

Welcome



On behalf of Offaly Sports Partnership, we would like to welcome Aoife Byrne to our staff team. Aoife joins the staff of the Partnership as the Sports Inclusion Development Officer. In her short time with us, she has made substantial progress in the implementation of sustainable projects for the disability sector; and in building capacity within the sector for the delivery of health enhancing physical activities for people with a disability.

We wish her luck in her new role and look forward to working with her.



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Congratulations from Offaly Sports Partnership

Offaly has had a large amount of sporting success in the year to date, much of which has gone unnoticed. Offaly Sports Partnership would like to take this opportunity to congratulate: all our sporting heroes to date. Here are some of the highlights of the year so far -



Niamh Kavanagh (*pictured opposite*) on her recent selection to the Irish panel for the Women's Rugby World Cup.

Lorraine Regan of Kilcormac (*pictured opposite*) on her recent selection as one of eight athletes who competed at the European Paralympic Championships in Swansea recently. Lorraine featured in the first strategic plan of Offaly Sports Partnership and we are delighted to see the progress she has made since then.



Birr athlete, Michael Hand threw a 33.47cm in the u14 discus at the recent GloHealth Juvenile Track and Field Championships in July, to win gold. Michael was first spotted in 2013 / 2014 when participating in Offaly Sports Partnership's annual SPORTSHALL Athletics programme. Following a referral to St Brendan's Athletics Club in Birr, he has been making waves since.

Tullamore athlete, Jordan Hoang jumped a 31cm personal best in the triple jump at the recent SIAB Schools International Track and Field Championship in Cardiff in July, to win bronze. Jordan is a past pupil of Scoil Bhríde Primary School Tullamore, and was a member of the first Offaly team to secure success at the inaugural All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships held in Athlone in 2011.



Portarlington swimmer, Nicole Turner (*pictured opposite with John Treacy at the launch of Offaly Sports Partnership's second strategic plan in 2011*) who has recently joined the Paralympic Development Squad panel for swimming. Nicole has Hypochondraplasia, a form of Dwarfism. We wish her all the best for the future!

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The 26 strong team from five clubs in Offaly who competed at the recent Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick in June. Congratulations to all the medal winners.

(pictured opposite are members of the Ballinamere Special Olympics Club who made up part of the team)

The o50s Go for Life Games team who represented Offaly at the recent Go for Life Games in Dublin City University on the 7th June 2014 in the games of Flisk, Scidils and Lobbers. The Go for Life Games aims to involve older people in recreational sport; and are run in conjunction with Local Sports Partnerships throughout the country. Special congratulations to the Flisk team from Offaly (pictured opposite) as they came home with the Flisk title on their first ever outing at the Games.



Pauline Curley (pictured opposite) on her victories at the Cork and Limerick City Marathons. Pauline has been an active supporter of the Partnership's programmes; and assists in the delivery of our meet and train programmes across the county.

Olivia Murphy (pictured opposite), Administrator and Canoeing Ireland member who completed the Devizes to Westminster (DW) International Canoe Race 2014 at Easter in a time of 31h 08m 33s. The DW is considered to be one of the toughest, open-to-all endurance races on the planet. It's a severe test of skill, physical and mental stamina and planning - 125 miles with 77 portages, paddled over four days in a senior single (K1). Olivia has written an article on her experiences of the DW which can be found [here](#).



Good luck to all of Offaly's other sportsmen and women who are competing in events in the latter half of the year. We look forward to shining a light on your successes in the future. Go néirí an tádh!

Programmes 2014 - January to June

It's been a busy six months for Offaly Sports Partnership with a range of programmes delivered to adults, children, post primary and primary school pupils, sports club volunteers, etc. Some of the programmes delivered in the first half of the year include: -



Operation Transformation - Approximately 130 post primary and primary school pupils; and parents took part in Tullamore College's Operation Transformation programme, led out by transition year pupils and the Home School Community Liaison Officer Keith Begley, in January 2014. Well done to everyone who participated on the programme. Hope to see you out and about again soon!

