

LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS

SPEAK REPORT 2013



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Message from the Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

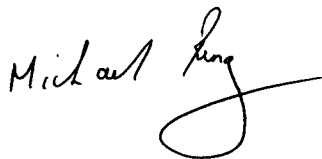
I am delighted to be given the opportunity to contribute to the seventh report of the Local Sports Partnership (LSP) network. The SPEAK Report provides an overview of the work of the 31 Local Sports Partnerships across the country in 2013. It also highlights innovative good practice projects and programmes that are being operated locally.

I believe it is extremely important that people are encouraged and given opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity. I am pleased to note that, in 2013, the LSP network maintained its robust delivery and support of an innovative range of participation programmes. Over 256,614 people participated in 788 locally delivered participation programmes.

The vital work of the LSPs in increasing participation, particularly among those sectors of society that are underrepresented in sport, is making a substantial contribution to the health and welfare of individuals, communities and the nation. The influence of LSPs and sports bodies is especially important today, as the problem of obesity and inactive lifestyles, particularly amongst our younger people, is a cause for concern. I commend the work of the LSPs in this regard.

The LSPs also provide a range of important up-skilling and training opportunities at local level for volunteers, coaches and administrators.

I would encourage people to become involved in sport events in their local areas so that they can enjoy the health and social benefits that come from sport and physical activity.

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 seventh SPEAK Report, which provides an overview of the operations of the national network of 31 Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) in 2013.

The Council has always placed a particular emphasis on ensuring sport is progressive and attracts participants from every corner of Ireland, from every age group and from all social backgrounds. This is a fundamental principle of the Local Sports Partnerships which aim to remove any barrier that prevents participation in sport.

There is a wide range of sports and physical activity programmes available throughout the Local Sports Partnership Network. In addition to the 256,614 people that took part in local programmes, an additional 20,032 female participants took part in 116 local Women in Sport programmes and over 19,500 participants took part in the Operation Transformation national walks and flagship runs in 2013.

This report assists the Council in assessing the impact of the Local Sports Partnership network and provides vital information with regard to the network's reach into local communities. As in previous years the Council warmly welcomes the support and contributions given to the Local Sports Partnership network by statutory, community and voluntary groups across the country.

Finally, on behalf of the Council we extend our thanks to all those agencies, groups and individuals who have contributed to this report and also to those who were 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 seventh annual report of the Local Sports Partnership (LSP) initiative. It reflects the work of the full national network of 31 LSPs for 2013.

Resources and Funding

Below is an outline of the LSP network's level of funding, management and staff in 2013.

- ▶ Almost €13m was invested in the network in 2013. This includes benefit-in-kind funding.
- ▶ Funding from the Irish Sports Council accounts for 41.5% of the total LSP funding in 2013, the remaining 58.5% is raised locally from other sources.
- ▶ A total of 445 people served on LSP boards in 2013, representing an average of 14 people per board.
- ▶ In 2013, 120 people worked full-time on behalf of the LSPs. 63 were directly funded by the ISC. A further 26 people worked part-time within the LSP structure, 3 of whom were funded by the ISC.

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2013

Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

- ▶ 4,254 groups have been supported in the delivery of their activities.
- ▶ 758 groups have been supported with regard to developing their organisational or management structures.
- ▶ LSPs planned and delivered 264 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies.
- ▶ 26,035 people participated on these training courses.
- ▶ In 2013, LSPs have provided 11,674 sports clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding.

Delivering Irish Sports Council Programmes

- ▶ 5,515 children in 57 primary schools received the Buntús Generic programme.
- ▶ 1,113 pre-school children in 128 childcare centres received the Buntús Start programme.
- ▶ 6,884 participants completed 458 Code of Ethics Basic Awareness courses.
- ▶ 576 participants completed 48 Club Children's Officer Courses.

Programme Delivery

- ▶ 256,614 people participated in 788 locally delivered participation programmes.
- ▶ 175 of these 788 programmes were new programmes which were developed in 2013 leading to 38,987 people participating.
- ▶ An additional 20,032 female participants took part in 116 local Women in Sport programmes.
- ▶ 36 of these 116 Women in Sport programmes were new programmes, developed in 2013 leading to 2,424 people participating.

Building and Sustaining Partnerships

- ▶ In 2013 LSPs played an important role in facilitating 163 networks and forums.
- ▶ LSPs were also actively participating on 266 local committees.

Information Provision

- ▶ Almost 136,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information.

Next Steps for the LSP Network

- ▶ Meeting demand – LSPs are working hard to make sure that the increased demand for events arising from the popular Irish TV show, Operation Transformation, is met. This is supported through the provision of additional local events, with an increased focus on sustainable follow-on participation programmes. LSPs are now building their audience through the provision of such follow-up events, targeting new populations identified from increased exposure attributed to the show.
- ▶ Child Protection – as a new policy environment is still emerging with the pending child protection legislation, the LSP network maintains its central role in the safeguarding of children and young people through its work with the NGBs, clubs and local organisations. LSPs are in regular communication with the Irish Sports Council on the issues relating to the new legislation.
- ▶ Effective and informed planning – LSPs are evaluating their work in order to improve their level of service and ensure efficient use of funds. Findings from the ESRI research publication “Keeping Them in the Game”, highlighted alarming drop-out rates in sport. LSPs take these findings into consideration when developing programmes, ensuring that any learning from research is being incorporated into the planning process.

1

Background, Funding and Resources



1.1 Background to LSP Network

This is the seventh annual report of the LSP initiative. It reflects the work of the full national network of 31 LSPs for 2013.

1.2 Project Funding Sources

Funding from the Irish Sports Council (ISC) accounted for 41.5% of the total LSP funding in 2013, the remaining 58.5% was raised from other sources. These figures include benefit-in-kind (BIK) funding.

| € | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| Monetary Funding (Locally Leveraged) 2013 | 3,689,561 | 29.0% |
| Benefit in Kind (Locally Leveraged) 2013 | 3,745,167 | 29.5% |
| ISC Core/Programme & Disability Grant 2013 | 5,150,568 | 40.5% |
| ISC Women in Sport Grant 2013 | 113,410 | 1% |
| Total Investment | 12,698,706 | 100% |

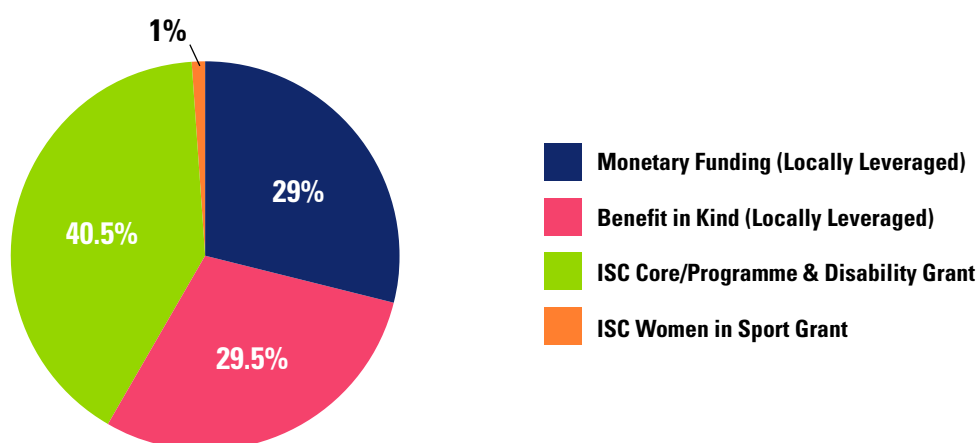


Figure A – Breakdown of Funding and Benefit in Kind Received by LSPs in 2013

After core funding from the ISC, the Local Authorities (LAs) were the next most significant source of funding and in-kind support for the LSP network in 2013. Other significant funders of the network were the Education and Training Boards (ETBs – formerly known as VECs), SOLAS (formerly known as FÁS) and the HSE.

Below are the top three contributors to the LSP network in terms of monetary funding, excluding the Irish Sports Council.

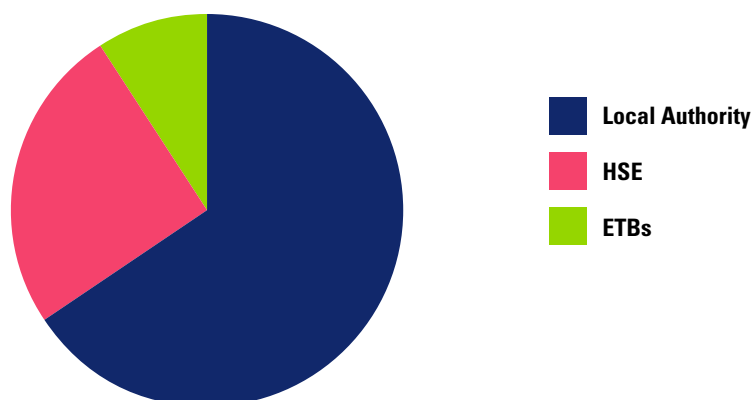


Figure B – The Top 3 Local Funding Providers across the LSP Network in 2013

Below are the top four contributors to the LSP network in terms of benefit-in-kind funding, excluding the Irish Sports Council.

