



National College of Art and Design

National College of Art & Design

Print Department, School of Fine Art

**Exploring the Impact of Regeneration:
Understanding its Social Effects on The Tenants of
Dolphin House, Dublin 8.**

“Unlocking the Potential of a Community Through Regeneration.”

by

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I declare that this Critical Cultures Research Project is all my own work and that all sources have been fully acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. O. L.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Signed:

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Introduction

This research project draws on the current regeneration of Dublin's South Inner City flat complex, Dolphin House which is situated in Dolphins Barn, Dublin 8. Dolphin House is a strong, friendly, and proud neighbourhood located off the South Circular Road which is part of Rialto village and its community, and situated next to the Grand Canal. Dolphin House holds generations of families, living with strong family and community relationships helping to provide residents with the everyday assistance they may need, which has been essential in working-class neighbourhoods throughout history, including Dolphin's House. It is one of the largest public housing developments in Dublin. It was originally constructed in 1957, occupied 18.5 acres, and now has roughly 1,200 residents, around 750 adults and 450 children.

This complex is made up of 392 flats in six blocks, and throughout the estate itself there are 44 senior citizen housing units in Dolphin Park. (*Dolphin House & Park*, 2020). Within this research project I have explored the many physical and social factors which contribute to why regeneration occurs, the effects and the issues related to regeneration.

Regeneration

“Urban regeneration is an approach to city planning to repair the social and economic problems of an urban area, improving the physical and environmental aspects of the city, as well as the buildings. Urban renewal aims to transform obsolete or blighted areas into economically productive areas of a community.” (*EnelX,online,n.d. p.1*)

The concept of regeneration has been an interest of mine as the majority of my studio based practice has often been based around my own interpersonal

relationship with Dublin City. These multiple concepts such as social osmosis and gentrification, more specifically place, placelessness and displacement has been a reoccurring set of concepts that I have encountered throughout my life. It is without a doubt that these concepts can oftentimes induce social and psychological problems within the people living in areas that are undergoing or underwent regeneration or gentrification,

“A sense of displacement which arises from the emotional, affective, and psychological responses to changing demographics in gentrifying neighbourhoods. Inhabitants can experience a ‘loss of place’ when they are no longer able to make place the way they used to.”
(*Exclusion and sense of displacement under austerity, 2020, p.5*)

These named sets of concepts have also played a vital part in my own family's history and personal experience as my family were displaced as a result of the slum clearance in Dublin's inner city in the late 1930s, 40s and 50s.

“On November 3, 1936 an open invitation was published calling the citizens of Dublin to action, to join this growing body and tour the slums of Dublin ‘to see with your own eyes the stark realities of the situation here where it is worst’.”
(*Sheppard, April 2015, p.1*)

Historical Examples of Displacement

This slum clearance had a lasting impact on the citizens of Dublin, negatively and positively. Such as interpersonal relationships i.e. socialising within the community, that were sacrificed for the ‘benefit’ of cost sufficient housing. The government implemented a cost effective housing scheme, however this had a negative impact to those living within these tenements and other housing units that were deemed inhabitable. Tenants found themselves being moved to new suburbs, in my family's case, Crumlin, but they also included areas such as Driminagh, Ballyfermot and Cabra.

“The acquisition of land in Crumlin was ordered under a compulsory purchase act by Sean T. O’Kelly on 18 August 1934. The Housing Committee wanted to build 1,100 dwellings in Crumlin and nearby Dolphins Barn within a year of the report. A total of 2,328 dwellings were proposed for the whole of the Corporation’s district.”(Sheppard,B. April 2015.p.3)



Figure 1 - Dolphin House 1957, photographic print, Hugh Doran.

Tenants also found themselves being put into newly built flat complexes, resulting in relationships being cut and support networks lost, leaving families including my family, alienated and having to start again. I focused on this topic within this research project because I have witnessed the ever changing sites that would have held the many memories, stories, values and experiences within

these communities, that have been torn down and strategically replaced, in many cases into hostile architecture and taking away that sense of community.

Current Research Project

Dolphin House

An example of this can be seen in Dolphin House's new regeneration plan, with the eradication of the connecting communal balconies and stair-cases, by replacing them with detached individual balconies. This architectural modification arguably reinforces feelings of disconnect and isolation between the tenants themselves.

Although this regeneration project has introduced many negative consequences, it definitely has reduced previous social problems such as the unignorable drug abuse, loitering and vandalism which was frequently seen within these communal staircases. Dolphin House also has a high proportion of residents who are vulnerable or isolated, including elderly single men and women and families coping with chronic health (including mental health) issues. (*canaction/rights-rialto-in-action, n.d*) .

Socio-Economic Issues within Dolphin House

The issues that I have highlighted within this research project are socio economic ones such as the long history of drug abuse, lack of education, lack of health services and the decline of social connections within this particular community, due to the new architectural plans. The information regarding the high number of tenants already vulnerable and isolated, is apparent among higher authorities, for example

Dublin City Council and An Garda Síochána. These newly introduced methods of security and privatisation may potentially intensify the mental health of these tenants already suffering.

These housing units at Dolphin House are already known to be overcrowded, humid, mouldy, and susceptible to sewage problems, being smaller than current modern housing units and having severe accessibility issues. While some of these concerns have and will be addressed throughout the current ongoing physical regeneration, this was a chance to build a complete regeneration strategy that goes beyond the physical aspects of the area.

82% of the 920 residents wanted significant regeneration, with 67% opting for full demolition. Some 70% of residents wanted to stay in the estate and 65% said Dolphin's greatest asset was its neighbours. The process was carried out by the Dolphin House Community Development Association (DHCD) after it secured agreement from DCC for resident consultation before any redevelopment. (O'Keeffe, 2009)

It is important to keep in mind that it takes more than just physically regenerating a space to stop many of the issues connected to disadvantage, from resurfacing, including crime, antisocial behaviour, low educational attainment, physical deterioration, poor physical and mental health and stress. These difficulties need more hands-on approaches. Resulting in questions including; will this current regeneration project highlight or contravene these significant issues?

Phase one of this regeneration project was approved by the Dublin City Council in October 2014.

"The scheme provides for the demolition of two blocks and the development of a total of 100 new dwelling units (including new houses, new apartments

and amalgamated/refurbished units within three existing blocks), with buildings ranging between 1 to 4 storeys in height. It is hoped that this development, which addresses a number of blocks in the south-east corner of the estate fronting on to the Grand Canal, will go on site in 2016 and will act as a pilot programme that can be replicated for the remaining blocks fronting on to the canal.”

(Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, 2016)

Regeneration Plans

Although this Regeneration project has went ahead, the original plans for this regeneration of Dolphin House had taken place as far back as 2008, unfortunately due to the financial and property crash which led to a recession in that year, the same private developers pulled out of the plans, leaving behind tenants in despair and left to live in these intolerable housing conditions. The tenants were left without any sense of hope for their housing situation which fueled the tenants frustration. The feeling of unknown led to the tenants and other members of the local community setting up (RRiaG) Rialto Rights in action Group which was established in 2009, which was to form a collaboration between the residents, the local community development organisations operating in Dolphin Housing Estate, to tackle the substandard housing conditions, lack of healthcare conditions and the collapse of the regeneration plans, in Dolphin House.

“In 2009, Community Action Network (CAN) proposed to tenants and community workers (including the Regeneration Coordinator) in Dolphin House the idea of implementing a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to address the housing issues.” (The Advocacy Initiative, 2011)

Over time, the tenants became familiar with the Human Rights Based Approach and were empowered to campaign more effectively for their right to requisite housing.

