

**Taobh Tíre**  
**Update 12**  
**August –December 2006**

**Background**

Taobh Tíre a better library service for rural and isolated communities is a pilot research project run by Donegal County Council in association with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna under the Public Library Research Programme. The project has investigated and implemented new and innovative ways to serve small communities. The project team is working in partnership with local stakeholders – Community Development groups, Family Resource Centres, commercial companies, a Rural Transport Initiative, Údarás na Gaeltachta and others. This partnership approach is both innovative and very successful to date. At present there are 14 Taobh Tíre service points in County Donegal.

**Extension to new areas**

The launch of the Letterkenny Community Development Project (CDP) service point took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. The Letterkenny CDP is an ideal partner for the Taobh Tíre project as one of the main aims of the CDP is to promote the economic, educational and cultural welfare of the community of Letterkenny and to empower disadvantaged groups to effectively participate in a programme of personal and social development. This ties in directly with the objectives of the Taobh Tíre project.

**Mainstreaming**

Preparations for the mainstreaming of the project are well underway. Operational procedures have been amended to include Taobh Tíre members e.g. overdue letters. A calling card was designed and implemented for the delivery service. This card lets the partner organisation know that the delivery van has called to their Taobh Tíre site and will return again the following week. The amendments to operational procedures and the discussions with staff have helped in ensuring the sustainability of Taobh Tíre in County Donegal.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Research & Policy Section of Donegal County Council presented a comprehensive evaluation report to the Management Team in August. The objective of this evaluation was to:

- Assess the level of understanding of library services and their importance in serving rural communities.
- Provide evidence of increased inter-agency working.
- Identify new access channels to the library service.
- Provide evidence of increased understanding of the needs of particular target groups.
- Provide evidence of increased integration of library services into aspects of economic, social and cultural life.

This report will form the basis of the final report.

## **Pride of Place Award**

Taobh Tíre was awarded a Community Service Outreach award at the Co-operation Ireland's Pride of Place Awards in Tullow, County Carlow in October. The Pride of Place award is an all-island competition which is directed towards recognising improvements by local communities to create civic pride in their area. The competition focus is on people coming together to shape, change and enjoy all that is good about their area. In their comments the judges stated that '*This excellent partnership between the local authority and a very positive and supportive rural community has the potential to be a model for other areas of rural isolation*'.

## **Final Report**

This final report will make recommendations to the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government in relation to the replication of this service by other local authorities. It will also recommend the mainstreaming and consolidation of Taobh Tíre by Donegal County Council. The results to date have been impressive with just over 1200 registered Taobh Tíre members (more than the mobile library.) The project provides new opportunities for education, life-long learning, leisure and personal development in areas that are unable to sustain a full time branch library. Without exception, there is great enthusiasm for the project, which shows the widespread recognition of the need to increase the social, educational and cultural opportunities of every person in the county. It also acknowledges the importance of

the library service as a true gateway to resources for children and young people, for learning and information, and for culture and the imagination. The final report will be published early 2007.

For further information see also

Update 1 December 2002- March 2003

Update 2 April 2003 – July 2003

Update 3 August 2003 – November 2003

Update 4 December 2003 – March 2004

Update 5 April 2004 – July 2004

Update 6 August 2004 – November 2004

Update 7 December 2004 – March 2005

Update 8 April 2005 – July 2005

Update 9 August 2005 – November 2005

Update 10 December 2005 – March 2006

Update 11 April 2006 – July 2006

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