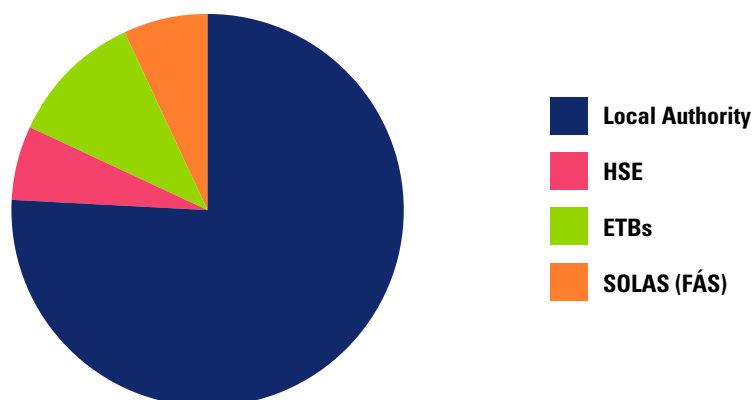


Figure C – The Top 4 Local Benefit-In-Kind Providers across the LSP Network in 2013

Irish Sports Council funding to the LSP network reduced by 6% from €5.61m in 2012 to €5.26m in 2013, reflecting the reduction of €1,047,000 in the Council's own budget.

LSPs continue to be successful in leveraging funding from local sources. Such funding has increased by nearly €270,000 while in-kind support for the LSP network now accounts for just under a third of overall LSP support.

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

1.3 LSP Management and Staff

Boards of Management Participation and Representation

- ▶ A total of 445 people served on LSP boards in 2013, representing an average of 14 people per board.
- ▶ On average 17 hours were committed by each management committee, including the work undertaken by board sub-committees in 2013.

Local Authorities, ETBs and the HSE continue to be the 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.

LSP core staff are funded by the ISC while other personnel are funded through other sources. Along with Co-ordinators and Administrators, many LSPs employ Sports Development Officers and/or Sports Inclusion Disability Officers (SIDOs), a number of which are also supported in part by the ISC. In 2013, LSPs also provided placements for interns and jobseekers seeking work experience and an opportunity to develop skills on Government schemes such as JobBridge and TÚS.

In 2013, 120 people worked full-time on behalf of the LSPs. 63 were directly funded by the ISC. A further 26 people worked part-time within the LSP structure, 3 of whom were funded by the ISC. The LSPs also contracted a further 325 tutors to deliver programmes, courses and initiatives within the LSP structure.

| | Male | Female | Total |
|---|------|--------|-------|
| Full time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies | 53 | 67 | 120 |
| Part time staff, funded by ISC, other programmes and agencies | 10 | 16 | 26 |
| Total | 63 | 83 | 146 |

Figure D – LSP personnel across the network¹

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

2

Achievements of the LSP Network in 2013



2.1 Introduction

LSPs undertake a wide range of actions and methods with the aim of increasing participation rates in their local communities. These actions include:

- ▶ Promoting a sustainable local sporting infrastructure through support for clubs, 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.
- ▶ Providing information about sport and physical activity to create awareness and drive opportunities.

2.2 Development of Local Sports Infrastructure

A key priority for LSPs is that there is a sustainable level of development within the local sports infrastructure. Across the network, LSPs work with clubs and groups to ensure that structures are in place to enable citizens from across all LSP target groups to participate in a wide range of sport or physical activity options. This sustainable environment is further facilitated through supporting volunteers and coaches to access opportunities to develop their skills and improve the quality of sports participation in their communities.

Funding Work

In 2013, LSPs provided 11,674 sports clubs, groups and organisations throughout the country with important information and advice in the area of funding. This represents an increase of 1,699 clubs. LSPs have worked directly with 1,951 of these clubs to assist them in developing funding applications.

Club Development Work

The LSPs support existing providers of sports and physical activity across the country and work with sports clubs, communities and individuals in order to introduce new sporting opportunities and sustainable pathways for ongoing participation in physical exercise. To this end, in 2013:

- ▶ 4,254 groups were supported in the delivery of their activities.
- ▶ 758 groups were supported with regard to developing their organisational or management structures.
- ▶ A further 1,104 groups were assisted in tackling development or policy issues.

This support work assists clubs to improve and develop and helps them to attract and retain members. LSPs also play a key role in advising clubs in the areas of club planning and in the development of inclusive policies.

Training and Education Courses

LSPs provide a range of important up-skilling and training opportunities at local level for volunteers, coaches and administrators.

- ▶ LSPs planned and delivered 264 training and education courses, workshops and seminars with their partner agencies.
- ▶ 26,035 people participated on these training courses.

The most popular courses and training programmes offered by LSPs are in the areas of Club Development training, Disability Awareness/Inclusive Games training, Go for Life PALS training, Be Active After School Activity Programme training and Active Leadership 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. The Buntús Start and Buntús Generic programmes were developed by the Irish Sports Council as a sporting springboard for pre-school and primary school children. It takes them through the concepts of active play and leads on to provide a taste of some specific sports and games. Since their introduction, almost 411,000 children have been beneficiaries of both programmes.

During 2013, 5,515 children in 57 primary schools benefited from receiving the Buntús Generic programme. 1,113 pre-school children in 128 childcare centres were introduced to active play with the Buntús Start programme.

The Buntús Generic programme is in its tenth year and has been offered to all primary schools across the country and its roll-out finished in 2013. The Buntús Start programme will continue to be available to pre-schools across Ireland.

| | Buntús Generic | Buntús Start |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| Total number of schools/centres that received training (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start) | 2,720 | 2,584 |
| Total number of teachers/practitioners trained | 19,051 | 9,513 |
| Total number of children in trained schools/centres (since introduction of Buntús Generic/Start) | 353,463 | 57,149 |

Figure E – 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 clubs.
- ▶ 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 2013, 6,884 sports leaders and volunteers completed Basic Awareness training on 458 courses run by the LSPs, representing an increase of 17% in course numbers compared to 2012. Some 576 volunteers attended the follow on Children's Officer training courses.

| | Basic Awareness Training | | | Club Children's Officer Training | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
| No. of courses delivered | 448 | 404 | 458 | 45 | 52 | 48 |
| No. of participants | 6,505 | 5,889 | 6,884 | 489 | 616 | 576 |

Figure F – Summary of Code of Ethics outputs for 2011-2013

2.4 Programme Delivery

Each LSP uses its local knowledge and expertise to identify specific needs, and thus to plan, develop and implement targeted programmes to directly increase the levels of local participation particularly amongst the harder to reach social groups. In 2013, the LSP network maintained its robust delivery and support of an innovative range of participation programmes:

- ▶ 256,614 people participated in 788 locally delivered participation programmes in 2013.
- ▶ 175 of these 788 programmes were new programmes which were developed in 2013 leading to 38,987 people participating. The rest of the programmes were continued from previous years.

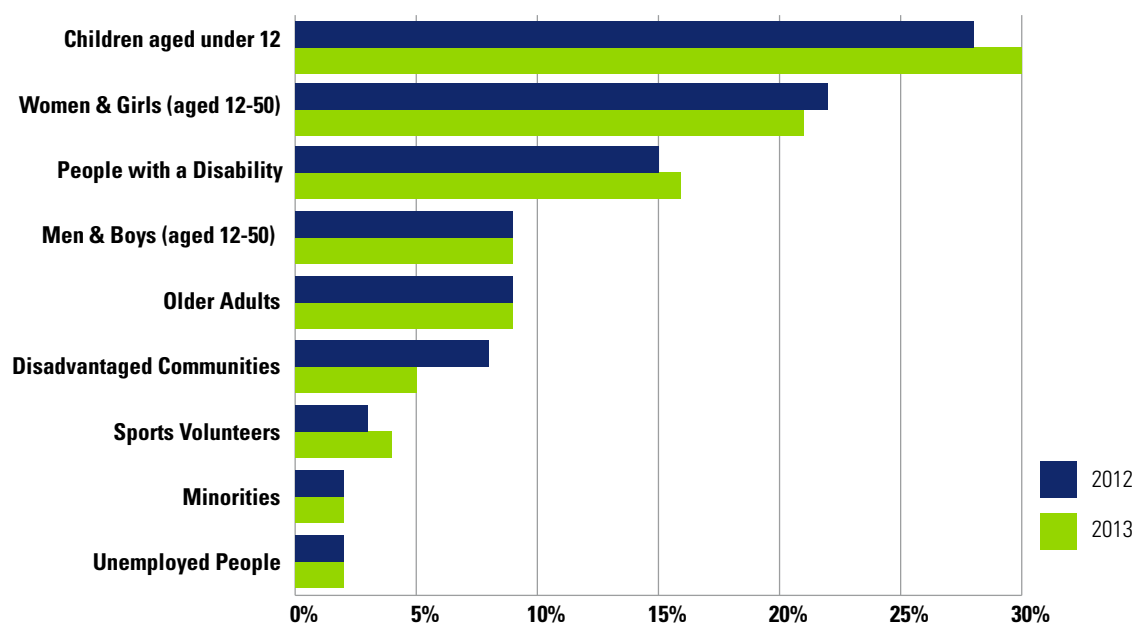


Figure G – Breakdown of primary target groups in LSP programmes in 2012 & 2013

Women in Sport Programmes

In 2005, research conducted by the ESRI for the Irish Sports Council revealed that less than one in five Irish women came close to achieving the accumulated 30 minutes of physical activity per day, for at least five days per week, as recommended by the World Health Organisation for good health. The research also showed that approximately the same proportion of women was sedentary. Given the positive association between physical activity and physical and mental health these numbers represented a significant challenge to the policy system. It was clear from that research that initiatives needed to be put in place to promote greater participation in sport and physical activity by women.

The ‘Women in Sport Initiative’ launched by the Irish Sports Council in 2005 also 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 ‘Women in Sport Initiative’ was developed to address the differences that exist between women’s and men’s interaction with sport, with patterns of volunteering an interesting area of analysis. 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. A specific fund is allocated to Women in Sport programmes across the LSP network.