'Dolphin Decides' - 2009, report, which was the result of two years of thorough resident consultation, described the insights and conclusions from a distinctive community process in respect to the proposed regeneration of Dolphin House and Dolphin Park, with regard to how their neighbourhood should be physically and socially revitalised, the residents' preferences were outlined in 'Dolphin Decides' along with the subsequent actions required to carry out the process including the focus being put on the social aspect of the regeneration project just as much as the physical. "Crucially the report found that social regeneration is as important as physical redevelopment." (*Dolphin House & Park, 2020,p.1*).

This regeneration of Dolphin House presented the potential to limit and possibly end the cycle of social injustice and poverty within this community. It is quite obvious that this particular redevelopment plan had the ability to improve this area's economy, community, and employment opportunities.



figure 2 - Dolphin House during demolition, 2023, James Doyle.

“In 2013 the regeneration programme was agreed and some €19 million was spent to provide 100 new homes in the first phase of regeneration of Dolphin House in Dublin, which is one of the largest local authority flat complexes in the State.” (Kelly, 2013,p.2)

This compelling narrative which was fed to the residents of Dolphin house by Dublin City Council, would have alleviated the stress and anxiety felt by the tenants, this would have meant that the decades of living in inadequate housing conditions and campaigning for basic needs (such as accessibility problems, overcrowding,

dampness due to poor insulation and mould) would have finally of came to an end. The basic needs I have mentioned are definitely necessary, the other architectural structures within Dolphin House flat complex, such as the blocks currently standing in a U-shaped form, which are being replaced with New blocks built to enclose the complex and create internal courtyards, which would increase the security of the complex and reduce opportunities for antisocial behaviour. (Kelly, 2013, p. 4) but was this new plan in the best interests of local tenants?

“As of now the number of units in the overall estate is now estimated as 100 from phase 1 which is complete, 43 in New Dolphin Park, and approximately 307 Public Housing, 261 Affordable Cost Rental and a number of private units incorporated into the Dolphin House masterplan.” (Dolphin House regeneration, n.d)

Regeneration can be defined as a process of improving a community or area that has been neglected or is in a state of disrepair, a process that can have a positive effect on a disadvantaged community, providing much needed resources and opportunities to those who live there. The major proposed benefit of regeneration is the improvement of the physical environment. This can include the construction of new housing, the refurbishment of existing buildings, and the provision of better public services. These improvements can help to create a more attractive and vibrant community However, regeneration can also have a negative effect. There have been other negative effects due to the regeneration of Dolphin House. The project has caused disruption to the local area, with construction noise and traffic congestion.

Other physical aspects of regeneration can cause negative effects and can have a devastating effect on the community, as it can lead to the displacement of long-term residents and the loss of a sense of community. Another issue is that regeneration can often be focused on the physical environment, rather than the social environment. This can mean that while the physical environment may be improved, the social environment is neglected. This can lead to a lack of social cohesion, as the community is no longer connected by shared experiences and values. Regeneration can also lead to a loss of cultural identity.

This is because the process of regeneration often involves the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of new ones. This can lead to the destruction of important cultural landmarks, which can have a negative effect on the community's sense of identity and belonging. While regeneration can have a positive effect on a disadvantaged community, it can also have a negative effect.

It was this importance to ensure that this regeneration project was carried out in a way that took into account the needs of this community, and that it does not lead to gentrification and a lack of social cohesion.



Figure 3 - Former Dolphin House Tenant, commonground.ie

Interviews with Tenants of Dolphin House

To support my Primary research within this research project I have conducted interviews with some of the local tenants, who are currently witnessing and living in this regeneration project, in Dolphin House. These interviews allowed me to document and explore the oral history in depth, by collecting artefacts and other relevant data (including photographs and videos) to establish an archive of material. I got to hear their voices and their personal views of how the regeneration of their homes has had an effect on their own personal lives, and within the community as a whole. I have selected tenants of a different generation, different age brackets to gain a greater understanding on whether age plays a role on their views of this

current regeneration project. My advantage of access, and pre-existing knowledge, meant I was familiar with Dolphin House, the participants and the history.

When speaking to the local tenants from Dolphin house, I was introduced to Debbie Collins. Debbie was born in a flat in Dolphin house 57 years ago and still resides there, although now she has been reallocated and has acquired a newly regenerated flat. Debbie is also an actively involved member within the community, she has worked in Dolphin house homework club the last twenty one years and still continues to do so.

“Dolphin House Homework Club is a programme of the Rialto youth project and has been since 2004. The core work of the homework club is offering space and support to young people so that they can successfully complete their homework or study every day.”

(Dolphin House Homework Club, 2015,p.1)

Dolphin House Homework club is much more than just a homework club, it also provides the youth within the community an opportunity to go on trips encouraging the young people to broaden their horizons, and push them out of their comfort zone. From engaging in quality arts programmes, these programmes range from visual arts, music, dance and creative arts programmes. This ‘homework club’ again was an initiative set up by members of this community to help sustain a support system and build relationships with the young people regardless of whether they come to the club for homework help or not. This is a great example of how supportive facilities can make a difference and improve the lives of the young people specifically within this area, ensuring to help them from possibly making bad decisions or engaging in anti-social behaviour from the lack of a designated facilities.

I chose to interview Debbie as I felt that her own personal life experience growing up in Dolphin house and her long experience witnessing and working with the youth within this community (see appendix a), would inform me about the overall changes and socio-economic issues the community in Dolphins house has faced over the last few decades, along with her own feelings surrounding this current regeneration project. When asked about the sense of community now due to the regeneration, Debbie stated:

“Now that I’m living in one of the regenerated apartments, it's like when you go in your door, you're in your door, you know, we've no open balconies. I haven't got one anymore. But before we used to be able to go out and stand on your balcony and have a chat with your neighbours and you don't see anybody now you just go in. And when you're in, you're in, like all the chatting has gone out the window, the gossip has gone.” (*D.Collins, personal interview, December 6, 2022*)

Although these communal staircases and balconies were seen as hotspots for anti-social behaviour, such as loitering and drug abuse. Dublin City Council's stance on this matter and how to address these issues was to remove the physical spaces completely, introducing security doors and private balconies. Were these modifications in privacy, requested by the tenants? It is clear that this eradication of communal balconies in Dolphin House Flats has had a significant impact on the sense of community within the building . The balconies were a place where residents could come together to socialise, share stories, and build relationships.

Without these communal spaces, it is much more difficult for residents to connect with each other and form a strong sense of community between neighbours. The loss of these balconies has also had a negative impact on the overall atmosphere of the estate, resulting in feelings of isolation and becoming more and more less inviting. This eradication of communal balconies has had an obvious effect on the overall sense of community in Dolphin House Flats, these steps to address this issue

was clearly a result of poor communication and consideration between the developers - Dublin City Council and the tenants within this community.

As Debbie states:

“more residents should have been involved in the meetings. And every meeting I went to the residents were throwing questions out and asking really good questions regarding their future homes and they couldn't answer the questions. Many of the DCC walked out of the actual meetings. They hadn't the answers for questions off the residents but yet this still went ahead.”
(*D.Collins, personal interview, December 6, 2022*)

As Dolphin House Flat complex was originally seen as ideal by Dublin City Council to help solve the expanding population at that time, unfortunately it was not until the recession and drug epidemic of the late 1970s/1980s that this anti-social behaviour started to arise and with that this stigma was attached to these flats, as well as the negative portrayal and misrepresentation of “the flats” in the media. Prior to the sanctions that followed after the many internal movements within these communities, one of the most notable was ‘The Concerned Parents Against Drugs.’

