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PARTICIPATION

Community Sports & Physical Activity Hubs

Evaluation Report 2019



ciste na
gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund







Abbreviations

CSH: Community Sports Hub

LSP: Local Sports Partnership

DAF: Dormant Accounts Fund

NPAP: National Physical Activity Plan

BME: Black and Minority Ethnic

CIT: Cork Institute of Technology

DLR: Dun Laoghaire Rathdown

SVT: Stradbally, Vicarstown, Timahoe

SIM: Single Item Measure

ISM: Irish Sports Monitor

FRC: Family Resource Centre

NUIG: National University of Ireland Galway

ASH: Athy Sports Hub

PE: Physical Education

NGB: National Governing Body

HSE: Health Services Executive

ETB: Education and Training Board

CSDO: Community Sports Development Officer

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

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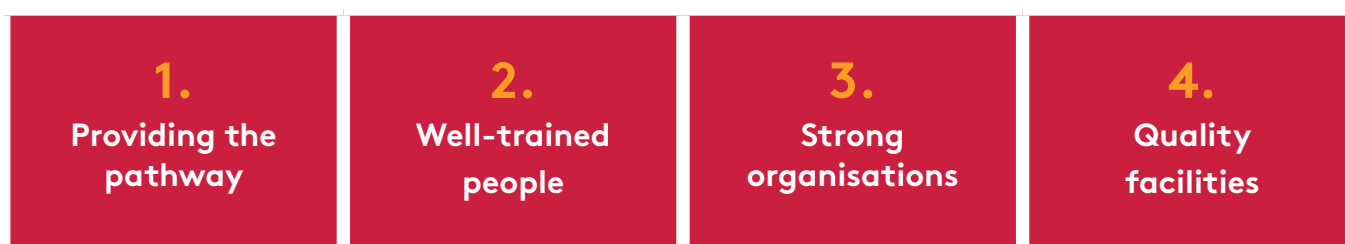
Executive Summary

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A Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub (CSH) is a collective of progressive sports clubs and other local organisations that want to work together to improve the sport offered in their local community. A hub will provide information, support and advice on a wide range of sports and physical activities to make it easier for people in disadvantaged areas to get involved and engage in a more active and healthier lifestyle. The overall aim of a CSH is:

To increase the number of people of all ages participating in sport and physical activity in their communities, with a specific focus on adolescents / young people.

A CSH is developed under a framework comprising the following four pillars:



Under Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the overall CSH programme, an investment of c€1.9m has been made to date in 18 CSHs across 15 Counties in Ireland.

This evaluation was informed by site visits to 16 of the CSHs during the period 1st August – 11th October 2019 as well as the distribution of an evaluation survey to hub participants. 32 LSP Coordinators and CSH Coordinators, 89 partner organisations i.e. schools, sports clubs, community groups, and 1,022 participants contributed to the evaluation. The key findings are set out below, presented under the four pillars of the hub framework.

Providing the Pathway

- The CSHs are engaging significant numbers of people across Ireland (42,280 engaged to date by the phase 2 and 3 CSHs). These individuals are being engaged in areas of disadvantage, both urban and rural and include a range of demographic groups including more than 21,000 young people.
- There is no 'one size' fits all approach to the CSHs, each has adopted a unique way of working in response to the needs and context of the local area, within which the hub is based – this is enabled by the flexible nature of the fund.
- All of the hubs have proactively made efforts to align their activity to local need. This has been achieved through consultation ranging from formally commissioned independent reports to informal conversations. It appears that the method of consultation is less important than the consultation itself in engendering a sense of ownership locally and in identifying local need – much of which also relies on the tacit knowledge of community partners. This should continue to be a fundamental part of any hub activity, with appropriate mechanisms to ensure the ongoing involvement of local communities.
- There is emerging evidence that those hubs that do a greater amount of proactively consulting and engaging local communities' pre-application, find it easier to spend funding allocations during year one, and are better placed to 'hit the ground running'.
- Of the participants surveyed, those that report being 'aware of CSHs and have participated in activities at a hub' (N = 605), a vast majority (95%) are being made to feel welcome, being made to feel like they fit in and feel that the hub is successfully bringing people from different backgrounds together.
- Across the participant survey sample (N = 819), the vast majority (87%) report that the CSH in their respective area has improved access to sport and participation opportunities – the main perceived contributor to this is the increased variety of opportunity on offer followed by a reduction in cost to participate.

- Whilst this evaluation cannot conclusively identify the extent of increased participation levels amongst participants, anecdotally there are powerful and impactful stories about individuals and communities that are achieving considerable health and social outcomes.

Development of Well Trained People

- The CSHs are proving to be an important vehicle for training and capacity building. Based on available data, more than 1,000 people have received accredited training through the phase 2 and phase 3 hubs. Many of these individuals are either volunteering in their community or progressing into paid coaching roles and thus generating employment outcomes.
- The delivery of training and capacity building is resulting in enhanced community leadership and confidence amongst participants. An improved capacity of local organisations is implicit in the improved capacity of local volunteers, the majority of whom are aligned to a local community organisation or sports club.

Strong Organisations

- There is strong anecdotal evidence for enhancements to partnership working amongst local organisations. In many cases, this has moved from a tokenistic acknowledgement of each other's existence within a community, to practical joined up planning around project spend, project activities and creating meaningful links that result in sustained participation opportunities.
- The role of the hub coordinator has been identified as being of critical importance. A strive for reducing level of dependence on the coordinator amongst community partners should be a key goal for LSPs, however it is recognised that some level of coordination, potentially on a reduced scale is likely to be required to retain the impetus and momentum behind hub activity and development.
- The sustainability of hubs is a key area of focus moving forward. Whilst hubs are aware of the time limited funding, only a small number are taking proactive steps to plan for sustainability at this stage. Most of the hubs are into year 2 and 3 of a 5 year cycle and it is important that sustainability planning is further embedded from this point forward.

Quality Facilities

- Access to capital for the purchase of equipment is considered a key enabler in creating a wider variety and choice of activity. There is strong anecdotal evidence of the CSH investment 'bringing facilities to life' and 'optimising existing community facilities' in providing affordable, accessible sport and physical activity opportunities.
- There are areas of learning and emerging trends for CSHs in relation to key characteristics of a successful hub. Having a clearly identifiable hub site or location appears to be a key catalyst in ensuring participants feel welcome, feel like they have an influence, and feel like they fit in, as well as creating greater optimism around the potential for sustainability.

Overall

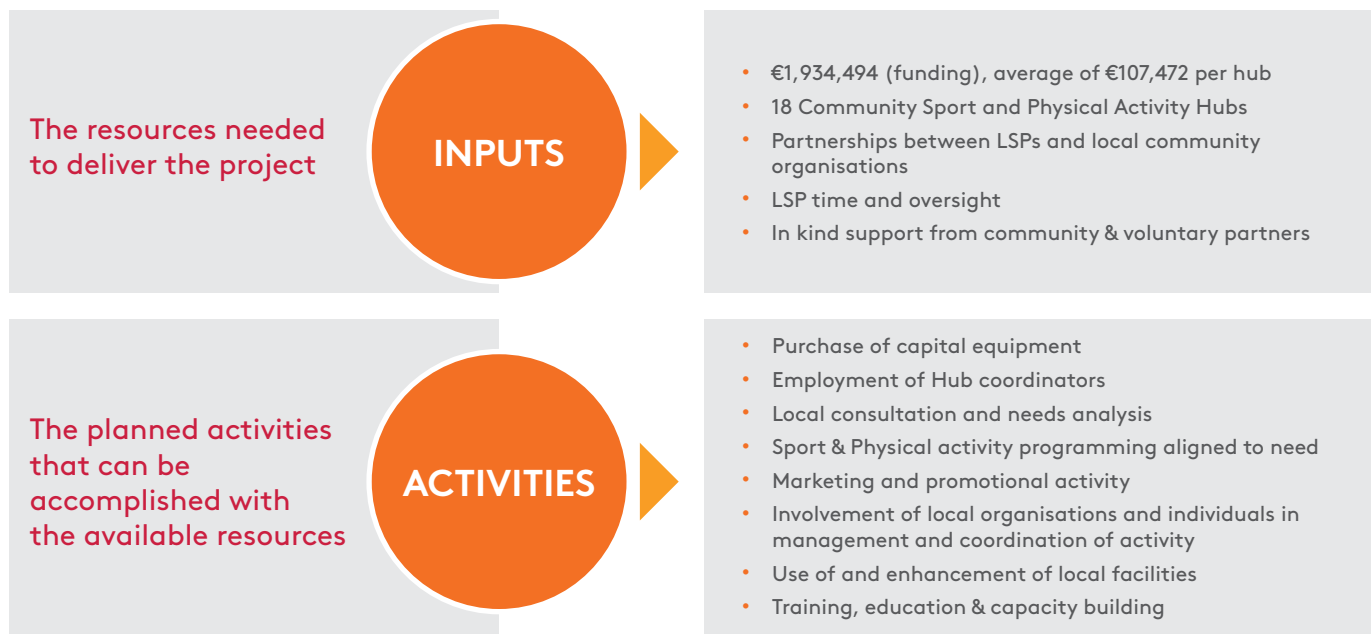
The consultation findings, both quantitative and qualitative outline a clear causal relationship between the inputs (i.e. funding, LSP and local community time and resources) and outputs (i.e. purchase of equipment, organisation and delivery of sport and physical activity programming and training). The evidence suggests that in most cases, this would not have been achieved in the absence of the hub investment or to a much lesser extent. The findings indicate that inputs and outputs have resulted in;

- increased access to sport and physical activity opportunities, delivered in welcoming and safe environments to people that face multiple disadvantages;
- improved links between local organisations;
- enhancement in skills and capacities and, anecdotally;
- improved health and social outcomes for people.

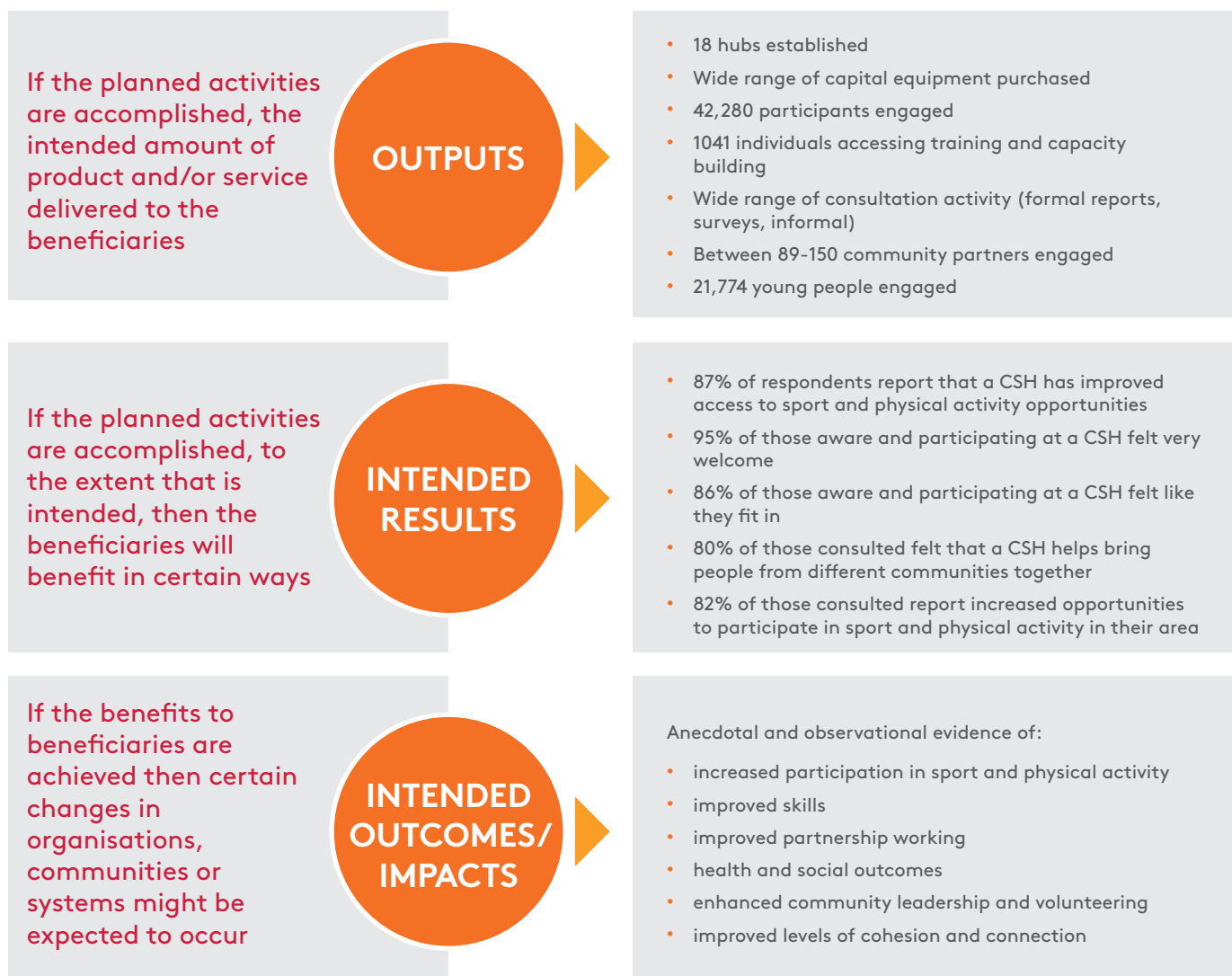
These outcomes align with the original intention for the CSHs and enable a conclusion that the CSHs are positive investments in local communities. The inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes are captured and summarised in a CSHs logic model overleaf.

