



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Compiled by the staff of Offaly Sports Partnership



SPORT IRELAND
LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS



Offaly Sports Partnership is a multi sectoral sub committee of Offaly County Council. It is hosted by the Local Community Development Section of the Council; and receives its core funding from Sport Ireland.

Contents

2016, a year in review	3
Board, Executive / Working groups & Staffing of Offaly Sports Partnership	6
Board of Offaly Sports Partnership	6
Executive of Offaly Sports Partnership	6
Staffing of Offaly Sports Partnership	7
Strategic Plan implementation	8
Pillar 1 - Instil fundamentals & Improve youth fitness	8
Pillar 2 - Increase adult & older adult participation	13
Pillar 3 - Include the least active	16
Pillar 4 - Integrate & Celebrate	19
Pillar 5 - Improve capacity & Inform the sector	21
Conclusion	26
Appendix 1 - Baseline fitness indicators for Fit School Monitor	28
Appendix 2 - Sports Inclusion Development Programme update for	30

2016, A Year in Review

2016 has been a particularly interesting year for sport in Offaly...

For Offaly Sports Partnership, it represented 10 years of promoting increased participation in sport and physical activity in the county. In celebration of this landmark achievement and with the very generous support of the Bridge House Hotel and our other sponsors, the Partnership hosted a Sports Awards of the Decade gala evening in December.

Award winners were selected from fifteen different sports categories along with the overall sports achiever award, which went to Shane Lowry, Clara's own professional golfer. His exploits since turning professional after winning the Irish Open as an amateur in 2009 have captured the imagination of his county.

The importance of volunteerism in sport was also recognised. Long serving Tullamore Harriers chairman, John Cronin who is making his mark in athletics officialdom at world level was feted as the winner of the life time contribution to sport award. The volunteer of the decade went to Edenderry boxing official / coach, Liam Breton; and the youth volunteer award went to Ann Marie Guinan from Drumcullen Camogie Club.



Recipients of the Offaly Sports Awards of the Decade 2006 - 2016

Offaly Sports Partnership would like to congratulate our worthy winners of the sports awards of the decade, and all of the shortlisted nominees.

On the international stage, 2016 marked the end of the most recent four year Olympic and Paralympic cycle. While Offaly had no involvement at Olympic level, the county was represented at Paralympic level...



14 year old Nicole Turner of Garryhinch was the youngest member of Team Ireland in Rio and was chosen as flag bearer to lead the team into the closing ceremony.

At her first Paralympic Games, Nicole impressively competed in five events qualifying for the final in every one. She succeeded in setting personal best times in six out of her ten races in Rio with her best placing; fifth in the 50m Butterfly.

Following on from her previous success in London 2012 as pilot for Catherine Walsh in cycling; Fran Meehan once again donned the mantle of pilot for Catherine, this time in Triathlon at Rio 2016.



James Nolan, Head of Paralympic Athletics (appointed April 2010), himself a two time Olympian (Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004), managed the athletics team at Rio 2016. The athletics team secured five podium finishes.

2016 also saw the Partnership launch its third strategic plan covering the period 2016 - 2020.



Board members of Offaly Sports Partnership at the launch of “Active Offaly, strategic plan and long-term framework guiding the work of Offaly Sports Partnership, 2016 - 2020”

The framework is underpinned by five key pillars: -

1. Instil fundamentals & Improve youth fitness
2. Increase adult and older adult participation
3. Include the least active
4. Integrate & Celebrate
5. Improve capacity & Inform the sector

This annual report is the first of five reports for the five years covered by this plan.

This report will give an overview of the board and staff of the Partnership in 2016; and will review the work completed in 2016 under each of the five pillars.

Board, Executive / Working Groups & Staffing of Offaly Sports Partnership

Board of Offaly Sports Partnership

In 2016, the Board of the Partnership comprised representation from: -

- Offaly County Council (one representative as the employer; and two public representatives)
- Health Services Executive (one representative)
- Laois / Offaly Education and Training Board (one representative)
- The sports sector (four representatives)
- The private business sector (one representative)
- Third level sector (one representative)
- An Garda Síochana (one representative)
- Offaly Local Development Company (one representatives)
- The sports ability forum (one representative)



At the conclusion of 2016, Barry Keegan, the private business sector representative tendered his resignation from the Board of the Partnership.

Offaly Sports Partnership would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Barry's contribution to the work of the Partnership since 2008 and would like to wish him well in the future.

Executive and Working Groups of Offaly Sports Partnership

The Executive of Offaly Sports Partnership in 2016 consisted of Miriam O Callaghan (Chair), Jude Feehan (Vice chair), Barry Keegan (Financial monitor), Monica Cleary (Offaly County Council representative), and Darren Butler (Sports representative).

In addition to the Executive, there were four sub groups in 2016: -

- i. Strategic Planning working group - Board liaison, Miriam O Callaghan. The strategic planning working group concluded preparation of a new plan and long term framework for Offaly Sports Partnership, which was launched in December 2016
- ii. Cycle forum - Board liaison, Clodagh Armitage. The cycle forum took the lead in the planning of Bike week activities
- iii. Sports Awards of the Decade - Board liaison, Barry Keegan. The sports awards of the decade working group took the lead in the planning of a celebration of Offaly's sporting heroes in the last decade (2006 - 2016) as part of the Partnership's 10 year anniversary celebrations.

- iv. Governance working group. At the latter end of 2016, and following the preparation and launch of our new strategic plan, a governance working group was established to review the structure of the Board of the Partnership; and to input into a review of internal policy and corporate governance. The first meeting of this group is due to take place in early 2017.

Staffing in 2016

In 2016, Offaly County Council continued to facilitate the employment of two full time; and one part time staff member for the Partnership.