- An additional 20,032 female participants took part in 116 local Women in Sport programmes in 2013.
- 36 of these 116 Women in Sport programmes were new programmes, developed in 2013 leading to 2,424 people participating. The remaining programmes were continued from previous years.

Nine years on we have a good chance to assess where we stand in relation to women’s participation in sport and physical activity using the results from the Irish Sports Monitor (ISM). The ISM was introduced in 2007 to monitor participation in sport and physical activity among adults and to identify trends in sports participation.

According to the latest results for 2013, almost 1 in 3 women met the National Physical Activity Guidelines through sport while just one in eight women were sedentary. These figures represent a healthy improvement on the earlier results and show that there is now a strong secular trend towards adult women becoming more active through sport and physical activity.

The 2013 ISM also reports that almost 43% of women are taking part in regular sport i.e. at least once a week. This is the highest recorded participation rate for women since the ISM was introduced in 2007 and has resulted in a significant narrowing of the gender gap in participation between men and women. The 43% is equivalent to over ¾ million adult women participating in sport on a weekly basis.

For every €1 invested by the Irish Sports Council in the LSP Women in Sport programmes, local partners contribute close to €2 in match funding. The average cost per participant to the Irish Sports Council for an LSP Women in Sport programme is €5.66. This represents good value for money in terms of trying to counteract the significant drop-out levels of this target group.

2.5 Building and Sustaining Partnerships

Networks and Forums

LSPs actively engage and promote a wide range of networks and forums at local and national level. In 2013, LSPs facilitated 163 networks and forums.

These networks and forums bring together sports clubs, statutory and non-statutory agencies, volunteers and other working partners to provide opportunities for partnership endeavours that influence and resource sports and physical activity at county and national level.

These channels allow for an increase in the reach of the LSPs, as well as profiling their ongoing work. Networks and forums communicate the core LSP message of the importance of sport and physical activity. They are also a sounding board for advice and recommendations as to what the LSP can do to assist sports clubs and partners.

LSPs have also established and participated actively in networks and forums with a specific focus on certain activities and target groups.



Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Sports Partnership has taken an active role in bringing together the relevant local partners to promote cycling and walking activities in the community. A “Walking Promotion Committee” was established by the LSP to identify current provision for walking in the county and to share information and ideas. Through working collaboratively with this forum in 2013, a brochure has been produced and widely distributed through all partners in 2014.

The Cork Community Walking Leaders Forum was established to support existing local walking groups across the county. As with the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Walking Committee, the aim was to allow for opportunities to share ideas, gather new information, plan events and link in with the relevant stakeholders. This included the statutory and community sectors, such as the Health Promotion Department and Cork Sports Partnership. Membership of the forum was promoted to all trained under the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) walking leader training programmes. The Forum provided important input into the design and planning of Cork Walking Month.



The member walking groups were engaged to host and facilitate walks for the month. The nature and extent of the range of activities organised through Cork Walking Month can be seen in its map and brochure to the left. Due to the successful engagement, the Forum is now used as a think-tank for the Operation Transformation national walk each year.

Awareness Raising and Committee Work

Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) engage in a range of local activities in order to promote the key messages of the Network. This may involve participating as members of relevant 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 2013, LSPs participated in 419 such events.

Mayo Local Sports Partnership's involvement in the Expo, a display of Training Supports for Unemployed in Kiltimagh is an example of involvement in such events. This Expo was organised by the Education and Training Working Group of the County Development Board in May 2013 and was attended by over 300 jobseekers. A range of workshops were held during the day on various supports and Mayo Sports Partnership had an information stand which showcased the Goal to Work Programme and Link2BActive programmes.

In November the national conference of Men's Sheds took place in Castlebar and over 300 delegates attended. Mayo Sports Partnership (working with Men's Shed groups in relation to the Men on the Move programme) had an information hub highlighting the success of the programme.

Participation in such events highlights the manner in which LSPs are embedded in the local community infrastructure throughout each county. They provide significant platforms in which the work of the Partnerships and their key message of the importance of sport in community life can be highlighted.

The extent to which LSPs are further rooted in the social and sports fabric of the community is also highlighted by the ongoing demand for their time and expertise in committee work. In 2013, LSPs were actively participating on 266 local committees.

2.6 Information Provision

LSPs act as information hubs and points of contact within their communities. As LSPs enable information sharing, they also work directly with the public to advise, signpost and refer them to the most appropriate next step. This can be a link to a sports club, to a community based organisation or to a volunteering opportunity.

Clubs and sports volunteers recognise that the LSP network channels participants and interested parties to their doors. The relationship between the LSP and the community is based on being a trusted and meaningful source of expertise.

In 2013, almost 136,000 individuals contacted the LSP network in order to access general or specific sport-related information. Furthermore, almost 10,000 individuals from all target groups have dropped into an LSP in person.

All LSPs are making use of their web presence and social media platforms to promote their activities and resources and to promote their message. These platforms are also becoming increasingly important for the LSPs in their networking and profiling activities.

3

LSP Programme Case Studies



3.1 Introduction

This section presents examples of LSP work practices and case studies of interaction with key target groups leading to capacity building of volunteers and sustainable participation.

Each case study demonstrates important elements of the LSP approach:

- ▶ In depth awareness of the needs of the communities.
- ▶ Effective delivery of opportunities for sport and physical activity to the wider community, but especially to hard-to-reach groups who are not engaged in mainstream sports.
- ▶ Engagement in a partnership approach with a wide range of local links, highlighting the extent an LSP is embedded within the local community and local sports infrastructure.
- ▶ Focus on the sustainability of programmes through follow up work and collecting feedback.

Section 2 has described the range of actions and methods of engagement undertaken by LSPs across the network and the results of this work.

We now examine in more qualitative detail how LSP programmes have actually gone about their work. This section asks some questions about how

- ▶ LSPs have built capacity within their communities and enhanced the volunteer base.
- ▶ LSPs have worked together to ensure that good practice in shared learning is taking place on a daily basis.
- ▶ LSPs have managed to increase participation with different target groups.

A series of case studies are detailed to present an insight into the level and extent of work that is being delivered across communities.

3.2 Empowering and Acknowledging Volunteers

LSPs assist clubs and sporting organisations on the ground in attracting, retaining and up-skilling people to give of their time. 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.

The LSP Network continued to play a critical role in 2013 in supporting club development and sustaining voluntary commitment across the country. Through its direct development work with clubs and sporting organisations on the ground, LSPs ensure a steady growth of sport-related volunteerism across Ireland.

Empowering Volunteers

The following example of the Go for Life Programme demonstrates the manner in which LSPs help to build capacity in their communities. The focus of this national programme is on older people, with a specific leadership component. It works with members of local groups and communities of older people who have an interest in leading physical activity within their groups. The programme leads to increased capacity among the volunteer base nationally. The LSPs work in conjunction with Age and Opportunity and the HSE by facilitating Physical Activity Leaders (PALs) training locally. The aim of these workshops is to provide information, ideas and skills to leaders so that they can implement programmes to involve older adults in physical activity. Leaders tend to be members of community groups like active retirement associations or clubs. The LSPs network with older adult groups locally and can direct them to such training opportunities. LSPs can also help access venues locally, keeping costs down for such training. This approach allows more self-sustainable activity to take place without the need for as much involvement from the LSP or other supports.

Case Study: Go for Life Leadership Programme

Introduction

Go for Life is the National Programme for Sport and Physical Activity for Older People, funded by the Irish Sports Council. It is based on research which challenges sedentary lifestyles and which demonstrates the physical, mental and social benefits of remaining physically active in older age. Go for Life is an Age & Opportunity² initiative which commenced in 1994 with the aim of increasing the participation of older people in recreational sport and physical activity.

The aim of the Go for Life Project is to involve a greater number of older people in all aspects of sport and physical activity more often. Age & Opportunity carry out a range of initiatives aimed at significantly increasing older people's involvement in all aspects of active living and recreational sport, including participation, planning and leading.

The **Go for Life Leadership Programme** is a series of nine workshops intended to provide information, ideas and skills to people who are interested in encouraging older people to get more active. The participants, often older people themselves, become Physical Activity Leaders (PALs) who can lead members of their own groups or communities in short exercise routines, simple dances, fun games and recreational sports. These workshops are offered in partnership with the national network of Local Sports Partnerships and the HSE.

This unique model of peer leadership is supported by a team of ten trainers around the country and by all of the Local Sports Partnerships and the HSE. The first four workshops cover the four key components of functional fitness for older people – joint mobility, aerobic fitness, balance coordination and muscle strength. The last five workshops cover a wide range of adapted recreational sports and games.

Results and Outcomes

Over 2,000 older people have attended PALs workshops since 2001. Each year 200-250 new volunteers are recruited and enabled to become PALs, the existing network of 1,200 PALs is supported and further up-skilled where resources allow. As a direct result of the PALs programme and the grant scheme that supports it, physical activity is now firmly on the agenda of most active retirement and Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) groups and many other groups and communities, including those in disadvantaged areas.

Groups can have physical activity sessions in their own meeting place without any cost to the members and they can design these sessions to suit the abilities of the members. The Go for Life Games have been made possible because of the past decade of grassroots work enabling older people to become PALs and raising the profile of older people among local agencies.



² Age & Opportunity is the national not-for-profit organisation that promotes opportunities for greater participation by older people in society through partnerships and collaborative programmes.

Quotes from Participants

“Go for Life has resulted in more people coming to our group to learn about the benefit of exercise. People also bring home with them the ideas and exercises that they could do in their everyday lives. There are now four or five of us who can lead out the activities. This ensures that Croom ‘Communities in Motion’ programme continues to develop and grow.