Logic model: Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs

The Work



The Effects



Introduction & Background

1.1 Introduction and Purpose of the Report

This report sets out an independent process and outcomes evaluation of the 2016 (Phase 2) and 2017 (Phase 3) Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs (CSHs) project. The CSHs are funded by Sport Ireland through the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) and delivered by the network of Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) in partnership with local communities. The objectives of this evaluation are:

- To assess the extent to which hubs have achieved their intended outputs, outcomes and aims.
- To present national level findings across all phase 2 and phase 3 hubs.
- To identify the contributors to the success, or otherwise, of the hubs.

This report and its findings are informed by consultation with 1,022 hub participants, 89 stakeholder organisations, and 32 LSP or hub coordinators/managers.

The findings are presented in sections 4-6 and culminate in section 7 outlining critical success factors to guide the future direction of the CSHs project. The earlier sections offer an introduction to the concept of a CSH, their aims, objectives and goals.

1.2 The Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF)

The DAF was established by legislation and enables unclaimed funds from accounts in credit institutions in Ireland to be used to support: the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged, the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged, persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000).

Under the Dormant Accounts Act 2012, the Minister for Rural and Community Development is responsible for the processes by which Government approves measures and projects to which funding may be disbursed under DAF. The Department of Rural and Community Development is required to prepare a three year DAF Disbursement Scheme that sets out the measures to be implemented under the Fund, and an annual Action Plan to give effect to the scheme¹.

Sport Ireland actively engages with relevant departments to inform and shape a series of measures that can deliver against key strategic policy objectives within the National Sports Policy (2018-2027), Healthy Ireland, A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025, and the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP).

1.3 Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs)

A network of 29 Local Sports Partnerships was established between 2000 – 2009. LSPs undertake a wide range of actions with the aim of increasing sport and physical activity participation levels in their local communities. These actions are grouped within four outcome areas:

- Working to develop clubs, coaches and volunteers, and supporting partnerships between local sports clubs, community based organisations, and sector agencies.
- Creating greater opportunities for access to training and education in relation to sports and physical activity provision.

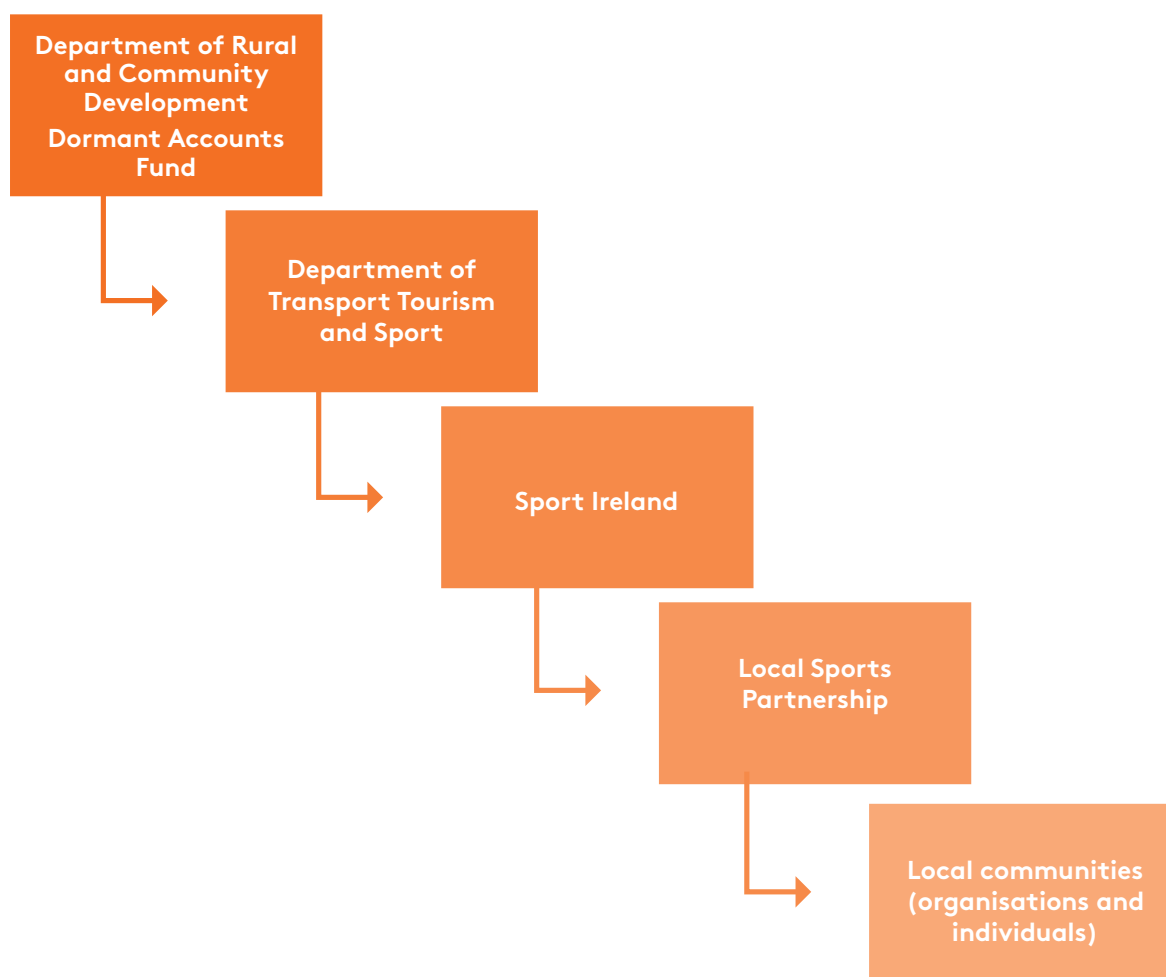
¹ <https://www.pobal.ie/programmes/dormant-accounts-fund-daf/>

- Provision of targeted programmes, events, and initiatives to increase physical activity and sport participation.
- Providing information about sport and physical activity to create awareness and access .

The latest LSP annual report (2018) identifies that almost 400,000 people participated in activities and interventions delivered by the LSP network and a collective team of 127 full time or part time staff². The LSP network can apply to Sport Ireland to establish CSHs within their respective county, aligned to local needs.

1.4 CSHs Funding and Delivery Model

The diagram captures the funding and delivery model for the CSHs initiatives and captures how funding is directed via Sport Ireland from the overall Dormant Accounts Fund. Sport Ireland administer funds through an application process that is open to the LSP network who are required to work collaboratively with their local communities to make best use of the funds in enhancing participation and removing barriers for disadvantaged groups.



² Local Sports Partnership Annual Report 2018
https://www.sportireland.ie/Media/Latest_News/2018%20LSP%20Annual%20Report.pdf

2

Community Sport & Physical Activity Hubs (CSHs)

2.1 What is a CSH?

The information below is derived from the 2017 application guidance notes.

Definition of a CSH

A Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub (CSH) is a collective of progressive sports clubs and other local organisations that want to work together to improve the sport offered in their local community. A hub will provide information, support and advice on a wide range of sports and physical activities to make it easier for people in disadvantaged areas to get involved and engage in a more active and healthier lifestyle.

Overall Aim

To increase the number of people of all ages participating in sport and physical activity in their communities, with a specific focus on adolescents/young people.

Overall Objective

To bring local people together and provide a home for local clubs and sports organisations.

The guidance notes identify that a CSH can be:

- **Community Sports Hub** - where the community is at the heart and is centred around community participation. This includes developing and strengthening linkages between the community, sports clubs and other physical activity groups.
- **School Community Sports Hub** - maximises sports facility usage through linkages with the local schools, community, sports clubs and other physical activity groups.
- **Outdoor Community Sports Hub** - focus on the development of the outdoor space as a hub, increasing the linkages between the community, sports clubs and other physical activity groups.

LSPs are also advised in the guidance that hubs can be 'area based' (i.e. targeting and using a range of existing facilities within an area) or 'facility based' (i.e. focusing on a single venue as host to a range of different activity). Essential across all hubs is the need to target disadvantaged areas and to focus on developing a legacy or sustainability. The framework below captures the aims and intended outcomes of all CSHs and will serve as a key reference document for the evaluation. The framework is based on the following four 'aims':

1. Providing the pathway
2. Development of well-trained people
3. Creation of strong organisations
4. Provision of quality facilities

| Aim | Output | Outcome |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Providing the pathway | <p>Research into community profiles and needs assessment</p> <p>Marketing & promoting activities, including outreach by sports clubs</p> <p>Purchase of small-scale equipment</p> | <p>Opportunities to participate in sport & physical activity</p> <p>A home where a range of local sports clubs can work together</p> <p>A welcome and safe place to take part in sport & physical activity</p> |
| Well-trained people | <p>Development of joint initiatives between sports clubs and recreational physical activity groups</p> <p>Training & development of local people</p> | <p>Training and development of the local people that make sport happen to build capacity and ensure sustainability</p> |
| Strong organisations | <p>Strong pathways facilitated</p> | <p>Self-sustaining sports clubs/ organisations</p> <p>An integrated approach from local partners to develop leadership in the local community</p> <p>Genuine community engagement & leadership</p> <p>Well organised and connected local clubs</p> |
| Quality facilities | <p>Resources are efficiently used to produce optimum & quality facilities.</p> | <p>Improved access for local people and sports clubs at affordable prices</p> <p>Integration with local facility planning & programming</p> |

The 2016 Sport Ireland Evaluation Report on CSHs identifies that:

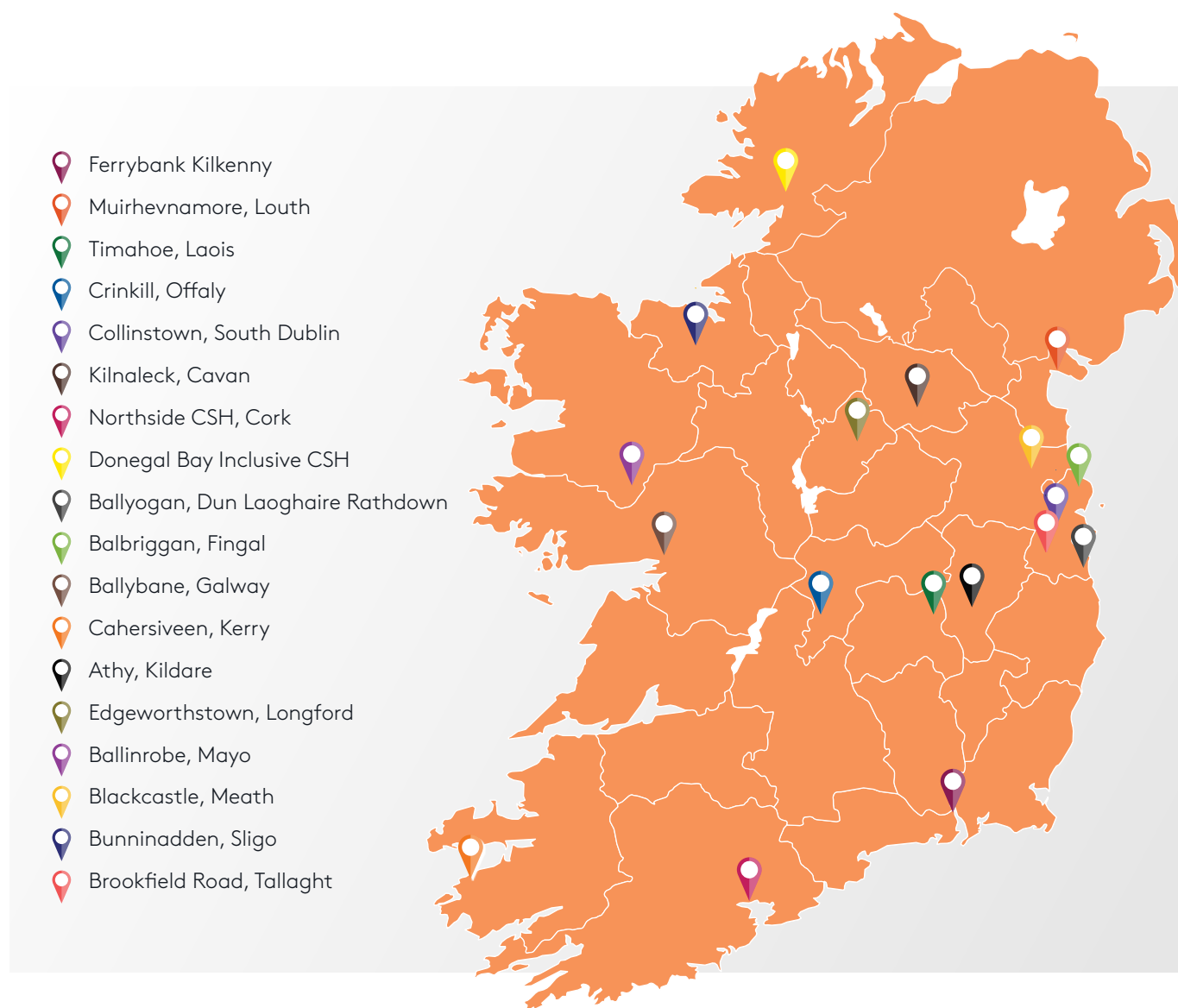
"Increased participation is best achieved when Hubs deliver on all 4 areas of the framework i.e. provision of a pathway, well-trained people, strong organisations and quality facilities. The evaluation has found that those Hubs that have achieved success in multiple areas have seen better community engagement and, as an extension of that, better participation levels in sport and physical activity."

