



Barcelona Declaration Project

Creating an Accessible Environment for All

Wicklow County Council Implementation Plan

(adopted by Wicklow County Council, February 2004)

<u>Contents:</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Introduction	
The Barcelona Declaration.....	3
The Irish Context.....	4
2. Wicklow County Council	
Background	4
Committee Membership.....	5
The Implementation Plan	6
Involving the Advocates.....	6
Link between Barcelona Declaration and "Outlook" - Wicklow's County Development Board Strategy	6
3. Methodology and Conclusion	
Steps to success	7
Conclusion.....	8
4. Action Plan	8-13

Introduction:

The Barcelona Declaration

When Ireland signed the Barcelona Declaration, in March 1995, it committed to making Ireland a more accessible environment for people with disabilities. This meant that, among other things, Ireland's built environment, services and decision-making processes would become more accessible.

The Barcelona Declaration was signed by all member states of the EU at a major event known as the European Congress on "The City and the Disabled" which was hosted in Barcelona. The outcome of the Congress was a manifesto known as the Barcelona Declaration and contains Seventeen Agreements that relate to a broad range of access issues.

The primary author of the Declaration is Francesc Aragall, the President of the European Institute for Design and Disability (EIDD).

The seventeen Agreements can be summarised as follows:

1. Promote disability awareness and ensure the rights of people with disabilities to be different and their right to receive personal attention
2. Develop policies and equality/disability proof decision-making processes
3. Develop consultative processes
4. Provide people with disabilities access to the social and physical environments as well as services
5. Provide training programmes dealing with equality/disability issues
6. Develop monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment procedures for actions, projects and policies regarding equality/disability issues.

Ireland now has to implement this Declaration and Agreements.

The Irish Context

In 2001, the National Disability Authority (NDA) was asked by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to establish a process for the promotion and practical implementation of the Barcelona Declaration involving all local authorities in Ireland. In June 2001, the NDA established a steering committee and issued a public call to tender for the Barcelona Declaration Project.

The Institute for Design and Disability (IDD) successfully tendered for the contract. The IDD team provide expertise, seminars and guidelines to assist local authorities in the implementation of pilot projects or actions related to the needs of people with disabilities. In June 2002 the IDD launched the Barcelona Declaration Project Ireland.

As of January 2004 eighty-seven Local Authorities in Ireland have adopted the Barcelona Declaration.

2. Wicklow County Council:

Background

Wicklow County Council adopted the Barcelona Declaration on 7th October 2002. In so doing the Council committed themselves to creating a more inclusive society for people with disabilities and to establishing structures for ongoing consultation with the advocates of this sector.

Once adopted, the main concern turned to how this Declaration could be made real. At this point the Community & Enterprise Section took a lead role in advancing the work.

The first step was to engage with an organisation called the "Barcelona Project" who have been specifically set up to help Irish local authorities put a plan of action together around the Declaration.

Arising from this a number of awareness raising meetings took place between the Barcelona Project team and the Community & Enterprise section as well as between the Project team and a cross section of senior officials from each Section of the Council.

Following on from this it was decided that an integrated approach to developing and driving an Implementation Plan would be most effective. Thus, in August 2003, a cross-sectional committee was formed.

Committee Membership

The members of this Committee represent Housing & Corporate Estate, Planning, I.T., the Arts, Libraries, and Corporate Affairs including its Training & Human Resources divisions. The members are as follows:

Derek Hennessy - Architect in Housing Section
Siobhan O'Brien - Training Officer in Corporate Affairs
Carmel Canterbury - Corporate Affairs
Mary DeCourcy - Information Technology
Sinead Redmond / Leah Coyne - Arts Office
Noelle Ringwood / Brendan Martin - County Library Service

This team is supported and facilitated by the following members of staff from the Community & Enterprise Section:

Margaret Malone - Community & Enterprise Development Officer
Patricia Reilly - Social Inclusion Officer

The Implementation Plan

The team set themselves the task of drawing together an Implementation Plan which would represent a myriad of ways in which the Council would improve on the local authority services being provided to people with disabilities living in the county.

