

Annual Report

1999-2000



GENERATING PROSPERITY IN A NEW MILLENNIUM

NEWRY & MOURNE
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED



INCORPORATING

NEWRY & MOURNE ENTERPRISE AGENCY

NEWRY & MOURNE DEVELOPMENTS PLC

1999-2000

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NEWRY & MOURNE
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED



GENERATING PROSPERITY

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NEWRY & MOURNE CO-OPERATIVE

The Twenty Sixth Annual General Meeting of

**NEWRY & MOURNE
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**



incorporating
NEWRY & MOURNE ENTERPRISE AGENCY

Held in the Confederation of Community Groups, Ballybot House, 24 Cornmarket, Newry, Co. Down
at 7.30pm on 4th December 2000.
Keynote speaker; Rev John Dunlop.

ARCHITECTS

WIN Expansion and Border Enterprise Park
Milligan, Reside, Larkin

AGENDA

1. Apologies.
2. Minutes of Last Annual General Meeting.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Enterprise Agency Report
5. Financial Director's Report.
6. Auditor's Report.
7. Elections to Board of Directors.
8. Election of Corporate Representatives to Annual General Meeting of Newry and Mourne Developments PLC.

By Order of the Board, Kevin Starrs, Hon. Secretary.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman: John MacMahon
Vice-Chairman: Sheila McGuigan
Secretary: Kevin Starrs
Directors: Conor Patterson, Michael Hughes, Joe Magill, Gordon Coulter, Peter McEvoy, Councillor Jim McCart, Peter Fitzsimmons, Kathleen Magee, Kevin Magill, Ronan Denny.

BANKERS

Ulster Bank, Hill Street, Newry

AUDITORS

Fitzpatrick & Kearney,
10c Marcus Square, Newry

SOLICITORS

Donnelly, Neary & Donnelly
Downshire Road, Newry

NEWRY & MOURNE CO-OPERATIVE STAFF 1999/2000

Conor Patterson	Chief Executive
Liam Quinn	Financial Controller
Michael Durkin	Senior Business Development Executive (Manufacturing & Technology)
Paul McCormack	Senior Business Development Executive - Part-Time (Manufacturing & Technology)
Sharon McGrath	Programme Manager - Territorial Employment Pact
John O'Hare	Programme Manager (Newry/Dundalk Business Linkage Programme)
Barbara Whitfield	Senior Business Development Executive
Jennifer Malone	Business Development Executive (Property)
Gráinne Moody	Business Development Executive
Enda Magill	Business Development Executive (Community Development)
Clodhna Geraghty	Business Development Executive (Community Development)
Declan Carroll	Planning & Research Executive
Rachael McCamley	Development Officer (Peace & Reconciliation)
Patricia Phillips	Office Services Co-ordinator
Maria Coyle	Finance Officer
Michelle Frost	Receptionist
Deirdre Goss	Receptionist

Chairmans Report

This is the twenty-sixth Annual Report of Newry & Mourne Co-operative. It is an honour to have been the Chairman of the organisation in what was in actuality our twenty-eighth year of activity and to have been involved in co-ordinating the service to the public provided by the Co-operative and its Enterprise Agency division during 1999/2000.

As we enter a new century and a new millennium, in my view the future prosperity of Northern Ireland depends on the performance of its small businesses. 90% of people working in the private sector work for companies employing less than 15 people. In this region especially, economic growth can almost entirely be attributed to the success of small businesses. Our small business owner managers are tough, hard-working, adept, able to see an opportunity and maximise its advantages.

As part of our commitment to developing small businesses in Newry & Mourne, in the last year our Enterprise Agency division concentrated considerable resources on facilitating international business for some of those local small companies as well as investments in the form of intellectual property and joint ventures.

Rather than trying to develop greenfield factories housing overseas companies new to Ireland, a form of investment which can be important, the Agency concentrated its efforts on initiatives which allowed companies to become the manufacturers of existing market-tested products, or agents for product lines which enhanced their portfolios. We have thus helped to establish partnerships in which local companies provide the conduit or bridge into the Irish/British and European marketplaces for, as an example, North American companies. Such partnerships, in my view, offer the prospect of more durable inward investment, in that one party is locally based, rooted in the social and economic fabric of the region. To that end during the year we organised a Newry & Mourne/Louth trade mission for our small companies to New Hampshire, (USA) and Quebec in Canada and began planning a major trade event centred on Newry/Dundalk which would attract North American companies.