“In 1983, in the absence of an adequate response from the statutory bodies, residents of the inner city areas most affected by the opiate epidemic mobilised in a social movement called the Concerned Parents Against Drugs (CPAD).” (*O’Gorman, 1997, p.3*)

In relation to this particular social movement Concerned Parents Against Drugs (CPAD), these parents did try to help create a sense of community and solidarity in the area, as they came together to address this prevalent issue of drug use. helping to reduce the stigma associated with drug use and the addict by redirecting their frustrations on the ‘drug-pushers’, Their aim was to eradicate the drug dealers, to create a more supportive environment for those struggling with addiction by trying to cut off the suppliers. Additionally, these concerned parents did help to raise

awareness of the dangers of drug use and did try to provide support to those who were affected by it especially at a time of intense stigma associated with the 'mystery disease' at that time, now known as - H.I.V/AIDs .

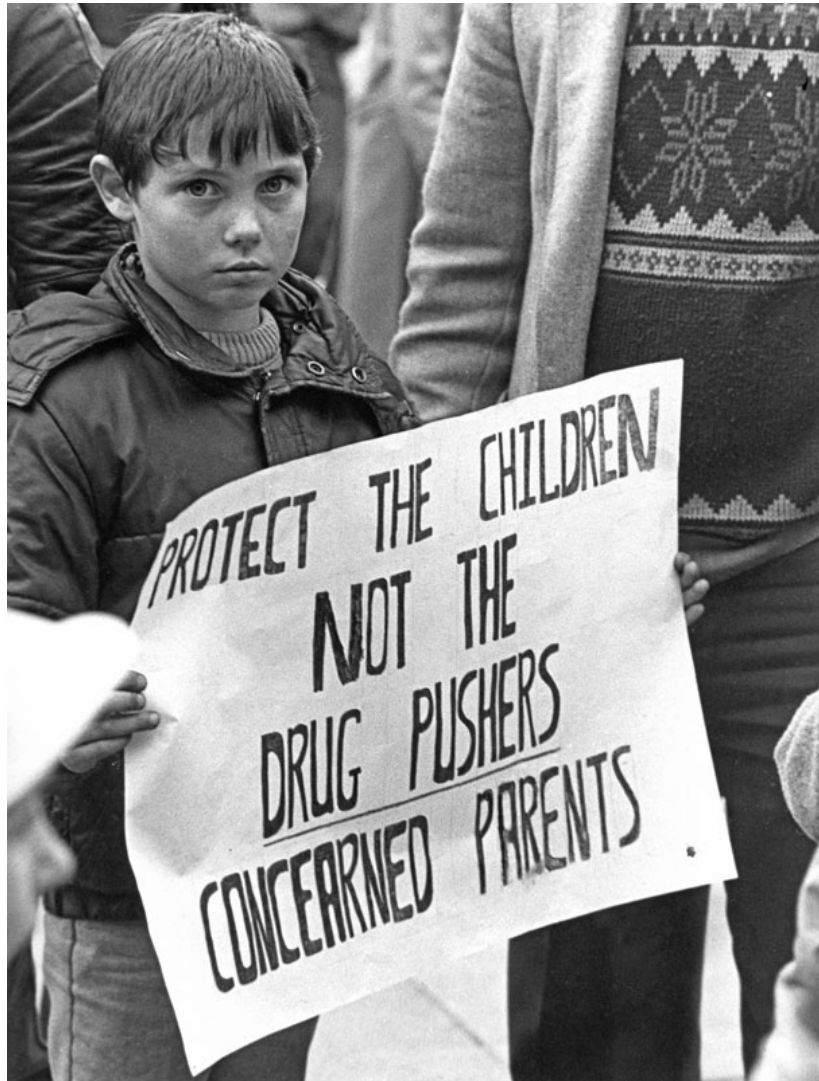


Figure 4 - Concerned Parents Against Drugs protest, April 1984, an phobhlacht.ie

Neighbourhoods in the inner city that traditionally have been sites of poverty and disadvantage, and more recently of drug-related harm, have now, in addition, been identified 'as having particular problems in terms of HIV/AIDS transmissions' (Department of Health, 1991). This movement was created to reduce the prevalence

of drug use in this area and create a safer environment for all living within this community and these concerned parents' main goal was to create a more positive image for Dolphin House Dublin 8, as demonstrated.

Despite initial success in tackling the issue at a grass root level, the movement came into disrepute. Intimidation and attacks on user-dealers, the shooting of a CPAD activist, and police and media antagonism over the movement's alleged use of vigilante tactics and its connections with Sinn Fein and the IRA contributed to the movement's decline in the mid 1980s.
(O'Gorman, 1997, p.3)

The negative social effects of concerned parents against drugs in Dublin 8, was seen in a number of ways. Initially, the increased presence of concerned parents in the area led to a sense of fear and mistrust among the local community at that time. The breakdown in relationships between parents and their children, as well as between neighbours, the increased presence of concerned parents ultimately lead to a sense of stigma and judgement being placed on those who were using drugs. Which resulted in further alienation and isolation from services outside of this community. The increased presence of concerned parents against drugs led to a decrease in the availability of drugs in the area, although there was an increase in drug-related crime as users were forced to look elsewhere for their supply. The failure of the statutory authorities to respond to the crisis has been perceived by some critics as indicative of a policy of containment of the drug problem in the inner city areas.

(O'Gorman, 1997, p.3) This was not the start of systematic failures from authoritative bodies in the community, this reinforces the idea that this was a campaign for justice coming from the tenants rather than the officials. *CPAD failed to realise its own potential through its own failure to develop an explicit political analysis which could keep it on track, and avoid the internal conflicts and external pressures to which it*

eventually succumbed. (Community Development As A Means Of Drug Prevention, 2000, p.51)

Solutions for overcoming challenges in the community

This prime example of historical community intervention reinforces my argument that it has always been the tenants within Dolphin House, having to fight for their basic needs to be addressed, including the overall safety, improving the inadequate housing conditions and the obvious lack of support services for the people struggling.

Dolphins House is managed by Dublin City Council, previously Dublin Corporation, and is available to those who meet the criteria for social housing. The flats are allocated on a points-based system, with priority given to those in greatest need. The flats are generally allocated to those who have been on the housing list for a long period of time, and who have a low income. There was a high number of tenants complaining about poor living conditions in Dolphin houses original flats, This mainly included persistent problems such as mould and dampness, This had a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of its tenants. These Poor living conditions had led to feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress among the tenants. These feelings can be exacerbated by the lack of privacy, inadequate ventilation, and overcrowding that often accompany living in a low-income social housing complex.

The importance of accessible services

Additionally, the lack of access to basic amenities such as running water, electricity, and sanitation can further contribute to feelings of hopelessness and despair. Furthermore, the lack of access to mental health services and resources can further compound the mental health issues of tenants living in Dolphin House.



Image available at: www.standrewsrialto.ie St. Andrew's Community Centre Dublin 8

The Rialto Development Association (RDA) with its location being situated in St. Andrews Community Centre (previously a Methodist church until the 1970s) is the main support service in this specific area for young adolescents and adults.

