



THE
IRISH SPORTS
COUNCIL



AN CHOMHAIRLE SPÓIRT

LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS

SPEAK Report 2011



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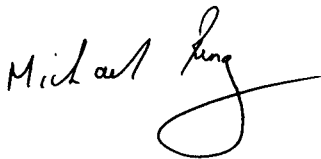
Message from the Minister for Tourism & Sport

I am pleased to launch the fifth report of the national network of Local Sports Partnerships. The SPEAK Report for 2011 covers the work of 32 LSPs across the country. It also represents the achievements of the network on the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the first LSP sites.

I am delighted to note that the network continues to meet the 50% matched funding recommendation of the Fitzpatrick Report (2005). In 2011 over 55% of the network's funding was generated from local sources. This is a strong endorsement of the quality, value and impact of the work of Sports Partnerships at grassroots level.

I would like to acknowledge the very positive contribution that the Sports Partnerships make to their local communities and in particular to those who are considered harder to reach e.g. socially excluded groups and people with a disability. The LSPs are working to provide quality sustainable participation opportunities for groups and individuals at local level. I commend their work and the ongoing support and commitment of their boards and committees.

I am again delighted to be associated with the continued achievements of the LSP initiative and look forward to seeing their contribution to the health and well being of Irish society grow in future years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Ring', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Ring T.D.

Foreword

On behalf of the Irish Sports Council, we are delighted to welcome the fifth SPEAK Report, which provides an overview of the work of the national network of 32 Local Sports Partnerships in 2011.

The Council recently launched its Strategy Statement for the next 3 years and again highlighted that the LSP network lies at the heart of the Council's work on participation. Over the last 10 years the LSPs have improved awareness of sport, increased demand for sport and physical activity programmes and increased opportunities and provision of sport and physical activity across the country. For example:

- The LSP network has been a vital mechanism to deliver the Code of Ethics Basic Awareness training. Over 23,400 people have attended the training through the LSPs. This represents two-thirds of all the people trained.
- Over 1,200 people have attended the Club Children's Officer training through the LSP network. This accounts for over 80% of all the people trained.
- The LSP network has also been instrumental in delivering national programmes to groups such as the unemployed, people with a disability, older adults and primary school teachers.

This report is an important resource for both the Council and the LSP network. It assists the Council in assessing the impact of the work of the LSPs and also draws attention to the range and diversity of the programmes in operation throughout the country.

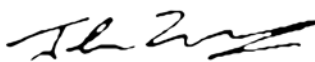
The network continues to deliver a large volume of high quality targeted initiatives at local level. In this year's report we have focused in on a small number of case studies that demonstrate best practice in programme delivery. A number of these case studies deal with the challenges of delivering to target groups including disadvantaged communities, travellers and the unemployed.

Each year the Council is encouraged to see the excellent support given to the LSP network by statutory, community and voluntary groups across the country. In the current difficult economic times it is all the more heartening to see local support to LSPs increasing.

Finally, the Council extends its sincere thanks all who have contributed to this report and also to those who have been involved in the delivery of the programmes and projects at local level.



Kieran Mulvey
Chairperson
Irish Sports Council



John Treacy
Chief Executive
Irish Sports Council

Key Findings

This report is the fifth annual report of the Local Sports Partnerships (LSP) network using the SPEAK self-evaluation system. It reflects the work of the full national network of 32 LSPs for 2011. The report has added significance as 2011 was the 10th anniversary of the first LSPs in existence.

Background, Funding and Resources

- The LSP network is a central pillar of the Irish Sports Council's plans for increasing participation in sport to 45% by 2020
- Over €12.7m was invested in the network in 2011. This figure includes benefit-in-kind funding
- Funding from the Irish Sports Council accounts for 44.6% of the total LSP funding in 2011, the remaining 55.4% is raised from other sources. These figures include benefit-in-kind funding
- 457 people served on LSP boards in 2011, representing an average of over 14 people per board
- In 2011, 111 people worked full-time on behalf of the LSPs. 65 were directly funded by the ISC. A further 35 people worked part-time within the LSP structure, 3 of whom were funded by the ISC.

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2011

Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

- In 2011, LSPs have provided 8,974 sports clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding
- 3,325 groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities
- 1,011 groups have been supported with regard to developing their organisational or management structures
- LSPs planned and delivered 208 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies
- 9,529 people participated on these courses.

Delivering Irish Sports Council Programmes

Buntús

- 1,045 primary school teachers in 105 schools received Buntús Generic training in 2011
- 1,811 childcare practitioners in 466 childcare centres received Buntús Start training in 2011
- A total of 17,515 primary school teachers have received Buntús Generic training since the inception of the programme
- 333,997 pupils in primary schools have benefited from this Buntús Generic training.

Code of Ethics

- 6,505 participants completed 448 Code of Ethics Basic Awareness courses
- 489 participants completed 45 Club Children's Officer Courses.

Programme Delivery

- 180,068 people participated in 853 locally delivered participation programmes
- 267 of these 853 programmes were new programmes started in 2011 leading to 38,177 people participating
- An additional 22,390 female participants took part in 145 local Women in Sport programmes
- 49 of these Women in Sport programmes were new programmes started in 2011 leading to 5,695 people participating.

Building and Sustaining Partnerships

- In 2011 LSPs played an important role in facilitating 163 networks and forums
- LSPs were also actively participating on 252 local committees and networks.

Information Provision

- Over 158,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information.

Sustaining the LSP Network

- Although a relatively recent addition to the sports infrastructure, all the evidence produced to date demonstrates that the LSPs have become a success
- There is a wide range of sports and physical activity programmes available throughout the LSP Network; programmes that had not previously been provided on such a comprehensive basis and would not be undertaken were it not for the LSPs
- 2011 saw the production of two independent reviews of particular relevance to the LSPs, the findings of which were both positive and encouraging. The Women in Sport review concluded that the Irish Sports Council's Women in Sport initiative had led to an increase in participation by this group and had also led to an increase in the profile of women's sport
- The Sports Inclusion Disability review concluded that the programme has been a direct contributor to increasing levels of recorded participation in sport and physical activity among people with a disability
- Both reviews highlighted the opportunities for LSPs and NGBs to work better together to improve coordination of delivery
- LSPs must take a strategic approach with regard to programme delivery and continue to explore ways to develop and deliver programmes and participation opportunities in a sustainable manner
- The LSP network must ensure that partner buy-in is maintained to enable LSPs to better achieve the goal of increased participation in sport and physical activity.

1

Background, Funding and Resources



1.1 Background to LSP Network

The Irish Sports Council (ISC) in its first strategy - A New Era for Sport - promoted the notion of Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) that would co-ordinate and promote participation in sport at a local level. The first eight LSPs were established in 2001. Over the next seven years the LSPs were rolled out on a phased basis, to become a national network operating in and covering every area of the country in 2008.

The LSP network is a central pillar of the Irish Sports Council's plans for increasing participation in sport to 45% by 2020. Increasing participation in sport and physical activity requires multi-sectoral efforts involving agencies from education, transport, environment, health and sporting bodies at national and local level across private and voluntary groups. The ISC has been active in generating support from all these sectors both directly and through the agency of its national network of Local Sports Partnerships. The ISC has recognised that the Partnerships are an excellent mechanism for delivering recreational sport to local people and addressing specific gaps in the sports sector.

The LSPs' mandate is to create a sustainable structure for all Irish people to become involved in sport at a level of their choosing, regardless of their ability, gender or background.

Some of the outcomes we seek are:

- Club development
- Volunteer training
- Enhanced planning of sport at local level
- Local directories of sports bodies & facilities
- School, club, community and National Governing Body (NGB) links
- Increased levels of local participation, especially amongst specific target groups such as older people, girls and women, people with disabilities, unemployed people and those who live in identified disadvantaged communities.

2011 was the 10th anniversary of the first LSPs in existence. With their partner agencies, the LSP network has been a phenomenal success in improving awareness of sport, increasing demand for sport and physical activity and in increasing opportunities and provision of sport and physical activity across the country. Over a 10 year period:

- The Irish Sports Council has invested €40.6m directly in the LSP network. This figure includes investment of €1.4m in Women in Sport programmes through the LSPs.
- LSPs have generated over 50% of its funding (include benefit-in-kind funding) from local sources since 2008.
- The LSP network has been a vital conduit for the delivering and dissemination of the Code of Ethics and Child Protection training and education. 23,420 people have attended Code of Ethics Basic Awareness training delivered by LSPs. This accounts for two-thirds of all people trained.
- 1,247 people have attended Code of Ethics Children's Officer training delivered by LSPs. This accounts for 84% of all people trained (the remainder being trained by NGBs).
- 17,515 primary school teachers have attended Buntús Generic training.

- National sports programmes for the unemployed (Link2BActive), sports leaders (Active Leadership), people with a disability (Sports Inclusion Disability Programme) and older adults (Go For Life) have been rolled out through the LSP network.

The ISC's role as developer of the LSP network and funder of programmes allows the efficient and effective delivery of national policy to local communities. The LSP network is a central pillar of the Irish Sports Council's participation strategy.

This report is the fifth annual report of the LSP initiative. It reflects the work of the full national network of 32 LSPs for 2011.

1.2 Project Funding Sources

Funding from the Irish Sports Council accounts for 44.6% of the total LSP funding in 2011, the remaining 55.4% is raised from other sources. These figures include benefit-in-kind funding.

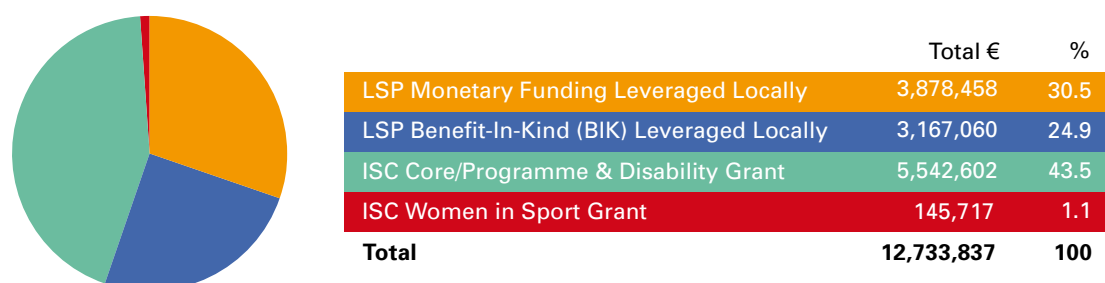


Figure A – Total funding received by LSPs in 2011

After core funding from the ISC, the Local Authorities were the next most significant source of monetary funding and in-kind support for the LSP network in 2011. Other significant funders of the network were the HSE, VEC, and An Post.

