

DLR PPN
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Public Participation Network

Plain English
Approved by NALA

The Network for Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental groups in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown



This booklet tells you about the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Public Participation Network. It explains the benefits of joining and tells you about different ways your group can be involved.



DLR PPN

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Public Participation Network

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Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN Frequently Asked Questions

Section 1:

What is the Public Participation Network and what does it do?



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What is the Public Participation Network and what does it do?

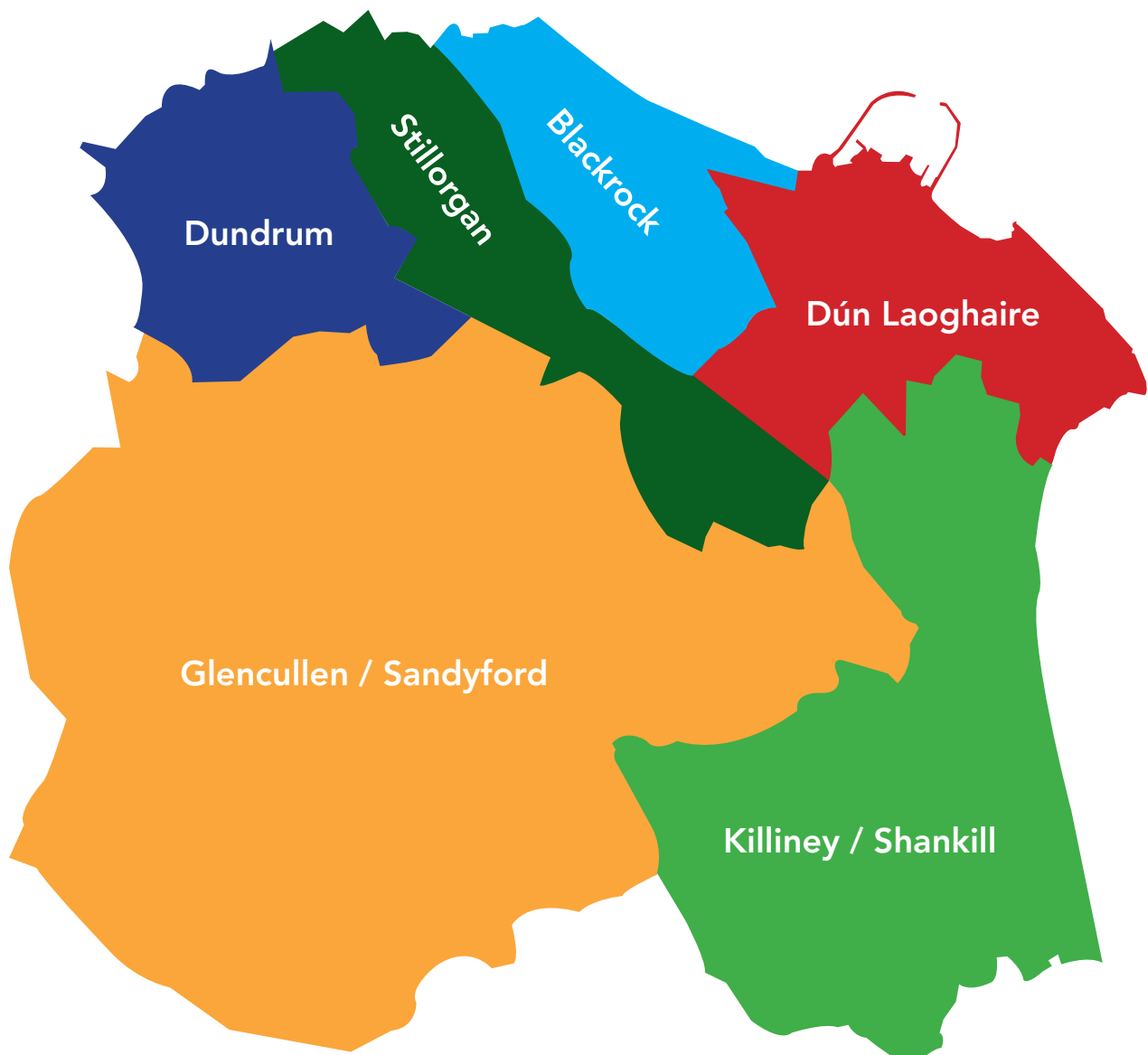
Public Participation Networks (PPNs) were set up in 2014 as a result of local government reform. There is a Public Participation Network in every county council area.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Public Participation Network

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Public Participation Network (sometimes shortened to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN or DLR PPN) is a network of community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental organisations, and we are active in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County area.

