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Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr Kieran McCarthy at the SHEP Training Centre, Ballintemple, on Monday 26th February with some members of the SHEP Management Committee and Mr David Lane (HSE Cork & Kerry) as part of the celebrating of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Social and Health Education Programme in 1974.

Nuacht

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SOCIAL & HEALTH EDUCATION PROJECT CLG (SHEP) NEWSLETTER

50 Years making a difference!

Dear Friends. Welcome to this first newsletter in our 50th year. We started the year with the sad news of the passing of our dear friend and former colleague Eileen Lynch. We will miss her greatly. Our condolences to Frank, her family and all her friends.

We are delighted to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Social and Health Education Programme and we express our gratitude to all who have been part of the unfolding journey. Our intention for the year ahead will be to keep our marking of the anniversary about people, to keep it simple and to keep it environmentally friendly.

Since its foundation in 1974, SHEP has blossomed and evolved, touching countless lives in ways both profound and unforeseen. The positive impact it has had on our community members transcends mere measurement - it's a legacy etched in hearts and memories. SHEP continues to be a vibrant

community, united by purpose and shared commitment. As we reflect on the past five decades, we honour the tireless efforts, the resilience, and the unwavering dedication of all involved. From the SHEP Management Committee to the dedicated staff and the several hundred people involved with SHEP in the delivery of various programmes, each thread contributes to the rich tapestry of our shared history. We raise our voices in gratitude, celebrating all the milestones, the growth, and the transformative journey that has shaped SHEP.

We were very pleased to welcome the Lord Mayor of Cork to Ballintemple on Monday last to formally launch our celebrating of what has been an extraordinary journey over 50 years. On behalf of all of us on the Management Committee I want to express my deep gratitude to everyone who has been part of the journey. We are very proud of all that has been achieved and we look positively to the future. We very much look forward to connecting with you over the coming months at one or more of the events that will be taking place.

Carrie Shanahan, Chairperson



Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr Kieran McCarthy at the SHEP Training Centre, Ballintemple, on Monday 26th February. With Carrie Shanahan, SHEP Chairperson of the SHEP Management Committee and Dolores McCashin, SHEP Company Secretary.





Eileen Lynch RIP

Our dear friend and former colleague, Eileen, passed away on January 1st. Eileen was a truly special person who made an enormous contribution, over almost 50 years in various capacities, to the life and development of the Social and Health Education Project and consequently to the wider community especially across Cork and Kerry. We loved her warmth, loving nature, joyfulness and humility. We have been impacted by her gentle, soulful presence. We have been inspired by her capacity to connect deeply with people and her enduring passion for equality and justice. So many lives have been touched by her over the decades and many lives have been changed for the better through her work in education, counselling, community work, advocacy and most recently environmental action. She was an exceptional person and a wonderful colleague, supporter and advocate.

She has left a lasting legacy in SHEP, working hand in hand with Frank for so many years with great integrity, steadfastness and tenacity. We know that her work in this Project meant so much to her - she also has meant so much to us. We are proud and privileged to have known her and to have worked with her. We loved her dearly and she will be missed greatly. Our hearts are heavy with sadness on her passing, but we are also filled with deep gratitude. May her loving and gentle soul rest in peace.

Jim Sheehan

IMPORTANT NEWS

New Strategic Plan 2024-27

Our new Strategic Plan will be formally launched at the end of March. It is the result of considerable work over the last few months and builds on the experience of the Project over the last three years. The new plan is informed by our new vision and mission statements. It includes a new focus on stepping up with regarding to the environment. It also includes a renewed commitment to working in partnership with other organisations where possible, further developing SHEP as a community of practice, and taking a stronger stance regarding systemic exclusion, inequity and injustice.

Additional HSE Funding

We are very grateful to the HSE (Cork & Kerry) for its support to SHEP over many decades. This year, additional funding has been provided once again for SHEP's Advocacy Programme and for LIB Multicultural Counselling and Outreach Programme.

Project work going very well – across all Programmes

We are delighted that there has been very strong interest in our training programmes again this spring. Our Facilitation Training Programme and our Continuing Personal Development Training Programmes, for example, were both over-subscribed. The Community Education Programme continues to meet strong demand across Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Clare. The Counselling Programme is responding to the increasing demand for our low-cost counselling. The Advocacy Programme is able to reach additional older people and people with disabilities because of the additional funding the HSE has provided.



A photo of the SHEP Staff team taken in the Dome in early February with Sarah Harrington (CESCA Coordinator). Also on the team are Abigail Joffe (International Partnership) and Maria Young (Green Spaces for Health).

PUTTING SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CENTRE

Significant Progress being made

As you will be aware, SHEP has been placing urgency on working out how to engage effectively with the climate and biodiversity-loss emergencies. One expression of this is that our new strategic plan places sustainability at the core of all our work. This commitment is demonstrated in our joining the Green Spaces for Health Project last year. The collaborators include Cork City Council, the HSE, Cork Healthy Cities, CEF, and The Lantern Project. We are pleased to host and administer this project which coordinated by Maria Young. Separately, our links with the Ardfoyle Horticulture Project continue to develop. We are delighted also to be a proud partner in the Dome Collaboration (see below). Finally, we are still awaiting news from our application to Cork City Council for the new Climate Action Funding.