Irish Sports Council funding to the LSP network reduced by over €428,000 or 7% from €6.11m in 2010 to €5.68m in 2011. This reflects the reduction of €2.6m in the Council's own budget.

LSP monetary funding leveraged locally has also reduced by over €400,000. However, in-kind support for the LSP network has increased by almost €229,000 and now accounts for almost one quarter of overall LSP support.

Total LSP Funding has decreased by €603,704 or 5% (net) in 2011. In light of the economic difficulties being experienced by the statutory sector this reduction does not come as a surprise. Despite this decline in funding, the investment of €12.7m in sport-promoting functions at local level is still considerable.

The Council is once again pleased to note that 50% of network costs are being provided locally. This follows a recommendation from the 2005 Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of the Local Sports Partnership programme.

1.3 LSP Management and Staff

Boards of Management Participation and Representation

- A total of 457 people served on LSP boards in 2011, representing an average of over 14 people per board.
- On average 23 hours were committed by each management committee, including the work undertaken by board sub-committees in 2011.

The Local Authority, VEC and HSE continue to be the three biggest participants on LSP Boards of Management.

LSP Staff

The moratorium on recruitment in the public service continues to raise practical difficulties for LSPs under the aegis of Local Authorities, particularly in relation to LSP staff on fixed term contracts. In common with previous years, this remains a significant challenge to the Network and is one which will need to be managed for the foreseeable future.

LSPs have core staff which are funded by the ISC and personnel funded through other sources. Along with co-ordinators and administrators, many LSPs employ Sports Development Officers and/or Sports Inclusion Disability Officers (SIDOs). In 2011, LSPs also provided placements for interns and jobseekers seeking work experience and an opportunity to develop skills (on Government schemes such as Jobsbridge and Tús).

In 2011, 111 people worked full-time on behalf of the LSPs. 65 were directly core funded by the ISC. A further 35 people worked part-time within the LSP structure, 3 of whom were funded by the ISC.

	Male	Female	Total
Full time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies	42	69	111
Part time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies	14	21	35
Total	56	90	146

Figure B - LSP personnel across the network¹

The LSPs also contracted a further 344 tutors to deliver programmes, courses and initiatives within the LSP structure.

¹ Figures include people working with LSPs on work placement and internship schemes

2

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2011



2.1 Introduction

The extensive work of the LSP network is characterised as falling under four main headings:

- Promoting the sustainability of the local sporting infrastructure by supporting club, coaches and volunteers
- Working to increase levels of local participation, especially amongst specific target groups
- Building sustainable partnerships across local sports clubs, agencies and working partners to influence and support sports and physical activity provision
- Acting as a provider of information about sport and physical activity at a local level to create awareness and drive opportunities.

2.2 Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

Sustainable club development is a key priority for LSPs. They work with local sports clubs and groups to ensure that local structures are in place to enable people to participate in their chosen sport or physical activity. Sports Partnerships also ensure there are local opportunities for volunteers and coaches to develop their skills and improve the quality of sports participation in their communities.

Funding Work

In 2011, LSPs have provided 8,974 sports clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding. LSPs have worked directly with 1,981 of these clubs to assist them in developing funding applications.

Club Development Work

In encouraging individuals to be more active, LSPs ensure that there are sustainable quality pathways for their lifelong participation. The LSPs continue to support existing providers of sports and physical activity across the country and work with sports clubs, communities and individuals in order to introduce new sports opportunities. To this end, in 2011:

- 3,325 groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities
- 1,011 groups have been supported with regard to developing their organisational or management structures
- A further 1,040 groups were assisted in tackling development or policy issues.

This support work assists clubs to improve and develop and better assists them to attract and retain members. For instance, LSPs advise and help clubs in the areas of club planning and in the development of policies in the areas of membership, disability awareness, social inclusion, health and safety and child protection.

Training and Education Courses

LSP provide quality opportunities for education and training at local level for volunteers, coaches and administrators.

- LSPs planned and delivered 208 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies
- 9,529 people participated on these training courses.

Similar to previous years the most popular courses run by LSPs were Club Development Courses, Disability Awareness/Inclusive Games Training, Go For Life PALS Training and Walking Leader Training.

2.3 Delivering Irish Sports Council Programmes

There are two flagship, national Irish Sports Council programmes: Buntús and Code of Ethics.

Buntús

The Buntús Start and Buntús Generic programmes provide an important opportunity for LSPs to engage with pre-school and primary school going children and their teachers. Since their introduction, over 382,000 children have been beneficiaries of both programmes.

In 2011, the work of LSPs with primary schools and childcare centres has led to the following results:

	Buntús Generic			Buntús Start		
	(2009)	(2010)	2011	(2009)	(2010)	2011
No of schools/childcare centres that received training	(241)	(142)	105	(416)	(536)	466
Number of teachers/practitioners who were trained	(1,859)	(1,125)	1,045	(1,536)	(1,802)	1,811
Total number of children that received training	(28,094)	(17,738)	17,721	(8,237)	(9,280)	14,835

Figure C - Summary of Buntús Generic and Buntús Start outputs for 2009, 2010 and 2011. Figures in brackets are for 2009 and 2010.

	Buntús Generic	Buntús Start
Total number of schools/centres that received training (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start)	2,570	2,156
Total number of teachers/practitioners trained	17,515	7,814
Total number of children in trained schools/centres (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start)	333,997	48,123

Figure D - Buntús Generic and Buntús Start outputs since the inception of the programmes

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics training programme targets sports leaders and adults involved in the organisation of sport for young people to promote child welfare and protection policies and procedures.

The Code of Ethics programme consists of two workshops:

- A 3-hour basic awareness training module for leaders within sports club and
- A further 6-hour club children's officer workshop to support club children's officers in the implementation of the code in their clubs.

In 2011, 6,505 completed Basic Awareness training on 448 courses run by the LSPs. This represents an average of 14 courses per LSP per year, an increase of 16% compared to 2010.

	Basic Awareness			Club Children's Officer		
	(2009)	(2010)	2011	(2009)	(2010)	2011
No. of courses delivered	(386)	(384)	448	(23)	(29)	45
No. of participants	(5,598)	(5,580)	6,505	(259)	(313)	489

Figure E - Summary of Code of Ethics outputs for 2009, 2010 and 2011. Figures in brackets are for 2009 and 2010.

2.4 Programme Delivery

LSPs respond to emerging local needs by identifying, developing and implementing specific, targeted programmes to directly increase the levels of local participation particularly amongst the target groups. In 2011, LSPs continued to develop and deliver a range of suitable and innovative participation programmes:

- 180,068 people participated in 853 locally delivered participation programmes
- 267 of these 853 programmes were started in 2011 leading to 38,177 people participating
- An additional 22,390 female participants took part in 145 local Women in Sport programmes
- 49 of these Women in Sport programmes were started in 2011 leading to 5,695 women and girls participating.

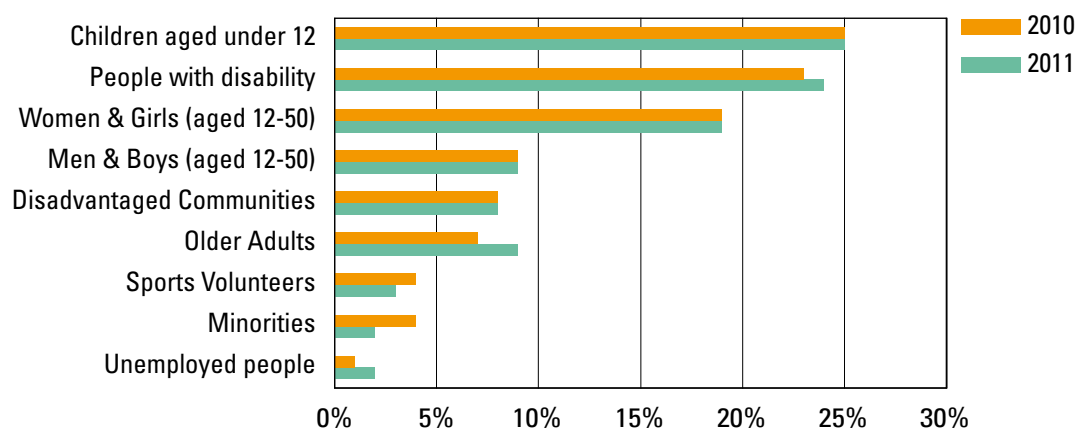


Figure F - Breakdown of primary target groups in LSP local programmes in 2010 and 2011

The LSP network has focused on delivering quality participation opportunities to groups and in 2011 LSPs (working with partners) were responsible for delivering almost 1,000 programmes at local level primarily. These 1,000 programmes share the underlying goal of increasing local participation in sport and physical activity in a sustainable and value for money way.

However, the range of programmes delivered by LSPs is extensive and varied. They vary greatly in their structure, format and methodology. Some programmes are flagship events and attract many hundred, indeed thousands of participants - for example mass participation cycling or running events, week long sporting or walking festivals or once-off sports taster days.

Others programmes, particularly those aimed at the most marginalised and hard-to-reach groups are much smaller, more focused and targeted. For example, many programmes aimed at people with a disability or travellers have as few as 10 participants and are often aimed at reducing or removing barriers to sports and physical activity participation. These smaller participation numbers allow for greater concentration of efforts which enables long-term sustainability and legacy-potential.

The Irish Sports Council and LSPs share the view that this mix of variety is the best way of ensuring programmes that are initiated locally are relevant and best placed to meet local needs. Sustainability of initiatives is increased when local groups are enabled to generate bottom up solutions and assist in delivery and implementation.

