



# ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Compiled by the staff of Offaly Sports  
Partnership



Offaly Sports Partnership is a sub committee of Offaly County Council, funded by the Irish Sports Council and hosted by the Local Community Development section of Offaly County Council.

### ***Introduction***

Offaly Sports Partnership is an inter agency and multi sectoral sub committee of Offaly County Council. It is hosted by the Community, Enterprise and Economic Development section of Offaly County Council; and receives its annual operating budget from the Irish Sports Council.

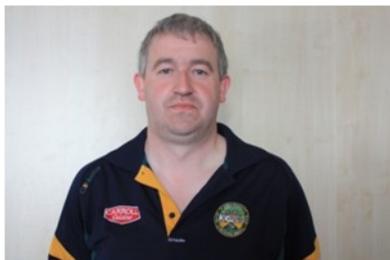
The Partnership is currently delivering its second strategic plan for the period 2011 to 2015. This operational report is the fourth of five reports for the five years covered by the plan.

### ***The Board of Offaly Sports Partnership***

In 2014, there were six changes to the board of Offaly Sports Partnership: -

- Cllr Ger Plunkett stepped down from the board following the abolition of Offaly County Development Board. This liaison position remains vacant until such a time as the new parent body under which Offaly Sports Partnership will sit within Offaly County Council is clarified
- Cllr Frank Moran replaced Cllr John Carroll as a public representative
- Darren Butler replaced Tom Godley as the Athletics Ireland, Offaly Athletics representative
- Eamonn Brady replaced Tony Hurley as the Football Association of Ireland's (FAI), Combined Counties Football League (CCFL) representative
- Miriam O Callaghan serves a dual role on our board, continuing to represent Laois / Offaly Education and Training Board; and replacing Gráinne Mc Intyre as the representative for Offaly Camogie
- Sgt Graham Kavanagh replaced Sgt Ollie Baker as An Garda Síochána's representative

The remaining agencies reconfirmed their existing nominees to the board, with Matt Connor remaining on as patron to the Partnership in 2014. The 14 board members for 2014, and our patron Matt Connor are shown below.



*From top left to bottom right*

*Matt Conor (patron); Sgt Graham Kavanagh (An Garda Síochána); Darren Butler (Athletics Ireland, Offaly Athletics); Joe Meegan (Athlone Institute of Technology); Jude Feehan (Community Games, Offaly); Clodagh Armitage (Health Service Executive); Eamonn Brady (Football Association of Ireland); Miriam O Callaghan (Laois / Offaly Education and Training Board; and Offaly Camogie); Monica Cleary (Offaly County Council); Pauric Pierce (Offaly GAA); Padraig Boland (Offaly Local Development Company); Barry Keegan (private sector representative); Cllr Danny Owens (public representative, Offaly County Council); Cllr Frank Moran (public representative, Offaly County Council); Kathleen Carroll (Sports Ability Forum representative)*

The executive of the Partnership in 2014 consisted of: -

- Miriam O Callaghan - Chair
- Jude Feehan - Vice chair
- Barry Keegan - Financial monitor
- Monica Cleary - Offaly County Council representative
- 

In addition to the executive, there were two sub groups in 2014: -

- Cycle forum - chaired by Clodagh Armitage
- Sports Ability Forum - chaired by Kathleen Carroll

The cycle forum took the lead in the planning of Bike week activities; while the Sports Ability Forum worked with the Sports inclusion Development Officer to develop and deliver sport , physical activity and active living programmes for people with disabilities.

In addition to the sub groups referred to above the Coordinator represented the Partnership at regional meetings hosted by the Irish Sports Council.

#### ***Staffing in 2014***

In 2014, Offaly County Council continued to facilitate the employment of two full time staff; and one part time staff for the Partnership. The two core positions of Coordinator and Administrator were 100% funded by the Irish Sports Council; while the post of Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO) was 50% funded by the Irish Sports Council, and 50% funded by the Health Services Executive.

Eamonn Henry continued as Coordinator for an eighth year; Olivia Murphy continued in the role of Administrator for a sixth year; while Aoife Byrne joined the staff of the Partnership as the Sports Inclusion Development Officer. The staff team are shown below.



