

Couch to 5k

Two couch to 5k programmes began in January, one with a group from Bury Quay and one with the Sports and Leisure students from NLN. The NLN students began their programme on 5th January which was very successful with all students completing their first timed 5k race at Tullamore Harriers on Monday 16th February. The Bury Quay group began their programme on 7th January with 19 people taking part in weekly sessions in Tullamore Town Park and at Tullamore Harriers. The group also went out independently with staff from the centre and made this part of an Operation Transformation programme focusing on healthy eating and physical activity. This group worked extremely hard with a total group weight loss of almost 10 stone. Well done to all who took part in these programmes!



Sports Ability Forum

The Sports Ability Forum are still meeting on a regular basis with representatives from a wide variety of backgrounds. This group plays a vital role in supporting the sports inclusion programmes across Co. Offaly.

St Joseph's Special Olympics Club

The newly established Special Olympics Club in St Joseph's NS have been making great progress and showing a huge desire to grow and develop. They are now participating in a combination of MATP and Sporthall Athletics with the aim of developing athletes for Special Olympics athletics events. As a result of this, three new coaches kindly offered to volunteer their time on a weekly basis (Dinjoe Connolly, Leslie Frances and former pupil Jude Roche). I delivered training to these coaches over a two week period and they now deliver sessions to the athletes every Wednesday. Due to the great commitment shown by St Joseph's they will be entering their first Special Olympics event on 9th May in Kilkenny.

Offaly School of Special Education

On the back of a very successful inter-school event in November, OSSE are now entering their first Athletics event in Special Olympics. They will also be competing on 9th May in Kilkenny.

“Good news, St Joseph’s and OSSE have entered athletes in the Athletics on the 9th of May (Kilkenny), delighted to see this.....first time in athletics for both. The support they’ve got over the past 12months has definitely helped with this.”

Patrick O’Reilly, Special Olympics Leinster Regional Development Officer.

Walking Group



RehabCare Tullamore delivered an Operation Transformation Walking Programme with the aim of getting the local community involved. This programme began on 19th January and proved very successful with large numbers participating and Alan Mullen from Operation Transformation 2015 coming to give a talk and attend one of the walks.



OPERATION TRANSFORMATION WALKING CHALLENGE 2015

YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!



- STARTS ON 19TH JANUARY AND RUNS UNTIL 11TH MARCH 2015
- MEETING POINT: CAR PARK ENTRANCE TULLAMORE TOWN PARK
- EVENT WILL RUN EVERY MONDAY & WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30AM UNTIL 1:30PM UNTIL 11TH MARCH
- OPEN TO ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART
- 8 WEEK CHALLENGE WITH A DIFFERENT WALKING ROUTE EACH WEEK
- WEEK 1: A walk along the canal to the Prince of Wales Memorial
- WEEK 2: Walk to Ann Burren Park and back
- WEEK 3: Walk out to Clonsilla Greenway and back
- WEEK 4: Walk out to Seely's Farm and back
- WEEK 5: Walk half of the 101 ha Salsbury route
- WEEK 6: Walk from John Mullen, RSC to Operation Transformation carpark on Clonsilla and the importance of keeping fit and active. Following this there will be a walk to Clonsilla castle and back.
- WEEK 7: Walk 1/2 of the 101 ha Salsbury route
- WEEK 8: Complete the full 101 ha Salsbury route

RehabCare
REHABILITATION CARE CENTRE TULLAMORE

THE EVENT WILL RUN EVERY MONDAY & WEDNESDAY FROM 10:30AM UNTIL 1:30PM FROM MONDAY 19TH JANUARY

GET YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS STARTED IN A FUN & CHALLENGING WAY!

WITH: D. TOIN
ALAN MULLEN, RSC'S
OPERATION TRANSFORMATION COME-STAND

ON THE FINAL WEEK YOU WILL COMPLETE THE 101 HA SALSBUARY WALKING ROUTE

CONTACT ORGANISER
SARAH O'NEILL
Tel: 087 9302214



TANDEM CYCLING PLANNING MEETING

A meeting has been planned for parents, teachers and service users to plan some tandem cycling events over the coming year.

