



## **Annual Report 2016**

TALLAGHT  
ENTERPRISE CENTRE  
DUBLIN 24



<b>CONTENTS</b>
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<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Chief Executive Report .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Community / Enterprise Development &amp; Training Department.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>a) Accounts Department .....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>b) Community Employment .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>c) Enterprise Development .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>d) Property Management.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>e) Training .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<b>Board Members and Executive.....</b>	<b>14</b>



## INTRODUCTION

I will try explaining my unusual introduction to the annual report.

I have just read in the daily papers about the death of, and tributes to, former Shamrock Rovers player Jimmy "Maxi" McCann. He played in a Shamrock Rovers team that had nine Irish internationals, all Dublin born. Maxie, following his one and only international for Ireland, under the management of the late Manchester United hero Jackie Carey, told the story of the team meeting on the Sunday match day at 12 noon in the Gresham Hotel and walking to Dalymount Park for the match, then walking back to the Gresham for the post-match reception. Not only that but players in the UK played on Saturday for their club team and travelled overnight by boat to represent their country on Sunday. Can you imagine Messi, Ronaldo or the Mayo, Dublin or Kerry teams walking from their hotel to the match venue?

It was also a time you wore your only suit, collar and tie attending Sunday Mass or even crushed in an attendance of 90,000 on All Ireland day in Croke Park. No doubt you will ask what all this has to do with Partas. Nothing, apart from highlighting the massive change in the many areas of our society over the years. It is equally so for Partas. The sporting analogy is my comparison. The core values of Partas remain i.e. running four Enterprise Centres, helping people train for the job market, upgrading existing job prospects and providing accommodation for start-up businesses. It is a new era and one must constantly move with the times.

There are also issues that must be challenged i.e. government attitude in their treatment of organisations like Partas as "voluntary". Let me remind them that apart from the hundreds employed in our Enterprise Centres many more were trained in starting their own businesses in other locations. Small businesses are the core of community life. It requires the highest standards of professionalism.

I also repeat a view expressed in last year's report because it is the truth and truth is one thing in life that never changes.

"The word vocation is usually associated with Religious. Over the years I have witnessed non-religious vocations i.e. visionaries capable of earning high salaries in the private sector, but devoting their lives, talents, values and aspirations to community".

The track record and success of Partas at community level, with minimum funding is on a par with the IDA, and Enterprise Ireland at international and national level. Over thirty years it has been responsible for the self-esteem, dignity, and purpose in the lives of many. It is a "doer" organisation with the ability to conceive, discuss, and implement projects. It is an organisation with the highest level of professionalism and at times can become very frustrated with the system.

One of the biggest flaws in government policy is their attitude to community organisations especially those that provide essential services such as training and job creation. They are lumped and labelled "voluntary". They have no real idea of their achievements and are detached. Yes, just like other areas of society there are organisations that do not perform, but the track record and performance of Partas is of the highest calibre.

Having being employed for over forty years in multi-national companies I have never experienced the professionalism and vision that I have encountered in Partas. It is a role model in how to get the job done. It is a prime example of retaining core values, upgrading to meet current challenges, and needs. It is a "life saver" for many in working on the ground providing job opportunities, and training courses. Partas is "leading the posse" in these areas. It is a beacon of light especially in disadvantaged communities. One questions how high Tallaght is on government agendas? As an organisation Partas is a major plus for any community - and all this against the odds.

The funding of an organisation like Partas leaves a lot to be desired. Last year's report showed the Partas state grant was less than 25% from ten years ago. It has now being even further reduced. Main funding now is applying for projects hoping one is successful. If unsuccessful it can be very demoralising, especially not always being made aware of the reason, despite the enormous efforts in preparing submissions and knowing your proposal is of the highest standard. It is also ironic that CEO John Kearns is regularly contacted by EU groups for advice and other EU groups visiting Ireland to observe how we do things. Partas are also recipients of EU awards and are highly regarded in Europe, but not on our own doorstep.