*Eamonn Henry, Coordinator*



*Olivia Murphy, Administrator*



*Aoife Byrne (SIDO)*

#### ***Jobsbridge support in 2014***

Following the successful recruitment of four interns under the Jobsbridge scheme in 2013; Shane Mc Manus, TJ Meehan, Declan Mulally and Niamh Treacy continued working with the Partnership until Easter 2014; while a fifth intern joined the staff of the Partnership in March 2014 and supported the delivery of our work programme until December 2014.



### ***Contracted tutors / Student placements / Volunteers***

Much of the work of the Partnership throughout the year was also made possible through the efforts of contracted tutors, students on placement and a number of volunteers who assisted the Partnership in the delivery of a range of events. These included: -

- Sylvia Gee - Be Active After School Activity Programme tutor
- Karen Walsh - Child protection training tutor
- Pauline Curley - Meet and Train tutor
- Claire Grehan, Jean Brady and Nicolas Mvula - SPORTSHALL Athletics coaches

Three transition year students also completed work experience placements with the Partnership for between one and two weeks during the course of the year; while students from Athlone Institute of Technology assisted in the delivery of the fourth All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships.

The board and staff of Offaly Sports Partnership wish to express their thanks to all those that helped in the delivery of our programmes in 2014. Go raibh mile maith agaibh!

### ***Strategic Plan Implementation***

During 2014, the Partnership continued the implementation of its second five year strategic plan, "Everybody's Participation Counts 2011 - 2015".



The plan sets out four priority themes: -

1. Lifelong involvement in sport
2. Sustainable inclusion
3. Dialogue to increase participation
4. The marketing of sport

The following sections in this report will give an overview of the work completed in 2014 under each of the strategic goals.

#### ***Priority theme 1: Lifelong involvement in sport***

Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to supporting lifelong involvement in sport and physical activity. Progress in achieving this goal is detailed in the following pages.

27 actions to address lifelong involvement in sport were written in to the Partnership's operational plan for 2014. Of the 27 actions outlined in the operational report, 25 of the actions were delivered on. Actions were delivered in / on behalf of: -

- Bike week
- Local sports clubs / groups - Bike 4 Life, Community Games programmes, Education and Training for sports clubs volunteers, Meet and Spin, and sports capital supports
- Older people - Go for Life Games, Go for Life Physical Activity Leader training, and o50s boccia
- Operation Transformation - national walk day, and Tullamore College's Home Community School Liaison Operation Transformation programme
- Primary schools - Be Active After Schools Activity Programme, Football Association of Ireland Aviva 5s, Inter schools swim gala, Offaly Fitness Monitor, SPORTSHALL athletics, and the World 5,000m Marathon Challenge
- Post primary schools - Tullamore College's Home Community School Liaison Operation Transformation programme, and the World Marathon Challenge incorporating the John Treacy Relay Marathon

Highlights of the year included: -



### ***Bike week***

Bike Week 2014 took place from Saturday 14th to Sunday 22nd June with cycling events all over the country, organised by local authorities, community groups, charities and cycling groups. From free bike checks, fun cycles, lunchtime city rides, heritage cycles, electric bike races, school cycling events, road races and much more, there was something for every age and ability.

Offaly Sports Partnership in conjunction with Offaly County Council, the HSE and An Taisce delivered a range of events (i.e. Bike 4 Life training, meet and spins, lunchtime cycles, Pedal in the park and safer cycle training for schools); and supported the delivery of eight club events in Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore for approximately 700 people of all ages and abilities as part of Bike Week 2014.



*From top left to bottom right  
Lunchtime cycle, Sprocket Rocket with Wolftrap Cycling Club and Pedal in the Park*

### ***Local sports clubs / groups / organisations***

A range of programmes were delivered to support local clubs, groups and organisations in the delivery of their activities including (but not limited to): -



***Community Games supports*** The Partnership supported Community Games areas in the delivery of athletics and Futsal to their members. In the area of athletics, five participants supported through the athletics programme went on to compete at the All Ireland Community Games finals in 2014.