The following items will be discussed:

1. The loaning of the tandem bikes to parents/teachers/adults for a short term basis (ie a few hours) on certain conditions
2. Planning NCBI tandem cycling events over the summer in Boora Parklands using the 5 tandem bikes in the county
3. Encouraging service users to join the cycling clubs directly and become involved in local cycles and to hire the bikes directly at Boora Parklands
4. Participating in other national events organised specifically for adapted cycles

Representatives from the Wolftrap Cycling Club (Birr), Tullamore Cycling Club, Grand Canal Adventures (Daingean) and Boora Bike Hire will be in attendance.

Venue: Hugh Lynch's Bar (upstairs)

Date: 16th February 2015 8pm

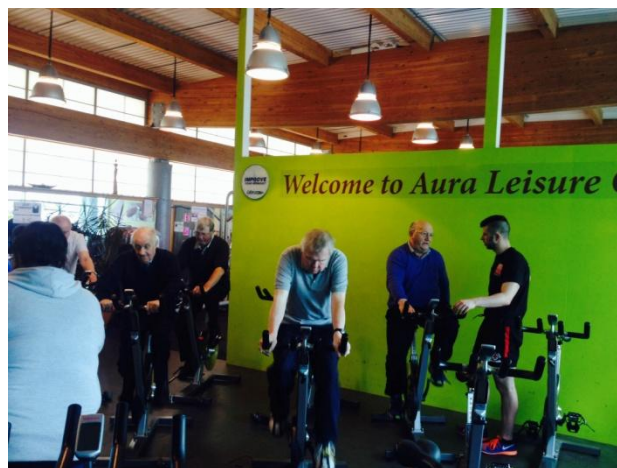
I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance in advance of the meeting to Aileen Ahern 086-8637702

NCBI Tandem Cycle Meeting

On 16th February Aileen Ahern (NCBI) facilitated a very successful meeting in relation to Tandem Cycling in Co. Offaly. This meeting was attended by myself, members of NCBI, Wolftrap Cycling Club (Birr), Tullamore Cycling Club, Grand Canal Adventures (Daingean) and Boora Bike Hire. This meeting discussed how to make the best use out of tandem bicycles in the area, pilot cyclists, joining with local clubs and planning events for the summer. As a result of this meeting some NCBI members joined up with local cycling clubs and became registered members. This is a very positive step-forward in increasing participation within the county.

NCBI Gym Programme

NCBI have once again participated in a Spinning and Gym programme in Aura, Tullamore as a pre-requisite to the Tandem Cycle outings in Lough Boora in the summer. This class began on 4th March and runs on a weekly basis with at least eight participants. This class provides a great work-out as well as a social outing for members of NCBI to meet up.



Aura Leisure Centre, Tullamore, have invited us once again to use their gym facilities:

Wednesday mornings from 11.15 am – 1pm on the following dates:

March 4 th	March 11 th
March 18 th	March 25 th
April 1 st	April 8 th

The group will be facilitated by a trained member from the Aura group and is open to all ages and all abilities.

Aura Tullamore Leisure Centre offer excellent, state of the art facilities for health and fitness and strive to make their leisure centres accessible to all.

There is a charge of €15 per person for 6 weeks.

Suitable gym clothing should be worn during these sessions. You are welcome to bring someone to assist you if you wish to do so. Please contact me if transport is an issue for you as limited transport may be available.

To book your place in this group or if you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact Aileen Ahern on 086-8637702.



Over 50s Boccia League Final

On Tuesday 7th April the final of the over 50s Boccia League was held in Raham Parish Hall. The final was contested by Belmont and Clonbullogue Active Retirement Groups. Congratulations to Belmont for winning their fourth title in a row by overcoming a strong Clonbullogue team in the final. Thank you to the officials and all those who participated in this league.