Further detail on specific programmes aimed at target groups are included in Section 3 of this report.



Participants from the Easter Golf Camp as part of Cavan Sports Partnership's 'Active Communities' programme with Cavan Golf Club.

2.5 Building and Sustaining Partnerships

Networks and Forums

In 2011, LSPs have been to the forefront in the promotion of a wide range of networks and forums at local and national level. LSPs have played an important role in facilitating 163 networks and forums.

These Forums bring together sports clubs, agencies, volunteers and other working partners across the LSP network and provide a framework to influence and resource sports and physical activity across the country. They promote the profile and work of the Partnerships, but more importantly increase the reach of the LSPs. Networks and forums act as a conduit to communicate the message of the importance of sport and physical activity to the community and are also a sounding board for advice and recommendations as to what the LSP can do to assist sports clubs and partners.

Some examples of forums that LSPs established in 2011 were:

- Kerry Sports forum was established to allow sports clubs a forum to express views as well as contribute to the promotion and development of sport in the County
- Cork Coaching forum provides coaches/volunteers and leaders of underage sporting activities in Cork access to relevant, up to date and appropriate material, training and information.

- Offaly Cycle forum was established to examine the barriers and explore strategies to increase participation in cycling in Offaly
- Longford Sports Ability forum consists of nine members which represent disability groups in Longford to guide a strategic approach to development and sports inclusion.

Awareness-Raising and Committee Work

This sub-section looks at local activities in which LSPs engage in order to promote the key message of the Local Sports Partnerships - this may involve membership of relevant local committees or structured involvement in awareness raising events.

LSPs monitor the number of awareness-raising events in which they have played an active role. In 2011, LSPs participated in 340 such events. Examples of these events include National Play Days, Positive Aging Week, Intercultural Days, Social Inclusion Week, information seminars and other presentations and talks to groups and committees in their local areas. These events assist in highlighting the work of the Partnerships and the importance of sport in community life.

In 2011, LSPs were also actively participating on 252 local committees and networks.

2.6 Information Provision

LSPs have a key role in acting as information hubs and points of contact. They enable more sharing of information and offer a common meeting ground, along with specific access and signposting information. They aim to act as a strong link between those who wish to participate and those who provide opportunities for participation. Clubs and sports volunteers recognise that their relationship with the LSPs links them into a meaningful sports and physical activity network and a source of expertise.

In 2011, over 158,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information. This represents a 13% increase in interaction with the wider public.

Almost 9,400 individuals from all target groups have dropped into a LSP in person in 2011, representing a 37% increase in direct contact between LSP teams and their local communities.

LSPs are making more use of on-line resources for information provision through websites and social media. The number of LSPs using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube continues to grow. 29 LSPs now use Facebook and are harnessing its potential for promotion, networking, exposure and information sharing.

For example, Facebook was used with success when targeting women to enter the Tipperary Mini-Marathon. This method of communication draws upon the aspects of mutual support and social bonds which help to attract women to sport. Of the 800 who participated in this event, over 435 (via an online feedback mechanism) expressed the opinion that they 'liked' the event. This type of poll is also important in sustaining women's interest and has potential to be used as an intervention tool in the future.

3

LSP Programme Case Studies



3.1 Introduction

LSPs are a key mechanism for the delivery of opportunities for sport and physical activity to the population and in particular to hard-to-reach groups who are not engaged in mainstream sports. The LSP network has focused on delivering quality participation opportunities to groups and in 2011 almost 1,000 programmes were delivered at local level primarily by the LSPs (working with local partners).

This section presents good practice examples of interaction with key target groups leading to capacity building of volunteers and sustainable participation.

3.2 Volunteerism

Sport in Ireland is supported by vast amounts of voluntary activity. A 2010 report on the *Economic Impact of Sport in Ireland* developed by Indecon consultants for the Irish Sports Council estimated that almost 270,000 people participate in some form of sport-related voluntary activity in over 12,000 sports clubs across Ireland.

The future of Ireland's participation in sport is dependent on attracting, retaining and upskilling people to give of their time to support community-based sports participation. The vital contribution of volunteers is recognised and valued by LSPs. Hence LSPs provide a range of training programmes, resources and supports for volunteers to grow and sustain their involvement, and to maximise the effectiveness of their voluntary time.

Limerick City LSP's Volunteer Inspired Participation (VIP) Programme is a good example of LSP work in this area.

Case Study:

Volunteer Inspired Participation (VIP) Programme (Limerick City LSP)

Introduction

The VIP (Volunteer Inspired Participation) Programme was established to train young people between the ages of 17-23 years old, to deliver sport to children in their local community. This year-long mentoring programme was piloted in 2011 and proved very successful with 80% of the participants carrying on to third-level education, with many studying sports-related courses.

Programme Outline

Limerick City LSP identified the need to develop a targeted mentoring programme in the area of sports, targeting youth in the regeneration areas of Limerick City.

Limerick City Sports Partnership had engaged with many young people and youth groups on various projects and it became evident, that there was a need to educate local young people, who could become role models for younger children.

The LSP consulted with potential stakeholders in the programme - young people, voluntary bodies and statutory organisations, some national governing bodies and the *Get BACK Challenge*. The LSP also consulted with the Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF) in Limerick City, who would become a key partner and nominating body for this programme.

The primary target group was 17-23 year old males and females who were nominated through YPFSF funded projects in Limerick City. These young people were trained in a mentoring programme, and then went on to develop and deliver sports and physical activity programmes for younger children in Limerick City's regeneration areas.

The programme aimed to:

- Educate and equip young people with the skills to volunteer and deliver sport to children in their local community
- Ensure that each young person would achieve at least three formal coaching awards
- Induct the young people into the business of sports coaching and community sport.

LSP staff spent time training and mentoring the young people in planning, organising and delivering safe and enjoyable sports sessions to local children across a number of different sports. Once the young people were competent and qualified they began to volunteer giving at least three hours per week based in the communities of Moyross and Southill or bringing local children to the pool at the University of Limerick.

While they were delivering these courses to their peers in their communities, the LSP worked further to mentor and guide them and show them ways to improve and make sessions more productive.

After a number of weeks, the young volunteers became more comfortable delivering sports sessions and the amount of mentoring work and feedback from the LSP team gradually decreased. As they became more confident and competent leaders, the LSP were able to offer more programmes and activities to community groups thus increasing the number of sports available in the communities.

The young volunteers formed a strong working relationship with their local groups as a result of the fact that they knew the group members and were quite close in age to them.

Outputs

During 2011, through this programme, over 1,000 young people benefitted from coaching and physical activity programmes.

The programme had a horizontal impact across other elements of the LSP's community programmes. The VIP programme provided integral support for 18 additional community programmes which included Saturday clubs, after-school clubs, Gardaí diversion sports programmes, youth clubs, swimming lessons and summer programmes.

Furthermore, prior to engaging with this programme, many participants indicated that they had little interest in progressing to 3rd level education. As a direct result of the programme, 10 young people who participated in the programme enrolled in college courses with seven participating in sports courses.

Sustainability

The young people who participated on this programme continue to volunteer in their own communities. Through their work more sports activities and opportunities for participation are offered to their peers and other younger people. Community groups have reported significant benefits through this training and mentoring. These community groups and projects are now interested in promoting other young people on the 2012 VIP programme.

Next Steps

Limerick City LSP plan to run this programme in 2012 with new young volunteers. The new recruits will attend four training courses and volunteer in the local community. They will also have regular contact with the volunteers from the 2011 programme, who will help mentor them and give them feedback on ways to approach certain situations.

It is hoped that when the second year's programme is up and running, time can be spent on developing a more female-orientated programme that encourages girls to attend courses and volunteer in the community.

'The VIP programme is a great programme as I got the opportunity to try a load of new sports and meet new friends. The programme helped me learn how to be a better coach and all the volunteering hours helped build my confidence in coaching. I learned that I really enjoy coaching and this programme showed me that I wanted to have a career in sport in the future. I am now studying Business Studies with Sport in Limerick Institute of Technology and am regularly volunteering with my local clubs'. – Padraig Reale, Programme participant



Fun on the greenparticipants enjoy the benefits of the VIP Programme

3.3 Disadvantaged Communities

Social disadvantage has a very large impact on the likelihood that an adult plays sport. Analysis from the *Sporting Lives* research published by the ISC and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) reveals that social disadvantage greatly lowers the chances that someone will take up an individual sport that is likely to be continued as an older adult. Those from less advantaged backgrounds who do play sport when young are, therefore, likely to drop out. Therefore LSPs have been to the forefront in reaching out and delivering participation opportunities in disadvantaged communities.

Case Study:

Kid Gloves Primary School Boxing Programme (Fingal LSP)

Introduction

The Kid Gloves Boxing Programme was developed by Bracken Boxing Club and Fingal Sports Partnership to:

- Introduce new boys and girls aged 9 -13 years to the skills and disciplines of amateur boxing
- Promote a non-contact, fun introduction to boxing within schools
- Build sustainable links between the primary schools and a local club.

Programme Outline

Following a series of meetings between Bracken Boxing Club and Fingal Sports Partnership the structure of the programme was developed based on Fingal LSP's Sports Conditioning programme (with specific boxing skills included). A coach from Bracken Boxing Club delivered skills sessions in four local primary schools for six weeks. Children progressed through a range of basic skills from week to week. Teacher involvement was encouraged to enable them to continue the boxing theme in their Physical Education (PE) classes after the programme had ended. A Development Officer from Fingal County Council's Sports Office supported the programme and attended at least 1 session in every school.

The programme was complemented with fun-focused, non-competitive Sunday morning skills sessions which were run in the boxing club. These sessions took place outside normal club hours so that the new participants could become familiar with the gym in a non-competitive, relaxed environment.

Outputs

413 children participated in the programme in 2011.

Sustainability

The coach for the programme comes from the local boxing club, which provides a constant school-club link in the programme.

Following the completion of the programme, a presentation night of the certificates was held in Bracken Boxing Club, acting as a club open night where parents got an introduction and insight into the club.