The resulting Implementation Plan, a copy of which is attached, embodies a unique coming together of the various Sections of the Council and represents a concerted collective endeavour in creating an environment which is accessible and beneficial for all.

Involving the Advocates

On the preparation of this draft implementation plan, the Team invited groups representing people with disabilities to become involved in the process and as a result have taken on board their significant suggestions. Indeed, it is intended that this linkage between the Council and the advocates of disabled people will become a permanent and valuable structure. The groups involved include:

Nicky O'Brien - Irish Wheelchair Association - Arklow Branch

Gertie Salley - Wicklow Communities Networking

Ciara Byrne - Irish Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephelus

Link between Barcelona Declaration and "Outlook" - Wicklow's County Development Board Strategy

While the Barcelona declaration is largely about local authorities looking inwardly at their services and working collectively to improve them, in Wicklow the Declaration has actually had an appropriate tie in with the County Development Board's (CDB) work. The Wicklow CDB's Strategy Plan "Outlook" contains a social inclusion action pertaining to the promotion of the social model of disability within the county. Arising from this action a piece of research is taking place which is assessing many of the county's service providers in terms of how accessible their buildings and services are for disabled people. The service providers being assessed include Wicklow County Council. Thus, the results and analysis from this part of the research will certainly help to inform the work of Wicklow County Council's Barcelona Declaration Implementation Plan.

3. Methodology –Steps to Success:

- Step 1:** Adoption of the Barcelona Declaration by Wicklow County Council
- Step 2:** Meeting between the national Barcelona Project team and Wicklow County Council senior Management.
- Step 3:** Convergence of Barcelona Declaration team in-house
- Step 4:** Drafting of Implementation Plan
- Step 5:** Consultation with advocacy groups
- Step 6:** Consideration of submissions and amendment of Plan
- Step 7:** Completion of draft Implementation Plan and dissemination of same to Council members
- Step 8:** Adoption of Implementation Plan by Wicklow County Council
- Step 9:** Implementation of Plan
- Step 10:** Ongoing review and evaluation of Plan

4. Conclusion:

Wicklow County Council's Barcelona Declaration team hope that this draft plan will be viewed as being comprehensive and inclusive and that its implementation will be achievable and successful. The team believe that this is possible through the combined effort and resolute determination of all the parties concerned.

BARCELONA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

ACTIONS	Resources		Deadlines (to become more specific as Implementation process begins)
	Who will lead this	Finance	2004
<p>1. To ensure that Wicklow County Council's website complies with recommended standards from an accessibility perspective. This work to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with web design guidelines issued by NDA • Customising key elements of Wicklow website from a disability perspective <p>Agencies to be consulted: National Disability Authority</p>	IT	Internal Resources	To be completed by June 2004
<p>2. Incorporate Disability Awareness Training as a mainstream training module offered to all staff employed by Wicklow Local Authorities including both office based and 'Outdoor' staff. Additionally, this training to be offered to Council Members.</p>	Corporate Affairs – Training Section	Internal Resources	To be mainstreamed as ongoing activity of Training Officer
<p>3. On pilot basis, deliver tailored Disability Awareness Training programme to all Library staff on county wide basis.</p>	Corporate Affairs – Training Section	Internal Resources of both Training Section and Library Service	To be delivered throughout 2004 as appropriate
<p>4. To provide training in sign language for at least one member of staff and for it to be highlighted publicly that this service is available – pilot this action in County Buildings</p>	Corporate Affairs – Training Section	Internal Resources	To be completed by June 2004