The Rialto Development Association (RDA) is a voluntary organisation established to manage St. Andrew's Community Centre for the benefit of residents and community groups in the wider Rialto area. It has a particular emphasis on tackling disadvantage and promoting social inclusion and economic development. The RDA is made up of a voluntary board of directors who have ultimate responsibility for the development and operation of St. Andrew's Community Centre. (*St. Andrew's Community Centre, 2022*)

St. Andrew's Community Centre is also the location for The Rialto Youth Project, which is a youth development program that provides a range of services to young adults in disadvantaged areas, specifically Dublin 8. The program focuses on

providing educational, recreational, and social activities to help young people develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life. The program also provides mentoring, job training, and other support services to help young people transition into adulthood. The program also works to create a safe and supportive environment for young people to grow and develop. The program works to empower young people to become active members of their communities and to make positive contributions to society. In hopes to improve the lives and wellbeing of the young people within this community.

Some people from these poor socio economic backgrounds may go on to pursue a career in social care because of their own personal experiences and understanding of the struggles faced by those from similar backgrounds. They may be passionate about wanting to help others and make a difference in the lives of those who have faced similar struggles. They may also have a strong sense of empathy and understanding for those who are disadvantaged and may be motivated by the desire to give back to their community. As they may have had a positive experience with a social care professional in their own life and may have seen the potential for making a real impact in the lives of others. Lastly, they may see social care as a way to make a good living while still having a meaningful and rewarding career that allows them to make a difference.

For a greater insight into some of the socio economic issues faced within young people, in this community, I decided to reach out again and Interview Taylor Smith (see appendix b), Taylor aged twenty one, is another lifelong resident of Dolphin House and is currently living in a newly regenerated apartment. She is currently

studying social studies which stems from her own experiences within Dolphins House. She hopes to provide better services for people within communities like Dolphin House including assisting me with research, ensuring I develop a greater sense and understanding of people's views, perceptions, experiences and current issues within the community.

Taylor stated:

“The reason why I wanted to pursue social studies is because I wanna get out of here, I want to use education as my escape because there's no escape in Dolphin's House.” (*T.Smith, personal interview, December 12, 2022*)

I asked if she thinks there should be more services introduced within this community as of now, and Taylor stated:

“Oh my God, yeah, a hundred percent. like I said, growing up as a child, like there was nothing ever here, and now like I said, I know there's the homework club, but that's just not enough. Like there's still kids, like I even saw for myself, like kids that I've grown up with that have gone down the wrong road and are going down the road of drugs, addiction and it's mostly men, to be honest with you. There definitely needs to be a more involved youth club or something, some sort of support to actually get people into education or even to get them out of the flats because that's all they know.” (*T.Smith, personal interview, December 12, 2022*)

The introduction of more support services can help prevent addiction and other anti-social behaviours, particularly in young men who are more likely to engage in these social behaviours, ensuring to provide the people with positive, structured activities and personal support. Many services have the ability to offer a variety of programs that promote healthy lifestyles, self-esteem, and other life skills. These much needed services can be implemented within this community to provide young

men with an alternative to prevent risky behaviours, such as drug and alcohol use, that can lead to addiction.

“A more radical approach is needed if we are to pay attention to the way health is sociologically structured, and avoid the trap of attributing problem drug use in our poorest communities as issues of individual choice only”.
(Butler, McCann, 1999, p.57)



Figure 5 - youth in Dolphins House, commonground.ie

Most youth services are the main service providing the young men in the community which help include access to new social networks, positive role models, and mentors who can provide them with guidance and support. These mentors help the young men learn how to manage their emotions, develop healthy relationships, and develop positive coping strategies. Helping them learn to cope with challenging situations and make better decisions. Youth services also help young men develop life skills that are essential to success in adulthood including

communication and decision-making skills, problem-solving abilities, financial literacy, and career guidance. Through these activities, young men can develop the confidence and resilience needed to make positive life choices and resist the temptations of addiction and other anti-social behaviours.

I asked Taylor about her views on these available services for the youth within the community, questioning whether they are beneficial or not?

Taylor stated:

“Yeah definitely, because it actually brings them outside of the complex. Like it actually brings them to a different place, to a different place where they're getting to do different stuff. They're being educated, they're in different social groups, they're away from drugs. whereas if you're constantly seeing drugs, you see people doing all sorts and all in the flats. like how is that for a child's mental health? That's all they'll ever know. Like the smell, it's disgusting, it's terrible. Like when children are brought into these homework clubs and Rialto and all, you know, they're doing activities with the kids, like it's putting a different perspective into the kids' world, there's a chance for them, there's an opportunity apart from what they see on a day-to-day basis.”
(*T.Smith, personal interview, December 12, 2022*)

It is important to understand exposure to anti-social behaviour can lead to a detrimental effect as a child that is exposed to consistent drug abuse, can experience a variety of potential negative outcomes including suffering from physical and psychological symptoms, poor physical health, behavioural problems, and mental health disorders. The child may also be at increased risk for drug abuse and addiction later in life. Additionally, the child may have difficulty forming and maintaining healthy relationships, and may struggle in school. It is without a doubt that these named psychological effects can create a cyclic pattern of behavioural problems, almost like history repeating itself within the community. The physical regeneration aimed to change these by introducing these private courtyards and play

areas for the young children, resulting in a level of segregation between the young children living in different blocks who would have originally all played together.

This is mentioned by Debbie:

“I pity the small kids now. Like, when we had the old flats, the kids would go down and play and knock for their friends from the other blocks. whereas now if they want to go down there and play, there's a square if you look over the balcony, just a couple of swings, a few little things. And their friends from the other blocks are not allowed in there due to the new doors you know. So that's a disadvantage for small kids growing up in Dolphin House.”

(D.Collins, personal interview, December 6, 2022)



Figure 6 - Dolphin House regenerated flats, 2021, rod.ie

The social effects due to architectural changes

Examples of these previously named architectural modifications are the eradication of communal staircases, private balconies and the installation of fob-only access for added security with multiple cameras throughout the complex. The private playgrounds and courtyards for the children in the estate were introduced to help prevent these negative social behavioural problems from constantly recurring, despite community efforts and external organisational efforts such Rialto youth project and St.Andrews community centre.

Although these regeneration plans which intended to improve community safety and many other socio-economic issues could not have been simply resolved without sufficient consultation between Dublin City Council and Dolphin House tenants themselves. It is evident that this physical change to Dolphin house may improve some physical/social problems, it has introduced many new negatives.

Do these positives outweigh the negatives? Or the negatives outweigh the positives?

Debbie's response was:

"The first thing that came to my head when you said that was a seesaw, it's up and it's down, it's up and it's down, so yeah, you know, there's just never really that stability within this community. And that comes from the lack of support and being ignored." (*D.Collins, personal interview, December 6, 2022*)

Similarly, Taylor's response when asked the same question was:

"They're just placing a person in a different accommodation with the same situations, same problems. There's nothing here unless they actually provide professional services and actually help and actually educate the kids and bring them out and do stuff with them. There's still nothing. You can put a person in a mansion anywhere and yet still have the same situation unless there's higher people providing services."

(*T.Smith, personal interview, December 12, 2022*)

After decades of receiving little assistance from higher authorities, a deprived community may have little hope for the future. This is frequently voiced, as these communities have been ignored for such a long time and have not received the proper resources they need to thrive. The tenants of this complex frequently experience discouragement and a lack of hope for the future as a result. This can be as a result of the marginalisation and lack of possibilities experienced by the tenants in Dolphin in comparison to other communities.