The two core positions of Coordinator and Administrator were 100% funded by Sport Ireland; while the post of Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO) was 50% funded by the Sport Ireland, 35% funded by the Health Services Executive and 15% funded by Offaly County Council.

Eamonn Henry, Olivia Murphy and Aoife Byrne continued in their respective roles.

Contracted tutors / Interns / Student placements / Volunteers

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

- Jean Brady - schools' programme and sports leadership tutor
- Aoife Byrne - community coaching coordinator and sports leadership tutor (outside of her part time role as Sports Inclusion Development Officer)
- Karen Walsh - safeguarding children (child protection) tutor

The Partnership also utilised a number of national governing body recommended tutors to deliver sport specific modules as part of our community coaching programmes delivered in Tullamore and Clara in 2016.

In addition, the Partnership facilitated work experience placements for two third level students and two transition year students during the course of the year; while students from Athlone Institute of Technology assisted in the delivery of the sixth All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival for primary schools.

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 2016. Go raibh míle maith agaibh!

Strategic Plan implementation

Pillar 1 - Instil fundamentals & Improve youth fitness

Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to instilling fundamentals and improving fitness levels among young people. Fundamental movement skills and fitness levels serve as the foundation on which future participation will be built.

Four key objectives within this pillar were identified: -

- i. The instilling of fundamentals
- ii. The monitoring of fitness levels among children and young people
- iii. The delivery of complementary / inter schools physical activity programmes to improve fitness levels
- iv. The promotion of and participation in national activity programmes locally

A range of actions to achieve these objectives were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2016, and were delivered on.



Under objective one, the Partnership continued to deliver its **SPORTSHALL Athletics programme** which remains the primary programme in developing fundamentals for children. Eight primary schools and 1,100 pupils participated on this programme.

Under objective two, the Partnership delivered the **Fit School Monitor / Remote Fitness Challenge**. This project will be an ongoing programme of the Partnership for the next five years.

Baseline fitness indicators have been established (*see tables 1 to 4 in appendix 1*) and the ongoing work concerns the monitoring of these baselines to identify whether the speed and endurance fitness of young people is improving or deteriorating. The tests used are a 60m speed test, and a 1 minute test of sustained running.

31 primary schools and over 3,500 pupils from 1st to 6th class took part in the programme in 2016. Initial analysis of the data collated in 2016 versus the baseline fitness scores from 2014 / 2015 suggests the following: -

- Boys speed indicators are improving with differences of between 0.57 and 1.72 seconds (marginally to very significantly faster) being recorded
- Girls speed indicators are improving with differences of between 0.79 and 1.12 seconds (noticeably to very significantly faster) being recorded
- Boys endurance indicators are improving with differences of between 5 and 10m (further but insignificant to marginally further) being recorded
- Girls endurance indicators are improving with differences of between 5 and 10m (further but insignificant to marginally further) being recorded

Initial experiences of this monitoring intervention has shown that the endurance test employed by the Partnership to measure fitness has proven to be very accurate; while the speed test protocols may need to be re-examined.

Furthermore, while no specific interventions were delivered by the Partnership in 2016 to cause the improvements in speed and endurance indicators, an interesting feature of this programme has been that participating schools have been instigating physical activity programmes as part of their school curriculum / extra curricular activities to address the area of improving youth fitness among their school populations.

Under objective three, the Partnership delivered a range of complementary / inter schools physical activity programmes to improve fitness levels. Among the programmes delivered were: -

Two inter schools **SPORTSHALL Athletics** programmes, the *sixth All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival (primary)*; and *SPORTSHALL Athletics Offaly (post primary)*.

The Partnership continued to coordinate the delivery of all aspects of the sixth *All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival* on behalf of the wider sports partnership network in conjunction with Athletics Ireland and the Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT). 650 primary school pupils from across 14 counties



Participants racing in the 6th All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival (primary)

Following the success of the SPORTSHALL Athletics primary programme, the Partnership piloted the delivery of a post primary SPORTSHALL Athletics programme among three post primary schools and 50 students in Tullamore. Similar to the primary school programme, a post primary All Ireland SPORTSHALL Athletics Festival will be piloted in 2017 with Offaly providing specialist knowledge to five other counties keen to develop the programme through their LSP, Athletics Ireland representatives or local schools.



The Partnership also plays a supporting role in encouraging clubs, national governing bodies of sport and local sporting organisations to deliver their schools' based programmes in Offaly. This year, the Partnership supported "Athletics Offaly" and "Believe and Achieve Coaching" to deliver their schools based programmes in Offaly. Approximately, 1,500 pupils / students participated on these programmes

Under objective four, the Partnership promoted participation in national activity programmes at local level. Among the programmes promoted were: -

Operation Transformation (Tullamore College Community Transformation)

The Partnership has supported the delivery of Tullamore College's community transformation programme in recent years. The programme is concerned with supporting transition year students to peer lead a physical activity programme based on the Operation Transformation couch to 5k concept.

Three primary and one post primary school; and approximately 150 pupils / students were involved in the programme. The programme culminated in a 5k run (*participants pictured below*).



Bike Week

Bike Week took place from Saturday 11th to Sunday 19th June with cycling events all over the country, organised by local authorities, community groups, charities and cycling groups.

Offaly Sports Partnership in conjunction with Offaly County Council, the HSE and An Taisce delivered a range of cycling events for primary school pupils; and supported clubs to deliver junior cycling events in Birr, Ferbane and Tullamore. 300 children and young people participated across the range of activities on offer.