I would also like take this opportunity in expressing deepest sympathy on the death of my predecessor as Chairperson, Maurice O'Connell. , and also founder member. A former senator Maurice was a person of the highest integrity. He was never afraid to challenge the system even at personal cost. He was also a member of the European Commission. For me he was a role model in standards and morality. I always regarded him as a mentor. He was a much liked person within the whole organisation of Partas, and missed by all. May he rest in peace.

On a personal level I wish to thank all for prayers, get well Mass cards, and visits during my recent illness. I am fully aware of the concerns, and good wishes expressed. It brought out the goodness, and kindness that I have always experienced in the organisation. It was leveller, and one has to experience the "front seat" to fully understand. Due to human weakness I made many promises I have broken. Despite, the many lessons learned one that stands is "things only happen to other people", but I learned very quickly "that I am the other person".

Finally, I thank all staff for your effort, and dedication during these very difficult times - against the odds.

**Aidan Thomas**  
**Chairperson**

## **No Turning Back**

Partas has irrevocably set out to implement a radical new element to its strategy – the Social + Local Enterprise Alliance – and 2016 saw the architecture of that strategy being put in place. As can be seen from the financial results for 2016, the need for a new strand of income has continued to be obvious and a brave, daring new vision has had to emerge. Like everything new, it can be daunting to embrace the scale of this new set of ventures, while at the same time maintaining the core operations and mission of the organisation. But in 2016 we set out and gathered the resources needed to build the infrastructure required and that has largely been achieved.

Our original enterprise centre in Main Road was to be the hub of this new operation and it required extensive work to make the plans developed possible. It is very satisfying to report that we managed to achieve that within the timeframe allotted and on a bootstrapping budget. We were lucky to have the building and project management experience of Bernard Bennett available to us in ensuring that we achieved that. The next phase, then, is to use that infrastructure to build new businesses and create a new vision and sense of Tallaght and the key role Partas can play in its social and local development. At the stage of writing this in 2017 it would appear that we have made a good start and can move forward optimistically to the full realisation of the Social + Local vision.

Meanwhile, we continue to carry out our ongoing roles of enterprise development and property management and to do so in the most professional and efficient way possible. This continues to demand an ongoing 'more for less' draw on us and it is to our credit that we manage to continue to perform so well under those difficult circumstances. We have continued to compete at the highest level for scant national and EU funding and have shown extraordinary skill and competence in both winning and managing such projects. They continue to be our R&D facility and that keeps us at the top of our game and to the forefront in innovative thinking. Again, at the time of writing, it is impossible to not mention our successful bid for our WEBNET project and two ERASMUS+ projects. WEBNET in particular is classic Partas territory enabling us to fund an extensive project for female entrepreneurs over 2 years.

From being supporters of entrepreneurs, we have now moved into being even more so entrepreneurs ourselves. We can lead by doing and build a network of entrepreneurs around us and together build a growing entrepreneurial culture in our community. It is only right that we should change and adapt as we move forward, even if that change seems to have been thrust upon us. It is worth remembering the words of JFK in this regard: 'Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future.'

**John Kearns**  
**Chief Executive**

## COMMUNITY / ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Key work commitments centred on our increased targets under our SICAP work with South Dublin County Partnership, involving mentoring supports and training delivered to over 200 people. In addition, we successfully delivered a range of training programmes to over 250 owner/managers funded through South Dublin Local Enterprise Office and Intreo. Our enterprise centres are almost at full capacity, and our Community Employment scheme continues to offer valuable real work experience and training to its participants.