Some images from the official launch in late 2023 of the new Dome and Garden at Ardfoyle – which is a collaboration involving Cork Migrants Centre, The OLA Sisters, The Ardfoyle Horticulture Project and SHEP. Funding for the Dome and Garden has come from a large number of supporters including the National Lottery, the Perry and Sandy Massie Foundation, and The Department of Integration. The Dome has been named Plantopia.

‘I am inviting you to go deeper, to learn and to practice so that you become someone who has a great capacity for being solid, calm and without fear, because our society needs people like you who have these qualities and your children our children need people like you in order to go on, in order to become solid and calm without fear.’

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MARKING THE SHEP 50th

Marking our 50th Anniversary – focusing on people, keeping it sustainable

Our intention with regard to this important milestone is to celebrate simply, with the focus on people and sustainability. There will be a number of formal events happening throughout the year as well as some informal events and gatherings. There will be an opportunity for everyone to connect with us during this milestone year. Our next formal event to mark the SHEP 50th will be an event in Tralee in late March which will be very kindly hosted by our long-term partners Kerry Education and Training Board. We are planning a large informal gathering of the SHEP Community at Ballintemple, during the summer. We will have more information for you on this later.

Dates for your Diary!

The Cork Presentation of Certificates Event will take place at the Silver Springs Convention Centre on Wednesday, June 19th. We are delighted that our friends and supporters Perry and Sandy Massie will be able to join us for this important event.

The Kerry Presentation of Certificates Event will take place on Thursday, June 13th.

The Limerick Presentation of Certificates Event will take place on Wednesday, June 5th.



Jim Sheehan, welcoming members of the OLA community and the Horticulture Project to the SHEP Training Centre in February as part of our marking the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Social and Health Education Programme. Included in the gathering were Sr Kathleen McGarvey, Sr Maura Cranney and Sr Maria Lee, who completed their term of office at OLA Provincial Leadership Team recently.

A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows."

- St. Francis of Assisi

‘Voices from the Heart’ – available on our website

‘Voices from the Heart’ is a delightful and important piece created in 2014 as part of our celebrating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Social and Health Education Programme. This piece is now published on the SHEP website and we hope you enjoy it. <https://socialandhealth.com/50th-celebration/>. The voices you hear include those of the co-founders Fr Donal Linehan and Nuala Rearden as well as a number of people who were involved in the early years of the Programme. These people gathered at SHEP in Ballincollig in late 2013 as part of a ‘memory mapping’ project. A special thank you to Mary Mangan and Fergus Lalor for producing ‘Voices from the Heart’.

‘Stories and Poems of Change’ – also available on our website

Stories and Poems of Change is a book produced by SHEP in 2014 to mark the 40th anniversary. Only one hundred copies of the book were produced in 2014. We are delighted now to publish the book as an electronic flipbook which means it can be read and enjoyed by a much wider audience. It includes memories, stories, poems and paintings contributed by a large number of people who have been touched by the Project. It also includes a summary of the Project’s history from 1974- 2013. We hope you enjoy it.

SHEP Choir

The happy marriage of singing and caring for our wellbeing is the reason that the SHEP Choir was launched in 2015. The SHEP Choir now feels like a branch of the SHEP Tree, reflecting its ethos, where all are welcome, all are respected and songs are taught in the natural voice manner. At the start of the year, the SHEP Choir sang for the funeral of Eileen Lynch (RIP) who worked with SHEP for many years. We were able to salute her with some beautiful songs that come from music of many traditions.

To give a sense of the experience of being part of the SHEP Choir here is some of the feedback from current Choir members-

“My experience has been enriching, life affirming and confidence building”

“Not so much a formal choir but a ‘singing circle’ rooted in ourselves and all life”

“The SHEP Choir is a mind, body, and soul experience”

As we prepare to celebrate SHEP’s 50th Birthday the invitation is there to see if you are interested in becoming part of the Choir in 2024.

To give you a sense of the singing we create please click on the link below

Baba Yetu: <https://youtu.be/TZQF-uWyMNA>

For more information or, if you need any clarification please contact Norma Roche on 085-8619468 norma.roche@socialandhealth.com



RIP Gillian Noonan

We fondly remember Gillian Noonan who passed away late last year. Gillian was a very active member of the Coiscéim panel and saw a large number of adolescents for the service. Gillian will be sorely missed. May her gentle soul rest in peace.

WHAT WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT

International Learning Partnership - NEPAL Visit to SHEP

We are really looking forward to the International Partnership Learning Visit to SHEP which will take place in April. A number of the staff of Sahakarmi Samaj, including Executive Director Ammar Air, will visit us for a ten-day programme of learning, reflection, exchange and joint-planning. We are particularly pleased the Mayor of Gaumul Rural Municipality and the Mayor of Jagannath Rural Municipality will also be part of the visiting group - these two mountainous and very remote areas in South West Nepal are key target areas in the current three year Irish-Aid funded programme. SHEP has been partnering Sahakarmi for 17 years and for almost all of this time Irish Aid has been a co-funder of this important work. Other partners that have supported us include ICCO Kerk in Actie and Development Fund Norway.