Stephen Moloney and Colm O'Regan, PALs since 2003.

“When you are trying to promote physical activity at community level, if you can say “Here is a ready-made programme”, it is of great benefit. You aren't trying to piece together information from various sources. It's also packaged really well and it looks very attractive, which all helps in getting people to volunteer and to participate in the programme.”

Caroline Peppard, Senior Health Promotion Officer, HSE



Go for Life Physical Activity Leaders

Next Steps

Demand for PALs workshops continues to be very strong as physical activity has become a core part of the calendar of events for older people's groups. The workshops are supported by a grant scheme which has grown in line with the numbers of active PALs to 1,009 successful applicants in 2013. The LSPs help promote the grant scheme amongst their community groups and contacts. They also assist groups with the grant application process as many of the groups may not have had any prior experience with funding applications. With the PALs programme so well established in groups and communities, Age and Opportunity are now building the Go for Life Games, a celebration of physical activity that supports and draws on the network of PALs countrywide. Financial support has been secured through HSE National Lottery funding and Community Foundation for Ireland funding to support the development of the Games in different parts of the country.

Acknowledging Volunteers

As well as supporting and up-skilling volunteers through a wide range of training programmes, the LSP network works to validate, recognise and reward the effort of volunteers through national and locally based awards schemes.

The first national Volunteers in Sport awards³ were presented in 2007. The awards scheme was designed to recognise the contribution, commitment and dedication of volunteers who give of their time to sport every year. Sport remains the single biggest driver of voluntary activity in Ireland. The awards are presented by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, the Federation of Irish Sport, the Irish Sports Council and The Community Foundation for Ireland to recognise coaches, managers, officials and administrators who give of their time to grow and develop amateur sports.

The commitment, dedication and leadership of Ireland's sporting volunteers, estimated to be in the region of 470,000⁴ people, allow athletes and communities to participate in sport all around the country. It is estimated that well over a million hours⁵ are put into sport on a weekly basis by adults volunteering in sport. Ten winners are selected annually to receive an award from the nominations received. An Overall or Lifetime award to honour a volunteer, who has consistently given of their time for a sport, a team, or an event over many years, is also awarded.

Previous winners have included Liam Sheedy, who managed Tipperary to All Ireland Senior success in 2010, Oliver O'Neill, youth coach and father of Olympic Boxer Darren O'Neill and Dublin City Marathon organiser Jim Aughney. Minister Michael Ring TD at the launch of the 2014 awards stated that *"The work of volunteers is the foundation on which sport in Ireland is built – without volunteers there would be no sport in Ireland."*

As well as contributing to the national awards, individual LSPs have worked to recognise and validate volunteers in their local communities.

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown (DLR) Sports Partnership held its inaugural Sports Volunteer Recognition Awards in early 2013, where local volunteers were honoured for their services to sport within the county. The event was organised to celebrate the work that these volunteers carry out in their local clubs and organisations. All sports clubs in the area were invited to nominate coaches and volunteers in their clubs that "have gone above and beyond the call of duty to give their time and expertise to the club."

Over 30 nominations were received and the Board of DLR Sports Partnership selected winners on the basis of the impact that the volunteers have had on their clubs and communities. Categories included Club Volunteer Administrator; Club Volunteer Coach; Long Service Club Volunteer; Inclusive Club and Volunteer Club Award.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, An Leas Chathaoirleach, Cllr. Stephen Fitzpatrick stated that:

"Sport would not happen without the thousands of volunteers, who coach, manage, officiate, administer and support participants at all levels. The main driver and enabler for sport in the county are you the volunteers, who come out every week to help people of all ages be active and participate in sports clubs."

3 Full details of the scheme and how to enter can be found on line at www.volunteersinsport.com

4 Irish Sports Monitor 2013 Annual Report 13.3% of adults aged 16 and over volunteered at least once during the previous 7 days. This represents over 470,000 adults engaging in such volunteering.

5 Ibid

In addition, certificates were presented to the thirteen participants who completed the Sports Volunteer Development Programme. This programme is a joint initiative of the University College Dublin (UCD) Athletic Union Council, the DLR Sports Partnership and the UCD Centre for Sports Studies. Its main objective was to equip volunteers with the necessary skills to effectively contribute to the management and development of their sports clubs through the provision of seminars and workshops.



The nominees for the Long Service Sports Volunteer Award

3.3 Healthy Living Programmes

The LSP network has engaged in partnerships with health professionals to develop and implement a range of bespoke programmes at community level that aim to challenge and address the current crisis of childhood obesity.

These programmes work directly with families and communities to offer clear messages and raise parental awareness regarding healthy lifestyles. Programmes aim to improve fitness and increase physical activity levels through educational and practical sessions. The ethos underpinning this type of programme is that there is provision of opportunities for participation and learning made available for all children when they need it, where they need it.

One such nutrition, sport and physical activity programme was the Way to Go Kids programme run in Limerick between the LSPs in the city and county. This project worked with young people in their family setting to develop a healthy approach to weight management.

Case Study: Way to Go Kids

Introduction

Way to Go Kids was originally developed as a US programme. With the support of the licensee, the two Limerick LSPs adapted the programme to meet Irish guidelines and standards in order to deliver two pilot Way to Go Kids programmes, the first in Limerick City. The rationale for the project was linked to the key challenges associated with dramatic increases in the prevalence of obesity among young people in Ireland, as identified in the 2008 HSE Framework for Action on Obesity.

Childhood obesity is not the consequence of a single determinant of health but often a combination of social, environmental, economic and cultural factors. The aim of this pilot was to identify a programme that would go some way towards addressing these issues.

Through getting parents and children involved over the eight weeks, experienced dietitians and physical activity co-ordinators worked with both groups in a supportive environment to develop healthy eating habits and make physical activity easy. The main aim was to support the young person to stop further weight gain while maintaining normal growth and development.

The project partners included the HSE, Limerick Health Promotion and Community Dietetics Department, Limerick City and County Local Sports Partnerships, the Get Back Challenge (Philanthropic partner for the LSP) and the University of Limerick Physical Education and Sports Science support students.

Project Outline

Each course involved a maximum of 12 children and their parents. The parents and children attended classes together with sessions facilitated by registered dietitians and professional fitness instructors. An introductory session involved the measuring of fitness levels, weight and height, as well as a presentation and an overview of the programme. This was then followed by a series of eight “fun” sessions for children aged 9-12 and their parents, with each session two hours in duration which included nutritional advice and exercise for fun. Two “parent only” sessions were taught during fitness time.

Results and Outcomes

An evaluation of the pilot indicated the following outcomes:

- ▶ 100% of children increase their muscle endurance by the end of the programme.
- ▶ 100% of children believed that physical activity was important by the end of the programme.
- ▶ 50% of children lost weight and 25% maintained their weight by the end of the programme.
- ▶ 100% of children increased their cardiovascular endurance.
- ▶ 87.5% of children either decreased or maintained their BMI during the Way to Go Kids programme.
- ▶ 75% of children increased their muscle strength by the end of the programme.
- ▶ Both parents and children enjoyed the nutrition and physical activity sessions.
- ▶ Attendance over the 8 weeks was 76%.

Parents agreed that the Way to Go Kids programme actively encouraged their children to eat more healthily and it made physical activity fun. Other positive results included children demonstrating an increase in knowledge and confidence. They also had a positive change in attitude and behaviour in relation to food, and food choice and increased physical activity levels. There was also increased participation in Fitkidz Walking challenges and the Kids Run at the Great Limerick Run.

Quotes from Participants

“The results from previous Way to Go programmes were very positive, with 50 per cent of children losing weight and 25 per cent maintaining weight by the end of the programme. Not only is the programme informative and educational, it is also fun and a great way of bringing the family together towards a healthier lifestyle.”

Sinéad Glover, Senior Community Dietician, Limerick Health Promotion, HSE

Feedback from the participants and the co-ordinators points to the success of the programme requiring full family participation in the physical activity and the information sessions. The use of props was seen as very important in terms of giving participants a visual image of what excess weight can look and feel like.

Next Steps

Limerick LSP plans to link with local GAA clubs to run Way to Go Kids in 2014 and to target all primary schools in the Healthy GAA Community located around the Mungret area. The aim is to engage the families in the club so that they can have direct experience of participation in the Healthy GAA club initiatives during and after the programme.



The involvement of LSPs in Healthy Living Programmes are examples of the manner in which LSPs operate as a key part of a local collaborative effort to promote participation. An example of this practice is the “Want 2 Move North Sligo”, an initiative to promote and enable increased participation in physical activity and sport for all ages with a particular focus on engaging with the local primary care team to target people who are inactive.

Case Study: Want 2 Move North Sligo

Introduction

A community needs assessment had identified information about and access to physical activity opportunities as a priority for many people of all ages, living in North Sligo. Arising from this, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) in conjunction with the HSE, North Sligo Primary Care Team and Community Health Forum developed the Want 2 Move programme. The aim of this project was to contribute positively to personal health and well-being. This also included reducing obesity and its associated health problems, promoting better mental health. A long-term aim of this project was to contribute to the reduction in overweight and obesity and the associated health problems in the population as well as promotion of mental health.

Project Description

The project comprises 4 elements:

1. Links with Primary Care Team:

This was a joint initiative by the partners to improve information sharing and uptake of community-based physical activity opportunities. Links were established with General Practitioners, Community Health Nurses, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists within the Primary Care Team.

2. Physical Activity Guide:

This 'Activity Guide' was initiated by SSRP and is disseminated as widely as possible including on the website, in local shops and in health centres/surgeries etc. The activity guide is updated every 3 months, and the Sports Partnership continues to promote new initiatives as they arise with local groups and facilities, including expectant and new mothers' fitness packages with Health Styles Leisure Centre for example.