Well done also to the almost 200 participants who came out for the Operation Transformation National Walk 2014 which took place on Saturday, 18th January along the Slí na Sláinte in Tullamore.



Rob Murphy Photography



Rob Murphy Photography

Sports Inclusion Development Programme In February 2014, Aoife Byrne joined the staff team of Offaly Sports Partnership as the Sports Inclusion Development Officer. In her short time with us, Aoife has made inroads into the provision of sports and physical activity for people with disabilities. She has delivered specific programmes for people with sensory, and intellectual disabilities; as well as a range of pan disability programmes and disability inclusion training.



*Xcessible athletics for Primary School
Autistic Spectrum Disorder Units*



Spinning for people with sensory disabilities



Get active with Aura for people with intellectual disabilities



GAA programme for Primary School Autistic Spectrum Disorder Units



Get into walking challenge (pan disability)



Disability inclusion training for coaches, sports volunteers and teachers

Meet and Train Offaly Sports Partnership are pleased to have supported the delivery of two meet and train groups in Tullamore - Arden View and Lloyd Town Park - during the months of April and May. Almost 20 people participated across the two groups.



The partnership would like to thank Pauline Curley for her support in the delivery of these programmes and we look forward to working with her later on in the year in the delivery of additional meet and train programmes.

o50s sport and physical activity programmes



Go for Life Games Once again congratulations to the Offaly Go for Life Games team who represented Offaly at the National Go for Life Games in Dublin City University on the 7th June. The Go for Life Games aims to involve more older people in recreational sport and is delivered in conjunction with local sports partnerships throughout the country.

Offaly ran pre qualifiers in May for participating groups and the winners of these pre qualifiers went on to represent Offaly at the national event.

A county league in the three sports (i.e. Flisk based on Frisbee / Horseshoe pitching; Lobbers based on Petanques and Boules; and Scidils based on 10 pin bowling and Skittles) played at the Games will kick off in 2015.

o50s Boccia - Congratulations to the Belmont team who won the o50s boccia league 2013 / 2014, and well done to all participating teams and groups. Roll on 2015!

If you would like to get involved in the Go for Life Games or o50s boccia league in the future, please contact the office on 057 93 57462 or by [email](#) to arrange a demonstration

School programmes

Tullamore and Environs inter school swim gala Offaly Sports Partnership would like to say “good job” to the almost 165 pupils from eight primary schools in Tullamore and its environs on their participation in Offaly Sports Partnership’s / Tullamore Swim Club’s inaugural swim gala for first to sixth class kindly supported by Aura Tullamore.



Following the success of this event, we are trying to establish whether demand exists for such an event at other public pools. If your school would be interested in such an event please let us know by indicating where your nearest public pool is. Based on the information / demand received we will explore the possibility of other such events in other pools.



SPORTSHALL Athletics In the last quarter of 2013 / first quarter of 2014, Offaly Sports Partnership with the support of its four Jobsbridge interns delivered primary school SPORTSHALL Athletics to almost 3,000 pupils in 17 schools throughout the county.

11 of these 17 schools went on to participate in the Offaly SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships with the following schools - Edenderry Boys (3rd / 4th boys and 5 / 6th girls); Ballinamere (5 / 6th girls); and St Philomena’s (3rd / 4th girls) - going on to represent Offaly at the All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Championships held in the new indoor arena in AIT on the 26th March 2014.

Well done to all the pupils who participated in the programme over the winter months; and special congratulations to the schools and pupils who represented Offaly at the All Ireland event. Our new SPORTSHALL Athletics programme commences in September 2014.

Aviva Health FAI Primary School 5s Offaly Sports Partnership would like to say “good job” to the nine schools that participated in the recent Offaly Aviva Health FAI Primary School 5s blitz in Leah Victoria Park Football Club, Tullamore.



Scoil Mhuire Banríon, Edenderry; and Durrow National School, Tullamore went on to represent Offaly in the “large schools, boys c cup”; the “medium schools, boys b cup” and the “girls a cup” respectively at the Leinster finals.

The partnership would like to thank the event coordinator, Declan Mullally and his team of referees for making themselves available; as well as Tullamore Town FC for making its facilities available to us for this event.