In the course of the year the Co-operative developed almost 20,000 square feet of new industrial units at WIN Business Park in Newry and began work in partnership with ROSA on a 20,000 square feet business park at Flurrybridge in South Armagh. The Co-operative invested some £400,000 in these projects, a large commitment for a non-profit organisation with modest resources. However, demand for workspace in the Newry and Mourne region was high and it was my view and that of the Board that the continued shortage of facilities would, if not addressed, stifle the further economic development of the area.

We hope, as part of our ongoing contribution to the long term development of our region, to develop during 2001 a further 25,000 sq. ft. of much needed workspace in another expansion at WIN Business Park. Our economy can only achieve truly sustainable growth if the infrastructure is there to enable our indigenous small businesses to start up and, crucially, to expand. While the region has seen its unemployment fall dramatically, it still has one of the highest unemployment rates in Northern Ireland concentrated in housing estates which continue to endure deprivation, in wards which were

among the most disrupted during 30 years of political violence in Northern Ireland.

This is a region which wants to be able to make the full transition from peripheralisation within Northern Ireland to the exploitation of what is perhaps now the most advantageous geographical location in Ireland. However, our ability to take advantage of surging economic growth in the South is severely constrained by the currency and taxation differentials between Northern Ireland and the Republic. During the year that issue was highlighted by the Enterprise Agency in a report which it submitted to the British Government, the Bank of England and the European Commission. Where Government policy is not in the interests of our region we see it as our duty, as an independent politically non-aligned organisation, to challenge decision makers.

The improvement in Newry's economic fortunes in recent years is, in my view, attributable in large measure to the active partnership of local bodies, in which the Co-operative and Agency has played a pivotal role, centred on our District Council (the first in Northern Ireland to embrace power sharing between nationalists and unionists), and supported by the voluntary/community sector and our business leaders.

During the year Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency further advanced the partnership ethic to which it is committed by being one of the founders of Enterprise Northern Ireland, a body established to represent the interests of Northern Ireland's 31 local enterprise agencies, a truly dynamic network of locally based business development agencies co-ordinating joint actions province-wide in the interests of all citizens whatever their religious or political persuasions.

I would like to finally say that I am immensely proud of Newry & Mourne and the uplift in its fortunes which so many of its people have worked hard to achieve. I believe all of those associated with the Co-operative and Enterprise Agency working to create and sustain small businesses, have with a number of other stake-holder organisations, been an important catalyst in the regions development. The people I have worked with in the Co-operative are committed to their town and region. We seek to provide a more secure and prosperous environment for our children in the forthcoming century than that which shackled the potential of so many of our people in the past.

I would like to thank our Chief Executive, Conor Patterson, and the staff of the Co-operative and Enterprise Agency. The range of activities listed in this report and the influence which the Co-operative, as a relatively modestly resourced organisation, has been able to exercise, testifies to the quality of our team and their commitment to the community.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Directors for their continued voluntary commitment to the ideals of civic responsibility on which the Co-operative was founded and which remain as relevant, if less fashionable, today as they were in the early 70's.

John McNeill



The Enterprise Agency - Activity Report

THE ENTERPRISE AGENCY DIVISION'S Mission Statement is "to contribute to the growth and prosperity and thus the social stability of the Newry & Mourne region by undertaking enterprise, business, economic and community development initiatives independently and in partnership with others"

Our main objectives are: 1) to increase the stock of new businesses and increase the competitiveness of existing businesses in the Newry & Mourne area; and 2) to assist in the strategic development of the region by advising on the efficient allocation of resources, promoting the region as an investment location, and contributing to central and local government policy making. The range of initiatives which we are now involved in is outlined below:

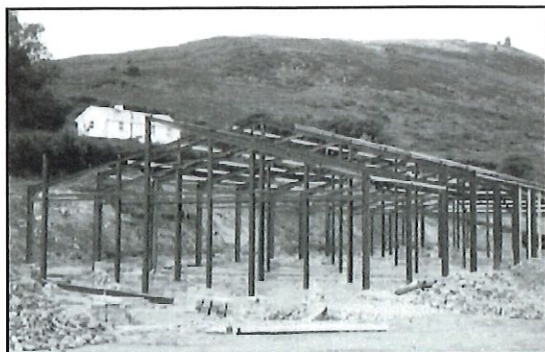
I. PROVISION OF WORKSPACE

I.1 LOW COST WORKSPACE - VITAL ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

In 1999/2000 WIN Business Park, Warrenpoint Enterprise Centre and the RDC at WIN provided 83 business units for businesses, occupying approximately 88,000 sq. ft. and employing 370 people.