Participants of Offaly's Birr Lunchtime Cycle on Wednesday, 15th June 2016

World Marathon Challenge

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

Nationally seven teams registered to participate with the Tullamore team completing the event in a time of 1h 55m 20s, thereby securing top spot on the national leader board and retaining the John Treacy Marathon Relay Challenge title.

Globally, 88 teams registered to participate with the Tullamore team finishing second overall. 50 students from three schools (i.e. Coláiste Choilm, Sacred Heart School and Tullamore College, *pictured below at the conclusion of the challenge*) in Tullamore participated; and our thanks and congratulations is extended to these schools for their continuing support of this programme.



Pillar 2 - Increase adult & older adult participation

The Partnership is committed to reducing sedentary living among adults and older adults; and increasing the number of adults and older adults taking part in regular physical activity.

A range of actions to address these objectives were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2016, and were delivered on. These included: -



Operation Transformation

Linked to the Operation Transformation programme, the Partnership delivered a 3 / 5k family walk in Cloghan using the Cloghan slí for almost 150 people as part of Operation Transformation's national walk day in January.

Thereafter, Cloghan GAA continued to host a weekly walk on Saturday mornings for the duration of the televised Operation Transformation programme.

Learn 2 Run

Continuing our collaboration with Athletics Offaly, Learn 2 Run was delivered in Clara in 2016.

50 people took part in the initial Learn 2 Run programme; and following its success, Clara Athletics Club was established.

Furthermore, Athletics Offaly hosted a summer road race series of seven events with an average turnout of 300 people per event.



Bike Week

Bike Week took place from Saturday 11th to Sunday 19th June with cycling events all over the country, organised by local authorities, community groups, charities and cycling groups.

Offaly Sports Partnership in conjunction with Offaly County Council, the HSE and An Taisce supported the delivery of a range of events by cycling clubs for almost 170 adults in Birr, Edenderry, Ferbane and Tullamore.



Birr meet & spin 2016

Older people in sport

Two programmes were offered to increase the participation of older people in sport and physical activity: -

i. **Over 50s boccia programme -**

Coordinated by the Partnership and funded by Go for Life, this programme aims to encourage older people to be more active more often.

Across the two over 50s boccia programmes (January to March; and October to December 2016), just over 200 older adults participated in regular physical activity

ii. **Go for Life Games**

Also coordinated by the Partnership and funded by Go for Life, this programme aims to encourage older people to become involved in recreational sport.

Local leagues are organised by the Partnership and participants can qualify to represent Offaly at the annual National Go for Life Games. 50 older people participated in the local league with 12 going on to represent Offaly at the national games.



The Offaly team at the Go for Life Games 2016

Pillar 3 - Include the least active

By far, the Partnership's largest area of work, we are committed to delivering measures to involve, sustain and mainstream the inclusion of underrepresented groups in sport and physical activity in the county.

Eight underrepresented groups (*i.e. 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*) continue to be prioritised for intervention. A range of actions to achieve this objective were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2016, and were delivered on. These included: -

People with a disability

Aoife Byrne, our Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO) continued to deliver programmes for people with disabilities in 2016.

Programmes were delivered to support the participation of people with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities; as well as those experiencing mental health difficulties. Sport Inclusion Development Programme highlights of the year included: -

- Community transformation programmes delivered for people with intellectual and sensory disabilities, and people experiencing mental health difficulties
- Pan disability recreational sport programmes including boccia and walking programmes
- Pan disability inter schools sports days for schools with special education needs units, hosted by local post primary transition year students
- Pan disability inter services sports days
- Pan disability Easter and summer camps
- The establishment of integrated sports clubs / training sessions including football for all, karate and tag rugby



*Sports Inclusion Development Programme activities
(inter schools sports days & midlands boccia)*

Across all the programmes delivered, 650 people with disabilities have been afforded opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity programmes. For more information on our Sports Inclusion Development Programme, see Appendix 2 (*Sports Inclusion Development Programme update for 2016*) or contact our SIDO, Aoife Byrne on 057 93 46843.

Ms Byrne also delivered a number of education and training programmes (*see pillar 5, inform the sector and improve capacity for more information on these programmes*), outside of her part time role as SIDO.

People of an ethnic minority

The primary programme delivered in support of this target group was the Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP).

The academy continued to run in Portarlington in 2016. The long term goal of the academy is the visible participation of persons of a migrant background at all levels in mainstream athletics in numbers, which at a minimum, is reflective of the

new make-up of Irish society.

Between 30 and 50 children participated regularly on the programme. Nine of these (seven Nigerian and two Irish) claimed 14 national medals (six gold, four silver and four bronze) in club, school and community games events. Furthermore, one former member of the Academy of Palestinian / Lithuanian heritage represented Ireland internationally.



Additionally, the Partnership is in discussions with Athletics Ireland regarding the replication of the programme in other parts of Ireland subject to the securing of additional funding to do so.

Finally, the project was positively profiled by the Irish Times in August 2016. To view the article, see [“Olympians of tomorrow sprint from ranks of capital’s new Irish”](#).

The unemployed

Funding secured under the Dormant Accounts Scheme via Sport Ireland allowed the Partnership to deliver two foundation community coaching training programmes for the unemployed in 2016.

Additional funding secured also allowed the Partnership to deliver level 2 and level 3 community coaching training programmes for the unemployed, with a specific focus on employment skills for the leisure industry, in conjunction with Laois Sports Partnership and Portarlington Leisure Centre.

For more information on community coaching training programmes for the unemployed, see pillar 5, inform the sector and improve capacity.

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 community sector.

Older people *(see increasing adult and older adult participation under pillar 2 heretofore)*

Pillar 4 - Integrate & celebrate

In keeping with the Partnership's inclusive vision, we seek to ensure that people of all backgrounds and abilities living in Offaly will have the opportunity to integrate into, and be visible within our county's organised sports clubs and facilities.