Our main aim is to facilitate communication between community groups and the local authority. This includes supporting community groups to take part in decisions made by the local authority.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County is located south of Dublin City. It covers the south-east part of County Dublin, stretching from the Dublin Mountains to the coast, including areas such as Dundrum, Glencullen, Shankill and Blackrock.



Our members are people like you who work and volunteer in the community. Our members' involvement in our activities makes us strong and effective.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN has **more than 500 members** and includes community-based groups, organisations, associations, clubs, societies and charities. You can see a list of some of our members on page 9. There is a full list of current members on www.dlrppn.ie

What is the aim of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

Our main aim is to make sure the community in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown has a say in local decisions that affect them. We also aim to:

- Empower our members to influence policy development;
- Keep our members informed about local news and issues; and
- Help our members to connect with and learn from each other.

We help the community to have a say in decisions that affect them

We work with the community so its representatives can take part in a fair and open way on a wide range of decision-making bodies such as:

- The Local Community Development Committee;
- The Joint Policing Committee;
- The Rural Task Force;
- Strategic Policy Committees.

We empower our members

We help our members to make a positive contribution to the community and engage with the county council and other local bodies. We provide training to improve our members' skills and knowledge. We also help members to contribute to policy development on issues of community concern.

We keep our members informed

We tell our members about local news, views and issues and also share information we receive from members with the network.

We help our members to connect

We run events where members can meet, talk to each other and learn from each other.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN wants to support the incredible contributions that local groups and organisations like yours make to the wellbeing of people living in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County area.

Who are PPN members?

Our 500+ member groups are all based in, or active in, the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County area. Some of our current members include:

54th/88th St Michael's Scout Group
Ballinteer Men's Shed
Dun Laoghaire Refugee Project
Broadford Residents Association
Shankill Tidy Towns
St Brigid's Community Garden
Glenalbyn Swimming Club
Stillorgan/Kilmacud Active Retirement Association
Coder Dojo Dun Laoghaire
Balally Family Resource Centre

Who can become a member of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

A group can become a member if it:

- Operates on a not-for-profit basis;
- Is volunteer-led. Groups can have paid staff but must be controlled by volunteers;
- Has at least 4 members and is open to new members;
- Has existed for at least six months;
- Has a members meeting at least once a year;
- Has a postal address or a local branch in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown;
- Is actively serving people who live in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown or advocating on their behalf;
- Has a governance structure (such as a constitution or set of rules); and
- Is not party-political.

Your group cannot become a full PPN member if it is already represented on Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council or other decision-making bodies through another organisation. If this is the case, your group can apply to be an associate member.

What is associate membership?

Associate members of the PPN enjoy most of the same rights as full members. However, they cannot nominate people to stand for elections or cast votes. Associate membership is open to groups who:

- Do not yet meet the criteria for full membership, but are working towards them; or
- Are represented on the county council or other decision-making bodies through other social partnerships like trade unions and the Chamber of Commerce.

Section 2:

How is Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN relevant to my group's area of interest?



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How is Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN relevant to my group's area of interest?

Pillar Groups

When an organisation registers with the PPN, it selects one of three groups that most closely fits with the activity of the organisation. We call these 'pillar groups'. They are:



Pillar 1:

Community and Voluntary



Pillar 2:

Environmental



Pillar 3:

Social Inclusion



Pillar 1: Community and Voluntary

The main aim or activity of community and voluntary members is to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of their community. The community and voluntary pillar is the largest and most diverse of the three PPN pillars.

The types of groups in this pillar may include:

Drama	Arts	Sports
Leisure	Community Safety	Youth
Active Citizenship	Festivals	Residents Associations



Pillar 2: Environmental

The main aim of our environmental member groups is to protect or sustain the environment. The National Environmental Pillar decides what groups can be members of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown's environmental pillar. The National Environmental Pillar is made up of national environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who work together to represent the views of the Irish environmental sector.

Environment members work on building sustainable communities and achieving a sustainable future. Their work can include:

Sustainable Planning	Environmental Education	Preventing The Spread Of Invasive Species
Protecting Wildlife	Recycling	Resource Efficiency



Pillar 3: Social Inclusion

The main aim or activity of our social inclusion members is to improve the life chances and opportunities of those who are:

- Marginalised in society;
- Living in poverty; or
- Living with unemployment.

Social inclusion members work to develop and build sustainable communities. They aim to build communities that promote the values of equality and inclusion and that have respect for human rights. They work with people such as:



Linkage groups

We also have 'linkage groups' working across different areas

'Linkage groups' are groups of PPN members who share an interest in a particular issue and work together on this issue. Any member of the PPN can be a member of any linkage group.