Erasmus Learner Exchange

For the first time ever SHEP will carry out a Learner Exchange through the support of the Erasmus programme. A group of twelve participants from SHEP will travel to our partner in Slovenia for a six-day programme of intercultural learning and exchange. The exchange will have a strong focus on exploring environmental sustainability. We have been partnering with LUR for six years now and we are privileged to deepen our connection with them. We will host a group of adult learners from LUR Slovenia to SHEP in June. Up to now, SHEP's involvement in Erasmus has been about supporting the professional development of our staff and facilitators. The Commission is particularly interested in

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including more adult learners from the non-formal sectors in the Erasmus Programme and we are happy to be involved in this important development.

COLLABORATIONS – other examples



Jim Sheehan and Tatenda Zira from SHEP participated in the OLA Chapter in February, along with other Projects partnering locally with the OLA Sisters including Cork Migrants Centre, and the Ardfoyle Horticulture Project.

Cork Education and Training Board

We continue to work closely with Cork Education and Training Board to deliver our community education programme in Cork City and County. We are working together with them at present to design a pilot which will include supporting participants to self-register on the 'FETCH' system. We are also working with them to develop a new 'REACH' project for the Autumn. This is likely to have a strong environmental focus.

Kerry Education and Training Board

We have been working with the Kerry Education and Training board of over twenty years – their support each year allows the SHEP Programme to reach communities across Kerry. They will shortly host a celebratory event to mark the SHEP 50th and to acknowledge the many local partnerships that have supported the work.



SHEP has been involved in CESCA since its establishment in 2014. We administer the programme and host the coordinator, Sarah Harrington.



Some of the graduates of the SHEP UCC Level 7 Diploma at the Autumn Conferring. The UCC- SHEP Collaboration started in 2001.

Mid-West Drug and Alcohol Forum

The Mid-west Drug and Alcohol Forum has funded the SHEP Programme in the Mid-West since 2010. The MWDAF are working with SHEP to identify ways to put the programme on a more sustainable footing.

INVITATION

CORK CITY BASED

COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROVIDERS' 10th GATHERING

Thursday 25th April 2024

9.30am to 1.00pm at Nano Nagle Place

Queries to Margo Hayes 087 1962023

Fáilte For All

**Community Education – Places of Welcome
and Social Transformation**

1. Inputs from Intercultural Educator and Activist, Cork ETB Youth Services/Councillor and Learners
1. Connecting and sharing with other providers of Community Education across the City
2. Mindful input from Michelle Gupta, Embody Harmony
3. Exploring our theme how 'Fáilte For All - Community Education – Places of Welcome and Social Transformation

Please forward this information on to others

Fáilte For All - Community Education – Places of Welcome and Social Transformation

This year, the 10th Gathering of Cork City Community Education Providers is being organised by the Community Education Engagement Group. The group is a network 10-14 of Cork City Based Community Education Providers who have been working over recent years to develop and build a strong and independent voice for the 110 or so Community Education provider organisations in Cork City. SHEP has been a member of this collaboration since its inception five years ago, organising two event each year over that time.

The Gatherings serve as a connecting space, networking and information sharing opportunity. The most recent event in October 2023 was in Nano Nagle Place. That Gathering, and the profile of the speakers and the unique location, aimed to explore the connections between Environment and Community through the theme 'Nature Nurtures Community Education'. For this Gathering the aim is to explore the ways in which Community Education can offer a relational education experience for personal growth and for addressing personal and community experiences of exclusion, intolerance and prejudice. People can register to attend on Eventbrite so as we can easily manage the communication as we get closer to the event [Click to Register on Eventbrite](#)

SHEP PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT

Healthy Ireland Waterford

For the first time, Healthy Ireland have partnered with us to offer a SHEP Reflective Practice Programme in Waterford.

Healthy Ireland Kilkenny

We are pleased that Healthy Ireland Kilkenny is collaborating with us to deliver an innovative 'Facilitating Groupwork for Health and Well-being' Programme for frontline workers in the Kilkenny Area.

South-East SPHE Community of Practice

This group of practitioners from a wide range of sectors meets for four days of training each year. This includes an annual residential training which takes place in Teach Brid, Tullow, Co. Carlow.



Slovak Teachers' Research Project & University of Exeter

With the support of the Erasmus Programme and in association with University of Exeter we have started phase two of this innovative collaboration. The focus of the work is on supporting the teachers to explore how the SHEP Experiential Learning Approach could be used to support mental health and well-being in schools in Slovakia. The group has worked mostly online – meeting approximately monthly. A Learning Visit to Ireland took place last Autumn and a two-day training was delivered by SHEP in Bratislava. Both of these pieces supported the teachers to deepen their understanding of the SHEP experiential approach.

'The best and the most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.'

Helen Keller