55 of these participants from four schools attended the club's open night and of the 55 children in attendance 17 ultimately joined the club. 12 new joiners were girls – this allowed the club the opportunity to register girls in the club for the very first time. The club's membership has also increased with the programme bringing in new boys for the Under 10's section.

Next Steps

Fingal Sports Partnership are going to continue to support Bracken Boxing Club's Kid Gloves Programme. Additional ISC funding for expansion of the programme will be invested in another club (Baldoyle Boxing Club) to try and improve both club perception and membership numbers there.

'Simply the best and most motivating 'outside' PE I've experienced as a teacher. I've learnt a great deal from the coach' – Michael Harrington (St. Molaga's Senior National School)



Participants learning new skills in Fingal LSP's Kid Gloves Boxing Programme

Local Sports Partnerships also work with members of the travelling community to increase levels of participation in sport and physical activity.

Case Study:

Travteen Youth Project (Donegal LSP)

Introduction

The All-Ireland Traveller Health Study published in 2010 highlighted that Traveller women and men die 12 and 15 years earlier, respectively, than their settled peers. It is well known that levels of physical activity have a major impact on health and therefore on an individual's life expectancy. Therefore Donegal Sports Partnership developed the Travteen Youth Project to promote physical activity and sport within the Youth Traveller Community in Co. Donegal. The programme was developed in consultation with young Travellers, the Traveller community and other relevant local stakeholders. The programme also aimed to provide an education to young Travellers around the benefits of sport and education to their physical and mental health and to support young Travellers to actively participate in sports which they would not normally engage with.

The project incorporated a wide variety of programmes that are tailored to meet the cultural needs of the targeted groups:

- Young women's group aged 9-18 years
- Boy's group aged 12-15 years
- Young men's groups aged over 16 years.

Programme Outline

Donegal Sports Partnership worked in association with the Donegal Travellers Project to prepare a programme of physical activity for 2011. The programme was prepared in consultation with the young Travellers, leading to the roll out of five initiatives for participants aged 9 to 18 years.

The activities included:

- Surfing sessions to promote water safety in July (aimed at girls aged 12-17 years). Five further lessons were held in September & October – 12 girls took part.
- A six week soccer coaching programme focusing on developing soccer skills, team work and tactical awareness in preparation for the National Soccer Blitz aimed at 12-15 year olds – 10 boys participated.
- Sports Taster sessions including basketball, tag rugby, soccer and GAA. Aimed at 9-11 year olds – 40 participants took part.
- Introduction to Surfing/Paddle Boarding Sessions to promote water safety and build confidence – aimed at 12-15 year olds – 10 boys took part.
- A Hill-Walking Initiative – Promoting hill-walking and positive mental health – aimed at 12-18 year olds – 20 participants took part.

Some challenges were identified whilst running the programme. These included building capacity of the young people, in particular the young women's group based on their self-perception, e.g. the thought of wearing wetsuits was initially off-putting for some. Also, getting buy-in from some families where there was a phobia of water-based activities was a challenge.

Outputs

92 young people aged between 9 – 18 years took part across the five initiatives.

Other outcomes identified following the completion of the programme included:

- Increased capacity building among those who participated
- Personal goal setting and overcoming fears for some
- Promoting self-image which can impact on the activities some young people may remove themselves from, due to physical appearance/ gender
- Great feedback from all programmes - in particular with the young women's group who actively participated in activities, which historically they would not have attended
- Increased awareness of the natural high that physical exercise can provide along with health and well being
- An awareness to maintain the connection with physical exercise into adulthood.

Next Steps

Ongoing development and support for young Travellers and incorporating physical activities has become a core part of the informal education programme delivered at the project. The programme is currently being finalised with young Travellers and parents. Demand levels appear to be high with young Traveller women also accessing boxing clubs for the first time. Attempts to secure funding are currently underway.

Some positive feedback received from the participants included:

- *'Never thought it would be such craic'* - boy aged 12 years
- *'Instructor was cool and helped me a lot'* - boy aged 15 years
- *'Didn't think I'd get standing up'* - girl aged 13 years
- *'Jumping off the pier has helped me overcome my fear of getting into the water'* - girl aged 12 years



Participants in Donegal LSP's Travteen Youth Programme

3.4 People with a Disability

Sport plays a major role in the lives of people with disabilities – be it as participants, organisers and/or spectators. Sport can and should play a major role in integrating people with disabilities into society. However, there is a range of well-documented barriers to full participation in sport and physical activity for people with disabilities. In 2011 the Irish Sports Council committed to further supporting the development of sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities, by investing over €441,000 (based upon a matched funding contribution) towards the development of the Sports Inclusion Disability Programme. This funding enabled the continuation of the work of 17 Sports Inclusion Disability Officers (SIDOs) in 20 LSPs with an additional fund available to non-SIDO LSPs to develop sport for people with a disability within their county. Through this Sports Inclusion Disability programme LSPs are working to provide available opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in a variety of sports and physical activities.

In mid 2011 a review of the Sports Inclusion Disability programme highlighted a number of positives to the programme. The review found that:

- It is clear that the programme has, since inception in 2007, been a direct contributor to increasing levels of recorded participation in sport and physical activity among people with a disability
- Sports Inclusion Disability Officers have, without doubt, provided a substantial range of opportunities which have engaged people with disabilities at a variety of different levels - from 'Come & Try' taster sessions to engaging people to take part in 'sustained blocks' of activity through to some committing to on-going activity (and membership) within club settings
- Successful projects are clearly driven by an understanding of the needs of people with disabilities
- There is no doubt that the SIDO programme has also helped to raise awareness and has allowed people with disabilities of differing ages and abilities to be identified, facilitated and supported to become more physically active.

Case Study:

Surf2Heal (Sligo LSP)

Introduction

Surf2Heal is a non-profit initiative which was created in 2008 by Garretstown Surf Club in Kinsale, Co. Cork with the aim of introducing surfing to children and young people with autism.

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) ran a pilot *Surf2Heal* programme in August 2010 and following the positive feedback from local parents and children decided to deliver a week-long camp in July 2011. There was a significant demand for inclusion on the programme from parents of young people with autism.

Programme Outline

The Sports Inclusion Disability Officer with SSRP linked with the National *Surf2Heal* Committee/Coordinator to put in place dates and details for the programme and to share resources such as equipment, volunteers and expertise to help run a successful programme.

A letter detailing the programme was distributed to all families of young people with autism in County Sligo and the programme was advertised on both SSRP and *Surf2Heal* websites. Participants were selected on a first come, first served basis with a maximum of 14 participants.

The development of the *Surf2Heal* programme involved a partnership approach with input from the many partners including Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, *Surf2Heal* National Committee, Sligo Autism Services, Sligo Parents Support Network, County Sligo Surf Club, Point Break Surf School and Irish Surfing Association.

The main aims of the programme were:

- To introduce young people with autism to the sport of surfing
- To enhance social interaction of participants with one another and also with volunteers
- To encourage young people with autism to take up the sport of surfing on a regular basis.

Over 35 volunteers were involved in supervising and assisting on the programme. Prior to their inclusion all volunteers received training in the areas of Child Protection, Autism and Disability Awareness and beach/surf safety. The programme ran for one week with surfing as the sole focus.

Outputs

Sligo *Surf2Heal* took place in July 2011 with 14 young people with autism participating in a week-long camp.

This camp enabled the participants to increase their activity levels and their confidence in the water. It also gave them an important social outlet where they could feel comfortable and interact with instructors and volunteers in a meaningful way. A number of the children who took part had engaged in little or no physical activity previously.

Some additional outcomes of the programme included:

- Increased confidence levels in participants both in and out of the water
- Enhanced social interaction amongst participants/volunteers
- A pool of enthusiastic volunteers created
- A genuine affinity and interest in surfing and water-based participation was created with a number of participants.

Sustainability

Five of the programme participants went on to attend further surf lessons through a qualified instructor with two of the young people now surfing regularly as members of County Sligo Surf Club. The programme also created a pool of enthusiastic volunteers capable of sustaining the activities.

Next steps

It is planned to expand the programme in 2012 and deliver three separate sessions during each day. Depending on the number of volunteers recruited this will enable up to 21 young people with autism to avail of the programme in 2012. SSRP have secured funding from both the Irish Sports Council and local autism service to deliver the programme in 2012.

SSRP has also contributed funding through its special projects grants to buy necessary equipment to be stored with County Sligo Surf Club. This will help to ensure the long term future and sustainability of the programme in Sligo.

‘What an amazing, welcoming group of people. The volunteers and other children were fantastic and the whole experience was brilliant. To see my daughter come out of her shell this week was priceless’ – Mother of 13 year old girl with autism



Participants in Sligo's *Surf2Heal* Programme

3.5 School Completion Programme (SCP)

Research published by the Irish Sports Council has highlighted the important role education plays in determining whether an individual plays sport. Those of lower educational attainment and income are more likely to drop out and less likely to take up new sports. Indeed the *Sporting Lives* research published by the ISC/ESRI found that educational attainment is the single biggest factor in determining whether an individual plays sport.

Acknowledging the key role education plays, in late 2010 the Irish Sports Council, in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills, developed a partnership to work much more closely with the Department's School Completion Programme initiative. The School Completion Programme (SCP) is a Department of Education & Skills initiative that aims to have a positive impact on levels of pupil retention in primary and second level schools and on the number of pupils who successfully complete the Senior Cycle, or equivalent. SCP entails targeting individual young people of school-going age, both in and out of school, and arranging supports to address inequalities in education access, participation and outcomes.

A series of regional workshops between LSP Co-ordinators and School Completion Coordinators and Project Workers were organised. The workshops provided an opportunity for the LSPs to meet with and inform the Coordinators of the 124 School Completion Programme Local Projects, together with their Project Workers, on the work and programmes of the LSPs and how both "programmes" might intersect to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

This engagement led to the development and funding of several LSP/SCP programmes in 2011 with many sustainable outcomes. Here is an example of one run in Co. Limerick LSP.