When asked what they see for future of Dolphin House, Debbie - lifelong resident and community activist replied:

“I really couldn't answer that question. I don't know, I think it's just always gonna be the same. It's just going to be different buildings, different things, but nothing will change. It's the same year after year, you'll hear the same complaints day after day. And you hear there's nothing being done about it, and there's definitely nothing being done about it, that falls down to DCC. Again, you know, our landlord, as I said, like they would offer us the moon and the stars. And in relation to the playground, we were more or less given that to shut us up. You know what I mean? The kids designed that themselves.. and the reason why we let them design it was to give them ownership of it, you know what I mean? So they can say No, don't touch that, that is ours, which they did design it, we asked What would they like? We asked, like they were saying zipline? there's never been a zipline in Dolphin House, never! it will be great to see the reaction, but how long is it gonna stand there? You know what I mean. But I put it down to our landlords, and the police, definitely the police for doing fuck all for us.” (*D. Collins, personal interview, December 6, 2022*)

Taylor, who lives in the regenerated complex, stated:

“Unless the government actually puts in services that are actually providing funding or something like there's nothing for me and there's not enough for the younger generation like God help them as well. There's nothing for them here apart from what they already know. Unless they actually bring in the services, other than that, it's just not for me, I don't wanna be staying there. I want somewhere where I'm gonna be able to progress more and I'm gonna be able to go off and do what I need to do instead of living in a place where it's full of addiction and you know?” (*T. Smith, personal interview, December 12, 2022*)

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research project has highlighted the importance of providing support services for communities beyond physical regeneration. It is clear that social regeneration is just as important, if not more, for the long-term success of the community, by providing more access to education, employment, health, and other services to help improve the quality of life for the residents in Dolphin House. Ensuring that all members of this community have access to these services, regardless of their background or economic status. By providing such services, the community can become more resilient and better equipped to handle the challenges of the future. As well as introducing more Mental health support services as it is essential for the overall well-being of the community. Which will help reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues, creating a stronger sense of belonging and help create connection.

The interviews I have conducted with some of the tenants of Dolphin House have shown the importance of support services engagement for the community. The tenants I spoke with expressed a need for more support services to help them, and other members of the community with mental health, education, and employment. They also expressed a need for more government support for social activities and events to bring the community together again, and to help create a sense of belonging. It is clear that support services engagement would be essential for the regeneration of Dolphin House, creating a safer and more supportive environment for its tenants and for the regeneration of the area to be successful.

Dublin City Council and other statutory bodies have a responsibility to ensure that the necessary resources are available to support such initiatives. This includes providing adequate housing, employment opportunities, educational and recreational facilities, and access to health and social services. Furthermore, it is essential that these initiatives are implemented with the full involvement of the community, in order to ensure that the benefits are felt by all. By working together, Dublin City Council and other statutory bodies can help to create a more ambitious and brighter future for Dolphin House and its pertinacious tenants.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview with Debbie Collins on December 6, 2022. This interview was conducted in person. Debbie is a lifelong resident of Dolphin House flats and is a socially engaged member within the community, she is currently working in Dolphin House Homework Club for the last 22 years.

0:00

James: So tell me about yourself.

0:03

Debbie: My name is Debbie. And I live in Dolphin House. I'm 57 years old, I was born in a flat in Dolphin House, and I work in the dolphin house homework club.

0:13

James: How was your childhood growing up in Dolphin House?

0:16

Debbie: It was very good. When I was a child it was very good. Like, we just go out to play, we could play until some 10 o'clock at night, nobody was worried about her. There were no worries or anything. With a great childhood, I grew up with nothing, but nothing was great. We made the most of it now.

0:39

James: And what is the sense of community now like in Dolphin house? After regeneration? Does it still feel close knit?

0:42

Debbie: No, it's definitely not. Because of the regeneration, I'm now living in one of the regenerated apartments. And it's like when you go in your door, you're in your door, you know, we've no open balconies. I haven't got one anymore. But before we used to be able to go out and stand on your balcony and have a chat with your neighbours and you don't see anybody now you just go in. And when you're in, you're in, like all the chatting has gone out the window, the gossip has gone.

1:23

James: Do you feel isolated?

1:26

Debbie: Yeah. Yeah, really, definitely very isolated. I think it could be worse for people like even older, the older people, definitely. Because, again, you'd see them coming in and out.

And like you'd take a bag off them and help them up the stairs, you asked if they wanted anything in the shops, you know, I know you can knock on the doors and ask them. But like it was easier before, it was much more easy. And it was easier for them to sit out on the balcony and chat with their neighbours. Whereas that's all gone now

James: Do you think? See the way beforehand there was the presence of like, let's say the criminal activity or an example being people on the stairs, do you think in a sense, getting rid of the balconies and the communal staircases was better in relation to safety, or do you think it wasn't considered fully?

2:04

Debbie: It wasn't, it definitely was not considered fully, by no means because when we moved in here, and I'm here four years now. And when we moved in here, our front door downstairs broke the back door going into the garden area downstairs, they were broke by members of the community that were selling drugs, to put it that way. And they'd be coming in so this would be their resting point for hiding the drugs during the nights, breaking the lift, drinking on the stairwell, taking drugs on the stairwells.

2:33

James: And this was after regeneration?

2:36

Debbie: This was when I moved in four years ago, and a stop was only put to it about a year ago. And it took my son actually to take photographs and send them to DCC, anywhere that he could find that googled to find, he sent all the photographs or videos to, the place was in an awful state, broken doors, broken lifts. Like we have Paul's mother there. She's 75. And we couldn't even bring her up for dinner because she couldn't make it up the stairs because of what was going on and the police did nothing about it.

3:13

James: Do you think that's due to the lack of support services?

3:16

Debbie: Definitely. Definitely, like the neighbours themselves were getting out. And they have to stand at the doors in the night time, like in the evening time to stop them coming in and out. You know,

3:27

James: Are these people from this area?

3:29

Debbie: Some are from this area, some are not, but they're all friends.

3:36

James: Yeah, and around what age category?

3:36

Debbie: You're talking from about 18 Onwards. I wouldn't say over 30 but from 18 to 30 maybe, maybe 16 to 30.

3:44

3:36

James: And speaking about drugs, let's go back to your childhood and growing up in the flats? When did you first start to see the presence of drugs within this community?

3:47

Debbie: I'd say about 14 or 15.

3:52

James: Can you tell me what it was?

3:54

Debbie: It was mostly heroin. There was a lot of heroin going around and a lot of my friends died from heroin, because like they used to actually sit at the canal with a spoon and thank god I didn't take drugs in my life, I was terrified of needles! And you'd see them spooning out the canal water and mixing the drugs with canal water and taking it, which led to AIDS and that's what they died of in the long run, you know.

4:28

James: how did you feel initially when you started to see this kind of like plague take over?

4:32

Debbie: you know what, It was just like another thing, it was just sort of mind baffling, you know what I mean? I was saying Jesus, like, it was the thing, do you know what i mean? it was the thing to do.

4:46

James: So you didn't really know the effects of it fully?

4:50

Debbie: Well, I definitely didn't. But looking back, it was like just the thing to look at. Like if I seen it now, like I would fucking pass out, it was just like a daily thing, they would be sitting on the stairways to be doing it, they would be leaving their dirty needles lying around. And that's when AIDS came in the 80s I think was, and then from that they all started to drop one by one.

5:18

James: You know, at that time there were the concerned parents against their parents?