The evaluation team have thus developed an evaluation and consultation framework in this context.

2.2 Where are the CSHs?

Phase 2 and 3 of the CSHs project has funded 18 hubs across 15 different Counties in Ireland. A list of the hubs involved in this evaluation is provided below and plotted on the map below.

The hubs contain a wide mix of approaches including facility and area based hubs, urban and rural hubs, water sport and outdoor recreation hubs as well as the first Disability specific hub in Ireland. The diversity of CSHs has required a flexible and adaptable evaluation approach, set out in the following section.



3

Evaluation Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Sport Ireland commissioned an independent and objective evaluation of the 2016 (Phase 2) and 2017 (Phase 3) Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs (CSHs) in July 2019. The purpose and objectives of this evaluation are:

- To assess the extent to which hubs have achieved their intended outputs, outcomes and aims.
- To present national level findings across all phase 2 and phase 3 hubs.
- To identify the contributors to the success, or otherwise, of the hubs.

The following sets out the evaluation methodology including approaches to data collection and analysis, as well as identifying some limitations, assumptions and challenges impacting on findings.

3.2 Data Collection

This evaluation was informed by engagements with LSP Coordinators, CSH Coordinators, representatives from local community organisations, sports clubs, schools and other partners, as well as hub participants. All data was gathered during the period 1st August – 11th October 2019. The evaluation process was based on site visits to 16 of the 18 hubs funded under phase 2 and 3. Two of the hubs were unable to facilitate site visits due to staff availability during the evaluation timeframe, these hubs engaged via telephone consultations. To ensure consistency of approach, it was agreed that data collection at each site would comprise:

1. Semi Structured interviews with LSP Coordinators and CSH Coordinators (a total of 32 participants were interviewed).
2. Small group discussions and one-on-one interviews with partner organisations i.e. schools, sports clubs, community groups (a total of 89 organisations engaged and participated).
3. Distribution of a web based survey to project participants. The survey was designed by the evaluation team and distributed by the LSPs or CSH Coordinators to participants in their respective areas. 1,022 responses were received in total.
4. Researcher observation – where site visits coincided with activity, researcher observation was used to help understand the context and congruence of information.

Where partners were unavailable during site visits, they were engaged via follow up telephone consultations. In addition, each of the participating hubs provided the evaluation team with quantitative data relating to hub activity.

The evaluation process involved significant data collection, both qualitative through engagements and quantitative survey responses.

3.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was conducted using both thematic and narrative approaches (see, for example, Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao 2004, Bryman 2008). Through this process categories were developed, coded and reduced. Survey data and thematic data from interviews was triangulated and cross tabulated in order to identify emergent themes and issues and to explore the relationships between issues (Morgan, 1997).

Quantitative data in relation to participation numbers was provided by LSPs or Hub Coordinators. This data was aggregated to provide a national level overview of participation in the hubs. In relation to the quantitative survey

data, a descriptive analysis was carried out for overall findings, this offers a baseline and comparator against which individual hubs can measure their performance against. An inferential analysis was also carried out on multiple variables to identify any correlation, patterns or trends.

Participant sampling and data collection continued until no new conceptual insights were generated and the evaluation team felt they had gathered repeated evidence for the thematic analysis, thus reaching theoretical saturation.

3.4 Assumptions

In the evaluation of Phase 1 of the CSHs project (2016), a series of assumptions are set out in respect of the definitions of key variables including: participation in sport, recreational sport, volunteering, community leadership etc. This evaluation has adopted the same definitions in the interest of consistency.

3.5 Limitations

Efforts have been made to ensure the validity and reliability of findings through multiple method consultation (surveys, focus groups and interviews). As with any survey data, errors due to question non-responses may exist as a result of self-selection bias. The number of respondents who chose to respond to a survey question may be different from those who chose not to respond, thus creating bias. The multiple method consultation process was extended on two occasions to enable further engagement and sampling, however, there remain several limitations, these include:

3.5.1 Sample Size

The number of participants responding to the online survey was 1,022. This represents less than 3% of the overall participant group (based on quantitative participant data from LSPs). The average number of survey responses per hub is 58 with at least one response recorded for 17 hubs. The survey responses range from 180 to 0, creating bias in the overall data trends. Where hubs had less than 10 respondents, they were omitted from cross tabulation of data. Thus, the information presented in relation to survey responses offers emerging or indicative findings and cannot be conclusive.

The participant survey was distributed via LSPs, CSH coordinators and partner organisations. Some of the hubs collated hard copy responses from participants only, most distributed the survey link via social media, leaving the survey open to self-selection bias, and some had a combination of both. There was a lack of consistency in the survey distribution and thus some hubs may have had a higher proportion of respondents that had participated in hub activity than others. For those distributing the survey via social media, there is likely to be a higher proportion of respondents who reported 'no awareness' of the hub or 'aware but have not participated in the hub', this will not be the case for hubs that distributed hard copy surveys to participants only, therefore creating bias.

3.5.2 Baseline position

The structure of the fund allowed flexibility for LSPs to respond to local needs and issues. The hubs focused on different types of areas (i.e. urban/rural), on different themes (i.e. disability), used different activities (i.e. water sports vs fitness) and involved a wide range of community partners who were at varying levels of experience and capacity.

There was no clear comparative starting point for all hubs and therefore defining success is very different in each hub. Some hubs were only starting to deliver activities at the time of evaluation. In addition, hubs were not bound by a minimum set of participation targets (i.e. number of people or frequency of participation), thus comparison of hubs is difficult given their unique contexts. The lack of baseline data for participants also means we cannot conclusively identify whether hubs have led to an increase in rates of participation in sport and physical activity within communities.

3.6 Evaluation Timeline

The following sets out a timeline for the evaluation process which commenced in June 2019 and concluded in November 2019.



4

Headline Statistics

42,280

Total number of **unique participants** engaged by the CSHs as reported by Coordinators



56% of participants are **female** compared to **41% male** and 3% other or did not say

95%

Of all survey respondents who are aware of a hub and have participated at a hub (N = 605) **felt very welcome**

86%

Of all survey respondents who are aware of a hub and have participated at a hub (N = 605) **felt like they fit in**



1,041 individuals **accessing training** through the CSHs as reported by Coordinators

21,774

Total number of **young people aged 24 and under** engaged by the CSHs as reported by Coordinators



87% of survey respondents (N = 819) stated that a CSH has **improved access to sport and physical activity opportunities**



€1,934,494

The **amount invested** in the 18 phase 2 and phase 3 CSHs to date

80%

Of respondents (N = 685) felt that a CSH helps bring **people from different communities together**



7 'facility based' hubs compared to 11 'area based' hubs



11 urban hubs funded compared to 7 rural hubs



Increased variety of opportunity – reported as the primary reason for improved access to activity (N = 747)

5

Summary of Survey Findings

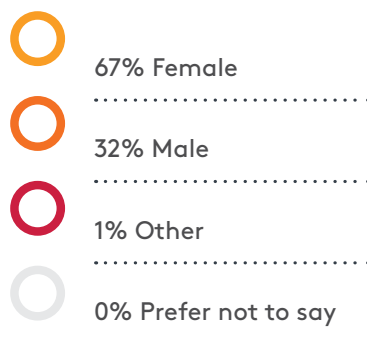
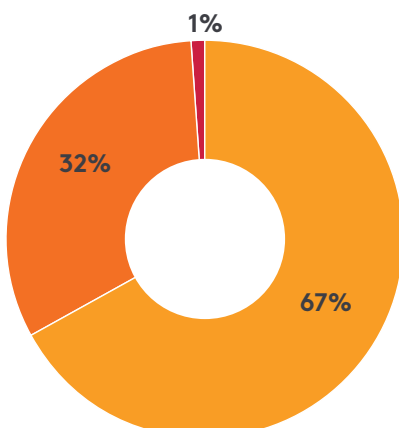
Overview of Survey Respondents

The following presents an overview of the respondents to the survey. Responses were received from 17 of the 18 hubs, the table below shows the response rate per hub.

| Answer Choices | Responses (N = 1,012) |
|--|-----------------------|
| Kilkenny LSP, Kilkenny City/Ferrybank | 0.2% |
| Louth LSP, Muirhevnamor | 11.4% |
| Laois LSP, Stradbally, Vicarstown, Timahoe | 4.6% |
| Offaly LSP, Crinkle | 7.9% |
| South Dublin LSP, Collinstown, North Clondalkin | 2.8% |
| Cavan LSP, Kilnaleck | 11.5% |
| Cork LSP, Northside Cork City | 6.4% |
| Donegal LSP, Stranorlar, Killybegs, Ballyshannon | 4.2% |
| Dun Laoghaire Rathdown LSP, Ballyogan | 3.9% |
| Fingal LSP, Balbriggan | 4.9% |
| Galway LSP, Ballybane/Doughiska | 1.0% |
| Kerry LSP, Cahersiveen | 0.0% |
| Kildare LSP, Athy | 10.1% |
| Longford LSP, Edgeworthstown | 4.6% |
| Mayo LSP, Balinrobe | 17.8% |
| Meath LSP, Windtown/Blackcastle in Navan | 4.5% |
| Sligo LSP, Bunninadden | 4.4% |
| South Dublin LSP, Brookfield in West Tallaght | 0.1% |

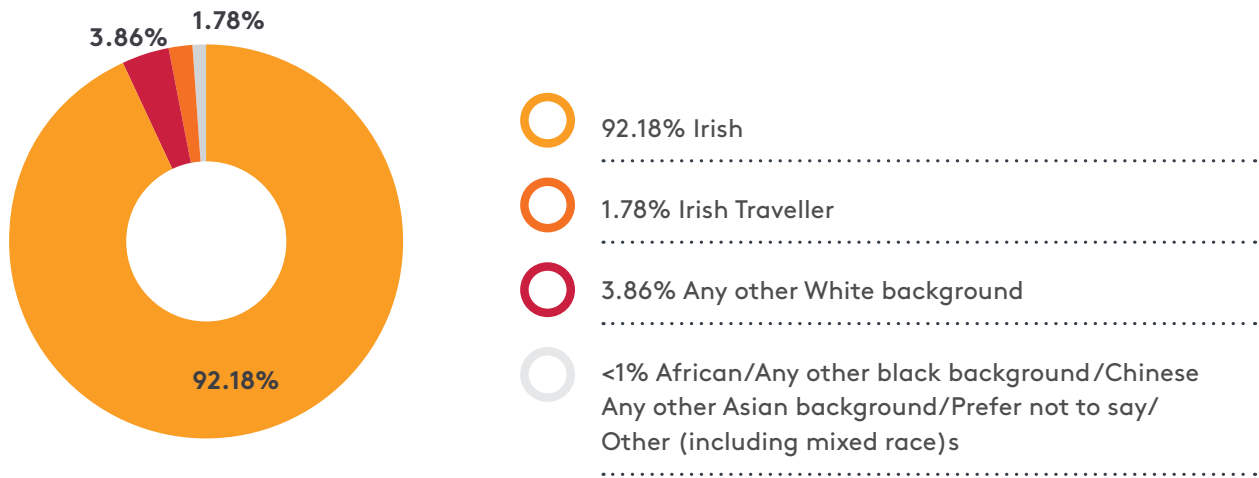
It should be noted that some of the hubs have not yet, or only just, commenced delivery of activities and thus were unable to generate survey responses.

What is your gender? (N = 1,014)

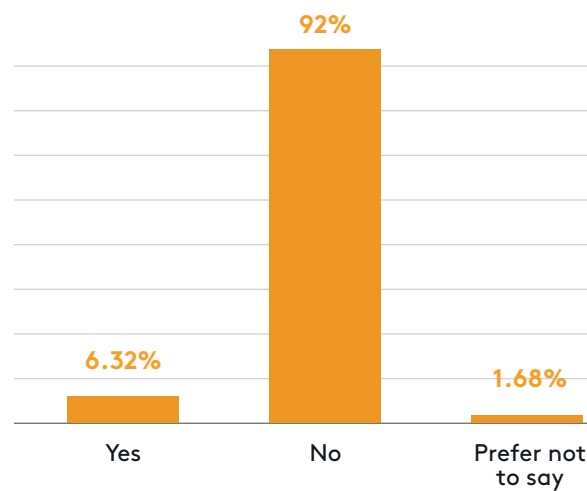


17 of the 18 hubs had a higher proportion of female respondents than male. Five of the hubs recorded significantly higher proportion of female respondents: Louth (91%), Cavan (83%), Longford (83%) and Meath (87%).

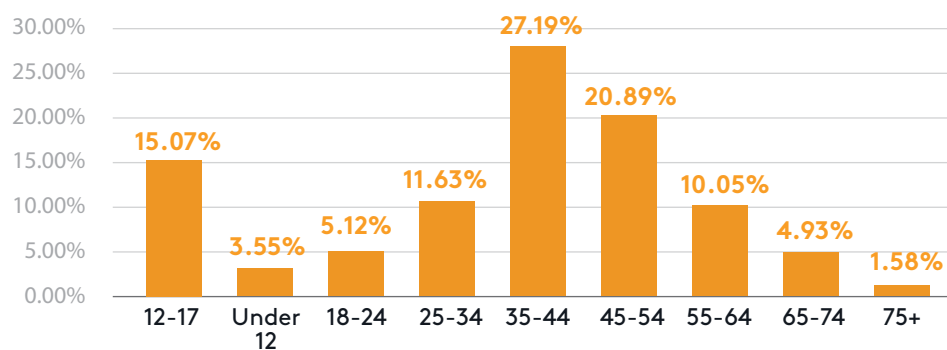
What is your ethnicity? (N = 1,011)



Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (N = 1,013)



Age of participant? (N = 1,016)



Key Survey Findings

The following offers descriptive statistics from the survey findings, no cross tabulations or filters are applied. N = the total number of respondents to that question.