Case Study:

School Completion Programme (County Limerick LSP)

Introduction

Following the regional workshop between LSP Co-ordinators and School Completion Programme staff in the mid-west region, Co. Limerick LSP staff met with SCP Coordinators responsible for programmes in four locations across County Limerick. Existing programmes, participation numbers, locations and activities to date were discussed. It was felt that physical activity did not rate highly in any of the four locations. LSP staff were given a clear understanding of programmes both for primary and secondary school SCP pupils. It was decided that the SCP Homework Club would be the best initial point of contact to integrate physical activity into the SCP Programme.

Programme Outline

Working with partners such as the VEC, Limerick Youth Services and the FAI a programme was developed to target primary and post primary students who are part of the School Completion Programme in the following five locations: Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale (primary) and Croom, Kilmallock and Newcastle West (post primary).

The programme aimed to:

- Increase physical activity opportunities across the SCP Programme
- Engage more girls in physical activity
- Increase awareness around the benefits of physical activity and nutrition to participants' general health
- Encourage participants to engage in additional physical activity programmes when available at school and in the local community.

The LSP's Sports Development Officer (SDO) delivered programmes to 186 pupils in primary and post primary schools in the five communities. The SDO was supported by SCP staff and PE teachers where possible. A vital element of the programme was the offering of a 90 minute Health and Wellness Seminar for the participants and their parents. These were delivered in three communities. Average attendance of parents was below 50% which underlines the challenge involved in targeting hard-to-reach groups.

The physical activity sessions were linked to the Homework Club where possible so as to encourage the children to participate in both. Programmes ran for a total of 34 weeks across all SCP groups. Average programme activities lasted 7 - 10 weeks. Activities included Boxercise, Kick Fit, Playground Games, Hip Hop, Aerobics and Multi-Sport Blitzes.

Outputs

186 students participated in the programme across the five locations. As well as this achievement, other notable benefits have been identified:

- Three programmes reported an increase in the number of participants in the Homework Club as a direct result of the physical activity being offered
- Three SCP Coordinators stated that teachers had commented on a significant increase in pupils' attention span on days of the LSP programme
- Having participated on this particular programme, many participants have gone on to participate in other LSP delivered programmes. For example:
 - In Kilmallock's SCP, five girls participated in the local *Gaelic for Girls* programme. Four girls have joined the local *Meet and Train* group and six girls are participating in the *Girls Outside* outdoor pursuits programme. Plans are being developed to link these *Girls Outside* participants to the new Climbing Wall and Outdoor Pursuits Club in Kilfinane, Co. Limerick
 - 12 girls from Abbeyfeale/Newcastle West participated in a *Soccer Sisters* Programme
 - On completion of the LSP programme Rathkeale SCP group added additional physical activity to their timetable, starting an eight-week swimming programme
 - Croom SCP continued physical activity programmes on completion of LSP programme.

Sustainability

In addition to the links (identified above) that participants have made with other LSP programmes one significant achievement of the programme has been the recruitment by SCP Coordinators of local volunteers and University of Limerick Physical Education and Sports Science students to support physical activity programmes. This ensures that activities can continue on a cost-effective basis. In addition to this, staff from Abbeyfeale Gym are linking with their school to deliver physical activity and to promote usage of the local gym.

Next Steps

Co. Limerick LSP has been encouraged by this programme to date and following a review are eager to continue elements of the programme in 2012, with a particular focus on the introduction of more participants to local community-based clubs being prioritised.

Schools have also been encouraged to send pupils to participate in other suitable LSP programmes.



Participants on Co. Limerick LSP's School Completion Programme Outdoor Pursuits Activity

3.6 Women in Sport

The Women in Sport (WIS) initiative launched by the Irish Sports Council in 2005 set out to address findings that the involvement of girls and women in sport and physical activity at school age and in adult life has tended to be much less than that of their male counterparts.

The overarching objectives of the Women in Sport programme have been to raise overall physical activity levels among women and to support women's roles within sports organisations.

In early 2011 an independent review of the WIS programme was published. This review highlighted a number of strengths in the WIS programmes run by LSPs. These strengths included:

- Success in increasing the level of women's participation in sport and physical activity as a result of WIS support and funded programmes
- The proactive development by LSPs to increase the number of female coaches, officials and leaders
- The contribution of LSP partners (such as the HSE and VECs) in assisting LSPs to initiate, extend and sustain programmes
- LSPs inclination to design programmes around women's needs (for example, offering women the flexibility to participate at their own pace but still within a group-based setting; this has successfully fostered social bonds and self-efficacy through mutual support)
- Successful programmes that had emerged when NGBs and LSPs linked together to promote the initiative, for example the *Fit4Life* running leagues. This model was identified as one which is extremely effective in increasing female participation and on a highly cost-efficient basis.

While the report suggested a number of recommendations that will impact on the future shape of the programme, the ISC welcomes the fact that the report found that the overall aims of the WIS programme are fully absorbed by LSPs and that the Partnerships have increased the level of women's participation in sport and physical activity.

Wide use has been made of *Meet and Train* groups to engage more women in sport and physical activity. *Meet and Train* groups are weekly walking/running groups, set up and supported by LSPs often in conjunction with local athletics clubs. The objective of the *Meet and Train* group is to provide an opportunity for participants (in particular women) of all ages and levels of fitness to get together to exercise with like-minded people, in a non-competitive environment initially under the guidance of a qualified coach. They provide a great opportunity for women of all ages and levels of fitness to meet on a weekly basis for one hour only and train in a fun and social environment - promoting the message that physical activity is not only good for you but that it also can be enjoyable. There is usually a nominal charge of approximately €2 per session.

These groups serve as a good example of collaboration between NGBs, LSPs and local athletics clubs, which along with the use of mass participation events (e.g. mini marathons) serve to raise the profile and actuality of women's participation.

The best *Meet and Train* programmes run by LSPs build in 'planned withdrawal' from ongoing direct involvement in provision. Where a project has been delivered with success, and the funding used to employ the services of an instructor, women have been encouraged to sustain the activity and to find the funds to pay instructors via, for example, introducing/ increasing session prices. Optimum sustainability is achieved by developing links with local athletics clubs to integrate *Meet and Train* group participants into mainstream club activity as the programme develops.

The development of a *Meet and Train* programme by South Tipperary LSP and Clonmel Athletic Club is profiled in more detail in Section 4.

LSPs also deliver a number of physical activity programmes targeting teenage girls in schools. Programmes are structured with participant's interests in mind and are designed to increase the number of teenage girls involved in long-term regular physical activity through developing more supportive environments in schools.

Case Study:

Sportstaster Programme for Teenage Girls (Kildare LSP)

Introduction

A Sportstaster Programme for Teenage Girls was organised by Kildare LSP in order to increase participation among teenage girls, by giving them an introduction to the sports and physical activity opportunities available locally and linking them to the clubs and groups in their area.

Programme Outline

In the development of Kildare LSP's strategy the alarmingly low level of teenage girls engaging in the recommended level of physical activity was identified. There are approximately 14,000 girls in Kildare between the ages of 10 and 19 years old and national figures show that the percentage of girls who engage in the recommended level of physical activity (60 minutes per day) at 15 years of age is 13%.

Working with Naas Town Council, Kildare VEC, all Sports Clubs and groups, K-Leisure, the HSE and Kildare County Council, Kildare LSP developed this programme to:

- Increase participation amongst teenage girls
- Build awareness of sports activities that are available in Kildare
- Increase membership of local sports clubs.

The programme was designed to give teenage girls a taste of the wide range of various physical activities that are available, not just mainstream sports. All sports clubs and physical activity groups were brought together in one location to demonstrate and promote their activities.

Outputs

The Sportstaster camp ran in Naas Sports Centre. All clubs involved provided resources at the event. Activities included GAA, Soccer, Rugby, Hockey, Martial Arts, Camogie, Archery, Dance, Health and Nutrition, Yoga, Gym, Cycling, Swimming, Athletics and Golf.

Some 500 teenage girls participated in the event. A follow up study revealed that over 20% of the girls that took part on the day registered in the various clubs.

Sustainability

All the clubs involved in the programme reported increased membership. Kildare LSP have also worked with the clubs involved, organising courses, seminars and projects that have increased their capacity to cater for extra members and recruit new volunteers.

Next Steps

Kildare LSP are hoping to roll out a similar programme in the Athy and the South Kildare area in the summer of 2012.

The LSP have also organised after-school dance classes in two schools following the project. There is great demand for dance activities, particularly from teenage girls who do not participate in mainstream sport. This demand became very obvious from the Sportstaster Programme.

The LSP have applied for funding to the HSE to support this initiative.

'I loved the Dance and Gym classes that were given and the instructors were great fun' - Ali O'Brien, programme participant.



Action from Kildare's Sports Taster for Teenage Girls

3.7 Older People

Research commissioned jointly by Go for Life, the National Programme for Sport and Physical Activity for Older People and the Irish Sports Council in 2007, explored attitudes to and participation by older adults in sport and physical activity. It found that only 15% of older people in Ireland are 'healthily active', that is, engage in levels of physical activity 'sufficient to derive health benefits'.

It is also known that older adults are much less likely to play sport than younger adults and that participation rates for playing sport decline with age. LSPs work with older adult groups, and the current generation of older adults, to re-engage them with sport by focusing on sports and physical activities that appeal to older people (such as swimming, cycling and walking).

Case Study: Active Exercise Programme (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LSP)

Introduction

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LSP in association with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) Leisure Services delivered an Active Exercise programme to some 130 adults (male & female) over the age of 55 across three centres each week. The programme created greater awareness of the need for regular physical activity and introduced individuals over the age of 55 to enjoyable and affordable physical activity through the use of public leisure centres while encouraging regular participation.

Programme Outline

The programme originated in 2008, where initially a number of individuals from senior citizens groups in the area had been taking part in a swimming programme on Wednesday mornings in the Monkstown swimming pool.

The proven success of this trial project in the Monkstown Leisure Centre (where 30 people participated each week in gym and outdoor activities followed by a pool session) resulted in extending the programme to two days in this facility and then to two other public centres in the county (Meadowbrook and Loughlinstown). The programme involved a partnership approach with the input from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LSP, DLR Leisure Services, Go For Life and the HSE.