Furthermore, as a county which loves sport and strives towards a more vibrant sports culture, the Partnership will seek to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of Offaly's sports' people.

A range of actions to address these objectives were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2016, and were delivered on. Progress in achieving these objectives is detailed below.

Integration

i. People with a disability

2016 has seen unprecedented growth in the establishment of integrated clubs as a result of the Partnership's Sports Inclusion Development Programme (SIDP) led out by our Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO), Aoife Byrne. Among the clubs newly established / continuing to be supported are: -



- Two Football for All clubs (pan disability) - Derry Rovers Football for All and Mucklagh Football for All kindly hosted by Derry Rovers and Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls soccer clubs
- Tullamore Tigers Tag Rugby (tag rugby for adults with intellectual disabilities) kindly hosted by Tullamore Rugby Club



Tullamore Tigers competing at a local tag rugby blitz



- Inclusive martial arts delivered with the support of Braveheart Shotokan Karate and Birr Judo Assist



- St Joseph's Special Olympics

ii. *People of an ethnic minority*

Additionally, as a result of our work in SPORTSHALL Athletics and the Integrated Academy for Athletics Performance (IAAP), the visibility and participation of people of an ethnic minority background within mainstream sports, and specifically in the sport of athletics is improving.



In 2016, a former participant on our SPORTSHALL Athletics programme set a new national indoor triple jump record. Furthermore, a second athlete, also introduced to the sport through the programme secured a third level sports scholarship.

In 2016, nine of our IAAP participants (seven Nigerian and two Irish) claimed 14 national medals (six gold, four silver and four bronze) in club, school and community games events. Furthermore, one former member of the Academy secured her selection for Ireland to compete on the international schools team.



Celebration

As mentioned heretofore, 2016 saw Offaly Sports Partnership celebrate its 10th anniversary which was marked by the hosting of a gala event to recognise and acknowledge sporting achievements, and the contribution of volunteers to sport over the last decade.

Pillar 5 - Improve capacity & Inform the sector

In keeping with two of the primary functions of sports partnerships as identified by Sport Ireland, this pillar is concerned with: -

- Improving capacity of the wider sports, physical activity and recreation sector by providing education and training; and
- Acting as an information hub for the wider sports, physical activity and recreation sector

A range of actions to address these objectives were written into the Partnership's operational plan for 2016, and were delivered on. These included: -

- i. The delivery of a variety of education and training programmes for older people, service providers, sports volunteers, students and the unemployed
- ii. The provision of information and support to the wider sports, physical activity and recreation sector
- iii. Inter agency cooperation to increase sporting and recreation opportunities in Offaly

i. Education & Training

In 2016, the delivery of education and training programmes was our second largest area of work. This was primarily due to the availability of Dormant Accounts funding which ensured our support of community coaching programmes for the unemployed and sports leadership training programmes for students; along with our standard education and training programmes made available to the wider sports, physical activity and recreation sector. Education and training programmes delivered included: -



Child protection training

Nine Safeguarding 1 programmes and one Safeguarding 2 programme were delivered to 165 sports volunteers.

A workshop was also held on the “*National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016*”

Community coaching for the unemployed

Two foundation community coaching programmes for the unemployed were delivered in Tullamore and Clara for 37 participants. Of the 37 that participated on the courses, 35 completed the courses; and 16 participants expressed interest in volunteering with local sports clubs and organisations or progressing into further training thereafter.



Participants from our Tullamore and Clara Community Coaching programmes

The Partnership also worked with Laois Spoons Partnership and Portarlington Leisure Centre to develop level 2 and 3 community coaching programmes with a focus on qualifications for the leisure industry.

Of the 16 participants expressing interest in progressing their sporting career, five availed of the level 2 community coaching programme with four completing the programme. Of these four, two availed of the level 3 community coaching programme.

A number of the participants who successfully completed the range of community coaching programmes have since secured employment in the leisure industry and we wish them well in their future careers.

Disability awareness training



Five disability awareness training programmes were delivered to 140 participants from students to teachers and young people to service providers.

Participants on disability awareness training programmes

- i. 50 students from Tullamore College and Oaklands Community College, Edenderry availed of disability awareness training. The students then delivered four week physical activity programmes for children with disabilities in seven schools (four in Tullamore and three in Edenderry), culminating in the hosting of inter schools sports days.
- ii. 20 staff members from a variety of service providers availed of disability games training. The trainees went on to deliver adapted physical activity programmes for

their service users thereafter.

- iii. 30 people availed of disability inclusion training as part of the Partnership's community coaching programme for the unemployed. Participants went on to support our Sports Inclusion Development Officer in the delivery of inclusive Easter and summer camps.
- iv. 20 teachers from four schools availed of inclusive PE training which was delivered with the support of DeafHear, the Irish Wheelchair Association sport (IWAs), Laois / Offaly Families for Autism and the National Council for the Blind in Ireland (Offaly branch).
- v. 20 young people availed of disability awareness training as part of their Foróige Youth Citizenship award.

Go for Life physical activity leader training

The Partnership delivered the first four workshops in Go for Life's physical activity leader training programme for 25 older people from 10 active retirement groups.

A number of these leaders have since begun to deliver physical activity sessions with their peers.



Sports leadership for young people



Four level 1 sports leadership programmes were delivered for 55 students from two post primary schools (Gallen Community College, Ferbane and Tullamore College).

Of the 55 students that participated on these programmes, 50 students were certified by Sports Leaders UK as having reached the qualification standard.

Sports specific coaching

Four sports specific courses were delivered to 161 participants including students and sports volunteers.