I.2 EXPANDING WORKSPACE PROVISION

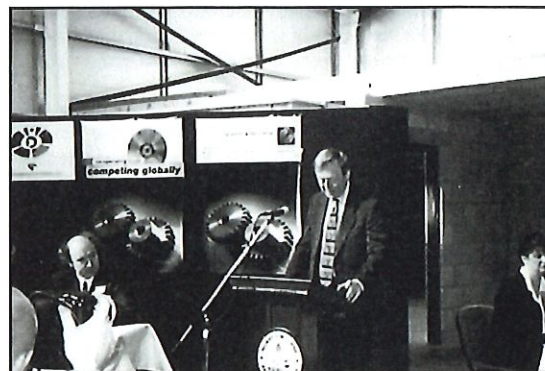
During 1999/2000 a major (18,500 sq. ft.) workspace expansion at WIN was completed in August 1999 and work began on the 20,000 sq. ft Enterprise Park at Flurrybridge (promoted as a partnership with ROSA, the Regeneration of South Armagh under the auspices of a joint holding company ORIEL DEVELOPMENTS LTD).



Border Enterprise Park at Flurrybridge under construction



WIN - Work In Newry



Launch of 18,500 ft² Expansion at WIN



New Unit at WIN

The Enterprise Agency - Activity Report



Site Preparations for a further large scale development at WIN Business Park which will be completed in 2002

2. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

In 1999/2000 the Agency was involved in a wide range of activities to support business development in Newry & Mourne:

2.1 COUNSELLING

This year our business counselling service for prospective start-up companies was provided under the Business Start Programme to 145 local people which means that a total of 4450 people have availed of this service since 1984. Under equal opportunity legislation we are required to monitor the perceived cultural/religious affiliation of clients assisted under the programme. During the year 27% of those counselled were from the Protestant community. The Protestant community accounts for approximately 20% of the population of Newry and Mourne. This is a free and confidential service, which we are able to provide because of support from LEDU; it is provided to anyone considering the option of self-employment.

2.2 TRAINING

2.2.1 Business Start

Developing the skills of managers and employees is the key to business success. It is therefore important that

anyone considering the self-employment option takes the opportunity to complete Business Start Training.

From April 1999 to March 2000 we provided 11 training courses for 125 people. Business Start training is funded by LEDU and is free of charge to participants.

During the year the Agency, in partnership with the District Council and LEDU, helped to set up 117 new businesses in Newry & Mourne through the Business Start Programme, creating 175 jobs. During the year more new businesses were assisted than in any other District Council area, including Belfast. It's worth noting as a comparison that in Belfast 114 businesses were assisted while in Derry 60 were assisted. The exceptional performance of Newry & Mourne was due to the quality of support provided by the Agency and the dynamism of our local economy.

2.2.2 Other Training

The Agency also delivered training through a number of other target programmes: 1) the Enterprise Training for Part-time Business Programme which provided training for 15 people; 2) the KITE Programme for Kilkeel Development Association.

2.3 NEWRY & MOURNE ENTERPRISE FUND

The Enterprise Fund is now in its fifteenth year and has made a significant impact in terms of financial support for new businesses in the area. To date the Fund has made 312 loans totalling £484,550. The recipients of the Fund have been able to raise further financial support from local banks, LEDU and the Prince's Youth Business Trust. In the year under review 13 projects were approved for financial support. The Fund is an integral part of the Agency's activities but particular mention should be made of our external finance committee members, Mr Richard Connolly, Ulster Bank, Mr P Kane, FM Systems, and Mr Patrick Kelly, ROMAL.

The Enterprise Agency - Activity Report

2.4 COMMUNITY BUSINESS PROGRAMME

The Enterprise Agency manages and administers the Community Business Start-up Programme for LEDU in the Southern Region (i.e. in the District Council areas of Newry & Mourne, Banbridge, Craigavon, Armagh City and District and Down).