Outputs

130 older adults participated weekly across the three centres. Activities taking place included swimming, gym activities, chair aerobics and line dancing. All activities catered for the beginner where participants could have fun and make new friends. A dedicated member of staff was also on hand to offer advice and coordinate activities. Complementing this activity, Active Exercise activity days were held twice with the support of the HSE. These activity days allowed for participants from all three venues to meet each other and try out new activities. These events helped to keep the participants interested in the programme, meet each other and act as a motivation to keep active. 200 people participated in these activity days.

In 2011, participants were also encouraged to “bring a buddy” who had never gone to one of the weekly sessions in order to give them a taste of the programme. Feedback from participants indicates that these two activity days have now become a constant in many of the participants’ calendars and they look forward to them every six months.

Sustainability

A review of the programme, in 2011, highlighted the positive impact it is having on the participants health and activity levels.

With the gym and other activities costing participants just €2, or €5 to include a swim, this is a great opportunity for older adults to become more comfortable in the gym environment and get active. This minimal weekly participant fee goes to the leisure centre to meet programme costs.

Many of the participants continue to visit the centres either during the set programme hours or in their own time now that they are comfortable using the gym and equipment. In addition there is a constant stream of new people attending sessions.

Participants in this programme have also gone on to take part in events such as the Flora Women’s Mini Marathon (one of whom was aged 81) and joined local walking and sports clubs.

Next Steps

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LSP was successful in its grant application to Go For Life for new equipment to support this programme. Chair aerobics and line dancing were new activities introduced.

In 2012 the LSP is partnering with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and DLR Leisure Services to organise 3 activity taster days catering for 400 older adults including the participants in the weekly programme. It will provide a fun event to work towards and introduce new Go For Life activities.

‘Just to say how much my friends and I enjoyed the fun day in Meadowbrook. Everyone was so nice to us and the organisation was superb. I know these things don’t happen without planning so a very sincere thank you.’ - Active Exercise Participant

‘I will tell all my friends about the facilities here’- Meadowbrook Active Exercise Participant



Participants giving Kurling a try in DLR Leisure Services, Loughlinstown

3.8 Unemployed

Since the start of the economic downturn the LSP network has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at unemployed people in the community. These range from training and education courses aimed at up-skilling the unemployed to improve their employability prospects to more direct programmes aimed at encouraging unemployed people to take more exercise. The 2009 SPEAK report outlined details of the *Link2BActive* initiative developed by South Dublin County LSP to create opportunities for unemployed people to access sports facilities at a reduced rate, encouraging them to participate in recreational activities. The following case study presents details on another LSP initiative for this priority target group.

Case Study: Goal to Work (Mayo LSP)

Introduction

The *Goal to Work* Programme consisted of a 14 week long specialised sports coaching course for jobseekers which aimed to provide participants with the tools to obtain some part-time employment in the area of sports development. The initiative recognised that many unemployed people are interested in sport and aimed to open up employment opportunities for them. The sports involved were soccer, Gaelic football and rugby.

Programme Outline

This sports-coach training programme was based on a pilot project, *Goal to Work*, run by Leitrim County Development Board with the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) in 2009, in which 12 people on the live register trained as soccer coaches. This project was followed by a second training programme in conjunction with Leitrim Sports Partnership that also included Gaelic sports and rugby.

In mid-2010, Mayo County Development Board, along with a multi-agency committee set up specifically for the purpose, developed a Mayo *Goal to Work* pilot programme to train 12 soccer coaches from across the county. This proved hugely successful. 50% of 2010's participants have received work on either a part-time or full-time basis.

Following the success of the pilot in 2010, a committee was formed to run *Goal to Work* in Ballina town in September 2011. Ballina was selected following its identification as one of two towns in Mayo with the highest Relative Deprivation Scores within the Mayo North East geographic area.

The main goals of the programme were to:

- Provide 13 unemployed people with coaching qualifications
- Assist unemployed people with an interest in sport to gain employment as coaches, referees, etc
- Promote physical and mental health and well-being through participation in sport – both for the participants themselves and in the partner schools.

The *Goal To Work* Programme consisted of a 14 week-long (two days per week) specialised sports coaching course for jobseekers which aimed to provide participants with the tools to obtain some part time employment in the area of sports development.

The programme allowed trainees to become fully qualified GAA, Rugby and Soccer coaches. It also included additional sports modules in Child Protection, First Aid, Disability Awareness and Active Leadership. Other modules included information technology, communication skills, career progression routes and curriculum vitae preparation. In addition, training was provided on how to explore setting up a business and further educational opportunities, all of which would help participants to identify possible employment after the 14 week programme.

Participants attended classroom-based activities on the first day. On the second day trainee coaches gained coaching experience through obtaining placement in local primary schools.

The trainees also had to organise a community sports event during the Halloween break utilising the recently developed local authority multi-use games areas.

The development of the *Goal to Work* Programme has involved a partnership approach with input from many agencies (including Mayo Sports Partnership, Mayo North East LEADER Partnership, Mayo GAA, Connacht Rugby, the FAI, Mayo County Council, the HSE, Mayo County Development Board and the Department of Social Protection).

Outputs

Of the 13 participants on the 2011 course:

- Two have taken up internships with NGBs
- Three have gone on to take up further sports education training such as the Sporting Chance programme from the National Learning Network
- Three have continued on in placements with primary schools and Community Sports Co-ordinators
- Three are now working in other areas
- Of the two who remain full time unemployed, one is a member of the Burmese Karen Community who continues to improve his English language skills. Since completing the course, he has commenced coaching and developing physical activity opportunities amongst the Karen community.

Sustainability

Since the course ended, the coaches have brought their new experience and skills to their work in their sports clubs and communities.

For example:

- Five of the course participants/coaches are coaching GAA at club level. One coach is coaching and selecting a senior club team, while two coaches are coaching primary school children. They are coaching under-8s, 10s and 12s at club level and in four primary schools weekly
- Two participants coach rugby in three schools in Ballina weekly, and regularly help out with the Ballina Rugby Football Club. Three of the coaches helped with a 'rugby blitz' in Ballina recently. Their commitments have grown and developed over the past two months. This programme has been a massive success for the IRFU, which is delighted

with the contribution and commitment of the coaches throughout the programme since its completion

- The FAI has also seen an increase in the coaches' participation since December. However, two coaches are unavailable; one has become self-employed and another is in full-time education, which has limited their involvement in the clubs.

Following completion of the programme, the local schools were keen for the coaches to work with the children again. Hence there has been a large increase in the coaches' level of involvement in the schools.

Next steps

Mayo Sports Partnership and Mayo North East LEADER Partnership with the support of the multi-agency committee, hope to deliver *Goal to Work* in East Mayo in 2012 and build on the learning outlined in each evaluation of the programme.

Funding has been secured from Mayo North East LEADER Partnership, the Department of Social Protection, the Irish Sports Council, Mayo County Development Board and Mayo Mental Health Association to build on the programme.

'It's given me some great fun games and ideas that I can hopefully use within the community'
– Programme Participant

'The children at all the levels Kevin coached were really delighted with him. He has a great way about him. The children miss him! Really excellent.' – Breaffy Primary School Ballina



Participants on the 2011 *Goal to Work* Programme

The examples above are just a sample of the many LSP programmes delivered to target groups in 2011. They are designed to give an overview and flavour of the work of LSPs in this key area. They demonstrate how important good programme planning, partner support, volunteer input and consultation with target groups are to programme success. It is only by the presence of these success factors can the many challenges (such as small group sizes, affordability, limitations of LSP resources and effective exit strategies) be overcome.

The impact of work by Local Sports Partnerships is endorsed by this comment from Mr. Eddie Breen, County Manager in Wexford County Council:

'The LSP Programme is a vital support to communities and can be utilized in areas where there are other programme deficits as sport and physical activity is a proven means to achieve other societal goals'²

4

Sustaining the LSP Network



4.1 Introduction

The LSP network, under the auspices of the Irish Sports Council, is demonstrating a real return on investment. Although a relatively recent addition to the sports infrastructure all the evidence produced to date demonstrates that the LSPs have become a remarkable success:

- There is a wide range of sports and physical activity programmes available throughout the LSP network; programmes that had not previously been provided on such a comprehensive basis and would not be undertaken were it not for the LSPs
- LSPs are the main delivery mechanism of opportunities for sport and physical activity to specific hard-to-reach groups
- The capacity of the local sports sector has been strengthened through the delivery of a wide range of training and education courses
- Excellent relationships have been built with schools, sports clubs, community groups and local partners
- More information is available to link those who wish to participate and those who provide opportunities for participation through directories, databases and other resources
- There is greater co-ordination, planning and joined up thinking with regard to local sports development
- Over 50% of the LSP network's funding is generated locally. In fulfilling their sport-promoting functions, LSPs contribute over €12 million annually in expenditure in the Irish economy at local level.

The Irish Sports Council has been carrying out research into the levels of participation in sport and physical activity over the last number of years and the following findings are relevant with regard to the impact of LSPs:

- Overall participation among adults increased significantly between 2003 and 2009. 29.8% of the population participated regularly (weekly) in 2003 compared to 33.5% in 2009.
- More importantly for the LSP initiative there has been a drop in the levels of sedentarism i.e. people who are inactive, from 18% to 15%.
- More women are playing sport now than was the case in 2003. Women's participation rates have increased much faster than men's. In 2003, 70% more men participated than women; the figure was 53% in 2009.
- The increase among adults aged over 50 (another target group for LSPs) has been more significant. In 2003, the ratio of participation between under 50 year olds and over 50 year olds was approximately 2.5:1. By 2009 the ratio was down to 2.2:1.
- In 2003 employed people were 50% more likely to participate than those unemployed; by 2009 the gap was down to 15%.

These increases in participation levels have been achieved through the combined efforts of cross-agency working. The ISC understands that no one agency can achieve the goal of increasing participation by working on its own. It is only by working cooperatively with partners from all sectors that we can achieve the necessary innovation, impact, scale and sustainability. The LSP network has demonstrated the effectiveness and efficiency that true partnering can bring to local initiatives.

A key recommendation of the 2005 *Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of Local Sports Partnerships* was the need for the national network to generate 50% of its own funding from local sources. To date, this has been achieved and the support of all partners has been vital in this regard. This substantial partner 'buy-in' places the network on a more sustainable footing and contributes to the quality and success of individual LSPs and the network as a whole. It is a strong testament to LSPs that local agencies and organisations have chosen to invest in them locally.