3. Community Physical Activity Programmes:

SSRP works with local community and sporting organisations to develop sustainable structures for physical activity while also addressing gaps in target group provision. To date a number of new initiatives have developed including a morning walking group, an outdoor gym programme and ladies-only fitness classes for GAA mothers, volunteers and players.

4. Links with other programmes:

A focus is placed on directing new and existing programmes into the North Sligo community including training and support for leaders, supporting community-led programmes and working with facilities to increase usage and access.

Results

The following key results have been identified:

- ▶ Greater engagement by the Primary Care Team in signposting clients to physical activity opportunities in the North Sligo area.
- ▶ Updated versions of the North Sligo Physical Activity Guide were developed and disseminated.
- ▶ Nine new targeted programmes were developed in the Community supported by SSRP and led by local community groups, facilities and sports clubs.
- ▶ A new community walking group established since 2012 now has 40 members, with 25 people walking each week; two leaders also completed the Community Walking Leader Training Award.

There is an ongoing evaluation of this programme.



Participants on the Want 2 Move North Sligo Programme

Sustainability and Next Steps

This initiative involved working with local communities to support greater use of existing facilities and amenities while also endeavouring to introduce new programmes to target groups. Other important outcomes associated with greater sustainability include:

- ▶ The development of a Community Walking Group with 25 regular members attending weekly walks, thus sustaining regular walking activity.
- ▶ SSRP have supported GAA Clubs to run women's fitness classes at their club house, including pilates, boxercise, yoga and circuit training. The clubs were targeting mothers, ex-players and volunteers from the club as well as new women from the community and the initiatives have continued after the pilot programmes.

- ▶ SSRP has linked with many community groups to develop their capacity to deliver a physical activity programme including an adult outdoor gym programme, support for the development of a Community Walking Group, adult fitness classes, a “Mature Movers” dance class for adults over 50 in the community, and reduced membership packages for new and expectant mothers and older adults in the local gym.
- ▶ 16 new volunteers are involved in co-ordinating, promoting and delivering community sport and physical activity programmes in North Sligo.
- ▶ The project has seen the development of a database of physical activity opportunities available in North Sligo and the dissemination of this information via the Community Health Forum.

The next step is to consolidate the model of delivery which will be linked to an evaluation of the project. The ultimate aim will be to replicate the project in other areas in Sligo and make the model available to other LSPs.

Quotes from Participants

The HSE Health Promotion Department stated:

“The relationship that has evolved with the SSRP has fostered a genuine partnership between all the agencies involved. Specifically in relation to the Want2Move project the Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership have been very practical and proactive in planning, launching and sustaining the initiative. This gives us great confidence for future endeavours”

Quote from a walking group member:

“Meeting different people, good for health, good fun, and a social cup of tea after the walk”

3.4 Joint LSP Work

LSPs continue to develop new and innovative means by which they can work together to enhance the shared power of the network. In many instances, geographic or regional proximity leads to the co-planning of events and the pooling of resources. The close relationships between LSPs allows for seamless sharing of expertise.

The example of the Westmeath and Longford LSPs coming together to share a Sports Inclusion Disability Officer clearly highlights how the sharing of such resources can be effectively managed.

Case Study: Westmeath/Longford Sports Inclusion Disability Programme

Introduction

In 2009, Longford Sports Partnership established a Sports Ability Forum to examine the needs of local disability groups. The group identified the need for a dedicated Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO). This view was further supported by consultations held with disability groups as part of the development of the LSP's first strategy, "Developing Sport Together". Following discussions between Longford and Westmeath Sports Partnerships the possibility of sharing a SIDO was explored. A successful application was made to the Irish Sports Council and to the HSE to fund the role.

The Westmeath/Longford Sports Inclusion Disability Programme started in 2012. The SIDO spends equal times in each location. Some programmes are run jointly, while the majority are run separately to accommodate differing local needs and also to take account of the fact that both sites are at different stages of development.

Description of Projects

The following projects are examples of the collaborative work of the Sports Inclusion Disability Programme:

Boccia Programme (Pan Disabilities)

Westmeath and Longford Sports Partnership provide training in the game of Boccia to disability services in both counties. The programme runs for six weeks, providing service users with the opportunity to participate in a new sport at a recreational and competitive level. Each service provider commits to having a minimum of two staff trained in the activity and must appoint a Boccia Coordinator.

From the implementation of the Boccia Programme and the successful uptake from disability organisations, the two Sports Partnerships introduced the Midlands Boccia League; this league caters for 24 teams with over 100 participants actively participating in league outings. The leagues provide an opportunity for social interaction and inclusion for disability organisations by interacting with other agencies.

Active Travel Programme (Pan Disabilities)

The Active Travel Programme, a cycling education and training programme was delivered to children and adults with disabilities in both counties through the Sports Inclusion Disability Programme. The programme introduces children and adults to safe cycling. The programme is delivered over six consecutive weeks.

Quotes from Project Participants

Boccia Programme (Pan Disabilities)

“The SIDO facilitated these sessions and was extremely helpful and enthusiastic in working with the group. The SIDO also was very helpful in showing me how to act as referee for the game. The Boccia sessions supported many of the key aspects of personal development which we promote on Turas, for example, group working, confidence building, physical wellbeing and having fun! As a result of participating in the sessions facilitated by the Sports Partnership the group decided they wanted to purchase a Boccia set to practice their skills and to also join the local Boccia league implemented by the Sports Partnership.”

Patricia Collins, Instructor, Turas Programme

Active Travel Programme (Pan Disabilities)

“We are half way through our cycling course and are all really enjoying it, there is a real feel good factor associated with cycling. All of the clients report feeling a lift in their spirits after a cycling session. Self esteem seems to be improving and clients that thought that they’d never be able to cycle are starting to feel more confident with the bikes and the road and are really enthusiastic about learning new skills. The clients enjoy being in the outdoors and getting fresh air, it is early days but the long term plan is for daily cycles at lunchtime to see how we can improve our physical fitness levels as well.”

Becki Donohoe, Manager, CNM2 Longford Mental Health Day Centre



Participants on the Active Travel Programme

Outcomes

A number of important outcomes can be noted from this joint working across the two LSPs which will help maintain the resources and funds for the role of SIDO. New programmes have been implemented in Longford as a result of the learning from the shared working. Likewise, new clubs have been established and networks put in place across the counties. Volunteers have been trained and up-skilled leading to sustainable programming of events and activities. Awareness has also been raised of the important role that the LSPs play in supporting people with disabilities in the two counties and at a wider level.

The cross county remit can sometimes be regarded as a challenge, with the two counties at different stages of development. However in excess of 924 people with different disabilities have been reached through the work. Many of the Westmeath Sports Partnership programmes are now sustainable, the challenge for the SIDO is to continue to build relationships and networks in Longford as the initiative is much younger there.

The Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon is an example of an annual event that brings two neighbouring LSPs together. This Women in Sport initiative between North Tipperary Sports Partnership (NTSP) and South Tipperary Sports Partnership (STSP) has become a permanent fixture on the Tipperary sporting events calendar as well as the national events calendar.

Case Study: Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon

Introduction

The inaugural event was held in Thurles in September 2010 with 800 women participating. Demand for this event became apparent in 2009 as an increasing number of Meet and Train groups developed around the county, facilitated by the work of both LSPs. This growth in interest highlighted the potential demand for a local mass participation event that Meet and Train groups could work towards. The Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon is also a unique sporting event within Tipperary as the largest women's only sporting event in the county.

Both North and South Tipperary Sports Partnerships benefit greatly from jointly hosting the Mini Marathon. This mass participation event which attracts in excess of 1,200 participants requires a significant amount of resources, which would not be available to just one LSP. By joining forces to deliver this event, the LSPs benefit in terms of financial resources. Each LSP has its own network of sponsors & local suppliers which ensure the financial outlay is minimised. By working together, the LSPs can utilise a larger network of contacts across both LSP areas. This includes access to volunteers who are vital to the success of the event. It also provides an increased potential catchment for the event.

The work load associated with organising a mass participation event is substantial. Given the small staff numbers in each LSP, it is important to pool human resources in order to deliver this quality event. Each LSP takes responsibility for specific tasks, such as booking of services, linking with local authority staff, promotion and marketing, organising volunteers, etc. Alternating the location of the event between Thurles and Clonmel allows the organisers to rotate the sponsors, ensuring more sustainable links with local businesses.

Planning and Managing the Event

The consultation process involves all key stakeholders, who are represented on the Planning and Strategy Committee, in particular the Tipperary County Athletics Board. The committee consists of both Sports Partnerships, the relevant town councils, local athletic clubs, Tipperary County Council, local Gardaí, Limerick Institute of Technology, Tipperary and the Tipperary Education and Training Board. There is a strong marketing campaign behind the event each year involving Tipp FM as a media partner. Some 34 radio ads are featured between June and September and both LSP Co-ordinators give regular interviews on Tipp FM in the lead up to the event.

Results

- ▶ An increase in registration numbers from 800 to 1,200 women over 4 years of the event
- ▶ Increased levels of physical activity by participants leading up to the event and after the event. This is evident through the number of Meet and Train Groups and walking clubs in the county, which now stands at 10. Membership of the groups has also increased.
- ▶ Participation of people with physical and intellectual disabilities each year.
- ▶ Publicity for the two Sports Partnerships with extensive media coverage in both print and radio.
- ▶ Each year over 70 volunteers come on board with the Tipp Mini Marathon from different groups such as the local athletic clubs, scouting groups and students from Limerick Institute of Technology, Tipperary.