- i. Boccia - 80 students from two schools (Banagher College and Coláiste Choilm, Tullamore) availed of boccia training via Irish Wheelchair Association sport (IWAs). These students then delivered six week boccia programmes with Ballinagar and Cloghan IWA services
- ii. Cycle Leader training - 11 volunteers availed of Cycling Ireland cycle leader training. Five went on to assist in the delivery of cycling activities as part of Bike Week 2016 with their local club.
- iii. Football for All - 30 volunteers from two soccer clubs (Derry Rovers, Edenderry and Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls) availed of Football for All training. Volunteers then went on to lead “football for all” sessions in their clubs; and have since established “football for all” groups within their club structure. Derry Rovers also hosted “football for all” blitzes and summer camps in 2016.
- iv. Special Olympics Floorball - 40 students from Tullamore College availed of Special Olympics Floorball training. Floorball is one of the newest team sports to join the Special Olympics programme. Similar to hockey, ice hockey and unihoc, it is played indoors in a 4 v 4 format. Following the completion of their training, the students worked with St Joseph’s Special Olympics on an eight week Floorball programme introducing the concept of the game to the athletes. It is anticipated that the athletes will participate in local, regional and national Floorball blitzes in 2017 as a result of this intervention.



ii. Information provision

In 2016, the partnership continued to develop its online presence via its website, www.offalysports.ie and its social media platforms (Facebook, Flickr and YouTube/OffalySportsPartnership; and Twitter @OffalySP).

Having this online presence allowed for instantaneous communication with our stakeholders with regard to funding opportunities; and also allowed the Partnership to ensure that opportunities for engagement in the wider sports, physical activity and recreation sector were promoted.

iii. Inter agency cooperation

Inter agency cooperation has assisted the Partnership in promoting sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities in Offaly for people of all ages and abilities.

Funding has been secured to continue to develop local sports, physical activity and recreation infrastructure; as well as developing and delivering participatory sports, physical activity and recreation opportunities in the county.

Conclusion

(as per SPEAK return 2016)

In conclusion, 2016 was a busy but fruitful year for Offaly Sports Partnership.

The year saw continued investment possibilities under the Dormant Accounts Disbursement Fund. The Partnership applied for additional funding under the community coaching and sports leadership strands; and were successful in securing same. Offaly also applied for funding under the Dormant Accounts Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub (CSPA) strand; and were successful in securing same. Preliminary work on the Crinkle CSPA commenced at the end of 2016, and roll out of activities should commence in the first quarter of 2017

Funding also became available mid year under Sport Ireland's Community Sports Development Officer Project Fund. While an application was made, unfortunately the Partnership was not successful in securing funding at this time. However a second application has been made under this fund for 2017.

2016 also saw Offaly Sports Partnership celebrate its 10th anniversary marked by the hosting of a gala event to recognise and acknowledge sporting achievements of the decade. The contribution of volunteers to sport was also recognised as part of this celebration.

The year also saw the Partnership finalise and publish its new strategic plan (our third) and long term framework guiding the work of Offaly SP, "Active Offaly, 2016 - 2020". Its aspiration is of an active generation for whom sport and physical activity is important; is part of their regular lifestyle; and is instilled within the county's population for future generations. The framework is underpinned by five pillars: -

1. Instill fundamentals and Improve youth fitness
2. Increase adult and older adult participation
3. Include the least active
4. Integrate and Celebrate
5. Improve capacity and Inform the sector

In implementing the new strategic plan and framework, Offaly Sports Partnership will continue to draft annual operational plans which will form the basis of our work under the five pillars; and which has been reported on herein. However as with the nature of this work, results can only be seen over time.

The Partnership's most successful areas of work to date have been: -

- The delivery of innovative interventions for children and young people
- Programmes designed to increase participation particularly among low participation groups such as people with disabilities, people of an ethnic minority, older people, women and the unemployed
- Provision of education and training allowing for improved capacity among clubs, organisations, sports coaches, teachers and volunteers; resulting in greater integration and participation.

It is anticipated that continuing work in these areas will address the objectives and strategic outcomes identified under each of the four Sport Ireland outcome areas: -

- i. Increasing levels of participation
- ii. More sustainable infrastructure
- iii. Greater access to education and training
- iv. Local Sports Partnerships as information hubs

However cognisance also needs to be taken of how the Partnership's interventions will address additional national frameworks, such as Healthy Ireland's Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 - 2025, and Healthy Ireland's Get Ireland Active, the national physical activity plan for Ireland

The staff of the Offaly Sports Partnership are also conscious of the need to move to a results based planning and management structure. Our new strategic plan goes some way in assisting this process by baselining indicators of children's fitness in the county for ongoing monitoring. Exercises in planning will be undertaken in 2017 to help refine a process for ongoing successful monitoring of our work through a results based lens

For further information on the work of Offaly Sports Partnership, contact the office on 057 93 57462, by email to sports@offalycoco.ie, visit www.offalysports.ie or follow us on [Facebook/OffalySportsPartnership](#) and [Twitter/OffalySP](#) or check out our [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#) sites.