5:23

Debbie: Yeah, but they were the ones that were selling the drugs to be honest with yeah, the best part of them but not all of them, they were covering their own arses, that's what they were doing.

5:34

James:But were there any people from within the community that really tried their best to control this?

5:40

Debbie:Yeah, there were a lot of people. Yeah, like, it was mainly the parents themselves. And when people came in from other places, to give their speeches and whatever but we all knew sure they were the top men that were selling it, you know what I mean?

5:54

James:What do you think that fell down to that?

5:57

Debbie:the lack of services and support. There was no support,no support off the police, there was No, no place to go, you know what I mean, at that time they took over, there was no one to turn to, they actually killed a chap on the Barn and we all stood there as kids looking at this.

6:10

James:Who did?

6:12

Debbie:The concerned parents against drugs organisation, and it was nothing to do with them, like, you know, what i mean?

6:20

James:And up to now, would you think there's still a great presence of drugs within Dolphin house?

6:25

Debbie:Definitely, oh definitely there is yeah, you see it day by day.

6:29

James:Are there any services in place now that are helping with this trying to tackle this drug problem?

6:43

Debbie:Apparently there is but I've never once seen them, they know who's doing it, they know exactly where it's coming from. And I've never once, as I said, it was happening on our stairwell down there. And only that my own son only has all the videos, he still has them.

7:13

James:Do you think that this annoyed him?

7:15

Debbie:Of course it did, You know what I mean? Like seeing where his mother is living, I came over here to make a better life from one side of the block to another, to make a better, well not really a better life, but like a new beginning again, you know, because all my kids are grown up now. And i'm still walking into the same old problems.

7:27

James:So realistically by the sounds of it, you don't think living in a newly regenerated apartment makes much or any of a difference?

7:34

Debbie:It makes no difference. It's still kind of going on, But not in the stairwell now. But you do see them coming in and out, but I just thank myself for taking a flat at the top, and that I'm not living downstairs. You know what I mean? Because as I said, it's quiet enough up here. You know, I clean all my own area and I don't need anyone to do it. And I'm happy with that, you know.

7:41

James:What problems would the people living at the bottom face?

7:44

Debbie:Well, I have a relative that lives on the first balcony. That's where they were standing outside, and he's an old person, and they broke the handle off his door, knocking on his window, laughing at him. And he's fairly sick. And they had no respect for him whatsoever. They were urinating on the stairs, leaving all their drugs on the stairs. They were leaving tablets on the stairs, Bottles of drink, currys, chips.

8:21

James:And yet even with the introduction of the cameras the buzzers?

8:27

Debbie:They broke the cameras.

8:30

James:So they still got in the door?

8:33

Debbie:They still got in the door. Yeah. And where the cameras were located. They broke them. So they couldn't see them.

8:55

James:Can you tell me when you started to become actively involved within the community?

9:02

Debbie:That was 21 years ago when I first got a job at faus, And I worked in the dolphin house homework club, so that made me more involved with the kids and the parents. You know what I mean, and get to know everyone a lot better, which I'm there 21 years now.We do a lot. With help from I'd say the only project that does Is rialto youth project. Nobody else

And we have them for summer projects, the whole month of July. And throughout the year and Christmas. They don't only do the homework. They do music, art. There's loads of different activities and trips. Like if that homework club wasn't there, the kids would have nothing in Dolphin house. And nobody would care about it.

10:00

James:How many days a week does this run?.

10:03

Debbie:Five days a week.

James:Do many kids within the complex utilise this?

10:05

Debbie:We have 142 kids registered in our club. and out of 142, we could get about 70 or 80 a day. They come in at all different times. So we might get about 70 or 80 a day.

10:20

James:And what is the building like?

10:24

Debbie:The building's not too bad. It's the Portacabin, as you just come into Dolphin House, which we'll be getting new ones due to the regeneration.

10:31

James:So that was considered in this regeneration project?

10:35

Debbie:It was Yeah, yeah. We fought with DCC for a playground where they had got a playground, they hadn't got it for too long, and it got burned down on them. And now we fought and fought. And now they're actually doing another playground at the moment as we speak. The building over there, right around the area of the homework club, and it's nearly down the length of the entrance, it's all wooden and it looks absolutely brilliant at the moment, but whether it's gonna stand there or not,we don't know.

11:04

James:Does this fall down to that same fear again of people taking advantage of these facilities?

11:11

Debbie:Yeah, all the people coming into the flats, they are all made of wood now. It looks like fort lucan to be honest with you, but yeah and it's absolutely fabulous. And if it's well taken care of hopefully, But I wouldn't hold my breath.

11:27

James:It's unfortunate that by the sounds of it, it sounds like no matter what service or facilities are put into place, there's always that level of like short lived hope.

11:34

Debbie:We're never excited about things happening here to be honest with you, you can't get yourself excited. Because you know, at the back of your mind, what if there's always a "what if" when something new comes into Dolphin house.

11:51

James:Do you think that goes as far back to when drugs were firstly introduced to this community?

11:56

Debbie:No no, when we were kids like when we were small here we had a playground. Actually where our homework club is now we only had the two swings, a slide and one of them roundabout yokes, but they were there for years and years and years, like, no one bothered with them. It's just the vandalism that's going on in Dolphin House today is outrageous. And nobody gives a shit. They get the names of the people that are doing it. But what they do about that is beyond me.

12:20

James:And what strategies or plans do you think they could take or put into place to stop this?

12:24

Debbie:Well, they tell you they put cameras in which they did. They tell you they look at them which they don't? We asked, Can we look at him, like my husband has a car down there and we haven't got the right to look at these cameras. You know what I mean? it's just ignorance,ignorance and laziness.

13:04

James:What do you think falls down to?

13:07

Debbie:D.C.C ! they do nothing about it, They give you what you asked for after years of fighting, and then it's yours to look after it? That's my opinion.

13:22

James:And what do you feel should have been taken into consideration more during the process of the regeneration project? More specifically for the residents.

13:26

Debbie:more residents should have been involved in the meetings. And every meeting I went to the residents were throwing questions out and asking really good questions regarding their future homes and they couldn't answer the questions. Many of the DCC walked out of the actual meetings. They hadn't the answers for questions off the residents but yet this still went ahead. Like for example I've seen a flat of a neighbour of mine, I've

spoken to a neighbour of mine, who has a five year old child and the child has leukaemia and he showed me his flat, exactly the same flat I'm living in right here. I'm in a two bedroom apartment and the chap lives underneath me in the same two bedroom apartment and his bathroom, and as I said his child five years of age with leukaemia, you would think someone was just after walking into the bathroom with a bucket full of black muck, and just thrown it up on the walls and up on the ceiling, I said to the chap "that couldn't be your bathroom". He said "that is my bathroom". So what did the Dublin cooperation do about it, he said they haven't come out yet. And he said he was waiting two months for them; they still haven't come out. And again his child is in that house with that mould and dampness. You'd want to see it. I've never seen anything like it in my life. He said, It's actually crawling out of the bathroom. the fact that it's the newly regenerated building and like newer materials and this is still present. But it's not a newer material. Like these are only refurbished. I couldn't get that word. Yeah. These are only refurbished. Like these were broken to a shell, Yeah, And the walls What are left and they just put a gain, like some type of an iron wire down walls there, like see if I have to try and hang anything up there on them walls. It's very hard. It's crazy, they just made the rooms a little bit bigger. And made the sitting room smaller. But like, this is a three bedroom flat that I'm in now. It's now a two bedroom flat. And the only difference between these flats and the old flats that we lived in, is where you're sitting now, which has a table and six chairs. you know what I mean? We used to sit with our dinner on our lap over there, because we only had a tiny kitchen. So this is the only new thing.