An important feature of the Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon each year is the link with Dr. Niamh Murphy in Waterford Institute of Technology. A post-event participant survey was developed. Excellent qualitative feedback is obtained from the survey on all aspects of the event. This also includes data on where people are from, age groups and physical activity levels before and after the event. From a response of 245 participants, results show that three quarters of respondents took part in the event for the first time. Over 60% indicated that their physical activity levels had increased significantly before the mini marathon. Some 57% of participants had become more active than at a point 3 months prior to the event. Some 30% were members of Fit 4 Life Groups. Two thirds of respondents indicated that they were aware of the event sponsors and a similar proportion being aware of the work of the Sports Partnerships.

Quotes from Participants

One participant commented that:

"We are so proud to have an event of this quality and excellent organisation in our own county, and we need to support it. What a sight to see so many women at the starting line. Well done to the North Tipperary and South Tipperary Sports Partnerships on this wonderful event for Tipperary."

Sustainability

The positive results provide important feedback for the LSPs and indicate that their work in continuing to support the Meet and Train groups across the county is leading to significant outcomes for the participants. The feedback also gives important learning points to the LSPs regarding establishing new Meet and Train groups, as well as in identifying facilitating factors in the monitoring and support of the groups. Key amongst these identified factors is the importance of working closely with community groups on the ground to generate awareness. There is clear evidence that the Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon is leading to a sustained increase in participation in running, jogging and walking by women in Tipperary. There is also further evidence that many of these groups are becoming increasingly independent.

Next Steps

The Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon is in a growth phase, with an increase in registrations over the past 4 years. The LSPs plan to increase the participation numbers to 1,500 and the committee will also be considering a children's event for the future. The Meet and Train groups around Tipperary are a key factor to the success of the Mini Marathon and will continue to be supported. Many of the Meet and Train groups are now organising their own mini 5k and 10k events. Many participants of the Meet and Train groups have now also joined local athletic clubs and triathlon clubs, particularly in Nenagh where there is a strong Triathlon club with a focus on beginners.



The start line at the Tipperary Women's Mini Marathon

3.5 Low Participation Groups

LSPs work to increase participation levels among specific target groups. These groups include women and girls, older people, people with disabilities, unemployed people, and those who live in identified disadvantaged communities.

Each year, LSPs design new programmes to engage with these target groups working in collaboration with local partners, to connect with the harder to reach groups within the community.

Jobseekers

LSPs have continued to develop a range of programmes that seek to enhance the engagement and participation of disadvantaged communities. Offaly LSP has developed an integrated approach to promoting participation opportunities for jobseekers and unemployed people, offering meaningful coaching and internship programmes.

Case Study: Community Coaching for Jobseekers and Unemployed People

Introduction

Offaly Sports Partnership developed a community coaching/internship programme in 2013 to support jobseekers to engage in the delivery of sport within their local communities. The aims of the programme were:

- ▶ To constructively engage with jobseekers to equip them with a skill-set that would allow them to pursue a pathway into the sport and recreation sector.
- ▶ To equip jobseekers and unemployed people with a skill set that would allow them to use these new skills to the benefit of their community.
- ▶ To increase the impact of the various participation programmes of Offaly Sports Partnership across the county through the work of these trained leaders working at community level.

Programme Description

The programme was delivered over nine weeks, three days a week, between July and September and was located at Tullamore Harriers.

Offaly Sports Partnership coordinated the delivery of the programme, with support from a range of National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and sports clubs which provided training at subsidised or no cost. This included Athletics Ireland, Go for Life, Killoughey Badminton Club, Leinster Rugby, Offaly GAA, Tullamore Basketball Club, Tullamore Canoe Club/Canoeing Ireland, Tullamore Harriers, Sportshall Associates UK, St Mary's Youth Centre Tullamore and the Volleyball Association of Ireland.

Most training was delivered at introductory, foundation or level 1 standard. A large proportion of the programme concentrated on sport for children and younger people. In designing the programme, consideration was given to the range of sporting activities on the community games programme of activity, and particularly in relation to minority sports associated with County Offaly.

Results and Progression

Fifteen people expressed an interest in the programme with twelve trainees signing up for the programme. Nine trainees completed the programme. A further six people associated with the sports sector undertook some of the specific modules.

Four of the nine trainees that completed the programme were recruited as part of Offaly Sports Partnership's first intake of interns under the JobBridge programme. They supported the delivery of a range of schools-based work, and out of school activities (such as Futsal, badminton, Spikeball, Sportshall Athletics and soccer training programmes). They were delivered in conjunction with Offaly Traveller Movement and Edenderry Acorn Project (Garda Youth Diversion initiative). These programmes were run in various parts of Offaly from September 2013, and continued on into the following year. Some of the interns also gained experience in the delivery of programmes for older people and people with disabilities.

In total the nine trainees who completed the programme reached over 2,000 people in the county through their voluntary work and linkages with the Sports Partnership.



Community Coaching Training Programme

Do you have a genuine interest in sport, physical activity or active living?
Are you interested in volunteering as a sports and/or physical activity leader in your local community?
Are you looking to pursue studies in the sport and recreation centre but don't know where to start?

If you've answered **YES** to any of the aforementioned questions, then join Offaly Sports Partnership on their nine week Community Coaching Programme.

Training takes place every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am to 3pm in the Tullamore Harriers. Modules include: -

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Adapted physical activity | Recreational walking |
| Athletics | Rugby |
| Child protection in sport | Soccer |
| Community Games | Sport & Physical activity for older |
| GAA | Water sports |
| Recreational cycling | And many more |

Contact Offaly Sports Partnership on 057 93 57462 or sports@offalysports.ie for more information

Outcomes from the Programme

The programme has resulted in two major impacts. Disadvantaged groups such as young people at risk and Travellers have been reached out to following on from the training programme and a range of minority sports such as Futsal, rounders and Spikeball are being introduced to children in the county.

Men

The network of Men's Sheds⁶ in Ireland has grown rapidly in recent years. The primary activity is the provision of a safe, friendly and inclusive environment. Men are able to gather and/or work on meaningful projects at their own pace, in their own time and in the company of other men. The primary objective is to improve the health and well-being of the participating men. A number of LSPs have developed important links with Men's Sheds in their counties, including Carlow LSP. They have ensured that the work of the Men's Shed has incorporated access to physical activity and new learning arising from this.

Case Study: Carlow Men's Shed

Introduction

The Carlow Men's Shed project originated from the Carlow Men's Health Project (CMHP) which was established in 2007 by local organisations, including Carlow Local Sports Partnership (LSP) because they could see that the numbers of men with poor health in County Carlow was increasing.

The aim of the CMHP is to make men more aware of their health and to support them to look after their health. The Men's Shed initially opened in 2011 one day a week, and has steadily grown to its present status, engaging and supporting men 3 days a week.

The Carlow Local Sports Partnership is one of a number of partners who support the development of the Men's Shed. Other partners include Carlow County Council, the HSE, community based development projects, Waterford Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Carlow.

Description of Activities

The activity programme for the men acts as both a means for social gathering for participants and as a medium to profile The Shed and stimulate further involvement.

The LSP has supported the men to engage in Go for Life Games festivals. These games provide an exercise and health activity dimension to The Shed. They also provide a space for social engagement as other groups from around the country take part in these events. Through funding secured from the LSP, The Shed has access to the equipment needed to continue the development of this activity.

A further programme offered by the LSP engaged the men in a six week swimming programme within a local gym. These sessions were with an approved trainer who supported the men to develop their swimming skills.

Outcomes

- ▶ Provide support to men in need of help arising from mental illness or other debilitating illnesses.
- ▶ Ease the transition of men from full-time employment to other activities in retirement.
- ▶ Provide an additional link between the primary health network and the many men who have no regular contact with that network.
- ▶ Establish a place for men that enables social interaction and activities to maintain the health and wellbeing of those men.
- ▶ Build a culture in The Sheds where all men are welcome and mutual respect and trust are paramount.
- ▶ Become a focal point in the community for the identification of men's health issues and actions to resolve those issues.



The Carlow Men's Shed participants

Quotes from Participants

"There is great craic and companionship to have discussions about all aspects of life and to take you out of your house. It keeps your mind active and you learn to do things in timber and steel. Without the Shed I would be very lonely and withdrawn."

Girls

The Women in Sport programme supports efforts by the LSPs to develop innovative programmes to engage women of all ages. An example of such a project is the Active Dance initiative in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LSP, targeting teenage girls in transition year.

Case Study: Active Dance

Introduction

The rationale for this project was based on studies that have highlighted the sharp lowering of participation rates in physical activity of girls during adolescence. This programme focused on dance and built on from the success of an existing teenage girls programme (Active for Fun) and the positive feedback from participants and schools over the previous two years. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown LSP, UCD Sport and dlr Leisure Services were looking to engage this particular target group and the programme was designed around the resources and strengths available to the group. Discussions were held with transition year co-ordinators and other relevant school contacts to develop the programme ensuring it would work within the school system.

Description

The five week programme uses a mix of activity and dance along with educational workshops, to create an interest among teenage girls to participate in regular physical activity. Activity sessions were for one hour and the key element of each session was to have fun while exercising. A small grant was provided to the participating schools (which they had to match) to assist in covering the tutor costs for the five weeks.

Results

- ▶ All five schools completed the programme with over 80% rating it as excellent or good.
- ▶ 78% stated they had increased their levels of physical activity.
- ▶ 75% said their understanding of fitness/activity had increased.