Appendix 1

Baseline fitness indicators for Fit School Monitor

(established 2014 / 2015)

Class	No. Tested	Mean Time	Top 5%	Top 15%	Top 50%	Top 85%	Top 95%
1 st	413	13.70	11.62	12.14	13.32	15.30	16.32
2 nd	425	13.67	11.29	11.79	12.98	14.65	16.17
3 rd	415	12.30	10.46	10.99	12.04	13.65	14.63
4 th	441	11.82	10.16	10.60	11.60	13.04	14.15
5 th	473	11.62	9.98	10.49	11.37	12.81	14.23
6 th	378	11.00	9.43	9.82	10.73	12.07	13.59

Table 1 - Boys 60m speed test

Class	No. Tested	Mean Time	Top 5%	Top 15%	Top 50%	Top 85%	Top 95%
1 st	386	14.21	12.19	12.78	13.99	15.44	17.08
2 nd	372	13.65	11.72	12.40	13.50	14.92	16.12
3 rd	414	12.91	11.09	11.65	12.73	14.19	15.35
4 th	393	12.34	10.74	11.15	12.13	13.45	14.59
5 th	408	11.87	10.24	10.68	11.71	13.08	14.10
6 th	374	11.43	9.81	10.34	11.36	12.64	13.31

Table 2 - Girls 60m speed test

Class	No. Tested	Mean Score	Top 5%	Top 15%	Top 50%	Top 85%	Top 95%
1 st	371	210m	250m	235m	210m	190m	175m
2 nd	427	215m	255m	245m	220m	195m	170m
3 rd	425	230m	265m	255m	230m	205m	190m
4 th	449	235m	265m	260m	240m	210m	195m
5 th	474	240m	280m	265m	245m	215m	195m
6 th	407	250m	300m	285m	255m	225m	200m

Table 3 - Boys 1 minute sustained run test

Class	No. Tested	Mean Score	Top 5%	Top 15%	Top 50%	Top 85%	Top 95%
1 st	351	205m	240m	230m	205m	190m	175m
2 nd	367	210m	250m	235m	215m	195m	175m
3 rd	419	220m	255m	250m	225m	200m	190m
4 th	400	230m	260m	255m	230m	205m	200m
5 th	422	235m	275m	260m	240m	210m	200m
6 th	379	240m	280m	270m	245m	220m	200m

Table 4 - Girls 1 minute sustained run test

Appendix 2

Sports Inclusion Development Programme update for 2016

(submitted to the Health Services Executive as a condition of their contribution (35%) towards the salary costs of the Partnership's Sports Inclusion Development Officer)

Fáilte / Welcome

With support from Sport Ireland and the Health Services Executive, Offaly Sports Partnership continues to employ a Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO), Aoife Byrne on a part time (three days) contract.

The SIDO's role is to: -

1. Support the delivery of physical activity and sport programmes with the aim of increasing the number of people with disabilities (including mental health difficulties participating in sport and physical activity; and
2. Create opportunities for improved quality of life for other target groups (e.g. disadvantaged communities, low income communities, migrants, older people, people with a disability, the unemployed, travellers, women and girls, youth at risk) of Offaly Sports Partnership

In an effort to address these objectives, the SIDO has delivered a range of physical activity and sport programmes for people with disabilities; and delivered two community coaching programmes for the unemployed; as well as leading out on the delivery of a level 1 in sports leadership for young people (delivered with the kind permission of Sports Leader UK). The following pages will give an overview of the SIDO's in 2016: -

January

Operation transformation



In conjunction with Bury Quay we delivered a walking / jogging programme as part of their Operation Transformation project. The programme began with a weigh in for all participants on Monday, 4th January; followed by the commencement of the walking programme on Wednesday, 6th January. The participants then went on to meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in Tullamore Town Park to take part in the programme. Weekly weigh ins, diet and nutrition talks, and demonstrations on healthy eating were also available; while the participants also followed the Operation Transformation television programme, and went on to reap the combined benefits of healthy eating and physical activity.

Irish Wheelchair Association / Transition year bocchia

A new partnership between the Irish Wheelchair Association, Ballinagar and Coláiste Choilm, Tullamore, which we hope will continue into the future; this programme is an integrated Bocchia league hosted by transition year students.



The programme began with a training day for the students which entailed learning how to play and officiate a bocchia game; and how to organise a tournament. On Tuesday, 12th January, the first round of the league was played. The programme ran for a further three weeks with the Irish Wheelchair Association securing the title in its inaugural year. The programme was an excellent way of promoting inclusion while also developing students' skills in the areas of disability awareness and inclusion. The Irish Wheelchair Association participants enjoyed the interaction with the students; and the competition between the teams.



transition year students.

In addition to the Sports Inclusion Development Programme activities delivered in January, a pilot *level 1 qualification in sports leadership* was delivered in Tullamore College for

The level 1 qualification in sports leadership (accredited by Sports Leaders UK) provides students with the necessary skills to lead simple physical activity and sport sessions with groups in schools, the community and in clubs. 30 students participated on the programme, and as part of their leadership module led "couch to 5k" session for fellow students as part of the college's community transformation programme. This programme concluded with a 5k run in the Tullamore Harriers.

February

Inter schools sports day for schools with special education needs units, Tullamore



Monday, 1st February saw the delivery of our popular inter school sports day for schools with special education needs units. Once again, Coláiste Choilm Tullamore were happy to provide us with a facility and to assist us with the delivery of the day.

Adam Clark from Special Olympics Leinster attended this event, acting as Master of Ceremonies for the day; while David Hannon (a local Special Olympics athlete) presented certificates and gave a brief oration on his achievements with Special Olympics, and the positive impact Special Olympics has had on his life. The programme continues to grow with excellent feedback from all involved, and it is hoped to expand the programme in September.

National Council for the Blind in Ireland (Offaly branch) gym programme

Delivered in conjunction with Aura Tullamore, this programme offers people with sensory disabilities the opportunity to experience a range of exercise classes such as spinning, resistance and weight training, etc. The programme also promotes social inclusion and integration in leisure facilities.

Midlands bocchia league

The third round of the Midlands Bocchia League, a pan disability cross county (Offaly / Westmeath) programme, took place in February.



Disability inclusion training



Disability
Inclusion
Training

Delivered in conjunction with the CARA Adapted Physical Activity Centre, and on behalf of our community coaching programme, 30 people from a variety of backgrounds took part in this training.