### Education and training programmes for active retirement groups, service providers and sports club volunteers

- Bike 4 Life delivered to nine participants with the support of Cycling Ireland which in turn resulted in at least one recreational meet and spin being delivered in Edenderry during the summer
- Seven child protection courses delivered to 92 volunteers from 22 clubs
- 15 people from five groups participated in Go for Life's Physical Activity Leader training in Daingean. Information on additional programmes

delivered for older people in this operational year can be found under priority theme two, sustainable inclusion (page 8)

- A range of education and training programmes delivered to service providers catering for people with disabilities

### **Operation Transformation**

Linked to the Operation Transformation programme, the Partnership delivered a 5.8k family walk on the Slí na Sláinte route for over 150 people. Three additional walks were also held in Offaly in the lead up to / on the national walk day with a similar number in attendance across the three events.

Walkers at the Operation Transformation National Walk Day in Offaly



Rob Murphy Photography

The Partnership also supported the delivery of Tullamore College's Home Community School Liaison Operation Transformation programme. For more information on this programme, check out post primary schools activities overleaf.

### **Primary school programmes**



**Aviva 5s** The Partnership delivered the Aviva 5s on behalf of the Football Association of Ireland. Nine schools, 18 teams and 144 pupils participated in the event. Scoil Mhuire Bainríon Edenderry secured a place in Leinster finals and finished runners up in the Section C schools category.

**Offaly inter schools swim gala** The Partnership piloted a swim gala for primary schools in Tullamore and its environs. 10 schools and 167 pupils participated at the event, with up to 10 participants going on to join the local club thereafter.





**SPORTSHALL Athletics** Two primary school programmes based around the SPORTSHALL Athletics concept were delivered in 2014: -

**SPORTSHALL Athletics Offaly (primary)** An inter schools event was held among 11 schools and 443 pupils in the first quarter of the year. Three schools (Ballinamere National School, Scoil Mhuire Bainrion Edenderry and St Philomena's National School Tullamore) qualified to represent Offaly at the All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships finals in Athlone Institute of Technology's indoor arena in March 2014.

SPORTSHALL Athletics training was delivered to a further 17 schools and 1,700 pupils in the last quarter of 2014.

**4th All Ireland SPOTSHALL Athletics Championships** The Partnership coordinated all aspects of the fourth All Ireland SPOTSHALL Athletics Championships on behalf of the wider Sports Partnership Network in conjunction with the Athletics Association of Ireland (AAI) and the Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT).

15 counties, 35 schools and 723 pupils participated. Ballinamere National School represented Offaly in the 5 / 6th class girls category finishing fifth in the category; Edenderry Boys National School represented Offaly in the 3rd / 4th and 5 / 6th class boys categories; with the 5 / 6th class boys finishing fifth and the 3rd / 4th class boys finishing fourth in their respective categories.; while St Philomena's National School Tullamore represented Offaly in the 3rd / 4th class girls category, finishing tenth in the category.

**World 5,000m Marathon Challenge** As an alternative to the full World Marathon Challenge that post primary schools participate in, the Partnership piloted the running of the World 5,000m Marathon Challenge in 2014. Two schools (St Brendan's Boys National School Birr and Scoil Mhuire Bainrion Edenderry) and 18 pupils participated in this event. Scoil Mhuire Bainrion completed the challenge in 14 minutes 20 seconds, putting them on top of the leader board. A further 61 schools from England, Scotland and Wales also took part in the event.

#### ***Post primary school programmes***

The Partnership supported the delivery of two programmes for post primary schools in 2014: -

**Tullamore College's Home Community School Liaison Operation Transformation programme** Two primary and one post primary school participated on the programme. Transition Year students led out the Couch to 5k jog / walk aspect of the programme with Junior Cycle students in the college, as well as leading out sessions in the primary schools. Pupils' parents participated in range of physical activity and exercise programmes including Self defence, Yoga and Yopalates. Approximately 100+ people participated across the four activity, five week programme



*Tullamore College's Home Community School Liaison Operation Transformation Couch to 5k*



**World Marathon Challenge** The World Marathon Challenge is the largest mass participation global event for children / teenagers currently held.