The main aim of the Programme is to establish and develop community based businesses which will be economically sustainable. Enda Magill and Cliodhna Geraghty jointly manage the Programme. New Groups supported during the year included:

- Appleby Carers
- Trading Places
- Goitse
- Lurgan Community Trust
- Global Business Services
- BrownGlow Coffee Manufacturing

During the year 18 groups in all were provided with training and mentoring support under the auspices of the Programme. The following community businesses began trading during the year as a result of the assistance provided by the Agency and LEDU:

- Iniscora Ironing Services Ltd
- Keady 2000 Ltd
- BrownGlow Coffee Manufacturing Ltd



Brownlow Maintenance Services Ltd – one of the community businesses supported by the Programme during the year

The Agency helped to organise a major conference on community business in Belfast in November 1999. A directory of community businesses in Northern Ireland was launched at the conference.

2.5 PEACE & RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

During 1999/2000 the Agency continued to service the Peace & Reconciliation District Partnership Programme in Newry & Mourne, as part of the Consortium formed with Newry & Mourne District Council.

By March 2000 the District Partnership had committed £4.48 million to projects and programmes in the Newry & Mourne area. The impact of the programme right across the region, the efficiency of its delivery and the innovativeness of its strategic approach were remarked upon publicly by the Secretary of State.

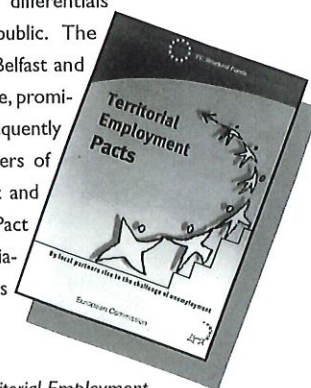
2.6 PESCA PROGRAMME

In January 2000 the Agency's contract was renewed with the Department of Agriculture NI to administer and manage the Northern Ireland PESCA Programme, which provides EU aid to fishing dependent communities in Northern Ireland. The success of the PESCA Programme has in no small measure been due to the efficiency and dedication of Barbara Whitfield, Programme Manager.

2.7 NEWRY & MOURNE TERRITORIAL EMPLOYMENT PACT (TEP)

The TEP seeks to develop innovative new approaches to the problem of imbalances in the labour market. Newry & Mourne hosts the only TEP in Northern Ireland. There are four in the Irish Republic and nine in Britain.

The Pact was the catalyst for a number of major initiatives during the year, including the cross-border careers fair and a lobby to London to press for a change in UK benefits policy. The Pact also sponsored the publication by the Enterprise Agency of a report on the effect of tax and currency differentials between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The Report was launched at the Hilton Hotel in Belfast and received a high media profile, with for example, prominent coverage in the Financial Times. Subsequently Agency staff and Directors met with members of the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont and representatives of the Bank of England. The Pact also funded in its own right a number of initiatives delivered by a range of other local bodies including Newry and Kilkeel Institute, NEWCOE and Mentor.



Newry and Mourne - one of 89 Territorial Employment pacts across Europe.

The Enterprise Agency - Activity Report

2.8 NEWRY AND MOURNE DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

During 1999/2000 the Agency was the principal deliverer of measures in Newry & Mourne District Council's Local Economic Development Strategy. During the year the Agency implemented the following programmes to which Newry & Mourne District Council made a financial contribution:

- Newry & Mourne Ambassadors Club
- Export Development in TSN Areas
- Enterprise Training for Part-time Businesses
- Rural Outreach Programme
- Manufacturing Effectiveness Programme
- Entrepreneur Linkage Programme
- Newry & Mourne Business Education Partnership
- Cross Border:
 - Newry/Dundalk Business Linkage Programme
 - Product Transfer Programme
 - PLATO Programme

Several of these programmes were co-funded by LEDU.

Details of these Programmes are set out below:

2.8.1 NEWRY AND MOURNE EXPATRIATE NETWORK (AMBASSADORS CLUB)

During the year the Agency expanded its expatriate Network, the Newry & Mourne Ambassadors Club to include more than 500 members across the world. The Club is a network of graduates and business people originally from the Newry & Mourne area now living overseas who wish to be involved in regeneration initiatives in the area and to be kept informed of the development of the area's business and trade. It is hoped that some of these may be encouraged to return home to set up in business. A quarterly news bulletin for expatriates, "Vision 21", was published during 1999/2000 and distributed to some 1,200 expatriates and key influencers each quarter.