Visually Impaired Football



Two taster sessions were held in partnership with NCBI in order to promote football for those with a visual impairment in the Midlands. The first session was held on Saturday 11th April in Moate Community Centre with eight children in attendance. It is hoped that this will become a regular activity and the children have been invited to participate in Mayfest in Dublin at the end of May. On Saturday 25th April a session was held for over 16s in St Mary's Hall, Portlaoise. This was a great day with FAI/Vision Sports Ireland coaches in attendance and players from the National B2/3 team.



VI Football

Football/Futsal We have organized some football sessions for visually impaired and blind players to play 5 a side football. We have great ambitions to make this a regular event depending on players interest. Players of all abilities are welcome. FAI coaches will be there on the day. It will be a fun exciting day out with refreshments afterwards.

Where: Moate Community Centre, Moate, Co. Westmeath.
Who: Aged 7 - 16 years.
Date: April 11th
Time: 10:00-12:00 am (B2/B3) 12:00-1:00 (B1)
Fee: €5

Where: St Mary's Sports Hall, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.
Who: Over 16's
Date: April 25th
Time: 10:00-12:00 am
Fee: €5

For further information and to confirm attendance, please contact:
Sean Poland 0872121445
Email: seanpoland2010@gmail.com
Aileen Ahern 0868371937
Email: aileen.ahern@ncbi.ie



Transition Year Disability Awareness

On Monday 13th April I delivered Disability Awareness Training to 18 Transition Year students from Colaiste Choilm, Tullamore. This involved theory and practical sessions on how to include people with disabilities in sport and students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of Paralympic/Special Olympic activities. Paul Divilly, Special Olympics Leinster Regional Development Officer was also in attendance to provide information on Special Olympics and offer support and guidance to the students. These students are now visiting three local SO clubs (OSSE, St Joseph's and Ballinamere) to gain experience delivering activities over the next four weeks and this will finish with another inter-school event in Colaiste Choilm on 12th May where the students will over-see all stations.



Get Active Aura

Get Active 2015

Venue: AURA Leisure Club, Tullamore

Start Date: Monday 13th April 2015 (and every Monday thereafter)

Time: 11:30-12:30

This 'Get Active' Programme incorporates overall body toning exercises including

- Aerobics
- Circuit sessions
- Step aerobics
- Core work
- Free weights
- And much more

Cost: €4.45 per person

(Please note places are limited so book in advance)

For further information:

Audie Byrne,

Offaly Sports Partnership

Sports Inclusion Development Officer

0579307463

aburne@offaly.sports.ie



On Monday 13th April the Get Active Aura classes resumed with many new participants. This programme provides weekly fitness classes which are open to anyone with a disability. Participants experience a wide variety of activities and exercise programmes in a fun, social environment.



attended this event. Students had the opportunity to participate in a range of activities targeted at their ability level, each of which was led by a Transition Year student from Colaiste Choilm. In the afternoon students took part in a variety of relay races as well as a javelin competition in which students and teachers tried to beat Jack Conroy. Jack is a Special Olympics athlete in Ballinamere who is representing Ireland in 100m run and Javelin at the World Games in Los Angeles this summer. A great day was had by all and it is now planned to make this module part of the Transition Year programme from September onwards. It is also hoped that we can involve more schools in this programme to further establish the links we have created.



Tandem Cycling

The first tandem cycling outing this summer for NCBI took place on Wednesday 13th May in Lough Boora. This was a fantastic day with 5 tandem bicycles on offer, 3 from Wolftrap Cycling Club and 2 which are based in Lough Boora Bike Hire. 3 pilots from Wolftrap Cycling Club also attended on the day to ensure everyone had the opportunity to experience a few different routes around the Parklands. Some participants even cycled into Cloghan and back to Lough Boora. The day finished with a cup of tea and a chat in the Visitor Centre and all participants are really looking forward to the next outing in June.