Linkage groups work to highlight issues that affect communities across Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. They make policy recommendations and elect representatives to represent their views on decision-making committees and advisory groups.

This means linkage groups have a direct link with policy and decision-makers. The Dún-Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN has linkage groups on topics including:

- Environment and sustainability
- Policing and community safety
- Social housing
- Planning

Each linkage group meets at least once a year and members are in contact with each other throughout the year.

Section 3:

How can my organisation benefit from joining Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?



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How can my organisation benefit from joining Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

Networking

We provide opportunities for our members to:

- Meet with similar groups from across the county;
- Collaborate on projects;
- Exchange skills, knowledge and experience; and
- Learn from one another.

Information

We inform members about community supports and other useful information by:

- Sending emails (or letters if you do not have an email address);
- Publishing a monthly email newsletter;
- Providing information through our website; and
- Communicating through our social media channels.

Our website has updates about our work, our members' news, funding opportunities, local and national consultations, useful resources and a calendar of events.

Representation

We have more than 30 representatives on county council committees. We also have representation on boards and committees of other local agencies. This gives our members eyes, ears and a voice in local decision-making.

Training

We organise free training, workshops and information sessions on issues chosen by our members. Training that we have organised for our members includes:

- Digital communications;
- Data protection;
- Understanding local government;
- Committee skills.

Funding

We let you know about the latest national and local authority funding available to your organisation.

Publicity

You can promote your group's events on our website and in our ezine for free. We share our members' updates on our Facebook and Twitter accounts. We also let members publicise their work at our meetings. Our website has a list of our members and it's open to the public.

Consultation

We make sure our members are aware of important consultations that are happening locally and nationally, and we support and encourage them to take part.

Section 4:

How can my group take part in
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?



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How can my group take part in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

By attending our members meetings

We hold meetings for our members twice a year. These are called plenary meetings. They are open meetings where members can share information and can network. At our plenary meetings, our members have a say in how the PPN operates and what its priorities are.

By taking part in linkage groups

The PPN is structured to enable members to highlight community issues and influence relevant policy. For more information on linkage groups, see page 12.

By electing PPN representatives

PPN representatives (or PPN reps) are PPN members who have been elected by a linkage group to represent the PPN on a committee, board, or advisory group.

PPN Reps can submit items for discussion, highlight issues of concern and raise questions on behalf of the linkage group at the committees they sit on. The PPN Rep reports to and from the linkage groups.

The role of the representative is to:

- Listen,
- Discuss,
- Represent, and
- Give feedback.

By electing our secretariat

The Secretariat is our steering group, made up of 9 people elected by members. Members from the three pillars (Community & Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion) are represented on the Secretariat. The Secretariat meets each month and is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the PPN. They manage the staff, budget and operations, and report back to members at the twice yearly plenary meetings.