Fitness testing In the coming four to five years Offaly Sports Partnership hopes to implement inclusive programmes designed to substantially improve fitness levels among primary school children with a specific focus on speed and endurance.

Recent international research has shown that it can take most children up to a minute longer to complete one mile compared to past generations. To reverse this trend suitable age appropriate interventions will have to be put in place. To this end, Offaly Sports Partnership would like to express our sincere thanks to the 11 schools that participated in our recent fitness testing project. Results are currently being collated and should be available to participating schools in advance of the new school year.

If your school would like to get involved with any of our schools programmes in the future, please contact the office on 057 93 46868 or by [email](#) to express your interest.



Bike Week took place from the 14th to 22nd June 2014 throughout the country, with 15 events held in Offaly for up to 700 people. Events held included: -

- Local events delivered by clubs in Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore



- Local meet and spins delivered by Grand Canal Sports in Daingean, Team 905 in Edenderry, Tullamore Cycling and Touring Club, and Wolftrap Cycling Club in Birr; and our recently qualified Bike for Life tutors for children, teens and adults alike.



- Lunchtime cycles in Birr, Tullamore and Edenderry.



- Pedal in the Park on Friday, 20th June in Lough Boora Parklands



- Safer cycle training for schools

Upcoming programmes

A range of programmes for schools, clubs and organisations will recommence in September. Among the programmes on offer are: -



The **Be Active After School Activity Programme (Be Active ASAP)** is designed for seven to eight year olds; takes place after school on school grounds; and is led by trained teacher leaders supported by parents. The programme introduces children to fun physical activity in a safe, familiar, structured setting, with an emphasis on enjoyment, learning and variety of activity. The programme aims to improve the attitudes of both children and their parents towards physical activity and lay the foundation for positive, lifelong physical activity habits.

Teacher training in relation to the roll out of the programme will take place in September. *If your school is interested in sending teachers to the training, please contact the office on 057 93 57462 or by [email](#) to book your place now.*

SPORTSHALL Athletics From September to November 2014, Offaly Sports Partnership will be delivering their annual SPORTSHALL Athletics programme for primary schools. Participating schools will have the opportunity to compete at county level in December 2014 / January 2015 to represent Offaly at the All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Blitz in March 2015.



The **World Marathon Challenge** is a simultaneous relay for post primary schools in which teams from across the globe race against each other over the full marathon distance. Participating schools can take part in the event any time between the 24th September and the 1st October; or can join teams from many countries for our global finale race on the 1st October, when teams from around the world will run simultaneously. Teams can be entered in to one of two age categories: -

1. Juniors aged 13 and under. The main World Marathon Challenge competition is for mixed teams made up of equal numbers of boys and girls from the same school, in the 13 and under category.
2. Any age; adults can take part too with additional competition categories for single gender teams, non school teams and teams of older runners.

Primary schools, if interested, are encouraged to enter the 5,000m Challenge instead of completing the full marathon.

If your school (whether it be primary or post primary) is interested in participating in either our SPORTSHALL Athletics or World Marathon Challenge programmes, please contact Eamonn on 086 7948054 or the office by [email](#).

o50s sport and physical activity programmes

Offaly Sports Partnership will be hosting a range of sport and physical activity programmes for people over the age of 50 years from September. Programmes on offer include go for life training, o50s boccia league and positive ageing week activities.

If your group is interested in availing of any of these programmes, please contact the office on 057 93 57462 or by [email](#).

Sports Capital 2014

On Thursday, 3rd July 2014, the Government's commitment to sport and local communities was underpinned when the Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Michael Ring announced grants of €40.5 million for 880 sports projects across the country.

Speaking at the announcement Minister Ring said: "Sports clubs and organisations are the lifeblood of communities across Ireland. I'm delighted to be able to show how much the Government values their role and contribution. Thanks to their largely voluntary work, these clubs and organisations are delivering on the Government's target to get more people to be more active, more often."