Go For Life Games



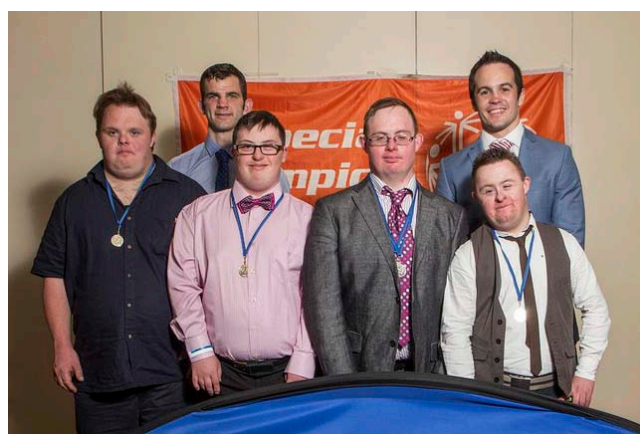
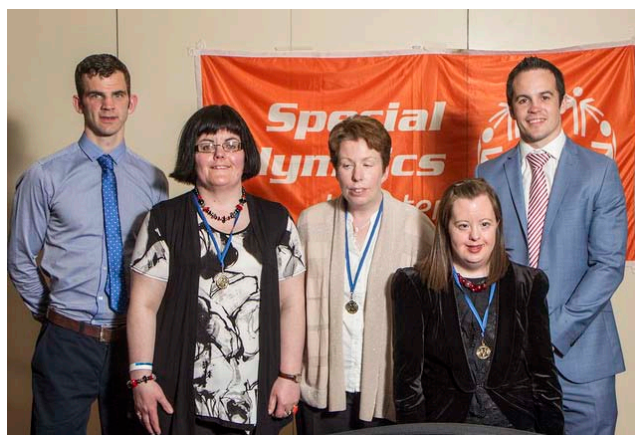
The Offaly Go For Life Games took place on Wednesday 20th May in Charleville Centre Tullamore. This was a very successful event with over 40 people taking part and Bury Quay Day Service coming out on top. Participants had the opportunity to compete in lobbors, flisk and scidils. A great day was had by all

in a fun, social environment which acted as a selection process for the National Finals taking place on Saturday 6th June in Dublin City University.



Special Olympics Leinster Awards Night

On Wednesday 27th May the Special Olympics Leinster Awards night was held with many Offaly athletes receiving recognition for their sporting achievements. Jim Smyth, Offaly School of Special Education was the MC on the night and he was joined by 200 athletes and many special guests from the world of sport. This was a great night and a celebration of our athletes and volunteers, well done to all involved!



Go For Life Games

The Go for Life Games National Finals were held in Dublin City University on Saturday 6th June. This was a very successful event with many counties represented on the day. Although the levels of competition were very high our Offaly team once again came away as All-Ireland Champions in the Flisk event. All of the Offaly team demonstrated great levels of skill and played the games in great spirit which was also recognised with a special award for one of our participants. Well done to all involved, the hard work paid off!



Bike Week (13th-21st June)

The official launch of Bike Week took place on Wednesday 27th May in Tullamore Town Park. This was a great occasion as Killurín cyclist Francine Meehan was in attendance. Francine takes part in many cycling events however of most significance is her role as a pilot cyclist for visually impaired athletes. Francine can be seen here with the two medals she won at the London 2012 Paralympic Games while piloting for Catherine Walsh.



Tandem Cycling

As part of Bike Week a tandem cycling event took place at Lough Boora on Wednesday 17th June. This event was held in partnership with the National Council for the Blind, Wolftrap Cycling Club and KARE Edenderry. This was a great success with 15 participants, and for many it was their first time on a bike.



CARA National Inclusion Awards

The CARA National Inclusion Awards took place on Thursday 18th June in Clontarf Castle Hotel, Dublin. The CARA National Inclusion Awards recognises organisations and people who contribute to the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport and physical activity. This year Ballinamere NS won the award for Inclusive Primary School/PE which is a huge honour for the school and for the county. This was a great day of celebration with awards presented by Minister Aodhain O Riordain TD (Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality and Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht).



Visually Impaired Football

On Saturday 20th June the third session of Visually Impaired Football took place in Moate Community Centre. This was a well attended session which focused on communication and developing the skills of the children taking part. It is hoped to make this a sustainable club for children with visual impairments and the next sessions are planned for 18th July and 15th August in Moate. We are hoping to receive support from the FAI to further develop this club in the Midlands.

