



**WESTMEATH
SPORTS
PARTNERSHIP**
— SPORT IRELAND —



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Introduction

Westmeath Sports Partnership entered 2020 with a full complement of staff following recruitment to fill the vacant Sports Coordinator role, and the newly funded Community Sports Development Officer, so were looking forward to a year of growth.

However, along with everyone else in the world, the Coronavirus put a serious spanner in the works and plans for 2020 had to be re-assessed, amended or put on hold. The team were faced with a number of challenges that previously would have been unimaginable.

Despite the unique and unexpected circumstances, the team continued to work extremely hard and displayed outstanding creativity, versatility and perseverance to ensure that the people of County Westmeath were still able to access a range of physical activity opportunities.

New online and virtual opportunities were developed, and a range of resources were put together to help ensure people were able to remain active when lockdown was at its most restrictive.

When restrictions allowed, the team were still able to develop and deliver programmes face to face in a range of settings including schools, clubs, and outdoor facilities.

2020 saw the establishment of the Westmeath Recreation and Sport Forum, the new advisory body that replaces the previous Board of the former Limited Company prior to the Sports Partnerships integration into Westmeath County Council. The first meeting was held in December 2020 and the group will be a key part in the direction, monitoring and oversight of Westmeath Sports Partnership.



Funding

Following the annual application process, Westmeath Sports Partnership received a core grant of €240,578 from Sport Ireland for 2020. This amount covers all staff salaries, programme costs, grant funding and administrative support for the operation of Westmeath Sports Partnership in 2020.

Additionally, Westmeath Sports Partnership was successful in applying for additional funding through the national Dormant Accounts Fund, administered by Sport Ireland. The partnership was awarded €87,760 overall which was broken down into the following programmes:

Community Sports Hub based at Athlone Regional Sports Centre - €61,000

Sports Inclusion Disability Project - €11,720

Volunteer Supports (to assist with the development of volunteers in clubs) - €11,540

Youth Leadership (to assist young people in gaining leadership qualifications) - €3,500

The HSE granted the partnership with €16,300 to deliver targeted programmes, particularly with a focus on health and inclusion.





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Programmes 2020

Despite the unforeseen intervention of Covid, which had a significant impact on delivery, Westmeath Sports Partnership was still able to deliver a range of programmes, courses and support to the residents of County Westmeath. Programmes were revised and amended where possible, although unfortunately a number had to be cancelled entirely due to Covid restrictions.

2020 CSDO Programmes

- **Introduction to resistance training for women**

6 weeks resistance training programme suitable for absolute beginners. The programme was delivered by Club Active in Mullingar. The last two weeks were postponed due to covid-19. Working with Club Active creates a path for continued participation.

- **Trampoline Fitness for Ladies**

This programme was delivered in collaboration with Jump for Joy Athlone. It was delivered over six weeks to help reach ladies who may not be interested in more generic fitness classes. It created an opportunity to try something new and different. The classes are run weekly so ladies could continue after the six weeks.

- **Back to Fitness (Ladies)**

The programme was delivered from the club house in Milltown GAA. The group were keen to get involved and have something take place in their local area. Due to covid the programme was postponed after two weeks. We hope to revisit it and run a new six weeks block when restrictions allow.

- **Pilates for Women Zoom**

Four-week Beginner Basic Pilates class for ladies. Each week women had additional material sent to them to help gain knowledge around the basics. After the four weeks ladies could join some of the Pilates classes already running online from Alison Hogan Pilates Studio.

- **Daily Mile**

Action changed due to restrictions. Playground Stencils were purchased that will benefit pre-schools, primary schools and disability services in Westmeath.

- **Couch to 5k**

The couch to 5k was delivered online due to restrictions. Each week participants were sent their programme and a youtube video answering and questions and providing motivation. This was delivered by LSP tutor David Kennedy.

- **4-day Canoe Polo Course for teen girls**

This course was delivered in collaboration with Mullingar Harbour Canoe Polo Club. All girls that took part stayed on training with the club. The course was delivered in summer camp style, 2.5 hours a day over four days.

- **Men on the Move Athlone**

12-week Men on the move programme with two sessions a week. The programme was delivered in Athlone Regional Sports Centre. This programme still has three remaining weeks to be completed outdoors when allowed. We brought the programme online to keep Men engaged. The social aspects are a massive part of this programme.

- **Pickleball**

Equipment loaned out to two schools. The intention was to have a six-week practice and hold a tournament between both schools, but this got postponed. We did a training day with the transition years to show them how to play and they kept the equipment on loan to practice.

- **Strong Seniors**

The programme was organized for the new track around the Athlone Regional Sports Centre but got postponed on the week of commencement due to Covid. The programme was subsequently brought online.

- **Men over 35 Try a Tri**

A financial contribution was given to Athlone Triathlon club to deliver the 6-week try a Tri programme.