Awareness of a CSH

(N = 828)

73% of all survey participants were *"aware of the community sports hub and have participated in programmes and activities at the hub"*

17% were *"aware of the community sports hub but have never participated in programmes and activities at the hub"*

10% of all respondents were *"not aware of the community sports hub and have never participated in programmes and activities at the hub"*

Participation Opportunities in local areas

(N = 825)

82% of survey participants felt that *opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity have increased in their area in recent times*

4% felt that *opportunities have decreased*

14% don't know if *opportunities have increased or decreased*

Feeling welcome at a CSH

(N = 822)

82% of all survey respondents reported feeling *'very welcome'* at a CSH

3% reported feeling *"not very welcome"* at a CSH

15% reported feeling *"not sure"*

Feeling like you 'fit in' at a CSH

(N = 823)

73% of survey respondents reported feeling like they *they 'fit in'* at a CSH

4% reported feeling that they *"do not fit in"*

23% reported feeling *"not sure"*

Hubs Bringing People Together

(N = 808)

80% of all survey participants felt that *"the hub in their area helps bring people from different communities together"*

4% did not feel that the hub in their area helps bring people from different communities together

16% of all respondents were *"not sure"*

Participant influence on hub activity

(N = 820)

40% of all survey respondents felt that they **have an influence** on what happens at the hub

25% felt that they **did not have an influence** on what happens at the hub

35% were not sure if they had an influence or not

Access to Opportunities

(N = 825)

86% of all survey respondents reported that the CSH in their area has **improved access to opportunities to participate** in sport and physical activity

2% reported that the CSH in their area has **not improved opportunities**

12% reported feeling *"not sure"*

Most significant ways the hub improved access to opportunities? (N = 747)

1.

The hub has increased
the **variety of activities**
available

2.

The hub has reduced
the **cost of**
participation

3.

The hub has created
greater access to
facilities

4.

The hub has created
better links to clubs

Access to Volunteering

(N = 635)

54% of all survey participants felt that *"the hub in their area has increased opportunities to volunteer in the local area"*

8% did not feel that the hub increased opportunities to volunteer

38% of respondents were *"not sure"*

Training through the Hub

(N = 633)

23% of those responding to the survey had completed training through the CSH in their area, **77%** had not

Of those completing training:

- **56%** felt more confident in encouraging local participation in sport and physical activity
- **46%** intend to volunteer at the hub or in their local community in the future
- **28%** have already volunteered at the hub or in the local community since completing training at the hub

Levels of Physical Activity

27%

Of all adults (18+) responding to the survey (180 of 657 respondents to this question) are achieving the minimum recommended levels of physical activity i.e. At least 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity activity, five days a week (or 150 minutes a week).

13%

Of all young people (<18) responding to the survey (22 of 165 respondents to this question) are achieving the minimum recommended levels of physical activity i.e. All children and young people should be active, at a moderate to vigorous level, for at least 60 minutes every day.

6

Summary of Partner, Coordinator & LSP Interviews

6.1 Introduction

This section sets out a summary analysis of the qualitative consultation activity. Overall, the CSHs are characterised by the employment of a coordinator, the purchase of capital equipment, investment in sport and physical activity opportunities as well as training of local volunteers.

Whilst working towards a common goal of increasing participation in sport and physical activity as set out in the hub framework, the delivery model for hubs differs between and within counties in response to the nuances and idiosyncrasies of individual areas. As such success can look very different for each hub which offers an important context for remaining sections of the report. When asked to rate the impact or progress of their hub to date, 14 of the 18 coordinators identified their CSH as 'positive', 2 have yet to 'get off the ground' and 2 identified as 'neutral'.

For clarity and ease of reference, the thematic analysis is structured on the four overarching pillars of the CSHs. A number of subheadings are identified under each. Within the subheadings are thematic overviews of the consultation findings, on occasion cross tabulated with participant survey data and interspersed with direct quotes from those consulted. We have also drawn out practical examples from across hubs that try and bring the thematic findings to life.

6.2 Providing the Pathway

6.2.1 Needs Analysis

An important component of hubs is that they should align to local needs. The approach to needs analysis varied across hubs. The most common approach (8 of the 18) was '*internal structured consultation*' comprising web based and hard copy surveys distributed to participants as well as purposeful meetings or discussions with specific target groups. This consultation was usually facilitated by hub coordinators or partners.

7 hubs adopted a more informal approach using casual conversation with prospective hub users as well as relying on the existing tacit knowledge of hub partners (as representative bodies) to identify need. 3 of the 18 hubs commissioned independent external reports.

Example

In the Kilnaleck Activity Hub, Cavan a survey was recently distributed to minority ethnic members of the community via one of the hub partners. This has identified that the availability of basketball would stimulate interest and participation. The group is now considering this as part of the multi annual funding proposal as the next round of capital investment, followed by some structured coaching programmes.

Example

In the Northside Activity Hub in Cork, the Local Sports Partnership undertook research to identify community needs including statistical analysis of local areas. They then commissioned students at the Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) to distribute a survey and conduct focus groups which culminated in the production of a needs analysis report which identified a lack of awareness and usage among the local community of existing facilities and a need to promote what already exists in the area.

Example

DLR Sports Partnership in collaboration with its partner organisation commissioned research in early 2018 “Youth participation in Sport & Physical Activity in the Ballyogan Area”. The headline finding was the current level of disengagement in sports and physical activity from a relatively early age – commencing at about ten years of age and permeating young adolescence. It highlighted a combination of (a) lack of interest (b) poor awareness of what is available locally (c) requirement to develop a range of programmes and services which have appeal for the target audience and (d) social challenges of connectivity within the community itself. The findings have informed the subsequent annual action plans for the hub.

Example

The need for SVT Community Sports Hub (Laois) has been established since 2012 with limited options for resources. There was an unsuccessful bid in 2015, this was focused solely on Vicarstown. A fresh inclusive approach involving the 3 towns led to the new successful bid, this involved consultation and engagement with stakeholders at a local level:

“There has been a lot of consultation at a local level in terms of needs. A needs analysis was carried out in 2012, although this was some time ago the core needs are still relevant in terms of the lack of facilities and infrastructure”

LSP Coordinator, Laois.

Across all partners and coordinators, it was identified that the process of identifying need and engaging in consultation, was crucial in raising awareness about the hub and its activity and in shaping the direction of the hub.

6.2.2 Awareness, Marketing and Promotion

The consultations identify high levels of awareness of sport and physical activity opportunities within hub communities, this is reinforced in the participant survey.

There appears to be a variance however between ‘awareness of opportunities’ and ‘awareness of the hub’. Most hub consultations reported that the level of awareness of the ‘hub as a brand’ is low amongst participants and amongst some of the partners. Several partners reported ‘brand confusion’ in trying to understand the relationship between the hub, the local sports partnership, Sport Ireland and where applicable, the host organisation.

“if you ask people, what is there for children in this community – they would be able to name all of the activities provided by the hub. If you asked people, what does the community sports hub offer in this community, they would find it difficult to describe”

Focus group participant, Sligo





The diagram above seeks to capture the decreasing levels of hub awareness as you move from funder to participant, compared to the increasing level of activity awareness as you move in the other direction. Hub partners, LSPs and coordinators are comfortable with this, “as long as participants are accessing opportunities” (multiple consultees). For hubs that have a facility based approach with a clearly identifiable site or location, raising awareness of the hub brand appears to be easier than those with a more area based approach.

The approach to marketing and awareness was reasonably consistent across hubs. Social media (Facebook) and word of mouth were the primary marketing tools. Other means of PR and marketing included: distribution of leaflets and posters, church bulletin and community noticeboard advertisements, local press release and sharing of information on partner websites. The expertise of the LSPs in marketing and promoting activities was identified as positive by a significant number of partners.

The hub makes a big effort to make sure all ages are catered for. They have a variety of activities which they display on social media and newsletters in the local area. I participated in the Couch to 5k and the coach was excellent, motivating and very welcoming. Really well run initiative

Participant, Mayo

The promotion of the Longford Hub required significant effort to reverse a negative local perception of the hall in terms of accessibility. The new Hub Coordinator had significant credibility at a local level through existing and established networks which made a huge difference.

LSP Coordinator, Longford

It was felt that there was a positive dynamic in relation to PR and Marketing.

Example

The SVT (Stradbally Vicarstown Timahoe) Sport Hub in Laois decided to outsource the marketing function, this is seen as value for money. The external provider is accountable for output, this appears to take pressure off key staff and provides a professional marketing service for a retained monthly fee.

Example

The Muirhevnamore Hub (Louth) has used several innovative and engaging approaches to raise awareness of activities and opportunities provided by the hub. This has included the production of a ‘Hub Christmas Card’ which was distributed to every home within the Muirhevnamore estate and included information on hub activities as well as a range of offers for people to participate. The Hub Co-ordinator has also visited local hotspots within the community such as bars, bookmakers and other outlets to display posters, distribute leaflets, and engage with potential programme participants.

Some hubs have developed a hub specific brand with hub specific social media profiles, whereas others have marketed and promoted hub activity through existing LSP and partner channels. In both cases (hub specific or through existing channels) where there is evidence of a collective commitment and contribution to marketing and promotion (which may be as simple as sharing social media posts), there appears to be higher levels of perceived awareness of the hub and hub activity.

Example

The Kilnaleck Activity Hub and Donegal Bay Inclusive Sports Hub have developed their own brand and social media presence. When activities are designed and made available, information is promoted via the hub specific pages and partner organisations, participants and other stakeholders are encouraged to share and promote information. Coordinators identified that this helps create an identity for the hub and promotes a sense of ownership and pride in the activities that take place.

6.2.3 Participation levels and pathways

The 2017 Irish Sports Monitor⁴ identifies that 32.6% of people are achieving physical activity guidelines. In a recent study commissioned by Healthy Ireland, Sport NI and Sport Ireland⁵ on Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity 2018, it found that 13% of children met the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day (17% primary school pupils and 10% post primary school pupils).

The participant survey used in this evaluation of CSHs, using the Single Item Measure (SIM), found that 13% of participants aged under 18 were achieving at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. In addition, 27% of adults (aged 18+) completing the evaluation survey are achieving the recommended guidelines compared to 32.6% in the 2017 ISM.

During consultations, hub stakeholders were asked to identify which pathway was most appropriate to them, options ranged from: 'inactive to active', 'from school activity to club activity' or 'from casual participation to structured club participation'.

15 of the 18 hubs identified that 'inactive to active' was their primary participation pathway. Participants have potentially become more active but are not yet meeting the recommended levels of physical activity. We also note that the correct implementation of the SIM usually requires pre, post and follow up engagements with participants. In this evaluation, the SIM was used once, reflecting one point in time for participants and thus cannot be used to report on changes in physical activity associated with the hub.

Whilst 'inactive to active' was the most common participation pathway, more than half of all hubs also focus on developing school club links, whilst just under half have a specific focus on moving participants from structured (but casual) sport to club based sport and physical activity.

"Such a pleasure to have great facilities at my door and the best staff to make you feel as part of everything you take on. I am 53 years old and doing more exercise now than I did 20 years ago and loving every minute of it"

Participant, Offaly

"The Donegal Bay inclusive sports hub is a brilliant addition to the area as there was a lack of activities for kids with autism and mobility problems before this. He really enjoyed the kayaking over the summer and has really progressed from going on a kayak with an instructor to being able to go on a kayak by himself. With the handcycling it gives him the option to go cycling with an upright handcycle and on the track his dad can join him on another bike so they can go around the track together in a fun way. He looks forward to it each month"

Participant, Donegal

⁴ <https://www.sportireland.ie/Research/Irish%20Sports%20Monitor%202017%20%20Half%20Year%20Report/Irish%20Sports%20Monitor%202017.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.sportireland.ie/Research/CSPPA%20Final%20Report.pdf>

"The pathway from inactive to active would reflect the journey of most of the participants on our detoxification programme. This would not have happened without the hub which has provided a neutral and non-judgemental space for the water and gym- based activities. Using a commercial based gym has been problematic for us in the past due to stigmatisation. The hub has provided a welcoming environment and the cup of tea and a chat after the activity has been frequently mentioned by our participants as being particularly valuable in their rehabilitation".

Partner, Kildare

"We coordinate activities and programmes for all demographics who have varying activity levels. We aren't operating from one facility and our target is to work at a regional level so our aim is to create relevant pathways for all in target areas. For example, some demographics may not be physically active at all so our focus is on encouraging them to be more active whilst some demographics are active but predominantly through school PE or one sport, so for this group, our aim is to expand and enhance their exposure to other initiatives and sports opportunities."

Coordinator, Northside Hub, Cork

There are examples of hub activity generating an increase in sports club membership, as well as establishing new sporting clubs:

Example

A 34-year-old participant with Neuro behcets syndrome engaged in the Donegal Bay Inclusive Sports Hub. He attended the first "Come and Try" Handcycling in January 2019. Handcycling is the cycle part of a para-triathlon. He had no access to a handcycle near his area. Donegal Bay Inclusive Sports Hub facilitated access to a handcycle at Finn Valley Centre for the participant to train in his own time. The participant obtained classification from Triathlon Ireland as a para-triathlete and in April he completed his first Try-a-Tri in Letterkenny with a pool swim. Towards the end of the summer he completed two outdoor full distance sprint triathlons in Newtownabbey and Dublin. An amazing achievement for someone who only started handcycling and returned to swimming this year. The participant has long term goals of competing internationally.