In addition to the Sports Inclusion Development Programme activities delivered in February, delivery of a *community coaching programme for the unemployed* commenced in Tullamore. The community coaching programme provides the unemployed with the necessary skills to lead out physical activity and sport programmes in the community; as well as providing participants with the skills for employment in the industry, or opportunities for further education in the sports sector. 12 people took part in the programme.

March

Disability awareness

As a result of a presentation delivered by the SIDO at an “Additional Needs Seminar” in the Tullamore Court Hotel where members of Inclusion Ireland were present; the SIDO delivered a presentation on Disability Awareness and Sports Inclusion to Ballinamere Foróige on Friday, 4th March.



Midlands boccia league

The final round of the Midlands Boccia League took place in March. Offaly’s Irish Wheelchair Association (team 1) secured the title in a hotly contested game against Shooting Stars from the National Learning Network, Athlone.

Inclusive Easter camp

In support of the work experience module for community coaching in Tullamore, participants supported the delivery of an inclusive easter camp from the 22nd to 24th March. 26 children participated over the course of the three day camp.



April



Irish Wheelchair Association / Transition year boccia

An existing partnership between the Irish Wheelchair Association, Cloghan and Banagher College, this programme is also an integrated four week Boccia league hosted by transition year students.

Get Active with Fitsquad

Delivered in conjunction with Fitsquad Edenderry, this programme is a fitness programme for adults with intellectual disabilities.

CARA Regional Meetings

The CARA APA Centre held their regional meetings for SIDOs across the month of April. These meetings provide an opportunity for SIDOs to meet each other and discuss programme ideas and work plans. A representative from Sport Ireland, Declan O'Leary, also attended this meeting to discuss his vision of making disability sport and inclusion a priority for all sections of Sport Ireland.



The main focus of these meetings was around education and training, and reporting procedures. The launch of the 2016 National Inclusion Awards were also discussed, and having previously had a winner from Offaly in 2015, we would love to see our county represented again. If you would like to find out more about these awards, please visit the website



Boccia referee training

In support of our Midlands Boccia League, staff and service users were trained in the officiating of the game to ensure the long term sustainability of the programme. Training sessions were delivered in Birr and Tullamore for over 20 people.

May

Walking challenge

Ofaly Sports Partnership's annual walking challenge recommenced in May and ran until July. The programme is an amalgamation of various walking challenges (e.g. Get Ireland walking 21 day challenge, Irish Heart Foundation step / time / distance challenge, etc) , and encourages participants to walk as far as they can in the two month period. Birr, Edenderry and Tullamore walks were peer led with almost 100 service users from seven services (Community Mental Health Services, KARE, the Muiriosa Foundation, National Learning Network, RehabCare, Riverview Resources and St Cronan's Day-care Services) taking part and aiming to complete either 19k, 29k, 39k or 40k+ distances during the course of the challenge.



Inclusive Karate

With the support of Braveheart Shotokan Karate, karate taster sessions for children with disabilities and their siblings, and people with disabilities was held. Following the success of the taster sessions, a club was established and now trains regularly in Tullamore.

Offaly Public Participation Network (PPN) Community Supports for Disabilities Open Day
On Monday, 23rd May, the Offaly PPN hosted an open day to promote local community supports available for people with disabilities. Guest speakers, Adam Harris (ASIAM); and Martin Naughton (Áiseanna Tacaiochta) provided an insight into the sector. Workshops were delivered on yoga for children, massage, reflexology, special needs clinics, "our community connections", diet / health / nutrition and Judo Assist. There were also a number of information stands showcasing local support and opportunities for people with disabilities, among them Offaly Sports Partnership and our physical activity and sports supports for people with disabilities.

In addition to the Sports Inclusion Development Programmes delivered in May, delivery of a *community coaching programme for the unemployed* commenced in Clara. The community coaching programme provides the unemployed with the necessary skills to lead out physical activity and sport programmes in the community; as well as providing participants with the skills for employment in the industry, or opportunities for further education in the sports sector. 18 people took part in the programme.

June

National Council for the Blind (NCBI) in Ireland (Offaly branch) tandem cycling

The NCBI summer tandem cycling programme resumed on Wednesday, 15th June in Lough Boora as part of Bike Week 2016. A successful event facilitated by NCBI, Wolftrap Cycling Club and Tullamore Cycling Club; tandem cycling sessions are held every month from June to September. Many thanks to those involved in the facilitation of the sessions.



Tullamore Tag Rugby



In June, Tullamore Rugby Club established Disability Tag Rugby in their club. Disability Tag Rugby is aimed at adults with intellectual disabilities and takes place every Monday from 10 - 11am.

Officially launched on the 7th July, the Tullamore Tigers tag rugby team have begun preparations to compete in upcoming games and blitzes commencing in August.

July

Inclusive Sports Day

Our annual inclusive sports day was held on Monday, 18th July in Coláiste Choilm Tullamore. Over 130 participants from a range of services across the county took part in a variety of activities delivered by Braveheart Shotokan Karate Club, Tullamore Basketball Club, Tullamore Soccer Club, Tullamore Rugby Club, Tug of War, Offaly GAA, Offaly Sports Partnership and service staff. Guest of honour on the day was Eoin Carroll of Offaly GAA.



Riverside Summer Camp

On Tuesday, 19th July, the SIDO delivered a sports session as part of the Riverside Therapy Summer Camp. The camp targeted 12 children with physical disabilities ranging from pre-school age to 18 years of age.

National Council for the Blind (NCBI) in Ireland (Offaly branch) summer camp

On Friday, 22nd July, the SIDO supported the NCBI in the delivery of a summer camp for children with visual impairments and their siblings. A great day of target games, relays, races and sports was had by all.