- **Sport Leaders**

Programme commenced with Transition years in Wilson's Hospital school. These will be finished in Spring Term 2021 when school return. Sport Leader requires 31 hours of time with transition years. On completion learners will know how to plan and deliver a structured sport/physical activity session, know how to assist in the delivery of a sport/physical activity session and the ability to review a sport/physical activity session.

- **Online Video Content**

A series of videos were developed to help people remain active during periods of lockdown restrictions:

- Self Defence 6 videos
- Children's games 10 videos
- Soccer series 5 videos
- Sports Quiz 8 videos
- Home workouts 5 videos



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Sport Inclusion Disability Programmes 2020

- **Swim Ability Programme** – swimming programme implemented for children and teenagers with pan disabilities, opportunity created to enhance swimming ability in a safe and controlled environment, facilitated by Mullingar Swimming Pool. It is hoped to also run the programme at Athlone Regional Sports Centre when restrictions allow.
- **Sports Inclusion TY Programme** – Programme was implemented in conjunction with Loreto Secondary School and St. Brigid's Special Education School. TY Students completed Sport Inclusion Disability Training implemented by the Sports Partnership and Loreto Physical Education Teachers which provided students with the skills to implement inclusive games/activities for students from St. Brigid's Special Education School supported by the Physical Education Teachers from Loreto Secondary School.
- **Westmeath Boccia Programme** – The Boccia League was re-established in early 2020 for adult day services in Westmeath. The league provides an opportunity for services to come together and compete in the game of boccia as boccia is suited to pan disabilities. The Boccia League Finals for Westmeath are currently on hold due to pandemic and will be re-established when it is deemed safe to return to this sport under the current league structure. Westmeath Sports Partnership have joined with Roscommon and Longford Sports Partnership to expand the league and following the three county finals, winning teams will go on to compete in the Midlands Boccia League adding another dimension to the current programme on offer to service providers/service users.
- **St. Hilda's Tag Rugby Programme** – A Tag Rugby Team for adults with intellectual disabilities was established in Athlone in conjunction with St. Hilda's Services in Athlone and co-funded Leinster Rugby Development Officer. Tag Rugby for adults with intellectual disabilities is fast growing in popularity and the aim is to move this programme under the local Rugby Club and the new team can compete at local, regional and national competitions organised with the support of IRFU four regional branches. This is the second tag rugby team in Westmeath, as the first team was established with Mullingar Resource Centre, Leinster Rugby and Mullingar Rugby Club.
- **Inclusive Gym Programme** – Gym programme for adults from Westmeath Down Syndrome Association, programme was postponed in March due to pandemic and will be completed when the gym re-caters for outside programmes (two sessions remaining on this programme).
- **Wheelchair Hurling Taster Session** – Taster session implemented in partnership with Westmeath GAA Co Funded Development Officer for the IWA Sunshine Club (children with physical disabilities) – further dates to be added when the IWA Sunshine Club resume activities when it is deemed safe to do so.

- **Football For All Club Programme** – In partnership with the FAI, meetings were held with Westmeath Sports Partnership, Westmeath FAI Development Officer, FAI Football For All Coordinator and Athlone Football Club to work together to establish a football for all club for children with pan disabilities in Athlone – this is currently on hold and will be back in planning stages when we get approval from the FAI. All parties are very keen to work together to establish this club in the locality.
- **Meet N Walk Programme** – Walking Programme implemented for adults with intellectual disabilities under Level 3 National Covid-19 Guidelines - programme was implemented with the use of pods which had a staff member in each pod to ensure social distancing requirements were met.
- **Enjoy Tennis Programme** – establishing the Tennis Ireland Enjoy Tennis Programme for teenagers with disabilities - Planning and scheduling of the National Enjoy Tennis Programme was carried out in partnership with Tennis Ireland and Mullingar Tennis Club. Programme was to be delivered under current national covid-19 guidelines – on hold due to the club’s tennis coach vacating post – programme to be implemented when a new coach is identified – working with Tennis Ireland Enjoy Tennis Development Officer and Mullingar Tennis club on this.
- **Kick Start to Recovery Programme** – Programme was planned and scheduled for adults with mental health difficulties but postponed on commencement date due to national directive by the FAI not to implement programmes in Level 3 (national guidelines)– currently programme is on hold and will be implemented on approval from the FAI.
- **ABC Pilot Programme** – this programme caters for adults with disabilities and is been delivered by Athlone Regional Sports Centre in line with national guidelines re: covid-19. This programme is an outdoor programme utilising the new amenity park opened at Athlone Regional Sports Centre. Participants work on improving agility, balance and coordination in a fun and controlled environment. This programme is on hold, with five sessions remaining.
- **Home Fitness Programme (Online via zoom)** – this programme was implemented for pan disabilities and delivered through zoom. Programme was implemented for six weeks and was targeted at all ability levels. Participants also had the opportunity to avail of a healthy eating plan to complement online programme.
- **Home Seated Pilates Programme (Online via zoom)** – this programme was primarily focused at adults with physical disabilities but was open to all adults with a disability who expressed interest in taking part. Programme was implemented via zoom and some participants were supported by service providers to take part.
- **Home Floor Pilates Programme (Online via zoom)** – this programme was open to adults with intellectual disabilities and mental health difficulties. Programme was implemented via zoom and some adults were supported by service providers to partake in this initiative.