Example

The Crinkle Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub in Offaly implemented the 'Couch to 5k' programme to get more people active on a regular basis. This concept proved hugely popular and as such helped to grow and enhance membership within the local Birr Athletics Club. The hub has also helped to facilitate the growth of the Club through the inclusion of a running track and athletics facilities on site.

Example

Participation in hub activities was identified as an important diversionary mechanism in Fingal. The Flemington area has become the focus of attention of many agencies due to reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there are numbers of disaffected young people being pulled towards gang culture and racially motivated anti-social activity. The multi-agency, targeted comprehensive approach to Sports and Community Development facilitated by the Sports Hub has already helped to prevent many young people from making the transition to anti-social behaviour and gang culture.

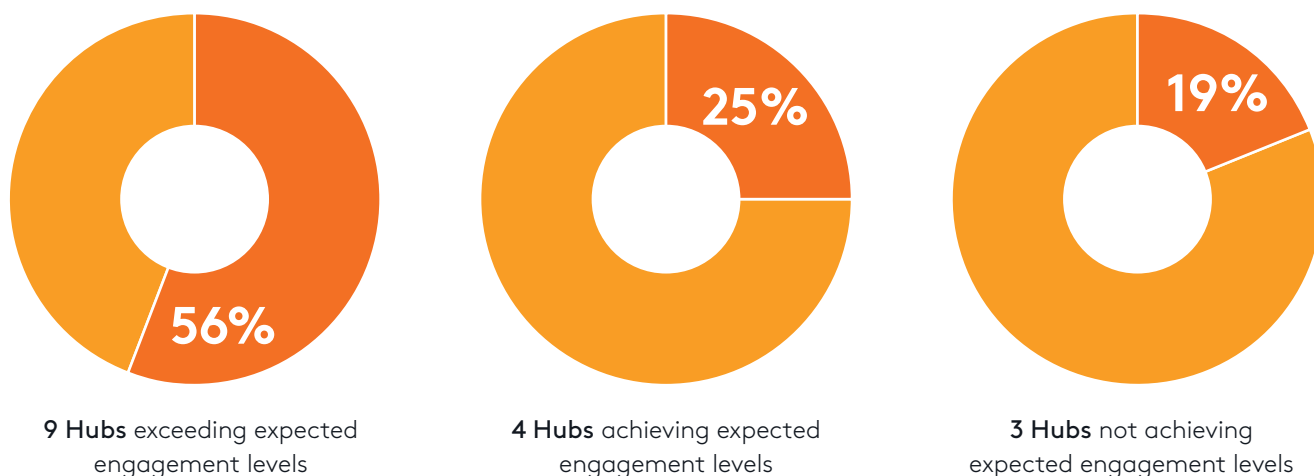
Fingal County Councillor

"At a club level, our membership has increased, and our members are delighted to have a Clubhouse to call home. The gym facility at the Club house has been amazing for our members in the winter months, or for members coming back from injury. The coordinator has been the glue that keeps the ASH (Athy Sports Hub) ticking".

Partner, Kildare

6.2.4 Levels of engagement in hub activity

Both partner organisations and hub coordinators were asked to reflect on the level of engagement in hub activity and assess the extent to which engagement had met their expectations. This was not based on a quantifiable target in most cases, moreover an expectation of what would be achieved by the hub in their area (N = 16 hubs).



16 of the 18 hubs provided quantitative data on the number of participants engaged. The total numbers engaged by hubs is 42,280. The numbers range from 16,420 in Laois to 127 in Donegal with the average participation level of 2,642. Numbers alone are not considered a measure of success by hubs. For example, the Donegal Bay Inclusive Sports hub is the first disability specific hub in Ireland and targets individuals with complex needs therefore 127 participants significantly exceeded their original expectations.

3 of the hubs reported that they are not achieving the level of expected engagement. In 2 of the 3, the CSHs are only 'getting off the ground'. In the other, both the partners and the coordinator identified significant challenges with recruitment. Despite engaging 478 individuals, stakeholders consider this to be below the level of expected participation. For comparison, another hub also achieved 478 participants, but identified that they had greatly exceeded expectations. This speaks to the differences in each hub area such as: level of readiness of community partners, population densities and the baseline engagement of communities, therefore perceived success is very much bespoke to individual hubs.

In 1 of the 18 hubs consulted, there was a disconnect between the expectations of partners compared to that of the hub coordinator. So, whilst the coordinator reported that the hub had achieved expected engagement levels, the partner organisations reflected that engagement was not as had been expected.

6.3 Well Trained People

6.3.1 Impact and challenges of training

There is evidence across all hubs that training and development of volunteers has been a core part of hub activity (either delivered or planned). A consistent view from partners was that the ability to "access quality coaches" via the LSP database of coaches was a key factor in ensuring high quality participation experiences during initial taster sessions and pilot programmes.

Access to coaches appeared to be more challenging in rural areas because of the travel implications, many of the partners and coordinators reflected that it is difficult to get coaches to travel to deliver a 1-2 hour session, therefore efforts were often made to structure programmes to ensure multiple hours of consecutive coaching to make it 'worthwhile'.

There are positive examples of the recruitment and training of coaches who may have ‘shadowed’ an experienced LSP coach before taking ownership of a programme within their local community.

Example

The Bunninadden Hub in Sligo recruited and trained two local females in foundation level Basketball, they now facilitate weekly coaching sessions for participants in what has become a self-sustaining activity.

Example

A young man first became involved with the Northside hub in Cork via participation in activities. He then went on to complete community coaching and training via the hub and is now employed by the Local Sports Partnership delivering tug of wars and triathlons in local schools as a certified coach.

Example

Hub funding has been utilised effectively to resource external training programmes. One notable example is the Community Youth Project “Leadership for Life” programme accredited by NUI Galway which the hub has part funded. Twelve young people from the Brookefield area of West Tallaght have completed the programme and a new tranche is currently participating. Those who have completed the programme now volunteer with the West Tallaght hub.

“The focus of our training is on building the capacity of participants to volunteer in hub activities and go back to their clubs and use the training to become better volunteers. Approximately 50% of people completing training have contributed as volunteers in some way to hub or local club activities. The hub has made a significant contribution to establishing people in leadership roles within their community”.

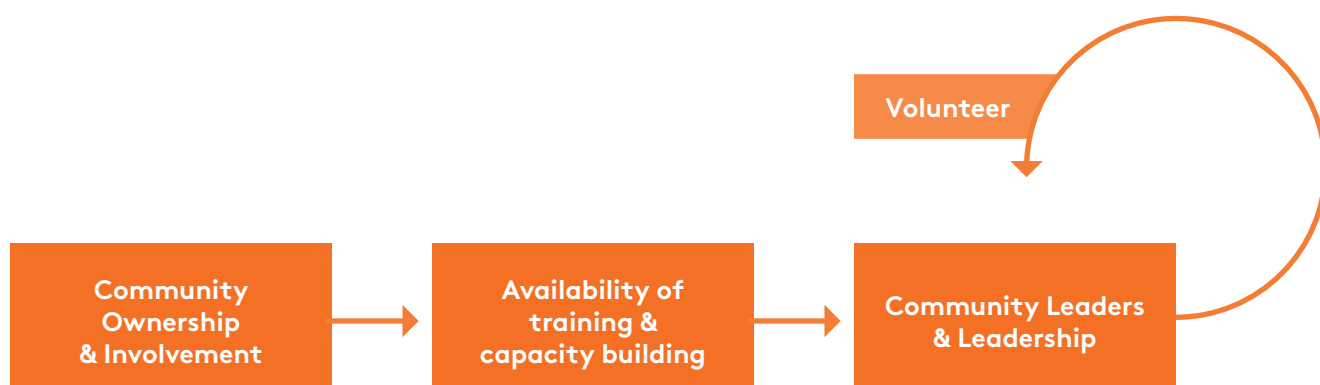
Fingal Hub Coordinator

Consistent views from across partner organisations pointed to availability of coaches as one of the critical challenges in ensuring the sustainability of hub activity.

6.3.2 Leadership and Volunteering

More than three quarters of hubs have delivered non sport specific training including support and mentoring for local partner organisations around governance and administration. This has typically been provided by the hub coordinator, drawing on the expertise and experience of the respective LSP.

There are examples of participants emerging as community leaders (although the participants and partners may not necessarily recognise the term ‘leader’) such as: managing a WhatsApp group of participants to coordinate dates/times and planning of activity, and retain a motivation and enthusiasm for participation.



Partners and hub coordinators consistently reflected on the correlation between the level of involvement of community partners and the emergence of new volunteers and leaders, so where there is a sense of ownership and responsibility for hub activity, there is a perception that this inspires and encourages the emergence of new volunteer leaders.

There was limited reference to the direct development of local clubs and organisations in terms of capacity building and governance. However, this was implicit in the delivery of training and capacity building to local volunteers. In the majority of hubs, where coach education, training or capacity building opportunities were made available, places were offered out to volunteers of local clubs and organisations. As a result, it was identified that the learning and development of these members results in the enhancement and development of the clubs and organisations themselves.

6.4 Strong Organisations

6.4.1 Varying approaches to governance

There were diverse approaches to developing governance structures across hubs. In the majority of hubs (13), the coordinator is an employee of the Local Sports Partnership or County Council with a dedicated remit to support the coordination and development of hub activity in the identified area. 5 of the 18 hubs use a model whereby the coordinator is employed by a local community partner and therefore located within the hub community.

The approach in each hub was typically based on history of partnership working (or not) between the community partners and LSP, experience of the LSP in delivering similar projects using similar structures, or capacity of the local community and their desired level of involvement.

The role and functions of the coordinator ranged from the direct coordination and in some cases delivery of programmes to a more facilitatory role. Examples of key coordinator roles are marketing, connecting with coaches (initially), connecting with NGBs, connecting with the community, offering administrative support, linking to other elements of the LSP, providing advice, facilitating planning (not exhaustive).

14 of the 18 hubs identified a high level of dependence on the coordinator, the other 4 identified that there was a reducing level of dependence on the coordinator over time.

Example

In the Kilnaleck Activity Hub, the community partners have successfully leveraged funds using the hub brand to secure a part time worker through Tus, with the intention that the worker can shadow and learn from the coordinator to take on the administration and logistical management of hub activity.

Despite a reducing level of dependence in some cases, there was a strong collective sense that the removal or absence of a coordinator would result in a stagnating of activity. The coordinators were widely regarded as crucial to hub activity particularly in relation to the engagement of participants and building relationships with key stakeholders

"I can't see the hub continuing unless the local Family Resource Centre or someone else decides to hire someone to do a similar job. I don't think the hub has a future without someone in this role."

Focus group participant, Mayo

In relation to pathways, there are shared feelings across hubs that in the absence of the hub investment, there would not have been a dedicated resource to champion integration and work with clubs to reach out to the community. Therefore, pathways might have developed, but on a piecemeal basis. It is likely that clubs would have been more focused on their own interests and their traditional target groups and profiles. The work of the hub coordinators in developing links between participants, activities, schools and clubs has created new pathways which would not have been in place previously.

6.4.2 Partnership Working

In most hubs, there is a strong sense that the hub has created the impetus for better partnership working and sharing between local organisations. Groups referenced that they

“would have been aware of each other, but reflecting on it now, we would never really have done that much to support one another’s activities, programmes or ideas”

Focus group participant, Cavan

In multiple hubs, the coming together of partners has resulted in the joint delivery of initiatives or the relocation of services to complement activities. There are examples of statutory services such as the HSE, Foróige and ETBs engaging with hubs as part of local steering groups, or groups of partners submitting collaborative funding applications to augment or enhance hub activity.

Example

The hub in Cahersiveen in Kerry is situated in the local school Coláiste na Sceilge. So far the hub has used the funding to refurbish the school gym and key representatives on the steering group including local voluntary, community and statutory organisations are working collaboratively to leverage additional funding from the Rural Social Scheme to employ a member of staff to make the school a central hub of sport and wellbeing for the entire community.

Example

The development of a central sports hub in Athy on the River Barrow was designed to provide a focal point through which the town could provide more effective and co-ordinated facilities for clubs using the waterway. These included, Athy swimming club, kayaking and canoe club, slalom canoe club, dragon boat racing club, triathlon club and the rowing club. The hub heralded a new spirit of partnership and collaboration among all groups based in the Athy sports hub.

“In the absence of investment from the hub, we would not have got the hub coordinator, she has not only provided expertise on building water-based participation, she has been a strong community activator. The base that we all now have in the Rowing and Canoe club would not have been developed. We all now work together and help each other out and there is a real sense of community spirit and identity with the water-based clubs. This would not have been imaginable 18 months ago”

Kildare LSP Sports Development Officer

Only 6 of the 18 hubs identified a formal steering group being established and there appears to be a strong sense of community ownership in these cases. In some areas, service level agreements and one page partnership agreements were used between the LSP and local community partners and in these cases were considered very useful in clarifying roles and responsibilities and engendering community ownership.

In other areas, a more informal approach was preferred with partners indicating that formal arrangements may inhibit activity. There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to the management of partners, much depends on the level of community readiness, community capacity and history of previous working relationships.