2.8.2 EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN TSN AREAS

This Programme was co-funded by the Peace & Reconciliation District Partnership. Its focus was on young companies with export potential. They were provided with mentoring, a busi-

ness plan and assistance to attend overseas joint venture brokering events. In addition, it enabled the Agency to represent the interests of more than 20 Newry & Mourne companies at trade events in Europe.

2.8.3 ENTERPRISE TRAINING FOR PART-TIME BUSINESSES

Following a successful pilot programme in South Armagh, this programme for part-time businesses wishing to develop into full-time trading was mainstreamed across Newry & Mourne. During the year 13 part-time businesses received advice and counselling.

This programme was co-funded by LEDU and the Department of Agriculture (Northern Ireland).

2.8.4 RURAL OUTREACH PROGRAMME

This programme enabled the Agency to hold a monthly surgery in Crossmaglen and in various centres in South Down for people considering starting or expanding a business. The Agency was also able to provide on-site counselling more generally for people interested in accessing grants for community development, as well as students interested in a career in business. This programme was co-funded by LEDU.

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2.8.5 MANUFACTURING EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAMME

Also part funded by LEDU, this programme provided a unique, practical service to local manufacturers, including for example technical advice on restructuring production lines, saving energy, scrap reduction and productivity increases. As an example of its impact one company employing 25 people was saved from closure. The companies assisted achieved improvements in production efficiency ranging from 25%-50%.

2.8.6 ENTREPRENEUR LINKAGE PROGRAMME

This programme secured additional funding from the Rural Development Council to deliver 4 actions:

- Business Prompt
- Business Linkage
- Business Excellence
- Doing Business trade event



Michael Durkin and Paul McCormack with keynote speaker Mr Joe White, US Commercial Consul at the Trading with North America seminar.

2.8.7 NEWRY & MOURNE BUSINESS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Agency is the managing agent for the Business Education Partnership in Newry and Mourne. The Business Education Partnership links all Newry & Mourne's 15 post-primary schools and representatives of the business community in the region. The aim of the Business Education Partnership is to: (a) improve the employability and achievement levels of our young people, and b) provide schools with a sharper economic focus by facilitating collaboration with the commercial/ industrial community.

Among the activities of the Business Education Partnership during 1999/2000 were:

- a series of Enterprise Awareness events for pupils aged 14-16
- an industrial placement programme for teachers in the region
- a science and technology awareness raising event
- preparation for a major careers convention later in 2000
- a cross community cultural awareness programme for pupils and teachers.



Paul McCormack with pupils from some of our local schools who exhibited at the Newry & Mourne Business Education Partnership Science & Technology exhibition.

2.9 LEDU ACTION PLAN

LEDU co-funds several of the District Council sponsored initiatives listed above. LEDU is also the principal funder of:

- The Business Start Programme
- The Community Business Programme
- ... Both of which are referred to earlier in this report.

In addition LEDU was the funder of the following pilot initiatives:

2.9.1 THE BUSINESS INCUBATION PROGRAMME

The BIP provided intensive assistance to two new companies with growth potential during the year.

2.9.2 SOUTHERN REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

The Agency began work in March 2000 on a major strategy to develop micro-enterprises across the 5 District Council areas which comprise the Southern region. It was proposed that the strategy would be co-ordinated by Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency, confirmation of the credibility of our organisation. In April 2000 the strategy was submitted to LEDU and IFI for funding.

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3. CROSS BORDER PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES

3.1 NEWRY & MOURNE/LOUTH PRODUCT TRANSFER PROGRAMME

This major joint initiative between the Enterprise Agency and the Louth County Enterprise Board aimed to introduce new products and/or manufacturing processes into the Newry & Mourne/Louth region under licence from North America. Twenty-four companies were recruited onto an intensive programme of assessment, training and market research.

In May 1999 the Agency co-ordinated with Louth County Enterprise Board a trade mission to Montreal and New Hampshire. 10 companies from Newry and Mourne and County Louth participated along with civic leaders from both areas. At least two trade deals have so far resulted from the mission.



