



IT'S BACK!!!!

€2,000 Prize Fund announced for Offaly's Longest Day Challenge to promote Health and Physical Activity in June

John Carroll, Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council this week launched "Offaly's Longest Day" project to promote health and physical activity in June and announced a €2,000 prize fund to coincide with the project.

The Longest Day Project was created by Offaly Sports Partnership and is supported by the Offaly Local Community Development Committee and the Healthy Offaly Team. The inaugural challenge took place in June 2020 as the Country was emerging from the 1st Covid-19 lockdown. There was huge interest among the citizens of County Offaly with young and old taking part. The challenge has returned this year following on from a hugely successful 2020 event and this year it's hoped that it will be even bigger and better. The idea of the challenge came about to give people a reason to get up and active in these difficult times and to have a goal or target to reach over the three weeks in the run up to the longest day. The sense of satisfaction when we reach our goals gives us an added impetus to keep going and keep being active.

"I'm delighted to endorse the Longest Day Challenge 2021", said Cllr John Carroll Chairperson of the Offaly County Council. "Last year I took the challenge myself and found it a really rewarding experience". It is my hope that everyone gets on board and sets themselves a daily or weekly exercise target that will benefit them both mentally and physically not to mention the great prizes on offer to successful participants".

Dermot Egan, Healthy Offaly Coordinator explained how people can take part in the longest day project and have a chance to share in the prize fund. This year Sports Clubs, all community groups, active retirement groups, Mens shed, service providers and Schools in particular are asked to encourage their members and pupils to get involved. Individuals, groups and schools are asked to order the required number of diaries through our Offaly Sports Partnership eventbrite link:

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/offaly-sports-partnership-longest-day-challenge-tickets-145729664349>

The challenge is now open for expressions of interest and will remain so until Friday 23rd April. Diaries will be distributed throughout the month of May, and participants are asked to use the daily physical activity diary to record their activity for the 20 days of June leading to the longest day. Independent judges from across the network of local sports partnerships will adjudicate 19 different categories and draw a shortlist of 5 to 10 in each depending on the volume of entries received. There will be a draw for each category from the people shortlisted with one person or household winning a cash voucher in each.

There will be 18 individual vouchers of €100: -

- Male & Female in preschool and infants
- Male & Female in 1st to 3rd class primary
- Male & Female in 4th to 6th class primary
- Male & Female in junior cert cycle secondary
- Male & Female in senior cycle secondary

- Male & Female in 18 to 34 years
- Male & Female in 35 to 49 years
- Male & Female in 50 to 64 years
- Male & Female in 65 years and older.

There will also be a €200 voucher for an entire household category. Only Diaries returned by the 30th June will be considered for the competition.

Councillor Declan Harvey, Chairperson of the Offaly Local Community Development Committee encouraged as many people as possible to take part in the Longest Day Project challenge. “The LCDC is again delighted to be associated with this project”, he said. *“This is an opportunity for people of all ages to show that Offaly is getting out and staying healthy and active. I took the challenge last year and felt great for having done so”*. Cllr Harvey acknowledged the work of Healthy Offaly and Offaly Sports Partnership in formulating the initiative and congratulated them on the success of last year’s event.

Anyone wishing to take part in the longest day challenge can click on the link at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/offaly-sports-partnership-longest-day-challenge-tickets-145729664349>

To request an activity diary, email longestday@offalycoco.ie. Should you have any queries phone Denise Coghill on 086 7912513. All diaries should be requested by Friday 23rd April 2021. Please include your name, postal address (with eircode) and mobile number when requesting a diary as they will be posted out to participants. All participants are asked to be mindful of the Government Covid-19 guidelines in place at the time and to be responsible with their safety and the safety of others.

ENDS