In Offaly, the event, incorporating the John Treacy Marathon Relay Challenge in Ireland, was hosted in one location. 36 students from schools (i.e. Coláiste Choilm, Sacred Heart School and Tullamore College) in Tullamore participated.

A total of nine teams from Ireland participated in the global challenge which catered for 133 teams. Tullamore finished seventh overall (and first in Ireland, thereby retaining the “John Treacy Marathon Relay Challenge” title for another year).

### Priority theme 2: Sustainable inclusion

Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to delivering measures to involve, sustain and mainstream the inclusion of underrepresented groups in sport and physical activity in the county. The eight groups prioritised in the current five year strategic plan are *Low income communities (rural and urban), Older people, People with a disability, People of an ethnic minority, The unemployed, Travellers, Women and Girls and Youth at risk*. Progress in achieving this goal is detailed in the following pages.

12 actions to address sustainable inclusion were written into the Partnership’s operational plan for 2014. Of the 12 actions outlined in the operational report, 11 of the actions were delivered on. Actions were delivered in / on behalf of: -

**Low income communities / Youth at risk** The Partnership supported the delivery of summer camps for low income communities / youth at risk through partner agencies in the county. Many of these summer camps were supported by way of equipment provision, while one summer camp sports day was delivered by the Partnership on behalf of the organising committee for the summer camp.



**Older people** A variety of programmes were offered to the o50s including: -

**Boccia** 135 people on 27 teams from 15 groups participated in the 2013 / 2014 o50s boccia league, with Belmont Men A securing the victory. A further 110 people on 22 teams from 12 groups are currently participating in the 2014 / 2015 o50s boccia league.

**Go for Life Games** To promote the concept of the Go for Life Games among active retirement groups in Offaly, the Partnership delivered two Go for Life Games workshops to 20 people. Following on from these workshops, two Go for Life Games blitz days were held for 57 people from three groups, and Offaly was represented at the All Ireland Go for Life Games in June 2014, emerging the Flisk champions for 2014.

**Go for Life physical activity leader training** As referenced heretofore under priority theme one, lifelong involvement, Go for Life training was delivered to 15 people from five groups in Daingean. Of the participants who attended the



training, it is anticipated that at least 50% of these continue to lead physical activity sessions with their groups from week to week.



Sports Inclusion Development Programme

Annual Report 2014

Compiled by Ms Aoife Byrne,  
Sports Inclusion Development Officer,  
Offaly Sports Partnership



**People with a disability** For information on programmes delivered for people with disabilities, please see the Sports Inclusion Development Programme annual report for 2014.

**People of an ethnic background including Travellers** A range of programmes were offered to people of an ethnic background including the Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance and an Integration through sport and physical activity programme.

The **Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP)** continued to run in two venues (Edenderry and Portarlinton) in 2014. The long term goal of the academy is the visible participation of persons of a migrant background at all levels (local, county, regional / provincial, national and international) in mainstream athletics in numbers, which at minimum, is reflective of the new makeup of Irish society. As visible participation within the mainstream is the project goal, this programme is one of the Partnership's few programmes where performance is used as a measure of its impact.



The Edenderry programme was mainstreamed within the Edenderry Athletics Club, and continues to be delivered with the support of the club. Of the participants in IAAP Edenderry, 50% of them qualified to represent their local school at the Offaly inter schools Sportshall Athletics Championships; and then went on to represent Offaly at the All Ireland Sportshall Athletics Championships.

The Portarlinton programme is delivered by staff of the Partnership. Two programmes (one indoor and one outdoor) were delivered across the calendar year in Portarlinton. Of the participants in IAAP Portarlinton, 50% of them qualified to represent their local school at the All Ireland Sportshall Athletics Championships representing Laois.

Furthermore, in support of the Portarlinton programme an IAAP SPORTSHALL meet was held in November.