In summary, some of the key highlights from the year include the following:

1. Our contract with south Dublin County Partnership (SICAP) and Intreo  
Our enterprise team supported 594 clients, helping them on the road to self-employment. Of this, 211 clients were registered on to the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme and/or the Short Term Enterprise Allowance Scheme.
2. Our Start your Own Business Programme, funded by South Dublin LEO, delivered by our internal staff, particularly David Brady, continues to receive excellent reviews from all participants. In addition to the SYOB course, we deliver a whole range of other programmes, including Computerised Bookkeeping, Technical Skills for Start-ups, Rainmaking and Bullet Proof Business Planning.
3. Our enterprise centres continue to be a priority in terms of our strategy. Much work has been undertaken in all centres to ensure that they are being fully maximised. Significant work was undertaken in relation to our rates position vis a vis units occupied by Partas, and we have submitted a number of units for rates exemption.
4. We have been awarded a three year contract for a new programme, designed by Diane Richmond, called WEBNET (Women Excelling In Business Network). It will offer a combination of accredited and non accredited training to would be female entrepreneurs over 30 weeks. It will be rolled out 6 times during 2017-2019. This is co funded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.
5. Our CE scheme continues to offer meaningful work placements to over 30 participants who are indispensable in terms of the work they do in Partas. The overall programme continues to be well managed by our new CE supervisor Noreen Keegan Kavanagh, who succeeds Bernie Black who retired in October 2016.

### ***The structure of CET:***

- a) Accounts Department
- b) Community Employment
- c) Enterprise Development
- d) Property Management
- e) Training

#### **a) Accounts Department**

The accounts department, headed up by Noreen Byrne, continues to play a significant role in the effective management of Partas. In addition to their normal day to day work they also provide support and backup to any programmes running within the four Enterprise Centres. Noreen also continues in her role as our HR Manager.

## b) **Community Employment**

During 2016 our numbers remained steady with 32 participants with 1 supervisor and 1 assistant supervisor in place.

In October Bernie Black, who was supervisor for 24 years, retired and Noreen Keegan Kavanagh replaced her. It has been a challenge but Bernie had great systems in place and Agnieszka as assistant supervisor is a terrific asset. Best wishes to Bernie for a very happy retirement.

All of the participants, with the exception of one person, carried out their duties on behalf of Partas throughout our four centres. The remaining participant works at West Tallaght Resource Centre.

We spent 84% of the training budget in 2016. Some of the various training courses attended by CE participants included:

- |                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Occupational First Aid        | QQI Level 5 accredited     |
| • Safepass                      | Solas Accredited           |
| • Reception & Front line Skills | QQI Level 5 accredited     |
| • Static Security Guard         | QQI Level 5                |
| • Door Supervision              | QQI Level 5                |
| • PSA Security License          | Private Security Authority |
| • Care for the Elderly          | QQI Level 5                |
| • Forklift                      | Industry standard          |
| • Spreadsheets                  | QQI Level 5                |

We used 100% of our materials budget.

Our progression figures during 2016 were good. During the year 10 people finished on our project and were replaced. 6 people from this group went into employment (60%).

## c) **Enterprise Development**

### ***Partas Enterprise Development Mission Statement***

"To eliminate social exclusion through the promotion of sustainable economic activity by creating an environment in which local people seeking to set up in business or become self-employed can access relevant support and services."

### ***Self-Employment and business development***

#### *Priorities for 2016*

- Provide opportunities for self-employment as a viable alternative for those for whom other employment opportunities are remote.
- Develop new and innovative ways to assist target groups to explore the option of self-employment.
- Create opportunities for target group to move from unemployment to self-employment.
- Work in partnership with other agencies to develop synergistic outcomes in developing entrepreneurship and job creation.
- Continue to develop and provide a comprehensive advice and support package to clients who are considering self-employment as an option (pre-enterprise: one to one and structured support and business planning).

- Continue to explore new and innovative ways to support individuals at pre enterprise stage (to include co-operative ways of working).
- Adopting a multi service delivery approach to support key target groups.
- Targeting clients through outreach information seminars and building on linkages with key service providers.
- The promotion of incubator workspace in four enterprise centres,
- The provision of marketing advice and assistance,
- The provision of a comprehensive advisory and business planning service,
- The operation of the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance Scheme to include annual assessments with new and existing clients,
- The provision of financial advice through the Tallaght Trust Fund.

