



### Press Release

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

Peter Ormond, 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 the Local Community Development Committee and is supported by the Healthy Offaly Team. The idea behind the project is based on famous wartime movies about the longest day representing a major turning point and a fight back, a refusal to lie down and accept defeat against the odds.

*"Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> of June is our longest day this year", said Miriam O'Callaghan, chairperson of the Offaly Sports Partnership. "We want the 19 days before that to be about a different 19 than what we have been used to. Our best fight back against Covid19 is to stay healthy, stay active, stay vigilant and stay the course. This is not going to defeat us", she said.*

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. Individuals and families can contact Offaly Sports Partnership from now to the end of May to express an interest in undertaking a 19-day physical activity challenge in the run up to the longest day on June 20<sup>th</sup>. Everyone expressing an interest will be sent an entry form to set out what they plan to do and a daily physical activity diary to record their activity. Entry forms should be returned to the Sports Partnership by June 5<sup>th</sup> and the daily diary by June 26<sup>th</sup>. 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 and female in preschool and infants; 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> class primary; 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class primary; junior cert cycle secondary; senior cycle secondary; 18 to 34 years; 35 to 49 years; 50 to 64 years; and 65 years and older. There will also be a €200 voucher for an entire household category.

Councillor Declan Harvey, chair 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 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. It’s also a great chance to win one of the prizes. But whether we win something or not, June is a great time to be out and about with the longer days. There’ll be over 17 hours of daylight on the longest day”.* He thanked Healthy Ireland and Offaly Sports Partnership for supporting the project.

Eamonn Henry, coordinator of Offaly Sports Partnership encouraged people to consider the Department of Health’s recommended levels of physical activity when setting challenges for themselves and family members. Children and young people need to be active for at least 60 minutes a day while adults need at least 30 minutes a day, five times each week.

In addition to the 19-day challenge, organisers also announced a Longest Day photographic competition to show Offaly people staying active while maintaining social distancing on June 20<sup>th</sup>. Details of prizes and the entry process will be announced in June.

Anyone wishing to take part in the longest day challenge can request an entry form and activity diary by emailing [longestday@offalycoco.ie](mailto:longestday@offalycoco.ie) or call Eamonn Henry on 086 – 7948054. Please include name and postal address when requesting a form and diary. **The deadline for expression of interest application forms is Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.**

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