6.4.3 Sustainability and long term planning

Whilst there is a high level of awareness of the five year funding cycle for a hub, there is limited evidence of structured sustainability planning. Most hubs are charging fees for activities with some level of subsidy from the CSH investment and the majority of hubs referenced the need to focus on training and capacity building of volunteers to sustain hub activities.

A common view was that the multi annual funding process was inhibiting long term sustainable thinking. Multiple hub coordinators and partners referenced the tendency to think more operationally than strategically when there is a requirement to spend budgets within a short timeframe.

There appears to be a general assumption that future efforts to source funding from other sources will be the main focus of a sustainability plan, this is potentially more prevalent in urban areas which might have less concerns around population density and disadvantage status as well as having access to a greater volume and variety of funding opportunities.

Whilst the majority of hubs identified aspects (of the hub) that may be sustainable i.e. certain high volume activities, relationships with partners and links to clubs – the main sustainability challenge is that of the coordinator – which is widely considered a critical component in the success of hubs. There are examples within several hubs where the LSP has already identified a desire to embed ongoing facilitation of hub activity within a core CSDO role where possible.

In addition, most partners and coordinators recognise that there is unlikely to be the same level of capital funding available at the end of the five year cycle, so the scope for the development of new activities and initiatives within hubs is reduced.

Example

The Offaly Hub is managed by the Crinkle Sport and Recreation Centre which is a not-for-profit organisation tasked with the oversight and ongoing delivery of hub activities. The Centre employs a co-ordinator to manage the associated activities on a daily and ongoing basis. Offaly LSP implements a Memorandum of Understanding with the Centre to deliver on key strategic objectives and targets relating to the delivery of FitClass testing within local schools. The Offaly LSP and hub co-ordinator formally meet 2-3 times per year to review progress against the agreed targets and annual work plan. The hub's governance model also synergises with other community services such as the Labour Market Scheme to employ local coaches to facilitate hub activity. There is a strong feeling that this model is effective and works within the rural area and can deliver sustainability through a community led approach.

6.5 Quality Facilities

6.5.1 Single site vs multi-site

Seven of the 18 hubs are identified as being 'facility based' rather than 'area based', this means that whilst hub activity may occur in a number of places, there is a clearly identifiable hub site from which the majority of hub activity takes place.

Based on the consultation feedback, partners and coordinators find it easier to define and connect the term 'hub' to a facility based project and there are emerging feelings that it will be easier to sustain. The notion of a facility based project is perceived to be more closely aligned to the 'hub' concept as opposed to a more outreach based approach and participants may find it easier to connect with something that has a clearly identifiable location.

Multiple hubs are located in facilities that have recently secured capital investment through for example: LEADER and Sports Capital. Partner organisations that have been involved in those developments talked about the hub investment *"bringing the building to life and creating a vibrancy that would never have been there otherwise"*.

Example

The Bunninadden Community Centre redevelopment in Sligo was funded in 2014 by LEADER. The community partners and LSP here feel that the investment by the hub has created the impetus to increase its midweek evening usage from approximately 12 hours per week to 25 hours per week as a direct result of hub activity.

“In the absence of investment from the hub, it is likely that the centre would have become a rental space for commercial providers and therefore the cost of activity would be much higher and there wouldn’t be the same variety. The hub has ensured that the facility has become a service provider rather than a landlord, offering more affordable, accessible and community led activity – this is a major contributor to its success”

LSP coordinator, Sligo

“The hall was underused, it was seen within the community as being inaccessible in many ways, it was not being operated through an ethos of maximizing participation. There was no strategic focus for the facilities, it seemed to be more about covering costs than developing infrastructure and participation, this has all changed and the building is key to this”

Partner organisation, Longford

Those partners and coordinators involved in area based hubs were more likely to identify logistical and coordination challenges and were also more likely to reference barriers to sustainability than those in facility based hubs. In several cases, partners referenced that it would be easier to create a connection to a facility/place with a hub brand attached, than to a brand itself.

6.5.2 Choice and Opportunity

There was a clear recognition across partners and hub coordinators that the hub has created a much greater variety and choice of activity than was available previously. Choice, variety and support (equipment, coaches and administration) were regarded as the 3 major enablers and contributors to perceived increased levels of activity.

Example

The Navan Community Sports Hub in Meath utilises 19 different facilities within its catchment area to help facilitate the delivery of a range of activities including Zumba, Cheer Dance, Late Night Football League, Multi-Sport activities, Couch to 5km, Run4Fitness, Buggy Buddies, Glow Football, Fishing for Fun, Learn 2 Swim and Basketball for the local community. This approach is designed to ‘bring sport and recreation to people’s doorsteps’ and reduce key barriers such as transport and low-level income etc.

Example

The choice and opportunity afforded by the North Clondalkin hub has attracted a wide range of community based organizations, from youth based, to long term unemployed, and elderly focused. This was viewed as an important enabler in contributing to multiple outcomes including: Improved participation levels across all age ranges; Increased usage of local facilities; Improved community cohesion through increased awareness of what was available in the community and organisations working collaboratively to pool resources to reach a more diverse audience; Improved community safety, facilities are at full capacity in the evenings which reduced the potential for anti-social behavior; Improved overall well-being through lower measurements of heart disease, diabetes and stress management.

To this end, there are high levels of attribution across the range of partners and coordinators to the hub and partners consistently talked about the fact that activity *‘would not have happened in the absence of investment’*.

6.5.3 Practical Considerations

Multiple hub coordinators and LSP representatives identified challenges in relation to the funding mechanism. Specifically, hubs identified that the multi annual nature of funding potentially inhibited long term planning as groups tended to focus on short term wins to support the following years application. In addition, several hubs referenced challenges in spending all of the funding allocation in year 1, particularly relating to capital budgets.

There is an understanding amongst hub coordinators and LSPs that the funding protocols are set by DAF and are outside of the control of Sport Ireland, however greater flexibility in the breakdown of revenue and capital funding, particularly in year 1 would be seen as beneficial.

A considerable number of hubs identified that pre application planning and consultation within local communities enabled them to identify priorities and set expectations at an early stage, ensuring that CSHs were ready to 'hit the ground running' once a funding award was made. This enabled a faster allocation of funding in year 1 and offers an area of learning and development for other hubs.

6.6 Conclusion

This section has set out the key qualitative findings from the interviews with LSPs, CSHs coordinators and partner organisations. A discussion and analysis of findings overall, followed by key recommendations is set out in the pages that follow.



Critical Success Factors

7.1 Introduction

An analysis of the consultation information and a cross tabulation of qualitative and survey findings has identified several critical influencing factors and points of learning. These are highlighted in this section and may influence the future development and delivery of CSHs.

It should be noted that all of the hubs that are delivering activity can draw on powerful and impactful stories about participants and how the activity has made significant changes to their lives. In all hubs, the partners involved referenced both the physical health impacts of participation, but also applied equal or in many cases stronger weighting to the social impact of participation on issues such as isolation and mental health.

There are strongly held views on attribution to the hub across partner organisations and coordinators and overall the hubs can be described as positive interventions in their respective communities.

Thus, whilst the evaluation team uses cross tabulation data to identify trends and characteristics of 'successful' hubs, it does so in the context and understanding that all of the hubs have delivered success, the critical influencing factors and points of learning herein, may help to augment and enhance the positive work of hubs to date.

7.2 Characteristics of a Successful Hub

The development of common characteristics has been challenging given the unique nature of individual hubs.

In each of the characteristic examples, there are anomalies where hubs have achieved success in the absence of that characteristic, particularly where the hub is thematic (i.e. disability specific). The following diagram identifies five critical process characteristics of a successful CSH based on the consultation findings.



Aligns to Local Need

Invests time and resources to identify local needs both at the outset and ongoing. Ensures ongoing consultation with local people to influence hub activity.

The nature of the consultation can be internal structured consultation, informal engagements or independent reports.



Facility Based

Has a clearly identifiable site or hub location.

It may be augmented by some outreach work, but there is a clearly designated hub facility.



Community Ownership and Involvement

Has created the conditions to involve local organisations in management, marketing, promotion and delivery of hub activity. This can be formal steering groups or informal networks.



Training & Capacity Building

Has a strong focus on training, capacity building and volunteer development.



Coordinator

The coordinator role evolves from a more 'hands on' approach to a more strategic/facilitatory role over time.

Each one of the characteristics and their rationale for inclusion is described further below:

7.2.1 Aligns to local needs

The qualitative engagements found that the investment of time to identify need through consultation can a) enhance the awareness of the hub and its activity, b) enhance participation and engagement, c) enhance feelings of community ownership as well as d) shape and guide the management and operation of the hub.

The methods deployed to identify need can be internal structured (i.e. surveys and interviews) or informal, it appears from the findings that the engagement itself is more important than the nature of engagement. Whilst the independently commissioned reports appear to offer a strong roadmap for the management and operation of the hub, the emerging findings suggest that these hubs are potentially missing an opportunity to build relationships with participants and engendering a sense of influence or ownership. A 'personalised exploration' of local need can potentially bridge the gap between someone 'being aware and not participating' and 'being aware and taking part'.

- Of those survey respondents who identified as 'being aware of a hub but have never participated in programmes or activities' (N = 141), 52% reported feeling very welcome at the hub, 41% felt like they fit in at the hub, 19% feel like they have an influence over hub activities.

This is compared to:

- Those who are 'aware and have participated' (N = 605), 95% report feeling welcome, 86% report feeling like they fit in and 48% report feeling like they have an influence.

The engagement of participants to identify needs therefore may have an influence on awareness and subsequently on the extent to which they feel they have an influence, the extent to which they fit in, and ultimately on participation.

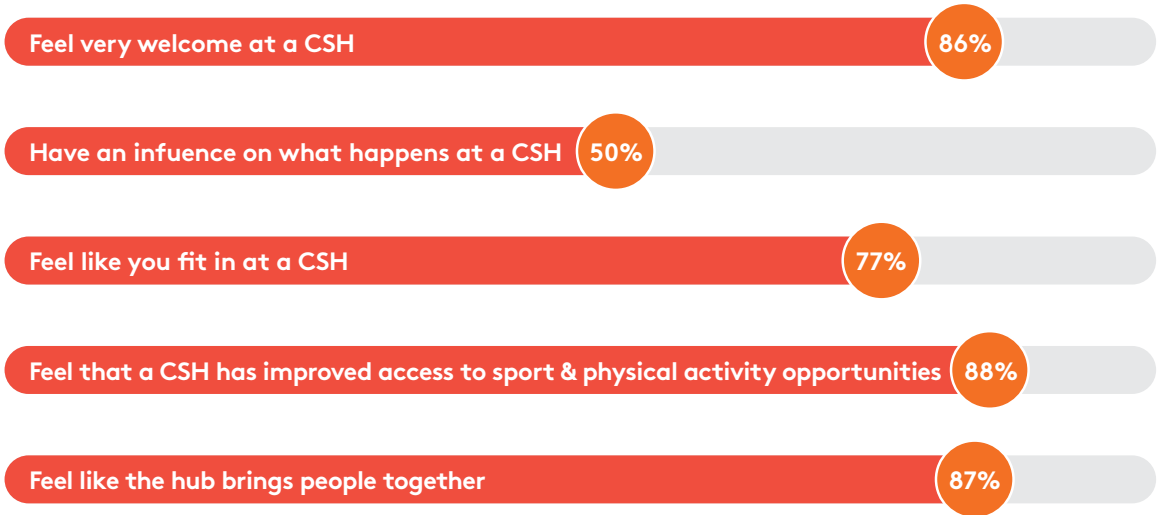
- The hubs with a higher than average (17%) proportion of respondents who are 'aware but have not participated' are all area based hubs.

The flexibility of the fund enables meaningful consultation and engagement as LSPs and Hub partners have the ability to act on the emerging findings from needs analysis, which is also a key enabler.

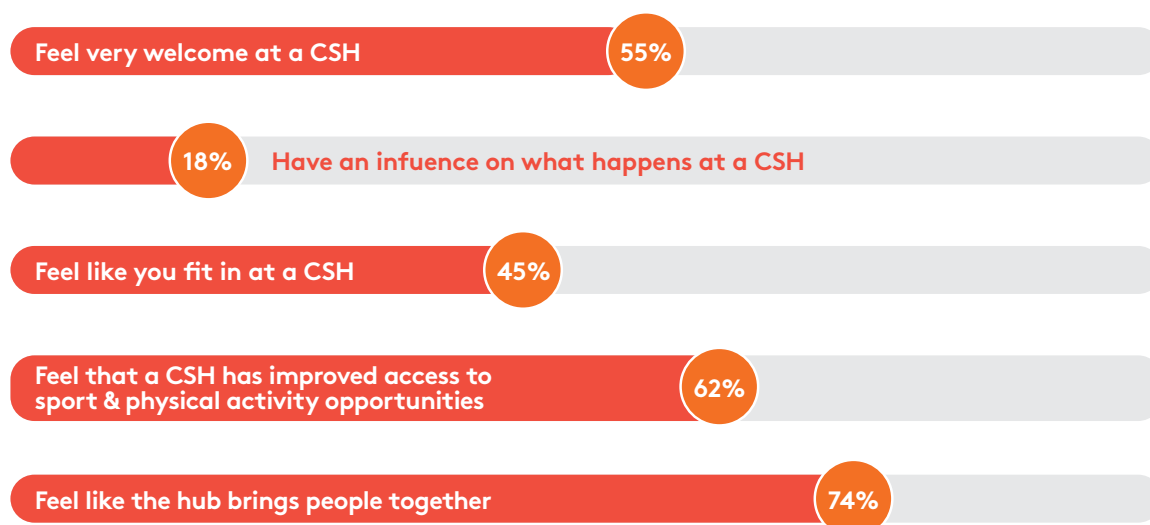
7.2.2 Facility Based Hubs

Having a clearly identifiable site does not mean that outreach activities do not happen, but it does identify one (or two) prominent location(s) that act as the 'hub'. The survey responses from participants are considerably more favourable in hubs that identify as having a clearly identifiable site compared to those that identify as being area based. There are 7 facility based hubs, with one yet to 'get off the ground' (Kerry). The 6 that are operational include Louth, Cavan, Sligo, Kildare, Longford and Offaly. Collectively, these hubs accounted for 9,167 (22%) of the 42,280 participants (based on coordinator data) and accounted for 504 of the 1,022 survey responses (49%). Responses from participants of hubs with a clearly identifiable site (N= 504) are more positive than those with a multi-site focus (N = 518) in all aspects of the survey including: awareness, feeling welcome, feeling like they fit in, bringing people together, increasing opportunities, feeling like you have an influence. This is highlighted below:

Facility Based Hub



Area Based Hub



In addition to the above, the proportion of respondents indicating they are 'aware and have participated' increases significantly in hubs that have a clearly identifiable site (74%, N = 504) compared to those that don't (44%, N = 518).