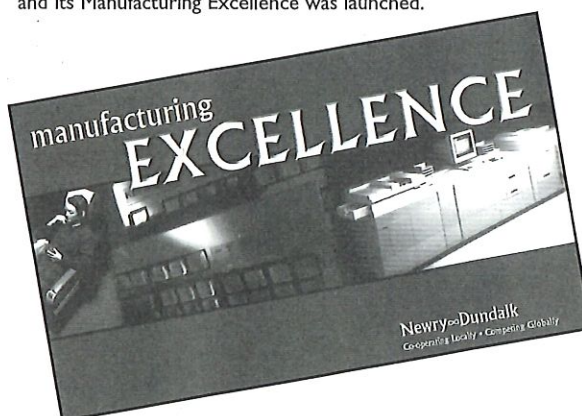
Some of those who participated in the Trade Mission to Montreal and New Hampshire organised by Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency and Louth County Enterprise Board - May/June 1999



Seeking joint venture partners in New Hampshire, USA - Ian Hill (Hill Engineering); Miceal Sheelan (Cleanroom equipment); and Des Murphy (Electromek)

3.2 NEWRY/DUNDALK BUSINESS LINKAGE PROGRAMME

During the year, under the auspices of this major programme to stimulate trade, business co-operation and Government Agency collaboration between Newry and Dundalk a 130 page full colour publication promoting the Newry & Dundalk region and its Manufacturing Excellence was launched.



The Manufacturing Excellence Directory

The Programme also sponsored an innovative strategy for the region. As part of that effort it organised a study visit for local business, politicians and community leaders to the Shannon region. It is our opinion that the Programme did much to promote Newry as the hub of cross border trade and co-operation, ultimately acknowledged in the decision by the British and Irish Governments to locate the Trade and Business Development Body (Inter Trade Ireland) established by the Good Friday Agreement, in Newry

3.3 NEWRY/DUNDALK COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

3.3.1 Community Leadership/Advanced Economic Development Training

During the year the Agency delivered an innovative training programme for community activists from Newry & Mourne and Dundalk. The Programme is accredited by the Northern Ireland Open College Network at NVQ Level III (i.e. providing university entry). The aim of the Programme is to formally validate the experience of community activists and to provide structured training to enhance their ability to engage in community economic development.

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The following groups participated in the programme during 1999/2000:

- Hilltown Community Association
- Omeath District Development Co Ltd
- Failte Abhaile (Dundalk)
- Cumann na Meirleach
- Newry & Mourne Carers Association
- The Ulster Society (Newry & District)
- West Ferrard Boyne Rural Development Group (Drogheda)
- Drogheda Area Womens Network

3.4 PLATO

During the year a group of 80 small companies from Newry & Mourne and County Louth participated in the Programme, setting up a series of mutually supportive groups which were able to draw on free advice and expertise from eleven large parent companies based in the region – Quantum; Heinz ABB; Coca Cola; Premier Periclase; SCA Packaging; Guinness; Glen Dimplex Group; Harris Ireland; FM Systems and Dundalk Institute of Technology. This is Europe's only cross border PLATO network.

3.5 APPRAISOR OF PROJECTS IN BORDER COUNTIES

In the course of the year the Agency appraised some 25 projects for Combat Poverty/ADM in the Irish Republic.

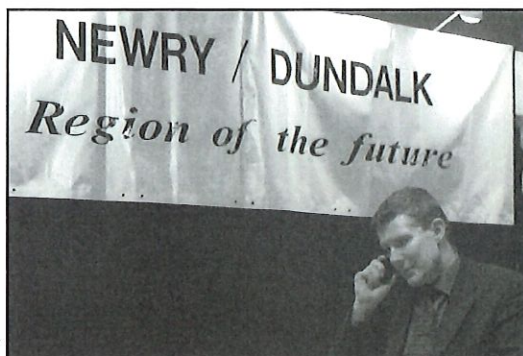
3.6 NEWRY & MOURNE/LOUTH JOBS AND CAREERS FAIR

The Agency organised two major careers and recruitment fairs in April 1999 and April 2000 respectively. The fairs attracted some 13,000 people, including pupils from every post-primary school in Newry and Mourne and County Louth; the long-term unemployed; job seeking graduates; and members of the public more generally. The 1999 event was the first cross border recruitment fair ever organised in Ireland and received considerable publicity (including BBC TV News). An independent evaluation of that event by Price Waterhouse Coopers found that 245 people had secured employment as a result of their attendance at the event. The Careers Fairs were organised with the help of financial support from the British and Irish Governments through the EU Special Support Programme, the

EU Newry & Mourne Territorial Employment Pact and Co-operation Ireland through the Newry/Dundalk Business Linkage Programme.



