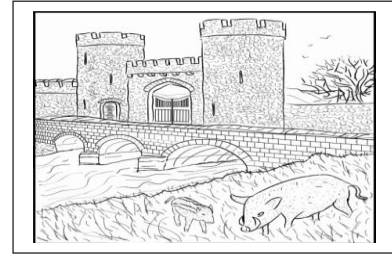


REPORT ON PUBLIC MEETING/ KELLY'S 6th NOV. 2012.

RE: MUCKLAGH COMMUNITY CENTRE

'ITS NOW OR NEVER'

€35,000 REQUIRED STRAIGH AWAY



People were sitting and standing everywhere; behind the bar counter, in doorways and even sitting on the floor. Such was the large crowd the turned up for the public meeting in Kelly's on Tuesday night last to gauge the feeling and need for **A Community Centre in Mucklagh**. **Chairperson Philip Barron** opened the public meeting by welcoming everyone and said 'by the way that people are crammed together here tonight is indication enough that there is a need for a Community Centre'.

Frances Neville/Pennick gave a presentation on the starting of the Mucklagh Development Group – with their mission statement as follows: “ Mucklagh Community Development Ltd is committed to the Social, Educational, Sports and Cultural Integration of the People of Mucklagh and surrounding areas. “Frances also out lined the various works that have being achieved since it's formation in 2009. They have organised litter picks, restarted the Community Family Day, and for the first time ever erected a community Christmas Tree in Mucklagh. Frances went on to state that as a result of MCD, Active Age, Community Alert and Foroige were started in the last few of years and are at their capacity now as meeting space is limited.

Caroline Bryant presented the statistics and analysis researched by MCD. The 2011 census showed an increase in the population from 1,102 people living in Mucklagh to 1,460 living there in 2011 which was an increase of 32.5% since 2002, and that is just in the Screggan area. This doesn't take in Charleville View, St. Colman's Terrace, and Adam's Villa. Figures taking from the questionnaire that was delivered to the people of Mucklagh and surrounding area showed that 90% of the people said that there were no facilities for the youth and there was a lack of facilities for senior citizens. Asked if there was a need for meeting space and indoor sports 80% of people said there was and while over 70% stated that there was also a need for dance, drama, music and cultural space. The overall report showed that there was a need for facilities for youth and the elderly. It was also pointed out that within the community there were over 260 pupils in St Colman's School and 80 pupils in Gort Na Mona School. On Friday evenings there are up to 160 children boys and girls under 12's playing football. Mucklagh Soccer Association has upwards of 150 under 12's. But there are no facilities for children who do not play football or soccer.

Site Obtained: To date a site has been obtained and plans drawn up for a proposed Community Centre. It is hoped that the proposed plans will cater for indoor soccer, bowls, kitchen facilities which would cater for family and community events such as refreshments after funerals, communions and confirmations, etc. Caroline pointed out that in 20 years time over 40% of the population would be senior citizen's and care of the elderly within the community will be of utmost importance. A number of community centres throughout the county deliver hot meals to the elderly 3/4 time per week and our facilities can cater for such purposes.

Vice Chairperson Willie O Grady: presented the costing for the proposed Community Centre. It is estimated that the project would cost €350,000. But, MCD would qualify for a Rural Development Grant from Offaly Local Development for €150,000 provided; (1) Plans drawn up and presented. (2) Site in the name of the Community. (3) Planning permission pending on €35,000 in the MCD Account.

Willie pointed out that to date a site has been secured, the architect's services/plans drawn free of charge, project management promised, the purchasing of steel at cost, the erecting of steel for free, also the plastering, legal skills and ground preparation and accounting advice all for free. The cost of the project €350,000 would ensure a grant €150 000 but we would need to fundraise for €35 000 immediately.

This would be followed by fundraising for €165,000 over the duration of the building project with a number of fundraising events. But it was impressed on the gathering the important to raise the **€35,000 immediately** as we must have these funds in our account to qualify for the grant of €150,000. The time scale of the proposed project would be to apply for planning permission now, commence building in early spring 2013 and complete the project by December 2013.

To raise funds urgently it is proposed to ask the community to donate a €100 per household

Declan Costello from Offaly Local Development opened the meeting to the floor, **Mary Neville** from Mucklagh Active Retirement, outlined that the Active Age Group is out growing its premises at the moment and for them to continue she asked would there be provision for them to use these facilities? **Lille Lacy** asked would there be provision for Social Dancing? While **Freda Spain** asked would there be storage for toddler groups to store their furniture? MCD members pointed out these facilities would be for all groups and organisations and to facilitate each group's needs. **Ann Marie Cunningham** from Community Games enquired about basketball facilities and said Community games need premises in the area to facilitate their programmes. **Padraig Kelly** enquired about an all-weather pitch for young children to play? The Chairperson said there was no provision at the moment, while others enquired about a stage. Everyone who was at the meeting was very interested in this project. **Aisling Kelly** from child's-play-pre-school group raised the point that it might be too much to ask everyone for a €100, especially with Christmas coming. **Laura Buckley** from Beechmount Park proposed a collection of €50.00 per household.

Willie O Grady said he was over 40 years in Mucklagh and he always hoped there would be a centre for his children, but it didn't happen then and if it doesn't happen now it would not be there for his grand children. "It's now or never". We cannot afford to lose this opportunity. **Pat Carroll from Brocca Road** expressed his concern re a collection of a €100.00 per household. **Irene Glavin** from Tegan Court asked if people could set up a direct debit and pay x amount ever week. **Ollie Bryant** praised the committee for the work they had done. They knew their facts and figures and they have secured a site. Everyone here is in agreement the we need a community centre and yes times are hard but we need to get behind MCD and give them €100.00 per house where we can. **Paddy Guinan** Chairperson, Shamrock's GAA Club spoke of how families in his age group with mortgages were finding things difficult, but after seeing the presentation and the reaction of the people here, this project is a must and let's get behind the people here and give them our support.

Cepie Burke from Tidy Towns urged families to give the €100.00 as Mucklagh needs a Community Centre. **Tom Minnock** from the Island spoke on how the people in the Island were in the same position recently when they were involve in the development to the Island Church. When they approached the people of the Island for €100 per house hold they too got a wonderful response - some people giving a lot more than the €100.00. He encouraged the people to ahead because they would get the necessary support.

Declan Costello then asked for a show of hands for a proposed amount of €50.00 or for €100.00 per household. 80% of those present were in favour of collecting a €100.00 per housed hold as the €35,000 has to be their Account by December 14th 2012.

The Chairperson, Philip Barron then thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked David Hutton, Bury, Aidan Bracken Building Design, Offaly Local Development Company, Local Community and Sporting Groups, St Colman's School and everyone in Mucklagh for all their help and support to date.

The Mucklagh Community Development Group were overwhelmed with the support and enthusiasm that was given to them on Tuesday night last. Numerous offers of voluntary help and skills were offered on the night which are most welcome, as people are needed in many areas from Admin, Business Planning, IT, and general labour - the list is endless. If you have a skill or a pair of hands willing to offer a helping hand Contact us on Mucklagh@ireland.com or 0876026428 or 0876325409. A Community Centre is for all of the Community in the future. This is a chance too important to miss. Plans will be on public view soon.

Please Note: MCD will announce a specified date that they call to your house for donations. These will be local members of the community whose names will be printed and on display in Flynn's and Kelly's Shops. MCD have an Account in Tullamore Credit Union: Acc. No. 65830/33