In addition, following the success of the academy in Edenderry and Portarlinton; and in support of our Women in Sport work, a Learn 2 Run programme for girls and women was established in Tullamore targeting schools with an above average enrolment of children of an ethnic background including Travellers. For more information on Learn 2 Run, check out our Women and Girls section of this report (page 10)



**Integration through sport and physical activity** This programme was developed to support the integration of members of the new Afghan community into the sport and physical activity

community of Offaly. With the support of Tullamore Soccer Club, a six week soccer programme was organised. Nine men participated on the programme with one member of the group continuing to train with the club at the conclusion of the programme.



**The unemployed** While the Partnership did not deliver sport and physical activity programmes for those that were unemployed in 2014; the Partnership did host five nine month Jobsbridge internships, four of whom were carryovers from 2013, with an additional nine month internship secured in March 2014. The first four interns concluded their internships in March 2014, while the fifth intern concluded his internship in December 2014.

During their time with the Partnership, the interns supported the delivery of a wide range of the Partnership's sport and physical activity programmes, among them programmes for people with disabilities; programmes for older people; and schools programmes including the Football Association of Ireland's Aviva 5s, inter schools swim gala, SPORTSHALL Athletics and the World Marathon Challenge.

**Women & Girls** The Partnership delivered four meet and train programmes, specifically aimed at women and girls. These programmes included: -



A **Learn 2 Run** programme for mothers and daughters in Lloyd Town Park Tullamore. 37 girls / women participated on this programme under the guidance of Pauline Curley. Nine West African children have since gone on to join the sprints group in the Tullamore Harriers, therefore mainstreaming the participation of girls in athletics. In addition, two of the parents who attended the programme now volunteer at the Tullamore Harriers ensuring the transition from group to club for the girls.

A **Park Life** (meet and train walking / jogging) programme in Lloyd Town Park Tullamore. 15 women participated on this programme under the guidance of Pauline Curley.

One **meet and train** (walking / jogging / general fitness) programme in Arden View Tullamore. Up to 10 women participated regularly on this programme under the guidance of Pauline Curley.

One **meet and train** (walking) programme for Dóchas. Five women participated on this programme under the guidance of Olivia Murphy, Administrator Offaly Sports Partnership and Irish Heart Foundation Community Walking Leader

In addition, various other meet and train programmes instigated by the Partnership since 2010 in Portarlington, Daingean and Edenderry have continued to flourish.

### **Priority theme 3: Dialogue to increase participation**

Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to facilitating dialogue between stakeholders to support sustained increase in participation. Progress in achieving this goal is detailed below.

Three actions to ensure "dialogue to increase participation" were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2014. Of the three actions outlined in the operational report, all actions were delivered on. Some of the actions delivered included: -

### Board, Executive and Working Group meetings

- The Board of the Partnership met four times in 2014
- The Executive of the Partnership met twice
- The cycle forum met on a number of occasions and were heavily involved in the planning and delivery of actions for Bike Week
- With the recruitment a new Sports Inclusion Development Officer in February 2014, the Sports Ability Forum met once in the latter half of the year

**SPORTSHALL Athletics working group** This action was linked to priority theme one and involved the Partnership working with the Athletics Association of Ireland (AAI) and other Sports Partnerships in the promotion of SPORTSHALL Athletics in 2014. From this work, 15 counties, 35 schools and 723 pupils in the fourth annual All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships.

### Priority theme 4: The Marketing of Sport

Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to marketing sport and the Partnership inside and outside the county. Progress in achieving this goal is detailed below.

There were no specific actions to market sport and the Partnership written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2014. However under the objectives outlined in our strategic plan 2011 - 2015, the following outcomes resulted: -