- Only 17 (3%) participants overall reported that they feel 'not very welcome' at a hub. This was too small a sample to apply any meaningful cross tabulation.
- The number of people reporting 'not sure' if they feel welcome is 134 (or 16% of respondents). Those hubs with a higher than average proportion of respondents who are 'not sure' if they feel welcome are multi-site/area based hubs.
- Only 20 (4%) participants overall reported 'no' when asked has the hub increased access to sport and physical activity opportunities in their area. This was too small a sample to apply any meaningful cross tabulation.
- The number of people reporting that they 'don't know' if the hub has improved access to sport and physical activity opportunities in their area is 98 (or 12% of respondents).
- 707 individual respondents (86%) report the hub has improved access to opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity in their area. Offaly (93%), Cavan (91%) record higher than average proportions of adults who report that access to opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity have improved. Louth (83%), Longford (83%), Dun Laoghaire Rathdown (82%), Kildare (79%) are the next highest. This includes 5 of the 7 facility based hubs.

The presence of a clearly identifiable site potentially makes it easier to generate a welcoming, inclusive environment as there is likely to be a greater variety and diversity of activity taking place in one location. In addition, where lots of activity is condensed into single locations, it may be easier for people to recognise, and thus attribute increases in opportunity to that location or hub.

7.2.3 Community Ownership

Based on the qualitative findings, high levels of community ownership (of a hub) are associated with high levels of feeling like you have an influence, increased prevalence of volunteering and creating the conditions for sustainability.

Community ownership is achieved in different ways and can be through formal steering groups or informal networks – the approach is unique to each hub, but the conditions are created for local organisations to feel like they have a strong role to play in the ongoing management and operation of the hub. In addition, and building on the exploration of local need, community ownership and involvement includes the ongoing engagement and consultation with participants to inform the evolution of hub activity. Based on the consultation and survey findings:

- Of the 40% of all respondents (N = 323) who feel that they do have an influence on what happens at a hub:
 - 88% reported 'awareness and participation'.
 - 97% reported 'feeling very welcome'.
 - 96% reported 'feeling that they fit in'.
 - 93% reported 'feeling that the hub brings people from different communities together'.
 - 99% reported that the CSH had increased sport and physical activity opportunities in their area.
- The hubs that recorded higher than average (40%) proportion of participants feeling like they have an influence (N = 323) are: Offaly (51%), Cavan (49%), Kildare (41%), Longford (45%) – all of these hubs have a clearly identifiable site.
- Conversely, 25% (N=198) of individuals reported having no influence on what happens at a hub. Of these,
 - 58% reported 'awareness and participation'.
 - 60% reported 'feeling very welcome'.
 - 46% reported 'feeling like they fit in'.
 - 64% reported 'feeling that the hub brings people from different communities together'.
 - 67% reported that the CSH had increased sport and physical activity opportunities in their area.
- The hubs with a higher than average proportion (25%) of participants (N = 198) who feel that they have no influence on what happens are multi-site/area based hubs.

7.2.4 Training and Capacity Building

Many of the hubs identify the recruitment, training and retention of coaches as one of the major challenges, but also one of the major gateways to sustainability of hub activity. Anecdotally, there are positive examples across the majority of hubs of local people being trained, and subsequently accessing volunteering or paid employment positions both within their local community and further afield as part of the LSP database of coaches.

The delivery of training and capacity building is resulting in enhanced community leadership and confidence amongst participants. An improved capacity of local organisations is implicit in the improved capacity of local volunteers, the majority of whom are aligned to a local community organisation or sports club.

Throughout the consultation with partners and coordinators, it became apparent that training and capacity building extends beyond sports specific and generic sports coaching. More than three quarters of hubs have delivered activity that has built the capacity of local organisations and steering group members in respect of governance and administration. Some of this has been achieved not through training but by virtue of working closer with the LSP. The enhanced governance and administration skills are aligned with improved community leadership and volunteering according to partner organisations and LSPs, and as a result, enhanced prospect of sustainability. Thus, a strong focus on training and capacity building is regarded as an important process characteristic of CSHs.

7.2.5 Coordinator

The role of the coordinator was consistently referenced as crucial to the overall success of a hub. The following key impacts of a coordinator were referenced during consultations:

- Brings energy and enthusiasm and motivates participation at partner level but also at participant level.
- High level of expertise and experience in generating programme ideas.
- Creates access to high quality coaches.
- Enables links to other LSP activities and programmes as well as NGB contacts.
- Plays a vital role in marketing and promoting activity or enabling the local community partners to market and promote.
- Offers a sounding board, listening ear and guiding voice for partners.
- Brings governance and administration experience in terms of managing budgets, collecting attendance and setting out key roles and responsibilities.
- Connected to local authorities and other statutory services and can guide and direct to new funding opportunities.

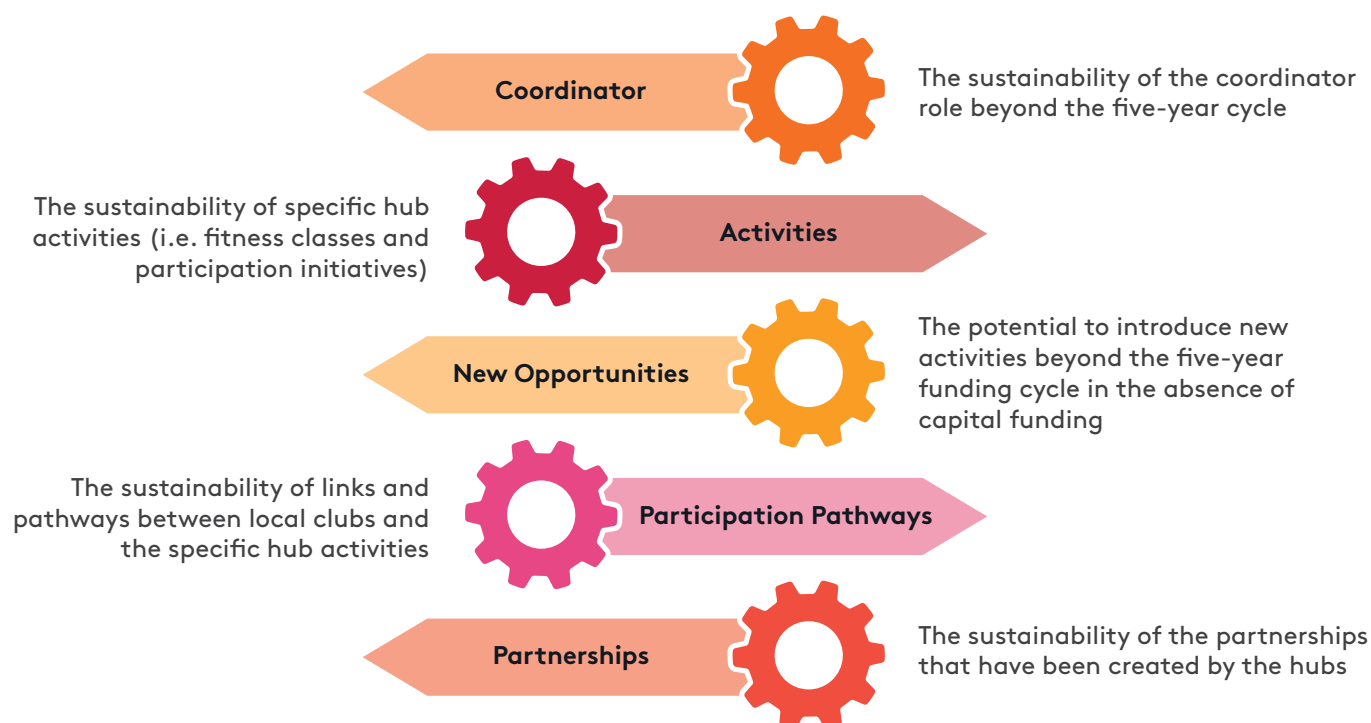
- Access to quotes and guidance on costs for capital expenditure.
- Retains a focus on targeting disadvantaged groups, and ensuring consultation and needs analysis takes place.
- Facilitates action planning, evaluation and reflection to help improve activity.

In acknowledging the time limited funding cycle of a hub, a key process characteristic for successful hubs is one that builds the capacity and empowers the community to embed the above list of impacts within partner organisations and local volunteers. This requires the coordinator to move to a more facilitatory or strategic role as the hub evolves and progresses, in essence adopting a community development approach and reducing the level of dependence on the coordinator to sustain partnerships, motivation and activities.

7.3 Scope of Sustainability

A key consideration for all CSHs given that they are funded projects with a defined lifecycle (five years), is the extent to which they can be sustained. Whilst the consultation activity identified high levels of awareness of the need to sustain activities, the actual planning for sustainability across the majority of hubs needs further work. Though it is acknowledged that most of the phase 2 and phase 3 hubs are still in their relative infancy, there is a need to think about the sustainability of activity during its development and design.

Different aspects of a hub require a different focus or approach in relation to sustainability. Based on the consultation findings, there are five components that make up a 'scope of sustainability'. These have been captured in the diagram below. The majority of hubs discussed one of the five components (activities), a small number of hubs are actively considering and putting in place action on 3 of the 5 components, none are considering all 5. The table that follows describes each in more detail and outlines some examples of practical actions and considerations across participating hubs.



| Sustainability Component | Description | Alignment to four pillars of the CSH | Practical Actions Emerging |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| Coordinator | The role is considered crucial to the ongoing management and development of a hub but is widely considered unlikely to be self-financed by income from hub activity. | Strong Organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several LSPs are exploring how the role can be embedded into core CSDO roles with a small proportion (10-20%) allocated to maintaining contact, support and motivation. The move from a 'coordination' to facilitatory role can reduce dependence and help enhance sustainability, although this is difficult in specialist or thematic hubs (disability for example). Community workplace schemes such as Tús could provide 'administrative coordinators' to assist hubs. Should be explored within years 3-5. |
| Activities | Central component of the hubs, this is what the hubs are there to provide. | <p>Providing a pathway.</p> <p>Well trained people.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where activities are subsidised, they could gradually move towards full cost by year 5 to reduce the shock or jump in cost. 'Profitable' or high volume activities such as exercise classes can subsidise less popular/ lower attending activities that have equal importance in terms of participation for disadvantaged groups. Higher levels of confidence about sustainability when linked directly to a clearly identifiable hub site. Area based hubs could consider introducing a 'central hub venue' towards the final years of the project. The training and capacity building of local people as coaches is coupled with the sustainability of activities – most hubs felt that having local coaches would be key in ensuring the continuation of activities. |
| New Opportunities | The capital funding provided by the Hub has been central in purchasing equipment to enable specific participation activities (i.e. table tennis tables, water sports equipment, accessible equipment). These can be expensive and are difficult to fundraise for. | Providing a pathway. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hubs should seek to capitalise on hub brand and the collaborations and partnerships to access new funding opportunities (Healthy Ireland, rural grants etc.). Hubs should begin to identify potential opportunities and engage agencies onto hub committees/steering groups with a strategic link to potential funding support. |

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Participation Pathways | The pathway into already existing clubs and programmes is key in terms of sustaining participation, particularly where an activity may not be sustainable beyond the funded period. | Providing a pathway. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways are likely to be sustainable where positive relationships with clubs and groups exist. A retained focus on relationships and links should be embedded into hub planning particularly in years 3-5. • Facilitating training and capacity building of local clubs and groups through coach education will enhance their capacity to take on new members and sustain links and pathways. |
| Partnerships | Most of the partnerships that have been established are voluntary and therefore have a strong sustainability potential but require a driving force. | Strong Organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to jointly apply for new funding streams or the community workplace schemes to identify personnel and secure a 'driving force'. • Appoint a lead partner and refresh aims, purpose and objectives through strategic planning in years 4-5 so that hubs have a clear action plan and vision for the period immediately after funding ends. |

7.4 Summary

This section has focused on two key areas of discussion and analysis, namely:

- **Characteristics of a successful CSH**
- **Scope of Sustainability for CSHs**

Drawing on survey data and qualitative feedback from stakeholder interviews, this section has identified five characteristics of a successful CSH and five components for consideration in pursuing the sustainability of a CSH. Interspersed throughout the section are references to key enablers such as the flexibility of the fund, the commitment and participation of local partner organisations and the expertise and contacts of the LSPs.