Walking Challenge

The Walking Challenge was a huge success this year with the addition of a group walk on Wednesdays at 11am. This was a great opportunity for people from different communities to meet and make new friends while also reaping the benefits of exercise and fresh air. Those who participated in the Tullamore group walk met at the Town Park and tried several different routes suitable to the individual's ability level. Many participants completed a 6km return walk to Charleville Castle in beautiful summer sunshine. Group walks also took place every Wednesday at Birr Castle and on a regular basis in Edenderry. Over 70 people took part in the walking challenge across the county and this ended with a presentation of certificates at Tullamore Harries on 7th July. Well done to everyone!



Tullamore Town Park

It is great to see Tullamore Town Park facilities being used so frequently by those involved in SIDP programmes. It is a fantastic amenity and it is great to see groups using this park as part of the walking challenge, go for life games, bowls, wheelchair swing and for general social outings. This is in line with our overall aim of promoting inclusion in the local community and is a step in the right direction.




Football for All

The Football for All programme resumed in Birr Town FC on Wednesday 8th July. This is a PAN disability programme which is offered to children and adults across the county and focuses on developing their football skills in a fun, positive environment. Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances this programme had to be cancelled, however it is hoped we will resume this programme at a later date.



Football For All





Venue: Birr Town FC

Start Date: Wednesday 8th July

Time: 5-14 year olds: 1pm-2pm
Adults: 2pm-3pm

For further information:
Aoife Byrne
Offaly Sports Partnership
Sports Inclusion Development Officer
0879357463
a Byrne@offalyccoo.ie



DeafHear Summer Camp

On Wednesday 15th July a summer camp was delivered in Tullamore Town Park to children with hearing impairments in conjunction with DeafHear Tullamore. Fourteen children attended this camp where they took part in a range of fun activities on a lovely summer day. Well done to all involved!



Sports Day

Our annual inclusive sports day for adult services in Offaly took place on Tuesday 21st July in Coláiste Choilm Tullamore. Participants from RehabCare, National Learning Network, Muiriosa Foundation and KARE Edenderry all had a great day trying out all the activities that were on offer. Events were delivered by Darinda (Zumba), Thomas Farrer (Karate), Aura Tullamore, Tullamore FC, Tullamore Basketball Club, Offaly GAA, Tullamore Harriers, Tullamore Gardaí and local service providers. A huge thank you to Alan Mulhall (Offaly GAA) who also presented medals on the day. This sports day provided a great opportunity for participants to try new things and also gave local clubs a platform to promote their own club. As a result of this many participants have now taken up bocchia, athletics with Tullamore Harriers and Karate with Thomas Farrer's club. This is a great outcome and once again works towards the long term aim of sustainable participation and integration within the community.



NLN Awards

The National Learning Network Awards night took place on Thursday 23rd July in The Bridge House Hotel Tullamore. This event was hosted by Midlands 103 presenter Anne Marie Kelly. Well done to all!



Judo Club

I am currently supporting Irish Special Needs Judo to establish a club in Offaly. At the moment there are only two 'Judo Assist' clubs in the country, Galway and Nenagh therefore this is an excellent opportunity for Offaly. Judo Assist Ireland is a national Special Needs programme developed to further promote the Sport for ALL concept and to introduce the fantastic Olympic, Special Olympic and Paralympic Sport of Judo to a wide variety of disability groups and individuals across Ireland. Judo is not only one of the most participated sports in the world it is also one of the most adaptable. This is due to the pure nature and culture of judo with its standing techniques and moves, which can also be achieved from the knees, and ground techniques and moves (grappling, holds) ensuring there is something for everyone's capability and mobility. There are no kicks, punches or striking of any kind in Judo, further reducing any accidental injuries. The Japanese word of "Judo" translates to "Gentle Way". The programme actively encourages the siblings and friends of the children with additional needs to come along and take part, making it a great family activity. You can visit the website www.specialneedsjudo.com and like the Facebook page Judo Assist if you wish.



