



Balancing drug services with commercial interests

JOHN MEAGHER's recent articles provide an interesting perspective on the outcomes of poor planning that has seen 25 drug and 17 homeless services situated in Dublin 1 and a further two drug and 11 homeless services placed in Dublin 2.

The issue is that we are undermining our economic potential and international reputation by placing social services within the retail and tourist core of our capital city.

The **Business Improvement District** is proactively engaging with statutory and NGO agencies to find solutions to the many social and

health issues related to drug misuse in Dublin.

We are assisting in the development of protocols which, if adhered to by drug services, will result in a reduction in the impacts of any negative behaviour of service users on their neighbours. The business community readily acknowledges the outstanding commitment and ingenuity of the gardai in Store Street in dealing with difficulties in the area. The Business Improvement District supports the Ana Livia Drug Project's position that we must work with people affected by drugs within their own

communities. We have supported financially an arrest referral programme whereby a drugs worker is regularly based in Store Street garda station. But placing services just 1km outside the retail and tourist centre as defined by the Dublin Development Plan will have enormous benefits.

All societies have social difficulties to contend with. Others appear better able to manage the competing needs of their citizens.

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