Sustainability

The schools had to designate a programme coordinator for the 5 weeks, which gave a focus both in the school for the pupils, as well as contact for potential future programmes. Two of the schools maintained the weekly dance sessions after the programme was completed with another one adding it to their Physical Education (PE) sessions. A logbook was given to participants to keep track of their activity and participation in the programme. This gave the participants an opportunity to track and monitor their activity levels during the five weeks, as well as start a habit of doing so.

Quotes from Participants

"I learned that it's not important how skinny you are but how fit you are"

"Your fitness can increase just by dancing"



Transition Year girls on the Active Dance Programme

Next Steps

The programme will be rolled out to a target of eight schools in 2014. The LSP is to work with participating schools to continue the dance element of activity in the school, working towards setting up dance groups or clubs for the students.

4

Next Steps for the LSP Network



4.1 Introduction

Increases in participation levels have been consistently evidenced through the work of the LSP network in 2013. Each case study clearly demonstrates the critical role played by LSPs in facilitating the combined efforts of cross-agency working.

The collaborative approach with partners from all sectors has again in 2013 led to further examples of achievement where local initiatives have been able to present innovative, evidence-based, scalable and sustainable results. The LSP network has demonstrated again the effectiveness and efficiency that true partnering can bring to local initiatives.

This section examines a number of important thematic concerns for the network as it seeks to build on these initiatives. Of particular interest are the following:

- ▶ Meeting demand – LSPs have worked to make sure that a popular Irish TV show has had a major impact in communities through supporting local events. LSPs are now building on these annual events to create ongoing sustainable activities and building their audience through the provision of follow-up events and projects.
- ▶ Child Protection – as a new policy environment is still emerging, the LSP network is maintaining its central role in safeguarding children and young people through its work with NGBs, clubs and local organisations.
- ▶ Effective and informed planning – with clear research findings highlighting challenging drop-out rates in sport, LSPs are ensuring that the implications and learnings are taken into consideration when developing programmes. LSPs evaluate their programmes to improve their level of service and ensure efficient and effective use of funds.

4.2 Meeting Demand: Operation Transformation



2013 marked Season 6 of the popular TV Show 'Operation Transformation' and the third year of the Irish Sport Council's involvement in the programme. The Irish Sports Council works in partnership with VIP Productions, the production company, to co-ordinate the nationwide walks and the flagship 5km runs featured on the show.

Local Sports Partnerships organised 41 simultaneous accessible walks across the country in various locations and terrains ranging from public beaches and parks, to the grounds of some of Ireland's most beautiful castles and demesnes. Over 12,000 people came out to walk with family and friends on the day. Some counties had in excess of 1,000 people out at their event. The Operation Transformation Leaders attended their local walks and encouraged viewers to get out and join in.

The Operation Transformation series wrapped up with two 5km fun runs held in Dublin and Cork. Both runs had a maximum attendance with 5,000 runners attending the Phoenix Park event in Dublin and 2,500 runners enjoying the event in Tramore Valley Park in Cork.

Many participants were encouraged by the social aspect of the walks and runs and the Local Sports Partnerships have received many requests for similar events. This demand for organised walks and runs is refreshing and several LSPs are working on developing sustainable programmes that encourage these participants to maintain their new activity levels long after the programme has ended. LSPs see the potential of Operation Transformation with its massive following and popularity and they have the capacity to embrace that audience nationwide and provide a means to physical activity for weight loss and better health.

Case Study: Mayo Meet and Walk Groups

Introduction

As a result of the huge interest in the January Operation Transformation Walks in Belmullet, Castlebar and Westport there was an expression of interest from these and other areas to support walking programmes. Through the promotion of the Operation Transformation National Walks in these areas, there was greater awareness and interest from other communities across the county. The LSP identified a local champion to link with from contacts developed in areas such as Castlebar, Claremorris, Belmullet and Westport. The Community Sports Project Worker liaised with each representative outlining the support that Mayo Sports Partnership was able to provide for the programme start up. The Sports Partnership linked in with the Local Authority and the Mayo Walking and Trails Partnership Committee to set up walking programmes to meet the demand coming from the successful Operation Transformation walks.

Description of Programme

In the initial set up of the programme, five areas were identified with a local community contact, a trained walking leader from the area and access to a walking loop or indoor facility. Initial insurance was covered under the Mayo Sports Partnership's policy. A team of five Fit Walk Leaders had been trained to deliver a five week introductory walking programme which could take place indoors or outdoors. The Community Sports Project Worker, walking leader and local contact all assisted in promoting the programme through local print media, community notes, radio etc. After an initial free taster session the five week programme included a small cost to participants. It was hoped that at least two of the five areas would be self-sustaining, with the costs of the ongoing programme met by participants. In total there were 80 participants in the five areas.

Walking groups were initially concerned with the issue of insurance. However, groups were encouraged to register with Get Ireland Walking and this resolved the issue with the Get Ireland Walking group insurance cover.

Results

At least 30 people attended the inaugural meeting of the Castlebar Walkers Group/Club. The club now meets twice a week and indeed has expanded to other locations across the county. As a result of the walking programme, Mayo Sports Partnership's relationship with Claremorris Athletic Club has grown with the club supporting the Fit Walk programme, hosting it in their indoor recreational facility. May 2013 saw the recruitment and training of the Westport Activity Ambassadors as part of the Westport Get Out There Activity Plan under Westport Town Council. These leaders were trained in walking leadership and proceeded to lead local walks in the area for both tourists and locals alike. The Westport Leisure Park is also a key focus point for the delivery of community based programmes in the area.

In Belmullet, the Erris Community Health Forum has been at the forefront in Community Walk/Fitness Initiatives including the Men on the Move Programme. Following the local Fit Walk Programme a mini marathon training group commenced in the area, this was a natural follow on for ladies involved in the initiative.

Quotes from Participants

"The Meet and Walk Programmes really connect in with the social fabric of local communities and this is what we are here to support. We have the infrastructure, now we are focusing on its usage."

Anna Connor, Mayo County Council's Walking and Trails Officer

"For some members of the Castlebar Walkers Group, meeting up is the highlight of their week. We have gone to Cong and other locations around the county and this would not have been possible without the support of Mayo Sports Partnership and Mayo County Council. Thanks for everything."

Joe Staunton, Castlebar Walkers Group

Next Steps

It is hoped that the initiative will lead to increased involvement in the Operation Transformation programme in 2014 and that at least 10 communities will participate in the Mayo Get Active Campaign, proposed for January 2014. As part of the Get Ireland Walking Initiative they plan to get two leaders/facilitators trained to assist communities who wish to either identify walking routes or to form a walking group in their locality. Mayo County Council's Walking Officer is involved with a European Project titled "Rural Alliances" and it is hoped to leverage funding from this towards walking initiatives in the county.



Participants from the Mayo Meet and Walk Groups

4.3 Being at the Forefront of Child Protection Policy: Code of Ethics

Legislative reform is pending with the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 and the Children First Bill which is planned to be passed within the next 18 months. This will mean there will be a statutory requirement for all organisations and people working with children in sport to comply with this new legislation. It is a significant change in legislation and will now make it mandatory for organisations to vet both volunteers and professionals who come in contact with children and vulnerable adults. Organisations will also have an onus to provide training to people and will be obliged to keep records of training. To date, the Code of Ethics for Children in Sport has been of a voluntary nature for organisations, although National Governing Bodies (NGBs) in receipt of Irish Sports Council funding have had to sign up to and adhere to the Code of Ethics programme.

The Code of Ethics Basic Awareness Training has been rolled out to over 62,000 individuals to date across the country. We foresee a much greater demand for this training prior to and following the passing of the Children First Bill due to the mandatory nature of the new requirements. This will undoubtedly put additional pressure on Local Sports Partnerships and National Governing Bodies to meet this demand. Every sports club has to have a Club Children's Officer. Local Sports Partnerships are delivering Club Children's Officer Workshops across the country. Through regular communication with NGBs and LSPs the Irish Sports Council is working to keep child protection high up on the agendas of sporting organisations and will provide advice on the new requirements when the legislation is passed.

4.4 Effective and Informed Planning

The work of the LSP network is becoming more informed by evidence-based planning and evaluation. LSPs are now basing their programme development on several factors, including formal and informal research, participant feedback and programme evaluations. The network of LSPs has developed a generic programme template which can be adapted to suit any LSP programme. By using this template, the LSP can question several aspects of a programme before deciding if it is a worthwhile investment of time and resources. The "Why Checklist" explores a series of questions including; should the LSP be involved, who are the partners, and if there is a clear exit strategy for the LSP which will ensure that the programme is sustainable after the LSP has stepped away. This will ensure that LSPs don't keep delivering the same programmes without considering the long-term impact of their work. Evaluation of programmes will ensure that LSPs are constantly improving how they work by learning from previous experience, which in turn informs planning of future work.

In addition to using self-evaluation tools, LSPs are using research to plan their work. A major national research report published in 2013 highlights the important role played by Local Sports Partnerships in putting local interventions in place to get the whole community active. "Keeping Them in the Game"⁷ was commissioned by the Irish Sports Council and compiled by ESRI researchers. It represents the largest study of participation in sport and exercise ever conducted in Ireland⁸ and provides evidence for policy from three large nationally representative surveys of activity, covering everyone from primary school children to older adults.

7 <http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Research/Keeping-Them-in-the-Game-2013/>

8 Ibid – the report is based on data from three nationally representative surveys, the Children's Sport and Physical Activity Study, the School Leavers' Survey and the Irish Sports Monitor. Data were collected from a total of over 30,000 respondents aged 10 and up.

The research highlighted that the take-up of sporting activities among young children is almost universal. By the end of primary school, the very large majority of students, 88 per cent, are regular participants in either extra-curricular or extra-school sport, with no significant difference between girls and boys. A majority who participate play multiple sports. Even among those who do not participate in such organised activity, most play sport with friends.