Judo Assist Ireland

NCBI Summer Camp

As part of the NCBI Summer Camp I assisted with the delivery of sports activities on Wednesday 26th August in St Mary's Youth Centre, Tullamore. The children participated in a range of activities including football and goalball and also took part in tandem cycling in Lough Boora in the afternoon. 15 children attended this summer camp and a great time was had by all.

Sports Leader Tutor Training

On Sunday 6th September I attended a Youth Leadership Tutor Training Day in Sports and Fitness Ballyfermot. This course, delivered by Sports Leaders UK, aims to provide a starting point for young people who wish to develop their leadership skills in a variety of sports and recreational situations. It is hoped that this programme can be rolled out with at least two different groups in Offaly as part of an initial pilot in the Republic of Ireland.



Come and Try Handcycling

Westmeath Sports Partnership, in conjunction with Offaly Sports Partnership hosted a 'Come and Try Handcycling' event on Tuesday 8th September at Columb Barracks, Mullingar. Below is a photo of Offaly athlete Joshua Connon who is now competing in handcycling time trials as part of the Invacare League.



Is Hand Cycling For You ?

Hand Cycling Come and Try Event

Where : Columb Barracks Mullingar
When : Tuesday, 8th of September at 6pm.

For further information contact :

- Westmeath and Longford Area**
 Contact Mary - 044 93 90208 or mary@westmeathsports.ie
- Offaly Area**
 Contact Aoife - 057 93 57463 or abyne@offalycoco.ie











Be Active ASAP Tutor Refresher Training

This training was delivered by Paul Friel (Meath LSP) in Aisling Hotel, Dublin on Thursday 10th September. It is now hoped that this programme will be delivered with primary schools in Co. Offaly.



Transition Year Disability Awareness Programme

This programme re-commenced with a new group of students on Thursday 10th September in Colaiste Choilm. Training was delivered by Special Olympics Leinster Regional Development Officer Patrick O'Reilly. Service users and staff from RehabCare Tullamore also gave a presentation on disability awareness to the students. These students will now spend the next four weeks visiting 3 SEN schools in small groups to deliver activities in preparation for the inter-school event.

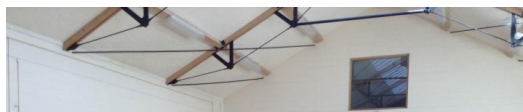
Sports Ability Forum

The Sports Ability Forum met on Tuesday 15th September in Offaly Centre for Independent Living, Clonminch Road, Tullamore. At this meeting Mary Duffy was elected as the new representative for the disability sector on the board of Offaly Sports Partnership. This forum group play a pivotal role in the development of the sports inclusion programme and their input is greatly appreciated.

Teacher Training



On Monday 28th September 'Inclusive PE for All' Teacher Training was delivered to 43 teachers in Ballinamere NS. This training was delivered by myself, Orla Dempsey (Irish Wheelchair Association), Aileen Ahern (National Council for Blind Ireland) and Mary Duffy (Laois Offaly Families for Autism). This was an excellent workshop where participants were given information and practical suggestions on how to include children with various disabilities into PE lessons. The group were very positive and engaging therefore we hope this will help work towards inclusion in future lessons.



Judo Assist Ireland

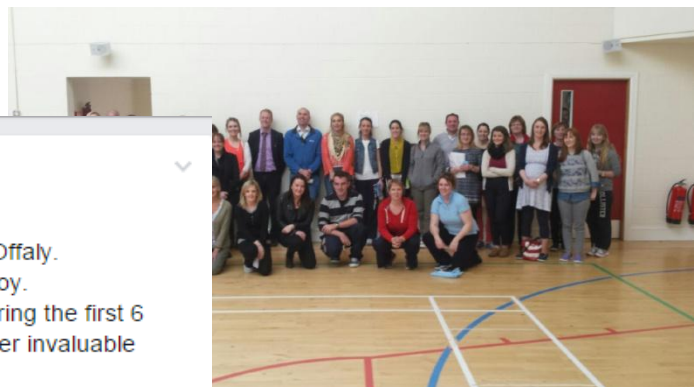
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What a first night at our new Judo Assist club in Birr Co Offaly. 18 new students graced our mat full of enthusiasm and joy. Thanks to My Tee Shirt print and embroidery for sponsoring the first 6 weeks and to Aoife at the Offaly Sports Partnership for her invaluable assistance. Roll on next week 😊

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Judo Assist

On Tuesday 29th September the Judo Assist club had its first session in Crinkle Sports and Recreation Centre. This was very successful with 18 participants and now runs on a weekly basis.