Two **mass participation events** were promoted in the county: -

- Operation Transformation walk as part of the national walk day on 18th January (150+ participants in

attendance); and

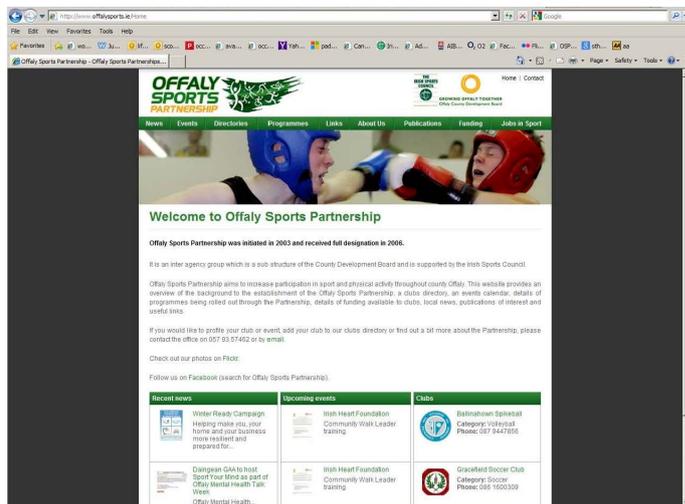
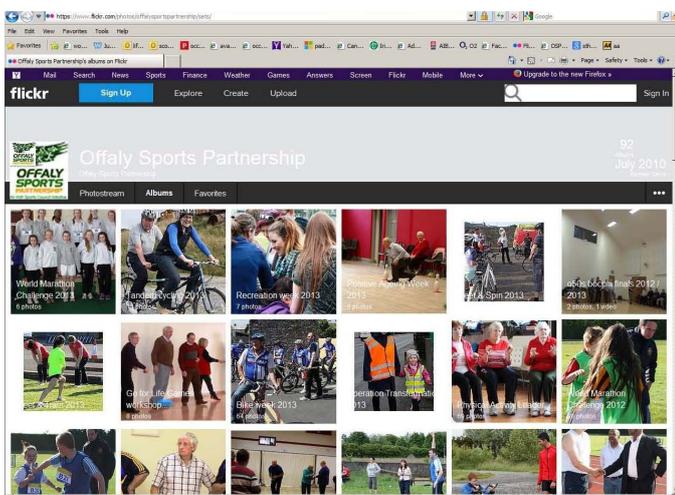
- Bike Week 2014 from the 14th to 22nd June (700+ participants in attendance across 13 events)

In relation to **promoting a range of events with the endorsement of successful sports persons from the county**, three programmes were delivered: -

- Meet and train programmes (x three) promoted with the support of Pauline Curley
- SPORTSHALL Athletics promoted with the support of James Nolan
- World Marathon Challenge incorporating the running of the third annual John Treacy Relay Marathon promoted with the support of Pauline Curley

The **logo of the Partnership was widely promoted** in all communications, public meetings, events, conferences, public awareness campaigns, on tee shirts and medallions for mass participation events. 20 press releases were issued to local media sources; four newsletters were disseminated to our stakeholders; and 175 articles / events were posted to our website, [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie).

The three websites of the Partnership were continually updated with information. While the visitor statistics for [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie) and [www.flickr.com/OffalySportsPartnership](http://www.flickr.com/OffalySportsPartnership) are unavailable at the time of printing, at the close of 2014, the Partnerships's Facebook page was liked by 167 people / organisations, etc, 46% of whom are female and 50% of whom are male.



The screenshot displays the Facebook page for Offaly Sports Partnership. The page header includes navigation options like 'Page', 'Activity', 'Insights', and 'Settings'. The main content area features a post from December 31, 2014, titled 'PADDY DOLAN MEMORIAL RUN 5 AND 10K DISTANCES Sunday 21st Dec at 12pm'. The post includes a photo of a runner and text: 'PADDY DOLAN MEMORIAL RUN 5 AND 10K DISTANCES Sunday 21st Dec at 12pm'. Below the post, it says '46 people reached'. The left sidebar contains 'PEOPLE' (194 likes), 'Promote Your Page', and 'ABOUT'. The right sidebar shows 'THIS WEEK' statistics and a 'Recent' list.

For further information on the work of Offaly Sports Partnership, contact the office on 057 93 57462, by email to [sports@offalycoco.ie](mailto:sports@offalycoco.ie), visit [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie) or follow us on [Facebook/OffalySportsPartnership](https://www.facebook.com/OffalySportsPartnership)