16:41

James: What do you think then when it comes to the positives and negatives? Do you think the positives outweigh the negatives? Or the negatives outweigh the positives?

16:45

Debbie: The thought, the first thing that came to my head when you said that was a seesaw, it's up and it's down, it's up and it's down, so yeah, you know, there's just never really that stability within this community. And that comes from the lack of support and being ignored. like I pity the small kids now. Like, when we had the old flats, the kids would go down and play and knock for their friends from the other blocks. whereas now if they want to go down there and play, there's a square if you look over the balcony, just a couple of swings, a few little things. And their friends from the other blocks are not allowed in there due to the new doors you know. So that's a disadvantage for small kids growing up in Dolphin House.

17:47

James: Do you think there's a focus on, let's say, the younger generation of Dolphin house? Is there a focus on the mental health and well-being of these young people?

17:52

debbie: Absolutely. sure I work in the home club. We work on their mental health and their wellbeing, and we have some kids that come in to us, and the stories they tell, we do a programme called "What does he need?" it's with N.C.A.D and Rialto Youth Project, But it's about male mental health, im doing it three years now. We've made up four imaginary boys, made of wooden silhouettes. And then it become their friend, they give them a name and we be asking the kids like, if Connor George, which is one of them, if Connor George came down to your flats, because he lives elsewhere would you let him come in?

And bear in mind these are children from the age of 7 to 9. They replied with "no we wouldn't have conor george down in Dolphin House, we'd be afraid if Conor George came down and the bad boys that sell drugs hit him or throw rocks, or rob his mobile phone". so this is the mindset of the children and what they would think of what dangers he could face coming into Dolphin House. You know, we were actually bringing the kids for a meal one time. And they asked if conor george could come with us, and we said Yeah, of course. And like the people we're looking at a big wooden figure, and either way we stood at the table, But that's a little bit about "what does he need?" the last four years now, but to hear what some of the children tell you, when you ask you obviously don't ask them straight forward questions. We'd say what would?, what if?, you know, and the things they come out with? Like, I wouldn't play in the fourth block because such and such is in the fourth block and they do this and they do that and like that goes to show what the kids are seeing, you know what I mean? and it's not fair, it's really not fair.

20:02

James: So it's them being exposed to things they shouldn't be witnessing at such a young age.

20:06

Debbie: Yeah, yeah. And I think it shouldn't be. And as I said, there's nobody there to stop it. You know, they're getting away with it, they're doing. And our Kids are falling victim of it, you know what I mean?

20:21

James: My last question, then, what do you see for the future of Dolphin House?

20:24

Debbie: Nowhere. I really, really couldn't answer that question. I can see, like, I don't know, I think it's just always gonna be the same. It's just going to be different buildings, different things, but nothing will change. It's the same year after year, you'll hear the same complaints day after day. And you hear there's nothing being done about, and there's definitely nothing being done about it, that falls down DCC. Again, you know, our landlord like, as I said, like they would offer us the moon and the stars. And as I go back to the playground, we were more or less given that to shut us up. You know what I mean? the kids designed that themselves.. and the reason why we let them design it was to give them an ownership of it, you know what I mean? So they can say No, don't touch that, that is ours, which they did design it, we asked What they would like, like they were saying zipline, There's never been a zipline in Dolphin house, never. it will be great to see the reaction, But how long is it gonna stand there? You know what I mean. But I put it down to our landlords, and the police, definitely the police for doing fuck all for us.

22:00

James: In what sense?

22:02

Debbie: Because I've heard people talking about the drugs that's going around in the flats and around the place. And do you know what the police said to me? 'Well, what's your

name? And where do you live?" And then you hang up the phone because you're afraid to give the name and address obviously. And when you hang up the phone? The police ring back the number, so you're afraid now. They put a fear in the people, can they not just just get down and do their job like. But Yeah, as I said, I don't see this going anywhere.

22:34

James:Do you have anything else relevant that you think you should add to or anything I haven't asked?

22:41

Debbie:Oh, No. You've asked them.

22:43

James:Well, that's perfect. Debbie. Thank you.

22:45

Debbie:You're very welcome.

Appendix B

Interview with Taylor Smith on December 12, 2022. Taylor is a lifelong resident of Dolphin House and is currently living in a newly regenerated apartment in Dolphin house. She is currently studying social studies stemming from her own lived experiences, in hopes to provide better services for people within communities like Dolphin House.

• 0:00 - 0:03

James: What's your name and your age?

• 0:04 - 0:06

Taylor: my name is Taylor Smith and I'm 21.

• 0:06 - 0:09

James: Tell me about your childhood growing up in a Dolphin house.

• 0:10 - 0:39

Taylor: Uh, I grew up with me ma and my little brother. Um, my ma and da separated when I was younger due to like different circumstances. They were just too young having me basically. Um, mostly childhood, to be honest with you, I mostly grew up with my nanny even though my mom was there, but I spent a lot of time in Nanny's house because she lived in the block next to us. Um, so yeah, I mostly just spent my childhood there. Same as me brother as well.

• 0:39 - 0:43

James: What would you have done as kids to occupy yourselves?

• 0:44 - 1:03

Taylor: Well, like there'd be loads of kids out there, like down the flats, so usually just playing with them. Um, there was nothing really there for us to do apart from like, you know, like making swings and stuff like that. Just usual stuff that kids do, playing games. Like there was nothing else to really do apart from that. Just usual stuff.

• 1:03 - 1:10

James: And were there any services available? Like I know there is the Homework Club, were you involved in that?

• 1:10 - 1:25

Taylor: Well I know the Homework Club now, but like back then when I was a child, like there was not as much to do compared to now. Like there was no services whatsoever besides that. Like I know now it's gotten better now, but for me you were sent out to the block and just played on the field and that's about it.

• 1:26 - 1:31

James: Oh really. And what are your views on this current regeneration project?

• 1:32 - 1:43

Taylor: Well, like when I heard about the Regeneration project, I was very excited because like there was nothing exciting ever in the community from the beginning. Like, so this was something new for us. Do you know what I mean?

• 1:43 - 1:45

James: As in new houses?

• 1:45 - 1:57

Taylor: Yeah, like obviously like we were all excited because the state of the place like, I'm sorry, but like the state of the flats, like it was horrible. Like the conditions are disgraceful, we had damp mould everywhere.

• 1:58 - 2:02

James: And was it hard to live in these conditions?

• 2:02 - 2:30

Taylor: Yeah, no, like honestly like, it was atrocious, like honestly. And the thing is as well is like the corporation wouldn't do anything for you. You'd constantly ring them up, tell them to come in. But same for other people like other tenants and all like, they had the fucking same issues as well. Like they're not gonna come out and fix it for you. So I was just dealing with it. But the new regeneration gave new kinda hopes, this was gonna be, you know, like a new house, a new life almost. So yeah, like everyone was excited like me Ma, me nanny, everyone was excited for the upcoming regeneration.

• 2:30 - 2:36

James: Were there any other people that shared a different perspective? Were there people that didn't want to leave their old flats?

• 2:36 - 2:58

Taylor: I think, yeah, there were definitely a few of them.

• 2:58 - 2:59

James: Yeah.