The characteristics of a successful hub are based on evidence from the data available to this evaluation. They do not seek to undermine the work of any of the hubs, all of which can provide examples of positive outcomes for disadvantaged people and communities. Moreover, this section has identified potential areas of improvement to further augment the positive work to date.

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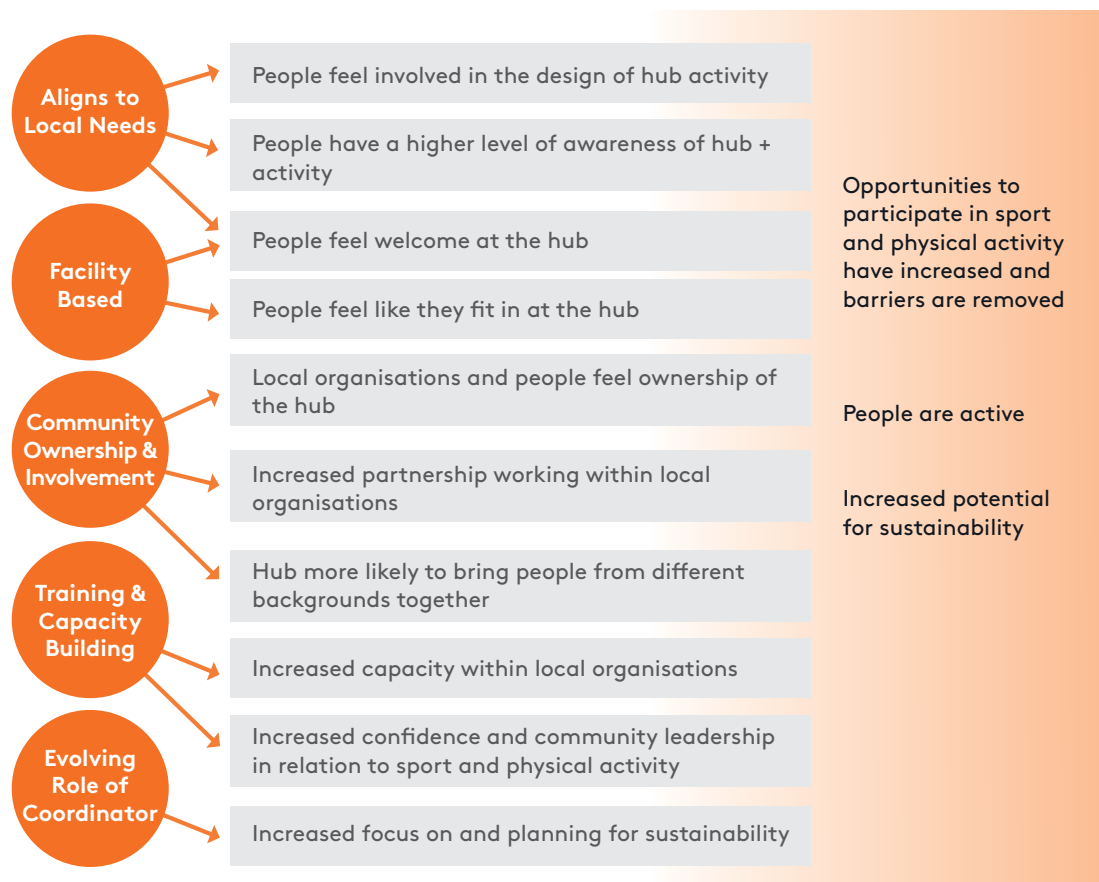
Summary and Conclusion

This evaluation report has identified a clear causal relationship between the allocation of Dormant Account Funds (via Sport Ireland) and the delivery of capital equipment and sport and physical activity opportunities in disadvantaged communities across Ireland. Evidence from the consultation suggests that in most cases, this would not have been achieved in the absence of the investment or to a much lesser extent. This report concludes that the investment has resulted in;

- increased access to sport and physical activity opportunities, delivered in welcoming and safe environments to people that face multiple disadvantages;
- improved links between local organisations;
- enhancement in skills and capacities and anecdotally;
- improved health and social outcomes for people.

These outcomes align with the original intention for the CSHs and enable a conclusion that the CSHs are positive investments in local communities. Each of the hubs, despite differences in governance and delivery models can draw on powerful and impactful stories of how activities have had a positive change of people's lives.

The following diagram seeks to capture a summary of the analysis by linking the emerging **characteristics of successful hubs** with **outcomes** and **impacts**.



Appendix 1

Delivering Against KPIs

Providing the Pathway

| Output | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|---|---|--|
| Research into community profiles and needs assessment. | List of engagement activities undertaken by the hubs to better understand needs of the community. (Including needs of local community groups, clubs & schools). | Mixture of independent formal reports (three), structured online surveys to informal interviews and group consultations. |
| | Number of reports/papers produced as a result of needs assessment. | 3. |
| | Extent of influence/involvement of the community in hub development. | 11 of the 18 hubs report their perceived level of community involvement/influence at needs analysis stage as 'strong', 7 hubs reported 'moderate'. 40% of participants surveyed feel that they have an influence on the hub, 25% do not have an influence and 35% are not sure. |
| Marketing & promotion activities, including outreach by sports clubs. | Number & type of marketing/promotion activities undertaken by the hubs. | Social media, community noticeboards, church bulletins, word of mouth, leaflets and posters represent the key marketing activity. |
| | Number of people and local organizations reached. | Mixture of hub specific social media presence and LSP social media presence. |
| Purchase of small-scale equipment. | Evidence small scale equipment purchased. | Evidence of wide range of sport specific and generic equipment purchased across hubs. |
| Outcome | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
| Opportunities to participate in sport & physical activity. | Number & type of local clubs, groups and classes that are associated with a hub. | 89 partner organisations participated in consultation, likely that more than 100 and less than 150 partners involved in hubs. |
| | Percentage of people that believe there exist opportunities for sport & physical activity participation in their local area. | 82% of participants surveyed report an increase in opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity in their area. |
| | Percentage of people accessing sporting facilities in the community at least once a week (disaggregated for gender, disability). | Anecdotally, LSPs and Hub Coordinators report that a majority of participants are engaged in hub programmes over multiple sessions. 56% of all survey respondents were female, 6% report having a disability. |

Providing the Pathway contd.

| Output | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|---|--|--|
| Opportunities to participate in sport & physical activity. | Level of awareness of the hub within the community. | 73% of survey respondents report being 'aware and have participated in hub activity', 10% of respondents report 'not being aware', 17% are aware but have not participated. |
| | Strong club-school links. | Evidence of improved school club links within specific hubs through qualitative discussion with CSH coordinators and school representatives, some did not focus on schools. |
| A home where a range of local sports clubs can work together. | Number & types of sports clubs that have come together to deliver programs in the community. | 89 partner organisations participated in consultation, likely that more than 100 and less than 150 partners involved in hubs. Evidence of wide ranging representation including sports clubs, schools, family resource centres, church groups, statutory agencies. |
| | The hub provides/creates a conducive environment for local clubs to work together. | Qualitative interviews identify strong perception from both LSPs, CSHs and partner organisations that partnership working has been enhanced. |
| A welcome and safe place to take part in sport & physical activity. | Members of the community feel safe and welcome when using facilities of the sports hub/participating in programs delivered by clubs. | 82% of all survey respondents report feeling 'very welcome' at their respective hub. 73% of all survey respondents report feeling like they 'fit in' at their respective hub. |
| | Sustained participation numbers reflected in renewed memberships. | Anecdotally, clubs have referenced increased membership as a direct result of hub activity. |
| | Ethnic, social and cultural diversity of the community represented in participation data. | Quantitative data supplied by hubs identified 714 participants from a minority ethnic background (circa 2% of all participants) whilst there were 794 participants with a disability (circa 2.5%). |

Well Trained People

| Output | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|--|--|---|
| Development of joint initiatives between sports clubs and recreational physical activity groups. | Number of joint training initiatives developed and delivered in the community. | Based on the data provided by hubs there have been at least 1041 people gaining accredited training across 105 different courses. |
| Training & development of local people. | <p>Number & type of trainings held for the development of community members.</p> <p>Number of community members signed up for each training.</p> <p>Number of community members that completed trainings.</p> | Types of training include: First Aid, Defibrillators, Safeguarding 1-3, FAI Kickstart, Ride Leader, Couch 2 5K Leader, Rowing, Basketball etc (not exhaustive). |
| Outcome | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
| Training and development of the local people to ensure sport happens. | Percentage of community members trained that feel equipped with the skills, knowledge and capacity to sustain and encourage local sports participation. | 23% of those responding to the survey have completed training within their hub. Of those: |
| To build capacity and ensure sustainability. | <p>Percentage of local people trained believe they have gone on to become role models/mentors for community members.</p> <p>Percentage of community members trained that feel confident to run their own programs.</p> <p>Percentage of community members trained that would feel comfortable in a position of leadership.</p> | <p>56% feel more confident in encouraging local participation in sport and physical activity</p> <p>54% have not volunteered at the hub or in their local community since completing training.</p> <p>46% Intend to volunteer at the hub or in their local community in the future.</p> |

Strong Organisations

| Output | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|--|---|--|
| Strong pathways facilitated. | Strong club-school links exist. | <p>No data on school club links but anecdotal evidence in some hubs about improved club school links.</p> <p>Examples include teachers being trained in sporting qualifications, schools accessing facilities and programmes.</p> |
| Outcome | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
| Self-sustaining sports clubs/ organisations. | Number of sports clubs/other organisations that feel equipped to continue to deliver quality services to the community. | Anecdotal evidence from qualitative discussions about strong capacity and skill impact on partner organisations, particularly with respect to marketing and promotion, administration and event/programme management. |
| An integrated approach from local partners to develop leadership in the local community. | Number & type of community stakeholders that come together to develop community leadership. | 89 partner organisations participated in consultation, likely that more than 100 and less than 150 partners involved in hubs. Evidence of wide ranging representation including sports clubs, schools, family resource centres, church groups, statutory agencies. |
| | High quality partnerships measured by feelings of trust, confidence and willingness to work with one another on a repeat basis. | Anecdotal feedback that many partnerships will be sustainable beyond dormant account funds. This is more profound in hubs that have a clearly identifiable site/location. |
| | Percentage of people that believe voluntary/leadership opportunities have been created by the hub. | 54% feel that opportunities to volunteer in their community have increased. |
| | Number of voluntary/leadership opportunities created. | 109 survey respondents (28%, N = 396) report that they have volunteered at the hub or in their local community since completing training, 195 respondents intend to volunteer in the future. |

Strong Organisations (contd.)

| Outcome | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|---|---|--|
| Genuine community engagement & leadership. | Community influence-Percentage of people that feel they can positively influence decisions made by the local hubs. | 40% of participants surveyed feel that they have an influence on the hub, 25% do not have an influence and 35% are not sure |
| | Percentage of people that feel the hub contributes to community cohesion. (People from different backgrounds get on well in a local area) | 80% of survey respondents feel that the hub helps bring people from different communities together |
| | Percentage of community members that feel a sense of ownership towards the hub. | <p>Generally, a strong sense of community ownership. Four examples of hub coordinators adopting a facilitatory rather than hands on role. Examples of hubs having secured funding for their own dedicated worker.</p> <p>However, overall still a strong sense of dependence on the LSP</p> |
| Well organised and connected local clubs. | <p>Clubs demonstrate a sustainable and robust organisational structure.</p> <p>Clubs are guided by an overarching annual strategy.</p> <p>Clubs demonstrate a strong sense of connectedness with each other in the community.</p> | <p>Different approaches to governance across hubs ranging from formal partnership agreements and SLAs to one page 'roles and responsibility' documents to informal approaches</p> <p>No formal annual strategy takes place within hubs, mostly facilitated and guided by CSH coordinator</p> |

Quality Facilities

| Outcome | KPI | Extent to which this is met |
|---|--|--|
| Resources are efficiently used to produce optimum & quality facilities. | Community members are satisfied with the quality of sporting facilities available to them. | <p>Greater access to facilities is the 3rd most common reason why access to opportunities has increased.</p> <p>Survey respondents identify the greater variety of activities as the key reason for improved access to opportunity.</p> <p>Partner organisations offer high levels of attribution to the access to equipment and facilities as the enabler in creating a greater variety of activity.</p> <p>Quality of and access to improved facilities was identified as a key enabler and high levels of attribution to facilities during qualitative discussions.</p> |
| Improved access for local people and sports clubs at affordable prices. | <p>Percentage of people that feel they can easily access sports clubs.</p> <p>Percentage of people that feel they can easily afford sports clubs/ programs.</p> <p>Number of sports clubs that demonstrate an increase in membership and participation due to better access.</p> | <p>82% of survey respondents state that the hub has increased access to opportunities to participate in their area.</p> <p>Survey respondents identify reduced cost of activity as a key reason for increasing access to opportunity.</p> <p>No available data on this. Anecdotally, clubs have referenced increased membership as a direct result of hub activity (i.e. Cycling Club in Kilnaleck).</p> |
| Integration with local facility planning & programming. | Integrated planning is reflected in the strategic plans & documents of the hub as well as local partner organisations. | <p>3 hubs produced formal reports.</p> <p>The hubs are consistently referenced in LSP strategic plans. Many partner organisations do not have or produce strategic plans, some are entirely voluntary.</p> |







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