### Clients Assisted

This section provides a quantitative and qualitative overview of the work carried out by the enterprise department of Partas, which is funded by the South Dublin County Partnership.

2016	Total Clients	Total Interventions
Male	450	771
Female	144	246
	<b>594</b>	<b>1017</b>

### New Enterprise Support Clients

New Enterprise Support Target Group		
Advice & Assistance in preparing business plans, applying for financial support, registering on to BTWEA and STEA, preparing cash flow statements, bookkeeping.	Male	249
	Female	97
	<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>

### Existing Enterprise Support Clients

Existing Enterprise Support		
Comprehensive support service to existing clients covering all aspects of enterprise support. Includes clients who registered onto the BTWEA & STEA scheme in 2010, transferred to year 2 in 2011 and were given further advice and assistance by Partas.	Male	201
	Female	47
	<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>

### New Businesses

New Businesses		BTWEA/STEA
Clients registering onto BTWEA or STEA	Male	157
	Female	54
	<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>

**Details on new clients:**

Age breakdown	MALE	Female	All Clients
18 – 25	15	07	22
26 – 35	81	35	116
36 – 45	98	34	132
46 – 55	42	18	60
Over 55	13	03	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>346</b>

Employment Status of new clients	Male	Female	Total
Live Register	234	83	317
Employment Initiative (CE/JI/TUS)	02	00	02
Student	00	00	00
Unemployed but not on Live Register	01	00	01
Retired	00	00	00
Low Income Family Unit	00	09	09
Disability	01	02	03
Casual	06	02	08
Carer	01	00	01
Self-Employed	02	00	02
Employed	02	01	03
<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>346</b>

Referred from	Male	Female	Total
Dept. Social Protection	153	60	213
Internal Referral	02	01	03
Friend/Acquaintance	27	08	35
LES	33	15	48
Local Community Group	08	03	11
Other State Agency	15	05	20
Publicity/information campaign	00	00	00
Self Referral	11	05	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>346</b>

**d) Property Management**

In line with the economic upturn Partas property management experienced a heavy demand for units and office space across all 4 centres. This resulted in a challenge to meet the specific requirements across all business sectors. 95% occupancy has been realised across all 4 centres and there is currently a waiting list for external units.

It would appear the market trends are weighted towards the service industry i.e. hairdressers, beauticians, childcare, health & fitness, coffee shops and catering. As it is our current policy not to have competing businesses in our centres we have had to decline offering space to some potential licencees and instead placed them on our waiting list.

**New Business**

- Ten new businesses were issued with licenses across the four centres in 2016.
- Rossfield Pharmacy expanded their operation and took an additional unit in Brookfield.
- One business moved from Brookfield to Bolbrook.

## **Accounts**

- Account management is ongoing and all non-compliant clients have been offered a structured payment plan, this has resulted in all bad debts being addressed or eradicated.
- An increase of 5% has been levied on all licenses upon renewal date. This has been received without any real opposition as clients appreciate that the running costs of the centres has increased.

## **Staff**

2016 saw additional places provided by TUS in the capacity of security, general maintenance, carpark attendance and cleaning staff in all 4 centres. Our TUS staff members work alongside our current JI and CE Staff. Feedback from the TUS Team Leaders has revealed that all participants have enjoyed working in our centres and found the experience rewarding and beneficial in terms of personal development and acquiring new skills.

George Conor retired after a long career in Brookfield. Tributes have been paid to him from right across the community and further afield. We wish him very happiness in his retirement and it goes without saying he will be sadly missed.

## **Maintenance**

### **❖ Killinarden**

- New CCTV System installed which allows remote monitoring of Bolbrook and Main Road in addition to Brookfield.
- A new heating system was installed in Killinarden towards the end of 2016

### **❖ Brookfield**

- Upgrade of security system following a risk assessment report resulting in upgrade of three new cameras HD quality and ability to monitor remotely via phone app.