Nevertheless, in a dynamic and uncertain environment, the LSP network cannot assume that these past trends will automatically continue into the future. In times of limited resources, when direct funding is scarce, all agencies are carefully examining the best use of resources be it human and/or financial. With LSP partners looking to re-focus their resources there is a risk that sport will lose out. Some partners may see sport as an ancillary element, a secondary component placed at the periphery of their work programmes. Therefore, sport's contribution to wider society and its ability to address the multi-agency issues and deliver on the common aims of health, community and social inclusion need to be emphasised.

In a tightening economic climate the LSP network must re-double its efforts to ensure that partner buy-in is not only maintained, but maintained to enable LSPs to better achieve the goal of increased participation in sport and physical activity. LSPs must engage fully with partners who share the LSP vision, who hold fast to its core objectives and principles, and who are delivering on the ground. The network must seek opportunities to retrench and prioritise those activities that best deliver on LSP aims while also assisting partners to achieve their objectives. The programmes and activities of the LSP network must continue to meet goals of increasing participation in a sustainable way and remain relevant to the needs and interests of local partners.

4.2 Programme Reviews

As referenced in Section 3, 2011 saw the production of two independent reviews of particular relevance to the LSPs, the findings of which were both positive and encouraging. The Women in Sport review concluded that the Council's Women in Sport initiative had led to an increase in participation by this group and had also led to an increase in the profile of women's sport. The Sports Inclusion Disability review concluded that the programme has, since its inception in 2007, been a direct contributor to increasing levels of recorded participation in sport and physical activity among people with a disability.

The WIS review contended that the majority of Women in Sport programmes should be built around NGB structures which are, by definition, normally sustainable. It noted that LSPs do, however, appear to have a stronger handle on both generic and local 'women's issues'. Sophisticated methods of 'cross-selling' to achieve greater synergies must be found. The requirement for LSPs and NGBs to collaborate to deliver opportunities for participation in the wider community in a way that allows a reasonable prospect of sustainability will be a key factor affecting Council decisions around future levels of funding.

Both reviews also highlighted the opportunities for LSPs and NGBs to work better together to improve coordination of delivery.

The Sports Inclusion Disability review noted the need for more work to be undertaken with the NGBs to embed inclusive agendas within their work programmes.

There is a need for greater levels of awareness to be created within the club sector in order to break down barriers. For many mainstream sporting organisations disability is viewed as an 'add-on' activity. Improved opportunity will result from making mainstream programmes more inclusive and must remain a key focus for the Sports Inclusion Disability programme going forward. Now is the time to consider alternative ways of LSP/NGB working but without losing the emphasis and ethos of the programme.

The challenge to work more collaboratively with NGBs and local clubs is one that the network will focus on in the coming year in line with the ISC's Statement of Strategy 2012-2014.

4.3 Programme Sustainability

Both the Women in Sport Review and the Sports Inclusion Disability Review also underlined the primary position that *sustainability* needs to take in the decision-making hierarchy with regard to LSP programme involvement. Sustainability, along with quality are core principles. LSPs must consider how best to deploy available resources while taking steps to limit risks of poor return. LSPs must continue to explore ways to develop and deliver programmes and participation opportunities in a sustainable manner. This requires a strategic approach to be taken with regard to programme delivery, with all programme partners fully aware of the financial and opportunity cost of delivering on initiatives that are not capable of delivering lasting impact. Some of the best LSP programmes may not have an immediate payoff – patience, perseverance and investment are required. In a time of lesser resources it is essential that LSP interventions support long-term participation to ensure any gains are sustained and extended. LSPs need to develop criteria by which to decide if a pilot programme is to be continued in conjunction with project partners.

LSPs can not just make a temporary impact on an individual or a group - for the interventions to be worthwhile they must be lasting and permanent. The most successful LSP programmes offer follow-up programmes or provide structured opportunities for participants to join local, volunteer-led clubs. For programmes to become truly sustainable it is vital that local clubs or alternative partners (or combinations thereof) will have the capacity to support the additional workload that a successful programme may leave them with – after the LSP disengages. In many respects jogging- and running-based activities provide the best examples of how an activity has been continued through established clubs or newly formed networks of fellow joggers.

The development of a *Meet and Train* programme by South Tipperary Sports Partnership and Clonmel Athletic Club (AC) is an excellent example of LSP/Club collaboration on a jogging/running programme with sustainable outcomes:

Case Study:

Meet and Train Programme (South Tipperary LSP)

Introduction

In 2011 South Tipperary Sports Partnership worked with Clonmel Athletic Club to establish the first *Meet and Train* group for women in Clonmel. Following the inaugural Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon in 2010 (which was a joint initiative between North and South Tipperary Sports Partnerships) a gap in the provision of a *Meet and Train* group in South Tipperary was identified. Clonmel Athletic Club approached the Partnership to assist them with the establishment of this group.

Background

The programme aimed to get more women participating in a health-enhancing activity (at a level of their choice) in a fun, social environment, leading to increased membership of the athletic club and to participation in local events, especially the Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon and Annerville 10k Road Run.

Four groups were established catering for four different levels from runner to walker. Each group was assigned an experienced athletic leader to lead each group and provide specific training programmes and advice to participants. The programme started in January 2011 with participants training every Monday evening. Meetings between programme leaders and participants were held regularly to review and develop the initiative.

Organisational, administrative and promotional support was provided by the South Tipperary Sports Partnership. The Sports Partnership also facilitated and subsidised 2 ChiRunning workshops for 25 members of the group. Clonmel AC provided a venue for the programme and leaders on a weekly basis, to plan activities, lead sessions and organise events. Participants contributed €2 at each session. This funded activities for the group such as prizes for events and a social evening for participants after the Tipperary Mini Marathon and at Christmas. Part of this contribution also assisted with the development and activities of Clonmel AC and in particular the juvenile section of the club.

Outputs

The programme was an enormous success with over 300 women taking part during the year, and over 100 women participating in the Athletic Club on a weekly basis.

The group fed into the Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon (which itself saw over 570 women registered) with 83 women from the *Meet and Train* group taking part on the day.

Clonmel AC is a very progressive club which organises and facilitates 24 athletic events in the county such as Interfirm leagues, winter and spring 4k leagues, Annerville 10k Road Run, Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon and the Boston Scientific Half Marathon. In 2011, the number of participants in these events increased due to members of the *Meet and Train* group taking part. For example, in the club's Winter league 4k, women made up approximately 50% of the 172 entries whereas in previous years participation levels for women accounted for 40% of the total 112 entry field. The average entry for this league (run over 7 weeks) was 154 participants. On two occasions there were more women than men participating.

Through increased local awareness of Clonmel AC, and the new links and relationships that were developed through the *Meet and Train* programme the club also saw a notable increase in their juvenile membership.

Sustainability

As a result of the *Meet and Train* group, participation levels in walking, jogging and running in Clonmel AC has increased by over 50% with over 550 participants throughout the club.

As a result of the establishment of this *Meet and Train* programme 50% of the women meet in smaller groups, three to four times a week, and have increased their levels of activity. Many of the participants who now exercise regularly in these smaller groups were sedentary before joining the programme. To meet increased demand Clonmel AC's track is used on Wednesday nights to accommodate extra sessions.

Membership of the *Meet and Train* group continues to grow. For example, group membership increased by 34 members directly after the 2011 Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon. This included one new wheelchair participant who now attends weekly.

Also, participants in other LSP delivered programmes (such as various walking programmes and programmes in disadvantaged areas) have joined the *Meet and Train* programme.

Next Steps

To further enhance the programme in Clonmel AC, all the *Meet and Train* participants will affiliate with Athletics Ireland under their *Fit4Life* programme and the leaders and volunteers will engage in their leadership training. In addition, Clonmel AC intend to work with South Tipperary Sports Partnership to develop a similar programme for men.

In 2012, additional plans are also in place for this programme to further grow and develop with links being established between South Tipperary Sports Partnership, Athletics Ireland and Tipperary GAA to provide opportunities for women in rural communities to be active in a social environment. Two communities with existing facilities (i.e. playing pitch with a walking/jogging track) have been identified to pilot the initiative. STSP will link with the local community groups, GAA clubs and Athletic clubs to enable this programme to be sustainable. *Fit4Life* Leader Award training will be provided by Athletics Ireland to leaders in the community groups to assist them to develop new *Meet and Train (Fit4Life)* groups. The initiative is intended to create a volunteer-led structure capable of catering for sustained personal change through the provision of continuous and ongoing activity. Clonmel AC and the *Meet and Train* leaders will play an integral part for future development in this area.

'I love Monday nights! Since I have joined I feel I have improved my fitness and general running. It is wonderful to meet up with all the other girls, our leader Donna is great - she gets to know people (and their names!). I would not want to give up my Monday nights for anything.' – Stine Teepan, Participant



Members of the *Meet and Train* group at the ChiRunning workshop

Working collaboratively with the LSPs, the ISC will develop a guide on policy and programme priorities which will include assistance on existing programmes and direction on new initiatives. As outlined in the ISC's Statement of Strategy 2012-2014, any guide that is developed by the Council will continue to follow the principle that the LSPs understand best what is required in their local areas. On this basis they can generate the best results and greatest impact from the available resources. The ISC's role is to advise, assist and monitor progression.

With more limited resources LSPs need to be clear about expected outcomes, the likelihood of achieving those outcomes and exit strategies prior to programme commencement. Strategies to withdraw and unlock the LSP's involvement, in a way that offers target groups a pathway to continue participating (through, for example, local club links) needs to be the ultimate goal and the primary consideration in the programme design stage. The enticements represented by immediate returns associated with unsustainable 'quick-wins' must be avoided. Programmes that are not capable of being self-sustaining must be discontinued. This is the mark of a more mature and developed LSP network and one which can more critically evaluate its own effectiveness.

Effective monitoring and evaluation of outcomes is essential to assessing (and proving) the effectiveness of LSP initiatives. The ability to demonstrate, measure and benchmark the direct and indirect impact of programmes run by all LSPs is fundamental to defending and maintaining investment levels in the future.