- **Couch to 3k Programme (Online via Youtube/email)** – this programme was open to all ability levels. The aim of the programme was to increase participants fitness levels by following a purposely devised plan with the hope that participants could walk or run 5km on completion of the programme.
- **Football Programme (Online via Youtube/zoom)** – programme was designed to allow participants partake in football sessions at home or from a service provider utilising outdoor spaces. Programme concentrated on developing participants skill and ability level.
- **European Week of Sport (EWOS) – In conjunction with Longford and Roscommon Sports Partnerships:**
 - Home Fitness Taster Session delivered through Irish Sign Language for Adults Deaf and Hard of Hearing in conjunction with Chime and Deaf Sports Ireland.
 - Home Seated Pilates Programme delivered via zoom with audio description for adults with visual impairments in conjunction with NCBI/Vision Sports Ireland
 - Autism in Sport Workshop delivered by Cara Centre – open to members of the public to attend – facilitated via zoom
 - Nutrition Workshop delivered through Irish Sign Language for Adults Deaf and Hard of Hearing in conjunction with Chime and Deaf Sports Ireland
 - Children’s Booklet and Resource pack of inclusive games/activities for pan disabilities developed by the three sports partnerships – launched during EWOS – resource to be utilised on an ongoing basis
- **Home Fitness Programme** – Programme delivered as a follow up from EWOS taster session for adults with visual impairments. Programme consists of live sessions implemented via zoom and participants also receive weekly pre-recorded seated pilates sessions which can be implemented at a time that suits participants.
- **Westmeath Sports Partnership Community Walking Programme** – working with OT’s from Community Mental Health to promote existing walking programme delivered by WSP Walk Leaders on a Tuesday morning and Thursday evening as walking programme is open to members of the public to attend and is implemented in line with national guidelines (currently level 3).
- **IWA Seated Pilates Programme** – Seated Pilates Programme for Athlone and Mullingar Service Users. Programme was designed for wheelchair users and able-bodied personal, focusing on upper body. Programme delivered via zoom.
- **Inclusive GAA Programme** – programme was implemented in St. Brigid’s Special Education School and facilitated by Westmeath GAA Development Officers in line with National Covid-19 protocols.
- **Cara Sport Inclusion and Disability Awareness Workshop** – Implemented in partnership with Longford Sports Partnership for Sport and Recreation Students attending Moate Business College, delivered via zoom. This workshop is designed to build awareness around people with disabilities participating in community sport and physical activity.



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Administrator

Communications

Social Media	
Facebook: Number of posts in 2020	555
Facebook: Number of Followers	6,318
Twitter: Number of tweets in 2020	169
Twitter: Number of Followers	1840
Instagram: Number of posts in 2020	165
Instagram: Number of Followers	578

Website	
Number of visits	10931
Number of unique visitors	3165
Number of new articles/pages produced	19

Information Leaflets & Booklets	
Let's Play Booklet	1000
Combined Activity Booklet	1000

Programmes

Sportshall Athletics	4 Schools – 201 participants
Operation Transformation	6 Saturday morning walks - Belvedere – average 80 6 Tuesday morning walks - Royal Canal – average 15 6 Thursday evening walks - Market Square – average 23
Bike Week 2020	proposed events with local clubs cancelled due to Covid concerns.

Education & Training

Safeguarding Workshops	10
Number of participants	98
Sports First Aid Workshop	1
Number of participants	12

Grants

Round 1 Covid 19 Support Grant	44 Clubs/Orgs €52,981 awarded
Club Development Grants	54 clubs €17,485 awarded

2020 Summary

With a full complement of staff, Westmeath Sports Partnership looked forward to developing and extending its reach and influence across the County during 2020. As with everyone else, those plans were significantly affected by the Covid pandemic. However, the team were extremely proactive and resourceful in adapting and amending programmes where possible, as well as developing new programmes, showing enormous creativity.

The pandemic created numerous difficulties and challenges, but also some opportunities to think about things differently and evolve the way we can engage with participants, clubs, schools and others. Some of the solutions and ideas that were implemented because of Covid will hopefully continue to be utilised as part of our service going forward, as we hopefully return to some kind of normality in 2021.

Tony Wheat

Westmeath Sports Partnership Coordinator.



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