National Learning Network Awards Night

On Thursday, 21st July, the SIDO attended the National Learning Network (NLN) Awards night in the Town House, Tullamore. It was wonderful to see so many participants from our programmes receiving their certificates from NLN; and we wish them continued success in the future

Football for All

On Thursday, 28th July, Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls Soccer Club hosted an information evening on the "Football for All" programme. Nick Harrison, FAI Football for All Development Officer was in attendance.



A workshop on Football for All will take place in September / October to assist the club in progressing this initiative.

August



Edenderry Football for All

Following the success of the Edenderry Football for All programme, the club hosted a Football for All blitz recently; and followed this up with a Football for All summer camp in August.

Tullamore Tigers tag rugby

Following their official launch in July, the Tullamore Tigers tag rugby team played their first game against Mullingar Lions tag rugby team. Preparations continue apace for upcoming local and national blitzes, and exhibition games at upcoming Leinster matches.



September

Transition Year (TY) Disability Awareness

8th September saw the SIDO deliver TY Disability Awareness training to 20 TY students from Coláiste Choilm Tullamore.

Following their participation on this training, the students led out a four week programme of physical activities with four schools hosting special education



needs units. The programme culminated in October with an inter schools event.



Inclusive Karate

An inclusive karate club hosted by Braveheart Shotokan Karate continues to train every Monday from 6.30 - 7.30pm on the premises of Tullamore Educate Together national school. New members always welcome!

Football for All workshop

Oisín Jordan, the Football Association of Ireland's National Football for All Coordinator, delivered a Football for All workshop for 30 coaches, parents and volunteers from Derry Rovers Soccer Club and Mucklagh Schoolsboys / Schoolgirls Soccer Club.



Participants will now be putting their skills to use in supporting the continued running of Football for All in Derry Rovers Soccer Club; and in establishing Football for All in Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls Soccer Club.

October

Inter schools sports day for schools with special education needs units, Tullamore



Thursday, 13th October saw the delivery of our popular inter school sports day for schools with special education needs units. Once again, Coláiste Choilm Tullamore were happy to provide us with a facility and to assist us with the delivery of the day. We were delighted to welcome Daingean National School

to the ranks of the participants on the day.

Vicky Glavin from Special Olympics Leinster attended the event and gave a brief oration on her achievements with Special Olympics. The programme continues to grow with excellent feedback from all involved, and it is hoped to expand the programme to Edenderry in the coming months.

Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls Football for All

Mucklagh Schoolboys / Schoolgirls Soccer Club hosted their first Football for All session in Mucklagh Community Centre on Thursday, 20th October. Sessions continue every Thursday from 7 - 8pm in Mucklagh Community Centre. Come along and join Offaly's newest Football for All group!



In addition to the Sports Inclusion Development Programme activities delivered in October, a *level 1 qualification in sports leadership* was delivered in Gallen Community College for transition

year students.

The level 1 qualification in sports leadership (accredited by Sports Leaders UK) provides students with the necessary skills to lead simple physical activity and sport sessions with groups in schools, the community and in clubs. 30 students participated on the programme. Additional courses will be rolled out in Edenderry, Gallen and Tullamore in 2017.

November

Transition Year (TY) Disability Awareness

Following the success of our TY Disability Awareness programmes in Tullamore, November saw this programme extended to Edenderry.

24 students from Oaklands Community College



underwent disability awareness training; and similar to our Tullamore programme are now delivering a four week programme of physical activities in three schools (Oaklands Community College, Scoil Bhríde and Gaelscoil Éadaoin Doire). The programme will culminate in December with an inter schools event.

Special Olympics Floorball



In an extension of our TY Disability Awareness training; and with the support of Special Olympics Leinster, we are now piloting sports specific coaching in Special Olympics disciplines.

40 students from Tullamore College participated in Floorball training; and are now coaching and playing floorball with members of St Joseph's Special Olympics Club.

December

Inclusive Physical Education (PE) for All

Following the success of our pilot "Inclusive PE for All" training delivered to teachers in 2015, a second programme was delivered in Scoil Bhríde Edenderry in December.

This workshop was delivered with the support of DeafHear, the Irish Wheelchair Association,

Laois / Offaly Families for Autism (LOFFA) and the National Council for the Blind in Ireland; and focuses on giving practical tips on making school PE lessons more inclusive for children with disabilities. Four schools participated on the day (Clonbullogue, Daingean, Scoil Bhríde, and Walsh Island national schools). It is anticipated that additional workshops will be delivered throughout the county, commencing in 2017.



Inter schools sports day for schools with special education needs units, Edenderry



Monday, 12th December saw the inaugural delivery of our popular inter school sports day for schools with special education needs units in Edenderry.

Oaklands Community College were happy to provide us with a facility and to assist us with the delivery of the day. 50 pupils /

students from the Oak Centre and Scoil Bhríde were in attendance on the day.

Nuala O Donovan from Special Olympics Leinster, and Lisa Dillon from KARE Special Olympics Club were our guests on the day, giving brief orations on their work with; and their achievements with Special Olympics respectively.

A second programme is planned for 2017, and will include Disability Awareness training, and delivery of a four week physycial activity programme with schools hosting special education needs units culminating in an inter schools event in the new year.

Finally, Offaly Sports Partnership would like to thank Sport Ireland, the Health Services Executive and Offaly County Council for their support of our Sports Inclusion Development Programme; and we look forward to working with you in 2017.

For more infomration on our Sports Inclusion Development Programme, please contact our Sports Inclusion Development Offcier Aoife Byrne on 057 93 46843 or by email, check out our website, follow us on Facebook and Twitter