• 2:59 - 3:04

Taylor: Like Annemarie across the road, she's been living in the flats years and like that was her ma's home as well. So she didn't wanna move. Um, and her children though, her children wanted to move but she still didn't want to move. So there were a few, there were a few different opinions on it. Like

• 3:04 - 3:06

James: Despite even the poor living conditions, do you think she just became used to this?

• 3:06 - 3:10

Taylor: Oh God yeah, that's all she's ever known. Do you know what I mean?

• 3:10 - 3:15

James: So it's that level of familiarity, she didn't wanna push out of her comfort zone.

• 3:15 - 3:16

Taylor: A hundred percent.

• 3:16 - 3:23

James: Do you feel that there's any support services still needed within Dublin house?

• 3:23 - 3:55

Taylor: Oh my God, yeah, a hundred percent. Like, like I said, growing up as a child, like there was nothing ever there. Um, and now like I said, I know there's the homework club, but that's just not enough. Like there's still kids, like I even saw for myself, like kids that I've grown up with have gone down the wrong road and are going down the road of drugs, addiction and it's mostly men, to be honest with you. Uh, most of the boys that I know. But uh, there definitely needs to be a more involved youth club or something, some sort of support to actually get people into education or even to get them out of the flats because that's all they know.

• 3:56 - 4:04

James: And do you, do you feel that growing up in the barn, possibly lessened your chance of Progressing in other aspects of your life?

• 4:06 - 4:27

Taylor: Oh my god. Yeah. Cuz you're in a disadvantaged area. You're in a place where nobody gets out of their comfort zone. Like I said, like Annemarie, like she didn't even want to move out cause the flats is all she's known, it's same with everyone else, these people are basically just picking up these social behaviours and it's considered as normal within the flats, where if you were to go out to Castle Knock or somewhere considered posher these behaviours are definitely not classified as normal.

• 4:27 - 4:29

James: And what are you studying?

• 4:30 - 5:09

Taylor: I'm actually doing social studies at the moment and that's the main reason why I'm actually doing it is because I've grown up with that. I've grown up seeing addiction, seeing my friends, especially blokes who have gone down the road of addiction and drug abuse. Half of them are locked up and their family like, you know, destruction and all and dysfunctional families like, I have dysfunctional family myself, and that is from the, the reasons i've mentioned earlier you know?. But um, that's the reason why I wanted to pursue social studies because I wanna get out there, I want to use education as my escape because there's no escape in Dolphin's House.

• 5:09 - 5:15

James: And do you feel like you are lucky that you had that good support network behind you?

• 5:15 - 5:33

Taylor: Oh, god yeah. Like if it wasn't from my nanny and ma, like they were the backbone for me, like my ma had nothing either, like I said, like she's a single parent, but she was the only reason why I actually am the person that I am today. Because if it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have gone down that route of education. I would've probably gone down the roads like the rest of my friends, the rest of the fellas. Do you know what I mean?

• 5:33 - 5:39

James: Do you think there's a lack of education around men's mental health in these flats?

• 5:39 - 6:12

Taylor: My god, a hundred percent. I feel like, I feel like people need to be so aware of it now. Like, especially when we're in a disadvantaged area. Like my brother for example, like, he like, like I said, like my ma is the backbone and she would obviously educate us on mental health and stuff like that, cause there was no services here that provided that education then, whereas my ma, she would of and in all fairness, thanks be to God, like my brother is doing well and he's in a trade and stuff like that, but there's definitely no sufficient services or support services for mental health in general. And that's why, that's why I think the fellas go down the route of drugs because it's almost normalised to them. Aswell it's a coping, it's a coping mechanism. It's a way to escape reality and what's going on behind the closed doors in these flats.

• 6:20 - 6:31

James: What about the likes of the Rialto youth project and the likes of the homework club? Like, do you not think that they are beneficial for mental health even like,

• 6:31 - 7:07

Taylor: Yeah, because it actually brings them outside of the complex. Like it actually brings them to a different place, to a different place where they're getting to do different stuff. They're being educated, they're in different social groups, they're away from drugs. where as if you're constantly seeing drugs, you see people doing all sorts and all in the flats. like how is that for a child's mental health? That's all they'll ever know. Like the smell, it's disgusting, it's terrible. Like when children are brought into these homework clubs and Rialto and all, you know, they're doing activities with the kids, like it's putting a different perspective into the kids' world, there's a chance for them, there's an opportunity apart from what they see on a day-to-day basis.

• 7:09 - 7:21

James: Has living through this active regeneration impacted your life? When you were in the process of moving out of your old flat, What was the story then?

• 7:21 - 7:47

Taylor: Well, like I said, like I was obviously delighted to be out of there, but like, it's the same thing though. Like I, I had this idea that once we were moved out, this regeneration was gonna be, you know, like a fresh start like this new life. But realistically, they're just reaccommodating people from the flats into a different building. There's nothing, there's nothing there, there's still no services available. There's nothing there apart from the people that I see every day, just with a more modern looking flat with all the same problems.

• 7:47 - 7:51

James: How does your nanny feel about the regeneration?

• 7:51 - 8:24

Taylor: Obviously she loves her new flat and she loves the fact that she doesn't have as bad dampness all over the wall. She doesn't have condensation, all that shite, but realistically it's still the same situation. You're just placing a person in a different accommodation with the same situation, same problems. There's nothing there unless they actually provide professional services and actually help and actually educate the kids and bring them out and do stuff with them. There's still nothing, there's not gonna be changed. You can put a person in a mansion anywhere and yet still have the same situation unless there's higher people providing services.

• 8:24 - 8:32

James: What are your hopes for a dolphin house?, what would you like to see change or improve?

• 8:33 - 8:54

Taylor: Well definitely for more mental health services, for educational services in order to actually encourage people towards achieving stuff beyond their imagination instead of being confined within this place, where they're constantly seeing addiction and constantly seeing you know, nothing, nothing for them here like.

• 8:55 - 9:01

James: Is there still that strong sense of community?

• 9:01 - 9:31

Taylor: like everyone is getting accommodated into new housing. Like everybody still knows everybody. And there is a sense of a community where, you know, if you have a problem, like, because there's no mental health services, my ma would go down to annemarie or something. Like if I'm having a bad day or you know, like Cindy will come down for a cup of tea. Do you know what I mean? There is that sense of community but I think that's the only thing that's actually keeping Dolphin house together is that remaining sense of community. Yeah. And other than that, it'd be gone, it'd be lost. There's nothing else here.

• 9:32 - 9:39

James: Do you see yourself remaining in Dublin house?

• 9:39 - 9:43

Taylor: By the way it's going now, absolutely not. Absolutely no chance.

• 9:43 - 9:47

James: How does that make you feel, if this is somewhere that you've always called home?

• 9:48 - 10:18

Taylor: Sad, it's heartbreaking because, you know, here is all I've ever known. You know that community as well. Like I'm obviously gonna have to leave but realistically is there anything here for me now, unless the government actually puts in services that are actually providing funding or something like there's nothing for me and there's not enough for the younger generation like God help them as well. There's nothing for them here apart from what they already know. Unless they actually bring in the services, other than that, it's just not for me, I don't wanna be staying there. I want somewhere where I'm gonna be able to progress more and I'm gonna be able to go off and do what I need to do instead of living in a place where it's full of addiction and you know, chaos. No, not from me.

• 10:31 - 10:36

James: Thanks very much for letting me interview you Taylor.

• 10:37 - 10:40.

Taylor: No worries. Thank you for listening to me go on and on.