The Careers Fair 1999 - facilitated cross border collaboration



Careers Fair 2000 - fielding enquiries from expatriates wishing to return to Newry & Mourne.

3.7 TRADENET IRELAND

During the year Enterprise House at WIN Business Park was confirmed as the Newry & Mourne base of the TradeNet Ireland online business to business networking system.



The launch of the tradenet access point in Newry at WIN Business Park Declan Carroll (centre) pictured with Council chairman Billy McCaigue, Jonathan McGilly (council EDO) and Tracy Walsh (CEO Tradenet)

The Enterprise Agency - Activity Report

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



WIN Business Park- working closely with its local community.

The Co-operative was active in community development in Newry & Mourne through the **Community Regeneration Agencies Network (CRAN)**, a partnership of community based regeneration agencies in the Newry & Mourne area. The members of CRAN are Newry & Mourne Co-operative, ROSA (Regeneration of South Armagh), ROMAL (Regeneration of the Mournes Area Ltd), and the Confederation of Community Groups.

The Co-operative is also represented at Board level on the District Partnership for Peace & Reconciliation by Mr Michael Hughes.

The Co-operative's Enterprise Agency division has played a pivotal role in the delivery of the Peace & Reconciliation Programme in Newry & Mourne which has had a very significant impact on disadvantaged communities and excluded groups across Newry & Mourne.

The Co-operative also helped the Mayfair Business Centre on the Garvaghy Road in Portadown to draw up a strategic plan for the area.

During 1999/2000 the Co-operative has worked closely with its host community in Mourneview, Murphy Crescent and Canal Street:

- Jennifer Malone represented the Co-operative on the Canal Street/North Ward Regeneration Group and chairs the Canal Street Heritage Partnership.
- The Canal Street Group and the Mourneview Community Association were both offered the meeting rooms and

administrative services of the Co-operative free of charge.

- The Co-operative provided sponsorship to the Mountainview Football Team in Mourneview.
- The Co-op also sponsored a Christmas dinner for elderly residents of MacManus Court in Newry.

During the year the Co-operative contributed to the following campaigns or organisations:

- Bosco Drama Club
- Buddy Bear Trust
- Butterfly Club Cancer Appeal
- Children's Leukaemia
- Concern - administrative support
- McManus Court Residents
- Mountainview Football Club
- Newry Basketball Club
- Newry Musical Society
- Phab (NI) Ltd
- St. Jude's Trust

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5. INFLUENCING POLICY AND PROMOTING THE REGION

During the year Newry & Mourne Co-operative and its Enterprise Agency division exercised considerable influence in lobbying for increased resources for economic and social development in the Newry & Mourne and the east border region.

Conor Patterson, Chief Executive, served as: Chairman of the Newry & Mourne Economic Forum; a member of the South Down/South Armagh LEADER Action Group; a Board member of Enterprise Newry; a Board member of the Ulster Community Investment Trust Ltd and a member of the PLATO Steering Committee. He also sat on the CBI/IBEC Belfast-Dublin Economic Corridor Task Force. During the year he was accredited as a mediator by the Northern Ireland Mediation Network.

Michael Hughes represented the Co-operative as a Board member on the District Partnership for Peace & Reconciliation. Chairman John MacMahon was a Board member of ROSA. Peter McEvoy was Chairman of the Newry & Mourne Business Education Partnership. Gordon Coulter (M.B.E.) was a Director of Kilkeel Development Association and Chairman of the Business In The Community Leadership Team in Newry & Mourne. Joe Magill was a Board member of Enterprise Newry whilst Ronan Dennedy was a member of the PLATO Steering Committee and the Newry/Dundalk Business Linkage Forum. Jim McCart, as well as being a Northern Ireland's longest serving District Councillor, was on the Board of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority, the Board of Governors of Newry and Kilkeel Institute of Further and Higher Education, and the Southern Education and Library Board.

During the year the Agency hosted visits by:

- The Danish Ambassador to Ireland and his wife.
- Tory spokesperson on Northern Ireland, Andrew McKay
- Political Development Minister, George Howarth, MP
- Senator Brian McDermott
- Scottish Community and Economic Development organisations.



