Saviours**

**St. Mary's Adult Education Group**



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Education & Training Board