ACTIONS	Resources		
	Who will lead this?	Finance	2004
5. Investigate purchasing of new equipment from Health & Safety perspective which has a disability focus eg purchase of evacuation chairs for use in emergency situations in Council owned storied buildings. Additionally, provide appropriate training to Fire Marshalls regarding use of this new equipment when purchased	Corporate Affairs – Health & Safety	Internal Resources	Completed by December '03
6. Continue Wicklow County Council's policy of ensuring equality for people with disabilities in the areas of recruitment, employment and training and development including consideration of special needs panel whilst endeavouring to exceed the compliance quote of 3% at all times. Policies to be reviewed following completion of Workplace Review.	Corporate Affairs – Human Resources/ Equality Officer	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity
7. Provide supported employment opportunities within Wicklow County Council where feasible. Mainstream this activity through entering into more formalised arrangements with supported employment organisations as and where appropriate. Consult appropriate agencies : e.g. County Wicklow Supported Employment Network, FAS, Connect Employment, Rehab etc	Corporate Affairs – Human Resources	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity
8. Ensure that all sections of WCC provide information in a variety of formats (eg braille, audio, large print etc) where possible All sections to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community, Cultural & Social Development ● Environmental Protection and Sanitary Services ● Housing and Corporate Estate ● Transportation and Roads Infrastructure ● Planning and Economic Development ● Corporate Affairs 	Corporate Affairs to advise upon /all sections to take particular responsibility for	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity
9. Ensure that relevant actions contained in this Barcelona Implementation Plan are incorporated in all major WCC plans / publications eg County Development Plan, Corporate Plan, LUTS, Local Area Plan etc	Corporate Affairs to advise upon /all sections to take particular responsibility for	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity

ACTIONS	Resources		
	Who will lead this?	Finance	2004
10. Integrate actions contained in this Implementation Plan into work of Strategic Policy Committees where relevant	Corporate Affairs to advise upon /all sections to take particular responsibility for	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity
11. Commission an artist to work with a number of special needs schools / centres /hospitals in Co. Wicklow in 2004.	Arts Office	Dependent on securing of additional resources	To be initiated by Oct '04
12. Explore further opportunities through which Arts Office can encourage and celebrate the professional artistic development of people, including people with disabilities	Arts Office	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity
13. Promote access to and participation in arts by people with disabilities. Actions to include hosting of updated Arts database on WCC website including accessibility information in relation to arts facilitators, arts venues and arts groups.	Arts Office	Internal Resources	To be completed by June '04
14. Both the Arts Office and Library Service to encourage participation by people with disabilities in all events/exhibitions etc hosted whether separately or jointly by both sections in 2004	Arts Office / Library Service	Dependent on securing of additional resources	Ongoing activity in '04
15. Promote awareness of the range of assistive technology devices available to people with disabilities accessing the Library Service in Co. Wicklow. To date, mini-loop systems have been installed in Bray, Ballywaltrim, Greystones, Arklow and Wicklow Town. Technology for the visually impaired has been installed in Bray, Greystones, Arklow, Wicklow and Baltinglass libraries.	Library Service	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
16. Further improve physical access to a number of libraries throughout the county – Blessington and Dunlavin currently targeted for further development	Library Service	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
17. Ensure that the County Wicklow Library Service delivers a service in line with the guidelines detailed in the recently published "Library Access" booklet – (Equality Authority / An Chomhairle Leabharlanna publication regarding the development of library services that accommodate library users with disabilities).	Library Service	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
18. Promote the creation of a 1% Capital Grant Building scheme similar to the 1% Art scheme from the Dept. of Environment, Heritage & Local Government to supplement existing funding sources, to refurbish public and private developments to improve accessibility and facilities for people with disabilities (taken from Wicklow CDB strategy 'Outlook' Urban Shadow Action 03)	Office of C&E	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04