### **❖ Tallaght Enterprise Centre**

- Major renovations took place in Main Road, which included the reception being moved from the front entrance to the middle of the corridor to make way for the location of County Fare. In addition to this all internal walls were insulated and energy efficient lighting was installed. New windows and doors at front entrance were also installed.
- Unit 2D was converted into a fit- for-purpose packing kitchen for clients of Kitchen Time.

## **Categories of businesses licensing units within the centre include:**

Fitness Training (3 centres)	Café
Hairdressers (2 centres)	Research & Dev. in Concept & Design
Tattoo Artist	Electrical Supplies
Printing (2 centres)	Curtain Manufacturing
Pharmacy	Clinical Hypnotherapy
Community Support Orgs	Dance Academy
Charity Bring & Buy	Beauty Salons (2 centres)
Civil Engineering	Third level Education & Training College
Blind Manufacturer	Smoked Meats importer and distributor

African Cuisine	Sports Physiotherapist
Car Mechanic	Newspaper Offices
Audio Visual	White Goods Repairs
Stationery Suppliers	Catering to schools
Corporate Catering	Upholstery repairs and refitting (2 centres)
Software	Confectionary
Air-conditioning	Commercial Pedi-Cycles
Childcare	Commercial Training

#### e) **Training**

The Training Department has had a busy and successful year in 2016, consolidating and expanding its range of accredited and non-accredited training courses to private, public and community stakeholders. Feedback from courses continues to be excellent, with a focus on thought leadership and best practice in Enterprise, Entrepreneurship, Sales and Marketing, Finance & Accounting, Tax and People Management. The Training Department has also commenced an extensive review and upgrade project in its QQI training processes and corporate governance procedures.

Enterprise Training for business owners, business starters and entrants to the Back-to-Work Enterprise Scheme gained further momentum during 2016, within the context of several key projects noted below.

Partas grew its market share in delivery of training programmes for Local Enterprise Office (South Dublin) during 2016 – a considerable achievement in a competitive environment for business starter training in South Dublin. Partas trained more than 250 business starters in the South Dublin County area, securing related economic benefits and employment opportunities for the participating businesses. In addition, short programmes on Keeping The Tax Man Happy, Business Planning, Social Media, Manual and Computerised Bookkeeping, Rainmaking, Employment Law and Credit Control were also delivered during the year.

The second key strand in enterprise training support was the delivery of “Start Your Own Business” training for more than 200 entrants to the Back-to-Work Enterprise Scheme, originating from Nutgrove and Tallaght. Condensed practical information and experiential knowledge of business start-ups was provided over multiple rounds of five/six short morning sessions, covering skills and knowledge in the areas of company registration, business ideas, sales, marketing and financial management and budgeting. Feedback from programmes was consistently very good or excellent and similar training is required in 2017.

Partas has continued to forge excellent relationships with all the major training providers that deliver QQI/ Solas training courses in our catchment area. All training rooms now meet the very high Solas standards and, as there continues to be a shortage of training facilities in the Tallaght area, Partas is now the venue of choice right across the four enterprise centres. Partas was also able to capitalise on existing relationships with training providers to sub-contract our trainers to deliver specific modules to address job seeking skills and interview techniques, required modules on most QQI/ Solas courses.

Hire of our training facilities to outside training providers continues to be lucrative. Solas have approved our rooms as meeting the required quality standard and are happy that we provide the right environment in relation to their compliance regulations.

## BOARD MEMBERS AND EXECUTIVE

Following the Annual General Meeting the following officers were elected:

**Chairperson:** Aidan Thomas

**Vice-Chairperson:** Barbara Quinn

**Board Members:** David Kennedy  
Enda O'Toole  
Pat Palmer

During the year three new Board Members were co-opted:

John Lahart TD  
Michelle Licciardi  
Carol Pemberton

### **Executive**

John Kearns Chief Executive

Diane Richmond Assistant CEO and Head of Community / Enterprise Development