The Danish Ambassador to Ireland and his wife visit WIN with representatives of the International Fund for Ireland.



N.Ireland Political Development Minister, George Howarth MP, visited WIN (January 2000)



Connecticut Senator, Brian McDermott visited WIN (February 2000)

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6. NEWRY ONLINE

The Agency devoted considerable effort to promoting a positive image of Newry nationally and internationally.

During the year, in partnership with Internet Technology Solutions, it launched www.newryonline.com, a comprehensive website providing practical information on Newry, updated daily. The website has become one of the most successful of its kind in Ireland. By the end of the year it was attracting 80,000 visitors on average per month. Set to achieve one million visitors per annum, newryonline is an enormously effective tool for promoting a positive image of Newry and region.



The launch of www.newryonline.com at Newry Omniplex – October 1999- Peter McShane/Gary Topping (ITS), with Conor Patterson and Grainne Moody.

The Agency was the catalyst for positive coverage of the Newry & Mourne area by the BBC 9 o'clock News, the Financial Times and Tokyo Times.

7. ENTERPRISE NORTHERN IRELAND(ENI)

The Agency was one of the founders of Enterprise Northern Ireland which was formed in January 2000 to represent the interests of Northern Ireland's 31 Local Enterprise Agencies, contribute to policy making and to develop collaborative community-based economic development programmes.

8. BUSINESS LIBRARY

The Business Library is a valuable resource for the community providing a wide range of business reference material. It is a free service which business owners, third level students and school pupils are encouraged to use.

As well as being an access point for the EU sponsored Euro Info Centre at Dundalk Institute of Technology, the library is now an access centre for the LEDU sponsored EDNET economic development network in Northern Ireland. The Agency now provides on-line access to information on global trade opportunities, market research, policy development, legislation and tender opportunities as well as access to the Internet.

9. OFFICE SERVICES

Our Office Services, which include telephone answering, word processing, desktop publishing, photocopying, colour printing and fax are available to businesses, community organisations, voluntary organisations and individuals. Michelle Frost and Deirdre Goss, our Receptionists, handle all our enquiries.

10. QUALITY ACCREDITATION

The Enterprise Agency has been registered as a ISO 9002 (BS5750) quality assured body since June 1991. During the year the Agency had its internationally recognised accreditation renewed by the UK National Quality Assurance (NQA) organisation.

The ISO 9002 Operational Manual includes procedures for:

- Managed Workspace
- Training
- Manufacturing Support Programmes
- Office/Secretarial services
- Self Start
- Business Counselling
- PESCA
- Enterprise Fund
- Peace & Reconciliation
- Newry & Mourne Directory
- Newry & Mourne District Council Programmes
- Community Business
- Cross Border Programmes
- Supplier Approval/Purchasing
- Quality Audit
- Library

Each procedure is subject to internal audits twice yearly and external audits once a year. In addition specific contracts are subject to third party audits which form part of the monitoring process.

Annual Report

NEWRY & MOURNE CO-OPERATIVE

WIN Consultants

In 1999 a new division of the Co-operative was established – WIN CONSULTANTS. The purpose of this division is to, where appropriate, tender for commercial work and so secure market fees for work done by the Co-operative's high calibre team.

Our aims are: to secure an independent income which the Co-operative can then invest in promoting economic development and social harmony in Newry & Mourne; and to facilitate operations more effectively beyond Newry & Mourne, in Ireland, Britain and in international markets.

WIN Consultants has a worldwide web presence at www.winbiz.net

As well as deploying the skills of the Co-operative's team, WIN Consultants uses the skills of a wider network of associates involved in community and business development in the region.

In 2000 WIN opened an office in Dundalk at Partnership Court.

Examples of some of WIN's work during the year were:

- Appraisal of projects for various funders in the Irish Republic
- Development of a large website attracting between 50,000 and 80,000 hits per month
- A cross-border tourism development strategy
- Drawing up guidelines for the 2000-2006 Peace-building Programme in the southern border counties
- Business plans and economic appraisals for a number of clients across Ireland



Liam Quinn promotes WIN Consultants in Scandinavia – November 1999

NEWRY & MOURNE
CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED



GENERATING PROSPERITY

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