The €40.5 million allocated today is a 30% increase in funding over the €31 million allocated in the last Sports Capital Programme in 2012. The Sports Capital Programme is the Government's main vehicle for supporting the development of sports facilities and the purchase of non-personal sports equipment.

A total of 2,036 applications were made under the 2014 Programme, the second highest number ever received under a Sports Capital Programme. A total of 821 of the successful allocations are towards local sports clubs and organisations, with the remaining 59 allocated to regional or national projects.

The facilities being funded today range from small-scale equipment grants, to regionally significant centres of sporting excellence.

This Government has now allocated over €85 million under the Sports Capital Programme since it came into office. Much of this funding has been allocated with the assistance of national governing bodies or local authorities. In the context of the tight budgetary situation, this level of funding shows a phenomenal commitment to sport and to local communities.

The allocations announced include funding for: -

- Natural grass sports pitches, tracks and courts;
- Floodlighting;
- Artificial sports pitches, tracks, courts and multi-use games areas;
- Security fencing and ball stop netting;
- Hurling walls / handball alleys;
- Building or refurbishment of dressing rooms, showers and toilets;
- Building or refurbishment of sports halls and gyms;
- Non-personal sports equipment;
- Shared facilities;
- Permanently fixed outdoor gym equipment.

County Offaly received an allocation of €522,807 for 19 of 49 projects applied for. Successful applicants include: -

CCM Racing Club	Clara Boxing Club	Crinkle Sports & Recreation Centre
Doon GAA	Edenderry GAA	Edenderry Town Football Club
Gracefield GAA	Grand Canal Sports	Moneygall Football Club
Mucklagh Community Development Company	Mucklagh Schoolboys / girls Soccer Club	Offaly County Council
Offaly Sports Partnership	St Bridget's Boxing Club	St Joseph's Sports Hall Committee
St Mary's Youth & Community Centre	St Rynagh's Hurling Club	Tullamore Basketball Club
Wilmer Tennis Club, Birr		

Notes for clubs, facilities, groups and organisations on our database

Offaly Sports Partnership is constantly updating its clubs, facilities, groups, organisations and schools' databases. Clubs and facilities, please review the clubs and facilities directories online and advise of any changes by [email](#).

Schools, groups and organisations, if you are concerned that the Partnership may have incorrect details for your school, group or organisation, please contact us by [email](#) to update your details.

Please also be advised that due to cost cutting measures, all future Offaly Sports Partnership correspondence in relation to our programmes will now be carried out by email, therefore I would appreciate it if you could please furnish me with an email address for our records.

Training



The National Programme for
Sport and Physical Activity for Older People

Go for Life Physical Activity Leader Training Offaly Sports Partnership in conjunction with Daingean Active Retirement Group, North Offaly Community Development Network and Go for Life will be hosting a Go for Life Physical Activity Leader Training course commencing on the 7th October in Daingean.

The Go for Life Physical Activity Leader Training is a series of eight workshops delivered on a weekly basis to older people interested in leading physical activity sessions with their Active Retirement Group, community group, mens and womens groups catering for those over the age of 50 years.

There are currently 12 places available on this course. *If you or your group is interested in participating on this course, please contact the office on 057 93 57462 or by [email](#).*

Offaly Sports Partnership will be running **child protection training** from September 2014 in the areas of: -

1. **Code of ethics** (three hour awkwardness module) - this course looks at how we can keep adults and young people safe and happy within the club environment. Course costs €15.
2. **Children's officer** training focuses more so on the role of a children's officer in the club.



To book your place on the code of ethics module or to express your interest in the children's officer training, please contact the office on 057 93 57462 or by [email](#).



The National Programme for
Sport and Physical Activity for Older People

Funding

Go for Life have announced their annual **National Grant Scheme for Sport and Physical Activity for Older People for 2014**. The closing date for receipt of applications is close of business on Friday, 26th September 2014. Check out the [website](#) for more information.

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)

Questions or comments? [Email us](#) or call 057 93 57462

Offaly Sports Partnership is a sub group of Offaly County Development Board, funded by the Irish Sports Council and hosted by the Community, Enterprise and Economic Development section of Offaly County Council.