

Limerick cleric of 1960s foretold where City was headed in his report

Fr Liam Ryan's 43-year-old study hailed as 'model for social regeneration'

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LIMERICK Regeneration Watch has highlighted a report written over 43 years ago about a city estate as a model for 'social regeneration' without demolition.

'Social Dynamite: A Study of Early School-Leavers' by sociologist Father Liam Ryan researched some of the problems facing residents on a newly built council housing estate, later identified as Ballinacurra Weston.

Fr Ryan interviewed over 100 teenagers and community members and parallels between the report's content and the situation decades on are striking in parts.

Fr Ryan said that the average resident "feels frustrated and ashamed" and "there is great resentment that outsiders do not make this distinction between good and bad" families who "were all thrown in together and he [an official] said 'The good fami-

lies will cure the bad families'".

He said people "lost many of their roots" when housed there and criticised the design of housing estates with "ample provision for the movement of traffic but unfortunately none at all for the movement of children"—resulting in loitering.

He found that young people felt discriminated against and left school early due to boredom and the prospect of making money.

Suggested solutions included more community facilities, smaller class sizes, "political activity" and instilling in people "a sense of well-being, a sense of importance... and their own dignity".

Fr Ryan almost foretells the regeneration process, recommending that "a citizens' body with representation from schools, churches, employment agencies, labour and management, central and local Government agencies should be established".

Community activist, Cathal Mc-

Carthy, said that the report "doesn't talk about demolition, but social regeneration. Regeneration is not going to happen in the way that they wanted it to. It's not economically viable anymore".

He added that young people are still leaving school early for the "lure" of legitimate employment or illicit payment by gangs and feels that extra Garda resources are needed so "people aren't afraid" and the community can then move forward.

"It points out that good families are in the majority in the estate and that is still the case today; the minority gives everyone a bad name. It looks at the kind of anti-social 'I'll do what I like' attitude. At the very start, it mentions the 'amused hostility' with which officials and others regard the people in these estates. That 'everyone there is a scumbag' idea has to change."

For a full copy of the report, see www.limerickregeneration.org.

A commemorative note for the GAA



Fiddler Anne Phelan, playing to the crowd at the celebrations marking the 125th Anniversary of the GAA at Limerick Gaelic Grounds last Saturday.

Picture: Brendan Gleeson

Cllr Leddin seeks progress on the re-letting of boarded-up homes in 'Regeneration' areas

THE Chairman of the Limerick City Housing Committee, Cllr Joe Leddin, has said that he has received a commitment following a meeting with senior housing officials in City Hall that progress is being made in assessing the level of work required to unboard a number of houses in regeneration

other parts of the city.

"I met recently with a number of local residents in Carew Park who expressed their genuine fear and concern for their community arising from boarded up houses within various estates. I have consistently highlighted the problems caused by these unoccupied houses for

for july all

East End