Tandem Cycling

The summer tandem cycling sessions finished up on Wednesday 30th September in Lough Boora. These sessions were facilitated by NCBI, Wolftrap Cycling Club and Tullamore Cycling Club. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed these sessions with many participants uptaking membership with these cycling clubs.

Get Active

The Get Active winter fitness classes resumed in Aura on Monday 5th October. This always proves to be a popular class with participants from across the county taking part in a range of activities and meeting new people. Thanks to the wonderful instructors who provide fun and varied sessions each week.

CARA Disability Inclusion Training



CARA Disability Inclusion Training was delivered on Saturday 10th October in Clonkill GAA Centre, Loughgar, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. This course was delivered in partnership with Westmeath and Longford Sports Partnerships with participants from a variety of backgrounds and with varying levels of experience in inclusive sport. The course was delivered by Caitriona Corr (SIDO Kilkenny LSP).





Aura Membership

Aura have very kindly continued their offer of reduced annual membership for anyone involved in the sports inclusion programmes with Offaly Sports Partnership. This is a great deal which has seen many people take up membership, across a range of disability groupings, further enhancing our aim of independence and sustainable participation in sport and physical activity. Thank you once again to Aura for their continued support.

Inter-school Event



The inter-school event took place in Colaiste Choilm on Thursday 15th October with 3 schools taking part, Offaly School of Special Education, Ballinamere NS and St Joseph's NS. This was a very successful event with 50 athletes taking part, under the guidance of an excellent group of Transition Year students. This programme continues to grow every year and it is planned to extend this to other TY groups and special needs classes in 2016.



Midlands Boccia League

The Midlands Boccia League resumed action on Tuesday 3rd November in Moate Community Centre with 21 teams taking part from across Offaly and Westmeath. This is an excellent programme which caters for PAN disability and also works towards sustainable participation through the training of referees from each organisation involved. The next round of this league will take place on Tuesday 1st December.

Additional Needs Seminar



On Saturday 14th November, Offaly County Childcare Committee hosted an 'Additional Needs Seminar' in Tullamore Court Hotel. Guest speakers at this conference included Penny Rodgers (Psychologist with the early intervention team), Katherine Bulbulia (Speech and language therapist), Petria and Mary (Offaly Association for people with an Intellectual Disability/Inclusion Ireland), Mary Grogan (SENO) and local Occupational Therapists. I was also asked to speak at this conference to provide information on the role of a Sports Inclusion Development Officer and offer advice and support on key contacts to assist service providers in being more inclusive. This conference was organised by Ruth Finney and was a great starting point towards inclusive practices in childcare settings.



Clochan House Training

On Wednesday 25th November I delivered training to the new PA's in Offaly Centre for Independent Living. This involved demonstrating sample activities that could be done in-house on a regular basis for those attending Clochan House. Activities included boccia, target games, go for life games, goalball, chair exercises and group activities. It is hoped that this will work towards sustainable physical activity opportunities for those attending this service.



FAI Blind Football Blitz

Blind Football Ireland held their first National Blitz at Tullamore Harriers Astroturf pitch on Saturday November 28th from 1pm – 3.30pm. This was a great opportunity for players from the 3 regional centres in Dublin, Cork and Sligo and new players from the Midlands area to meet each other and play some friendly matches under the close supervision of Blind Football Ireland and FAI coaches. Due to the success of this day, National blitzes will continue to take place on a regular basis with the next one scheduled for 6th February.



CARA National Training Day

CARA facilitated two National Training Days at Sports HQ, Dublin on 2nd and 3rd December. This involved training personnel to deliver the new Disability Awareness in Sport Workshop and the official launch of this new 2 hour course.