4.4 Summary

It is a strategic priority of the Council to ensure that the LSP network is sustained and continues to thrive and expand the range of sport and physical activities made available in local communities.

If LSPs:

- continue to build strong, mutually beneficial relationships with committed, relevant partners
- work closely with the NGB and sports club sector in a collaborative way
- are clear about the types of programmes that have the potential to be self sustaining, and those that do not; and
- engage in effective monitoring and evaluation of all their work, while adhering to sound principles of corporate governance

then the network will copper fasten its position of strength and relevance within the sports infrastructure across the country. This will ensure that the network can build on the significant gains made over the last 10 years into the next decade, and beyond.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of Local Sports Partnerships

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Appendix C – Images



Appendix A

List of Local Sports Partnerships

Local Sports Partnership Network	Year Established
North Tipperary Sports Partnership	2001
Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership	2001
Roscommon Sports Partnership	2001
Clare Sports Partnership	2001
Donegal Sports Partnership	2001
Kildare Local Sports Partnership	2001
Laois Sports Partnership	2001
Fingal Sports Partnership	2001
Cork Local Sports Partnership ³	2002
Meath Local Sports Partnership	2002
Waterford Sports Partnership	2002
Limerick City Sports Partnership	2002
Kerry Recreation & Sports Partnership	2004
Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership	2004
Mayo Sports Partnership	2004
Westmeath Sports Partnership	2004
Carlow Sports Partnership	2006
Offaly Local Sports Partnership	2006
Monaghan Sports Partnership	2006
County Limerick Local Sports Partnership	2007
South Tipperary Sports Partnership	2007
Galway City Sports Partnership	2007
Cavan Sports Partnership	2008
Louth Sports Partnership	2008
Dun Laoghaire Sports Partnership	2008
South Dublin Sports Partnership	2008
County Galway Sports Partnership	2008
Wexford Sports Partnership	2008
Longford Sports Partnership	2008
Leitrim Sports Partnership	2008
Dublin City Sports Partnership	2008
Wicklow Sports Partnership	2008

3 In early 2010, Cork City LSP (est. 2008) and County Cork LSP (est. 2002) merged to form one new Cork Sports Partnership.

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Active Leadership Award – An Irish Sports Council/Sport Northern Ireland award designed to provide trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic community based physical activity leaders.

All Ireland Traveller Health Study – The All Ireland Traveller Health Study (AITHS) is a study of Traveller health status and health needs that involves all Travellers living on the island of Ireland, North and South. The AITHS is jointly funded by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland).

Athletics Ireland – Athletics Ireland is the national governing body for athletics in Ireland.

Buntús – An Irish Sports Council programme developed to support primary school teachers and childcare practitioners in introducing young people to sport and physical activity.

ChiRunning - ChiRunning is a method of running instruction. Its primary focus is to teach runners to move in a more efficient, natural way. The instruction is disseminated in several ways, including instructor led courses, books, and videos.

Come & Try – Come & Try events are sports taster events where participants can come and try a range of sports, hassle free and at their own pace. It is a perfect opportunity to see what sports are available in the locality and to meet with local sports clubs and groups.

Economic Impact of Sport - The Economic Impact of Sport is a report published by the Indecon Economic Consultants in 2010 for the Irish Sports Council. The report establishes that sport and sport-related activities generate a very significant contribution to the Irish economy, while also playing a vital role in supporting the development of social capital and contributing to the health and quality of life of the Irish population.

ESRI - Economic and Social Research Institute. The ESRI produces research that contributes to understanding economic and social change in the new international context that informs public policymaking and civil society in Ireland.

FAI – Football Association of Ireland. The FAI is the governing body of football in Ireland.

Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of Local Sports Partnerships - The *Fitzpatrick & Associates Review of Local Sports Partnerships* is a report published by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism in 2005. The report evaluates the progress of the LSPs with reference to the key aims and objectives, and makes a number of recommendations for the LSP initiative.

GAA – Gaelic Athletic Association. The GAA is the governing body of Gaelic games in Ireland.

Fit4Life – Fit4Life is an Athletics Ireland programme to help participants develop their fitness in a fun sociable environment. The programme is suitable for beginners through to regular runners, and the emphasis is on meeting with people of a similar ability on a regular basis to walk or run.

Get BACK Challenge - The Get BACK Challenge is a registered charity that raises funds to support a broad range of health and activity initiatives aimed particularly at socially disadvantaged children. Since the start of the Get BACK Challenge over 7,000 children have benefitted from programmes operated through the Local Sports Partnerships in Limerick City and County.

Go For Life - The Go for Life Programme aims to increase participation among older people in recreational sport activities, and is supported by the Irish Sports Council.

HSE – Health Service Executive. The HSE is a statutory authority responsible for providing Health and Personal Social Services for those living in the Republic of Ireland.

IRFU – Irish Rugby Football Union. The IRFU is the governing body for the sport of rugby union in Ireland.

ISM - Irish Sports Monitor. The Irish Sports Monitor is an ongoing telephone survey of adults aged 16 and over in Ireland, which records sport and exercise activities undertaken in the 7 days prior to interview. In 2009, the Irish Sports Monitor interviewed over 9,700 adults. The survey is primarily designed to track levels of participation in sport, both for the population as a whole and various sub-populations of interest. The 2009 report is the latest in a series of collaborations between the Irish Sports Council and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) on sport and physical activity.

ISC - Irish Sports Council. The Irish Sports Council is a statutory authority that aims to plan, lead and co-ordinate the sustainable development of competitive and recreational sport in Ireland.

LEADER - LEADER is the EU Community Initiative for Rural Development that provides approved Local Action Groups with public funding (EU and National) to implement multi-sectoral business plans for the development of their own areas.

LSP – Local Sports Partnership. Local Sports Partnerships are an initiative of the Irish Sports Council to co-ordinate and promote the development of sport at local level. The key aims of the LSPs are to increase participation in sport, and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect. The LSP initiative lies at the heart of the Irish Sports Council's participation strategy.

Meet and Train groups - *Meet and Train* are weekly walking/running groups, set up and supported by LSPs often in conjunction with local athletics clubs. The objective of the *Meet and Train* group is to provide an opportunity for participants (in particular women) of all ages and levels of fitness to get together to exercise with like-minded people, in a non-competitive environment initially under the guidance of a qualified coach.

National Play Day - National Play Day is a multi activity play day targeting families.

NGB – National Governing Body. An organisation, recognised by the Irish Sports Council, that coordinates the development of a particular sport or sports through constituent clubs.

Older People – As used throughout this report, the term older people refers to those over 50 years of age.

PAL – Physical Activity Leader. A Physical Activity Leader is someone who can lead members of their own groups or communities in short exercise routines, straightforward dances and recreational sports.

RAPID – Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development. The RAPID Programme is a Government initiative, which targets 45 of the most disadvantaged areas in the country by focusing State resources available under the National Development Plan.

School Completion Programme (SCP) – The School Completion Programme (SCP) is a Department of Education & Science initiative that aims to have a positive impact on levels of pupil retention in primary and second level schools and on the number of pupils who successfully complete the Senior Cycle, or equivalent. SCP entails targeting individual young people of school-going age, both in and out of school, and arranging supports to address inequalities in education access, participation and outcomes.

SDO – Sports Development Officer. SDOs aim to provide opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for all sections of the community.

SIDO – Sports Inclusion Disability Officer. SIDOs aim to provide opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for people with a disability. See Sports Inclusion Disability Programme.

SPEAK – Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Knowledge system. The SPEAK system is a product of NEXUS Research (a not-for-profit research co-operative based in Dublin) which offers organisations the capacity to self-evaluate, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the work of the organisation and the impacts of that work.

Sporting Lives – Sporting Lives is a report published by the ESRI in 2008, in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council, on participation in sport over the lifetimes of the current generation of Irish adults. It aims to determine how participation in sport and exercise in Ireland has changed over recent decades and how it varies across the life course, from childhood to later adulthood.

Sports Conditioning Programme – The Sports Conditioning Programme is a programme that teaches young people the basic motor skills that are central to all sports, at an age where they find it easiest to absorb.

Sports Inclusion Disability Programme – A programme to encourage and facilitate more people with disabilities to participate in sport and physical activity, developing sustainable clubs and programmes in all settings.

Sustainability (with regard to LSP participation programmes) – A sustainable programme is one which leads to lasting participation in sport and/or physical activity which is capable of being self-maintained (without direct LSP support).

VEC – Vocational Education Committee. VECs are local statutory education and training authorities. Their service encompasses Second Level Schools, Further Education Colleges, Adult and Community Education, Literacy Support and Youth Support Services.

WIS – Women in Sport. An initiative of the Irish Sports Council to increase participation of women in sport, through providing alternative opportunities and developing specific programmes.

YPFSF - Young People's Facilities & Services Fund – The fund was established in 1998 to assist in the development of preventative strategies/initiatives in a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities, (including sport and recreational facilities) and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop. The objective of the Fund is to attract “at risk” young people in disadvantaged areas into these facilities and activities and divert them away from the dangers of substance abuse.

Appendix C

Images

Images on inside cover: Courtesy of Clare LSP, Kerry LSP, Laois LSP, Mayo LSP, Meath LSP, North Tipperary LSP, South Tipperary LSP, Westmeath LSP.

Section 1: Participants from the 2011 'Splash and Dash' programme - Courtesy of Mid-West Sports Network (Limerick City LSP, County Limerick LSP, North Tipperary LSP, Clare LSP, Kerry LSP).

Section 2: One of the 153 participants from the inaugural Pedal in the Park (a 10km cycle around Killarney National Park) in July 2011 - Courtesy of Kerry LSP.

Section 3: A young girl experiencing abseiling in the outdoors in South Kerry as part of the Girls Outside Project - Courtesy of Kerry LSP.

Section 4: Cavan Walking Festival 2011 participants beginning the climb to the summit of Cuilcagh Mountain in West Cavan - Courtesy of Cavan LSP.

Appendices: 4,000 ladies participated in the 2011 Western People West of Ireland Women's Mini Marathon - Courtesy of Mayo LSP.



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