Importantly, based on comparison with previous research, the current generation of primary school children is probably more active in organised sporting activity than any that preceded it. However, even at this initial stage of taking up sport, gender and class differences are apparent. Girls are more inclined towards individual sports, boys towards team sports. Children from families in lower occupational classes have similar rates of participation in extra-curricular sport to middle-class children, but are less likely to play extra-school sport (i.e., to participate in clubs, at sports centres and at other locations not linked to their school). Lifestyle effects are also apparent.

These factors lead to a widening socio-economic gap as people progress through adulthood – the less well-off are more likely to drop out from sport as young adults and less likely to take up new activities.

These factors represent a key challenge for the future work of the LSP network. Section 3.5 of this report has presented a variety of case studies that highlight the range of programmes and initiatives instigated and supported by LSPs in reaching out to low participation groups. The research findings confirm the importance of this core approach of LSPs to act as the main delivery mechanism of opportunities for sport and physical activity to specific hard-to-reach groups.

Other key findings from the research include:

- ▶ Many children drop out of regular activity during the second-level years, especially girls.
- ▶ School exams have a strong impact: students participate less in exam years and this has a lasting effect on whether they are active in later years.
- ▶ Students who play sport get, on average, better Leaving Certificate results.
- ▶ Activity as an adult is less related to attitudes and beliefs than to life events: most adults believe sporting activity is good for them and want to be more active, but leaving education, work commitments, relocations and family responsibilities lead many to drop out.
- ▶ Cycling and, in particular, swimming, are most likely to persist into later adulthood; Gaelic games meanwhile have a high drop-out rate.
- ▶ New sporting activities are mostly taken up through social connections with friends, colleagues and family members; finding facilities is not a barrier.



Report author Dr. Pete Lunn, ESRI, said: *“The findings imply a need to change the way we think about promoting sport and exercise. We are good at getting children involved – it’s keeping people involved as they get older that is the problem. The evidence suggests we could focus more on the major transitions in people’s lives and try to make it easier for them to continue to be active.”*

The LSP network has consistently made increasing participation in sport and physical activity amongst low participation groups a key strategic priority. This is through facilitating greater co-ordination, planning and joined up thinking with regard to local sports development, as well as relationship-building with schools, sports clubs, community groups and local partners. John Treacy, Chief Executive of the Irish Sports Council highlighted that *“It is vital that we and our key stakeholders have access to this type of research to underpin our efforts in this regard.”*

Section 2 of this report has demonstrated the wide ranging successful impact of the Buntús programme in engaging primary and pre-school children in physical exercise in their educational environments. This programme has promoted access and built capacity of teachers and childcare staff to deliver structured programmes within the school and crèche.

The research findings suggest that the transition to second level education represents the beginning of a falling off in engagement in sports and physical exercise. Some of the Dublin-based Local Sports Partnerships are currently collaborating with Dublin City University in a research project named Y-PATH – Youth Physical Activity Towards Health. This project has a particular focus on this aspect of transition.

Case Study: Y-PATH – Youth Physical Activity Towards Health

The Y-PATH project is concerned with identifying:

1. How active Irish second level youth currently are.
2. Identifying how well they are able to carry out fundamental movement skills (such as run, jump, throw).
3. Developing strategies for helping young people to become more active.

A pilot study was undertaken in Wicklow in 2010-2011 with positive results. The schools that were involved in the Y-PATH programme scored significantly higher than control schools in all measures at the end of the study.

22 mixed Dublin secondary schools took part in the project in 2013, due to continue into 2014. As part of the project, the Sports Partnerships have partnered with the School of Health and Human Performance at Dublin City University (DCU) to offer 7 second level mixed schools in the South County Dublin area an opportunity to avail of the Y-PATH physical activity and fundamental movement skills programme, free of charge. The normal cost of the programme is €300 per school.

This opportunity has been made available as part of a final evaluation of the programme being carried out by DCU. The Y-PATH programme reflects a whole school approach in achieving healthier, more active students. It encourages schools to see how they can contribute to healthier lifestyles for students through curricular and co-curricular initiatives and thereby shape and inform young people's thinking regarding the ease of access to a healthy active lifestyle.

The programme has a student component (delivered in regular PE class by the school PE teacher, supported by Y-PATH staff), a teacher component (delivered by Y-PATH staff), and a parent/guardian component (delivered by Y-PATH staff in conjunction with the school). Some 200 students have been participating across these 7 South Dublin schools, with a further 180 in 5 schools in Dun Laoghaire.

The DCU Y-PATH team assesses the physical activity and fundamental movement skill levels of one first year class group from each of the schools at 3 time points – September 2013, April 2014, and September 2014. As part of participating in the Y-PATH programme the selected schools are provided with training and resources to ensure full and successful implementation over the course of the academic year.



4.5 Summary

The continued effective operation and ongoing development of the LSP network remains a strategic priority for the Irish Sports Council. The developments outlined in this section show that the network is both responsive and proactive in its work and is ready to address any trends and challenges that arise. The process of continuous improvement is now being made more structured through the implementation of a formalised Performance Evaluation process across the network. Five LSPs have been engaged with the Performance Evaluation process in 2013 and further evaluations will be carried out in 2014. With continuous improvement always in mind, the most important role of the LSPs will be building sustainable pathways for people in their communities to become lifelong participants in sport and physical activity.

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 | 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 Sports Partnership | 2001 |
| Laois Sports Partnership | 2001 |
| Fingal Sports Partnership | 2001 |
| Cork Sports Partnership | 2002 |
| Meath 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 Sports Partnership | 2006 |
| Monaghan Sports Partnership | 2006 |
| County Limerick Sports Partnership | 2007 |
| South Tipperary Sports Partnership | 2007 |
| Galway Sports Partnership | 2007 |
| Cavan Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Louth Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| South Dublin County Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Wexford Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Longford Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Leitrim Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Dublin City Sports Partnership | 2008 |
| Wicklow Sports Partnership | 2008 |

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Boccia/Bocce – Boccia/Bocce is a precision ball sport, related to bowls and pétanque.

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

CARA National Adapted Physical Activity Centre – A National Resource Centre to lead, coordinate and support the development of sport, physical activity and physical education for people with disabilities.

Children First Bill 2014 – An Act for the purposes of making further and better provision for the care and protection of children and for those purposes to require the preparation, by certain providers of services to children, of child safeguarding statements; to require certain persons to make reports to the Child and Family Agency in respect of children in certain circumstances; to require certain persons to assist the Child and Family Agency in certain circumstances; to provide for the establishment of the Children First Inter-Departmental Implementation Group; to make provision for the preparation of sectoral implementation plans by Departments of State; and to provide for related matters.

Club Children's Officer – The Club Children's Officer is a volunteer role within a sports club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders. The Club Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum.

Community Foundation for Ireland – The Community Foundation for Ireland is a registered charity that seeks to inspire donors and support charities and community groups.

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.

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

ETBs – Education and Training Boards. ETBs are statutory education authorities which have responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other statutory functions. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, pilot community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes. On 1st July 2013, the 33 Vocational Education Committees (VECs) were dissolved and replaced by 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

FÁS – Foras Áiseanna Saothair. FÁS was the national training and employment agency with responsibility for assisting those seeking employment. The Further Education and Training Act 2013 resulted in the dissolution of FÁS on the 26th October 2013 and the creation of a new agency called SOLAS on 27th October, 2013.

Federation of Irish Sport – The Federation of Irish Sport is the independent voice for sport in Ireland representing 70 National Sports Organisations and 30 Local Sports Partnerships.

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.

Functional Screening – Functional Screening is a method of observing movement imbalances within a person, usually used in a sporting context.

Futsal – Futsal is a variant of association football that is played on a smaller pitch and mainly played indoors.

Fit4Life – Fit4Life is an Athletics Ireland programme to help participants develop their fitness in a fun and 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.

Get Ireland Walking – Get Ireland Walking is a national initiative which exists to maximise the number of people participating in walking; for health, wellbeing and fitness, throughout Ireland.

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.

IHF – Irish Heart Foundation. The IHF is the national charity fighting heart disease and stroke.

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.

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 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.

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.

National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 – The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. This legislation is part of a suite of complementary legislative proposals to strengthen child protection.

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.

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.

SOLAS – An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna. SOLAS is the national training and employment agency with responsibility for assisting those seeking employment. Formerly known as FÁS; the Further Education and Training Act 2013 resulted in the dissolution of FÁS on the 26th October 2013 and the creation of a new agency called SOLAS on 27th October, 2013.

Spikeball – Spikeball is an adapted 4-player v 4-player volleyball game that was introduced to Ireland in the last 3 years.

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.

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. On 1st July 2013, the 33 Vocational Education Committees (VECs) were dissolved and replaced by 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

WIS – Women in Sport. An initiative of the Irish Sports Council which aims to increase participation of women in sport through provision of alternative opportunities and the development of specific programmes targeting women and girls.

Appendix C

Images

The images in this report are courtesy of the following LSPs:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Images on inside cover: | Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Sports Partnership, Kerry Sports and Recreation Partnership, Laois Sports Partnership, Limerick Sports Partnership, Meath Sports Partnership, Mayo Sports Partnership, Waterford Sports Partnership, Wexford Sports Partnership, North Tipperary Sports Partnership |
| Section 1: | Kerry Sports Partnership |
| Section 2: | Meath Sports Partnership |
| Section 3: | Mayo Sports Partnership |
| Section 4: | Laois Sports Partnership |
| Appendices: | Cavan Sports Partnership |



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