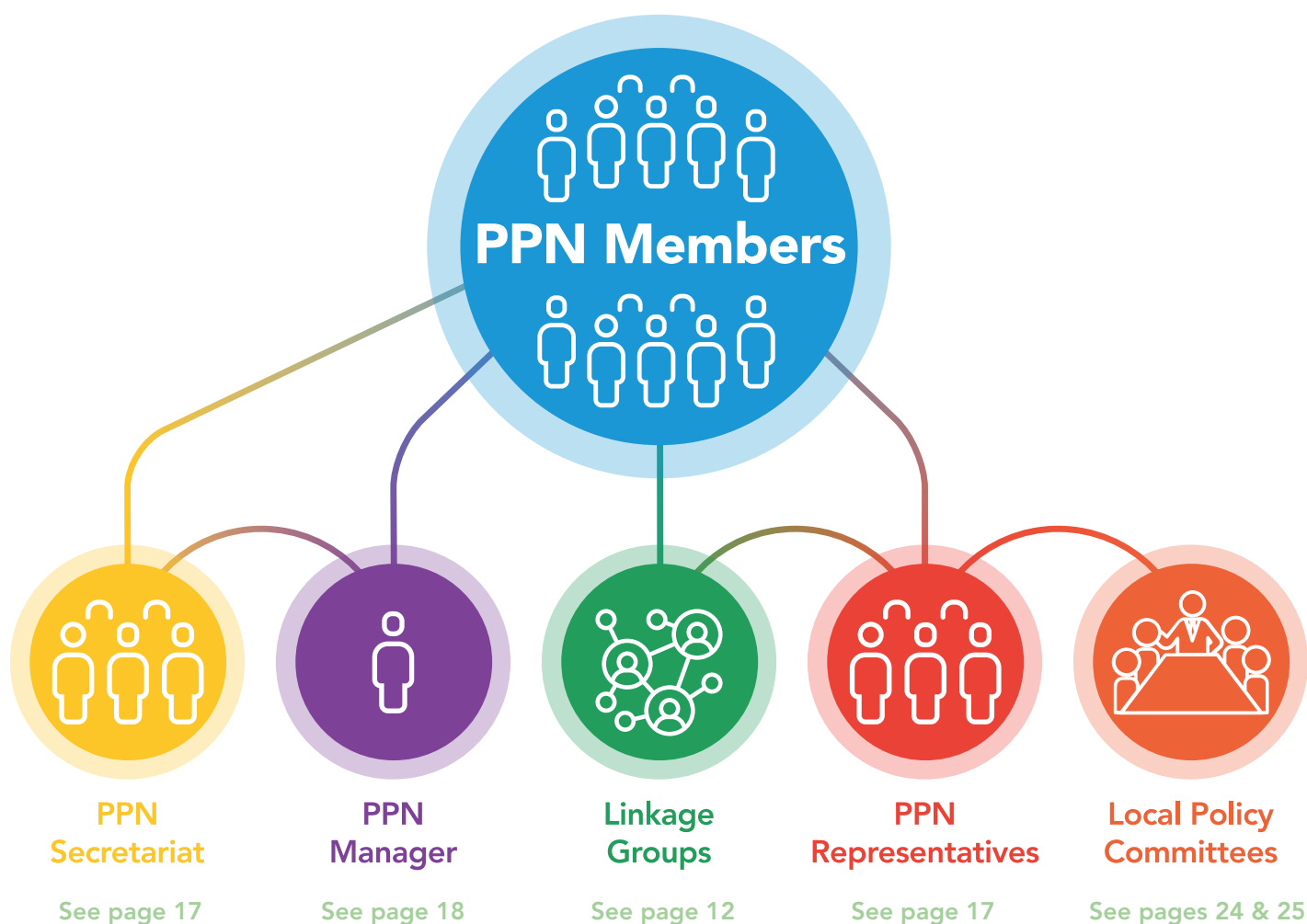
By attending our free training sessions

We survey our members to find out what training they need. Then we schedule training throughout the year based on what they have told us. This training is always free of charge to our members.

By submitting news to our email newsletter

Every month we ask members to submit any news items, such as upcoming events or success stories, that they would like to share with other members. We include these in our monthly email newsletter, along with PPN news, training and funding opportunities, and other useful information.

Structure of the PPN



PPN manager

The Network Manager is a full-time employee of the PPN. The PPN manager works under the direction of the Secretariat and develops and co-ordinates the activities of the PPN. If you have questions about any aspect of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN, contact the Network Manager. The Network Manager's contact details are at the back of this booklet.

Section 5:

How do I influence change through
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?



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How do I influence change through Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

Have you an idea to improve Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown or a community issue you want to highlight?

- Join the linkage groups you are interested in or help to set up a new linkage group.
- Attend your linkage group meetings and discuss ideas, issues and opinions.
- Elect representatives from your linkage group (or run for election yourself).

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN representatives have a formal link with the Council and other decision-making bodies. This means they can:

- Raise issues and ask questions on behalf of their linkage group, and
- Report back through their linkage group.

This means your group's ideas can help inform local policy and influence decisions.

We need you!

We are at our best when you, our members:

- Take part in linkage groups,
- Raise issues,
- Give feedback,
- Attend our meetings, training and events.

Our linkage groups can only function if we have community issues to talk about and solutions to bring to decision-makers. Our PPN Reps need your local knowledge and expertise to fully represent your concerns.

Your active membership will help to make the PPN for the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown area strong and representative.

Get involved in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN today.

Section 6:

How do we approach our work?



6

How do we approach our work?

Inclusive:

We accept all volunteer-led organisations in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown who meet our membership criteria (see page 9). We actively seek to include groups who may feel that they are not usually welcomed or listened to.

Participatory:

We encourage our members to get involved in all aspects of the PPN's work. We welcome all feedback and ideas about how we can do better.

Independent:

We are independent of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and any vested interests. We manage our own budget, and our opinions are not influenced by anyone other than our members.

Valuing diversity:

We know that the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN is made up of groups with many different opinions. We do not expect that all our members will agree on everything. But we will always try to reflect and feed back the diverse range of views our members have.

Transparent:

We are open about everything we do. We try to have fair and clear policies and procedures. We communicate our activity with all our members on a regular basis.

Accountable:

We report to you – our members. We will answer any and all questions you have. We have a good governance structure and good policies and procedures.