ACTIONS	Resources		Deadlines
	Who will lead this	Finance	2004
<p>19. Promote the implementation of Wicklow County Council's Play Policy with particular reference to it's recommendations regarding Play and Disability. Specifically, promote the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that young people with disabilities are not excluded from opportunities to play by providing appropriate equipment in playgrounds • Ensure the consultation with and participation of children with disabilities, their representative organisations, their non-disabled family members and carers during the design process for play facilities. • Promote the conducting of Disability audits of all Local Authority playgrounds within the county 	Office of C&E	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
20. Develop a <i>communications strategy</i> to inform people both internally (staff & Members) and externally regarding what is happening as a result of WCC's adoption of the Barcelona Declaration	Office of C&E	Internal Resources	To be completed once this Plan adopted
21. To explore ways of developing <i>partnership</i> approaches to the proposed work being undertaken by WCC in conjunction with other service providers in Co. Wicklow via the Wicklow County Development Board	Office of C&E	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
22. Circulate information regarding external funding opportunities for disability initiatives internally as and when they arise to ensure viability of this Implementation Plan	Office of C&E	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
23. To take proactive role in <i>awareness-raising</i> of Disability issues in the preparation of policies and documents by WCC (eg input into review of County Development Plan) etc	Office of C&E / Social Inclusion Unit	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04

ACTIONS	Resources	Deadlines	Ongoing activity in '04
	Who will lead this	Finance	2004
24. Assist in collating data (both qualitative and quantitative) in relation to the work and services Wicklow County Council currently delivers from a disability perspective	Social Inclusion Unit	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
25. Through delivery of Social Inclusion Action 03 in the Wicklow CDB strategy "Outlook"(re. implementation of the social model of disability among service providers in Co. Wicklow): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audit public Council buildings throughout the county in terms of their physical accessibility • audit the County Council as a whole in relation to how it welcomes customers and staff that have a disability 	Social Inclusion Unit	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
26. Promote adherence to and enforcement of Part M of the Building Regulations – investigate how best to measure this on representative sample basis	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
27. Continue to improve signage in County Buildings. Initiative currently underway to implement a signage scheme that is simple and clear whilst focusing particularly on the needs of people with a visual impairment and needs of people with literacy difficulties. Explore extending this signage initiative to other Local Authority buildings if funding available	Housing & Corporate Estate	Subject to sourcing funding	Ongoing activity in '04
28. Continue to incorporate the special needs of tenants from a disability perspective into WCC housing schemes throughout the design stage	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
29. In all housing construction schemes of Wicklow County Council, implement best practice from a disability perspective regarding the provision of paths, crossings, parks and recreational spaces in conjunction with the Planning and Roads Departments	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
30. With regard to all public buildings owned by Wicklow County Council, continue to strive for compliance with the highest accessibility standards	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04

ACTIONS	Resources		Deadlines
	Who will lead this	Finance	2004
31. Continue to promote the Disabled Persons Grant Scheme for both WCC Local Authority tenants as well as processing applications from the private sector in conjunction with the relevant Health Board -	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
32. Improve disabled parking facilities in grounds of WCC in terms of widening existing parking bays which are posing problems due to insufficient width in some cases	Housing & Corporate Estate	Internal Resources	To be completed by Spring '04
33. Develop systems for disability proofing the decision making processes of Wicklow County Council	WCC Barcelona Steering Committee	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
34. Ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are considered by WCC across all service areas and that genuine consultation takes place with external disability activists on an ongoing basis - as such, expand inhouse Barcelona steering group to include external representatives	WCC Barcelona Steering Committee	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
35. Ensure that in the roll out of this Action Plan, that there are tangible outcomes which can be measured and their impact assessed on the ground – as such develop effective monitoring systems to be employed throughout 2004	WCC Barcelona Steering Committee	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04
36. Promote regard throughout all sections of Wicklow County Council regarding the national policy framework as it relates to the Disability sector. Specifically, raise awareness regarding how the following pieces of legislation protect the rights of people with disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employment Equality Act ● Equal Status Act Additionally, raise awareness regarding the recommended technical specifications contained in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 'Building for Everyone' – National Disability Authority publication 	WCC Barcelona Steering Committee	Internal Resources	Ongoing activity in '04