Section 7:

Key stakeholders



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Key stakeholders

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (the local authority)

The council was responsible for setting up Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN and part-funds the PPN. The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN is independent of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council but it gets support from the Council's Community and Cultural Development Department.

Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)

These committees develop, monitor and review policies which affect the functions of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and give advice to the Council. The SPCs include members of the local authority, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN representatives and other stakeholders. The Strategic Policy Committees have no role in the way operational services are run — such as fixing roads or cutting grass.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has six Strategic Policy Committees that cover various policy areas. These are:



The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN has between three and five seats on each Strategic Policy Committee.

The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

This is a group of agencies that work together to co-ordinate community development in the county.

Funding

The LCDC is responsible for co-ordinating, planning and overseeing local and community development funding.

Linking agencies

When putting in place local and community development programmes, the LCDC links the different agencies and the work being done. It aims to improve the co-ordination between agencies so they can deliver better services.

Promoting engagement

The LCDC promotes active public participation and community engagement in local and community development programmes.

Planning

The LCDC prepares the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), which focuses on improving the quality of life and the well-being of communities.

The LECP identifies the goals the council needs to focus on to develop and support local economic and community development. It then sets out how these goals can be achieved up to the year 2021.

Collaborating

The LCDC brings together representatives from the following organisations:

- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLRCC);
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Public Participation Network (DLR PPN);
- Southside Partnership (SSP);
- Health Service Executive (HSE);
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP);
- Tusla, Child and Family Agency;
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Chamber of Commerce;
- Dublin Dún Laoghaire Education & Training Board (DDLETB);
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).
- Irish Farming Association (IFA).

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN has five seats out of 19 on the LCDC.

Joint Policing Committee (JPC)

This committee works to develop greater consultation, co-operation and accountability among:

- An Garda Síochána;
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council;
- Elected representatives; and
- Community representatives.

They work together to manage policing and crime issues across the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown area. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN has four seats on the JPC.

Department of Rural and Community Development

This government department is responsible for developing and funding PPNs nationally.

National PPN Advisory Group

This group advises the Department of Rural and Community Development on the development and monitoring of PPNs. The membership of the advisory group includes local and national stakeholders such as:

- Local PPN volunteers;
- PPN workers;
- Local government officials; and
- Representatives from the national Community and Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion sectors.

National PPN Workers Network

The National PPN Workers Network exists to support PPN staff to:

- Share best practice;
- Work collectively on projects and highlight issues;
- Nominate representatives onto the National PPN Advisory Group; and
- Engage with PPN stakeholders at a national level.

Social Justice Ireland (SJI)

This is an independent group which focuses on developing ideas and policies which it believes will improve social justice. It supports the development of PPNs by:

- Organising regional meetings for PPNs to share information;
- Providing training to PPNs and county councils about public participation; and
- Advising PPN Secretariats, representatives and resource workers.

Social Justice Ireland is also a member of the National PPN Advisory Group as a representative of the Community and Voluntary sector.

Section 8:

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN Frequently Asked Questions



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Frequently asked questions

How is the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN funded?

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN is co-funded by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Where is the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN office based?

Our office is in The Old Post Office, 7 Rock Hill, Main Street, Blackrock, Co Dublin.

Do I need to be an expert on a topic to attend meetings?

No. Always feel free to come along and find out more about the topic you are interested in and share your opinions.

I am a Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN member but have never attended a meeting. Is it too late to get involved?

It is never too late to get involved. Come along to any of our meetings, workshops or consultation sessions. You can view our event calendar on our website: www.dlrppn.ie

I have an issue I want to raise through the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN. How do I do this?

We advise you to contact the relevant PPN representative or join the most relevant linkage group where we can advise you on your issue. You can also contact us using the information at the end of this booklet.

I don't get correspondence from the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN. What should I do?

Get in touch with our office using the contact details at the end of this booklet.

Can more than one member of my group be involved in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN activities?

Yes. Anyone who is a member of an organisation registered with the PPN can come along to any of our activities.

How do I contact Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN?

Address

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown PPN
The Old Post Office, 7 Rock Hill
Main Street, Blackrock, Co Dublin

Email

enquiries@dlrppn.ie

Phone

01 706 0109 or 087 639 4506

Website

www.dlrppn.ie

Facebook

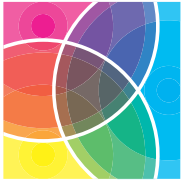
www.facebook.com/DLRPPN

Twitter

www.twitter.com/DLRPPN

WhatsApp

087 639 4506



DLR PPN

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Public Participation Network



• Participating in local decision-making



• Supporting active citizenship



• Sharing knowledge and learning



• Working together for a better DLR

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