

WESTMEATH SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

Consultation Document



Westmeath Sport Partnership Strategy 2010 - 2014

ABOUT US

(Who we are) Westmeath Sports Partnership was established in September 2004 to promote sport and physical activity for all people in Westmeath. The Sports Partnership is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is core funded by the Irish Sports Council. The Board of the Sports Partnership has representatives from various agencies, including Statutory Bodies, Local Development Agencies, Sports groups and communities within Westmeath. Our staff members, all with a passion for sport, are closely involved in co-ordinating and promoting increased provision and participation in sports and physical activity for people in Westmeath.

(What do we do) We encourage and support participation in sport and physical activity by providing information and training and by implementing relevant programmes. We develop, co-ordinate and/or deliver projects in partnership with individuals, groups, clubs and partner agencies and encourage groups to take responsibility for these projects and activities so that they can be self-sustaining.

(How do we do it) The work of the Sports Partnership is guided by the following key principles and values:

1. *Equality* – The Partnership aims to ensure equal opportunities and a social inclusion focus in all aspects of the programmes and services of the partnership and the initiatives being supported by it.
2. *Participation* - One of the key aims of the partnership is to provide information and opportunities to participate in sporting and physical activity, to as many people as possible.
3. *Sustainability* – To support and introduce initiatives that will develop sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities that are educational, lasting and financially and environmentally sustainable
4. *Evaluation* – Westmeath Sports Partnership is committed to implementing and evaluating its operations and learning from its experiences
5. *Partnership* – To appreciate the value of positive working partnerships and the on-going voluntary effort in sports development

THE STORY SO FAR

Since 2004, Westmeath Sports Partnership has clearly demonstrated that the work of the Partnership is beginning to have a significant impact on participation in sport and physical activity in Westmeath, particularly in the areas of increasing levels of activity in primary schools, teacher training and the raising of standards and awareness of best practice and ethics in sport.

Some of our main achievements have been:

- Launching and implementing many new physical activity and development programmes for schools, clubs and our communities
- Greater Participation in sport and physical activity in pre-school, primary schools and post-primary schools. Buntús generic programme rolled out in 65 schools with 424 teachers and 7620 students participating; Buntus Start in 38 childcare settings; and 13 girls in motion projects in post-primary schools
- Delivery of coach education and club development courses to 2500 club representatives
- Being an important Information Resource for all clubs, sporting, community and voluntary organisations
- the launching of our website www.westmeathsports.ie
- Providing small grants to local community and voluntary organisations; providing information on how to access Government and Local Authority grants and hosting Sports Capital Funding Seminars

GOING FORWARD, 2010 -2014

The strategic direction and operation of Westmeath Sports Partnership is outlined in this our second strategic plan. We must seek to strengthen and streamline the Partnership's programmes and initiatives in a very targeted and focused way, with the ultimate goal of increasing participation in sport and physical activity in

Westmeath.

OUR STRATEGIES

We are going to promote and deliver our programmes and initiatives under FOUR Strategic Headings:

Our Schools
Our Sports Clubs/Groups
Our Communities, and finally
The Partnership itself

These Strategic areas have been influenced by findings from the Irish Sports Monitor, published in 2008. The highlights of this report include at a National level that:

- 33% played sport for at least 20 minutes during the previous 7 days
- 58% went for a recreational walk of at least 20 minutes during the previous 7 days
- People with high educational attainment, men, younger people and those on high incomes were much more likely to play sport and much less likely to be sedentary
- Non-Irish nationals from outside the EU and the English-speaking countries were approximately half as likely to play sport as Irish nationals
- Controlling for population profile, Dublin City, Limerick, Offaly, Leitrim and Westmeath recorded low participations
- Personal exercise activities (going to the gym, fitness classes, and exercise machines.) are now the most popular sport and exercise activity in Ireland, following by swimming.
- 8% of adults had volunteered for sport-related activity in the previous 7 days, equivalent to 280,000 volunteers
- People with a disability who said they could not actively participate in sport were more likely to be involved as volunteers than those without a disability.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

The Westmeath Sports Partnership considers it essential that a strategy be a working document and one that is seen as both relevant and workable in answering the needs for those who have an interest in and who would benefit from sport in Westmeath. The Board will take an active approach to the monitoring, evaluation and review of the strategy and the implementation. The Strategic working group will monitor this plan through the implementation of annual work plans of the Westmeath Sports Partnership.

Westmeath Sport Partnership Strategy 2010 - 2014

Mission Statement

"Westmeath Sports Partnership seeks to ensure all people in Westmeath, have equal opportunity and access to participate in sport and physical activity of their choice".

Strategic Area

OUR SCHOOLS

Promoting greater School participation rates in sport and physical activity was a key priority in our previous strategy. Westmeath Sports Partnership will continue to pursue the concept of Active Schools, to ensure all children and young people are presented with appropriate sporting and recreational physical activity opportunities.

We will endeavour to ensure that children of all abilities have equal opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity within the school setting

1. Our Schools	Strategic Targets	How are we going to achieve our targets?	What will be the outcome?
	1.1 Provide opportunities for all children to participate in non-competitive physical activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the roll-out of the Búntus Programme • Expand and develop the Feet First¹ Programme • Continue the delivery of the CycleSafe¹ Programme • Implement and support the Active Travel Mullingar education strand. 	1.1 Increased number of children participating in sport and physical activity.
	1.2 Increase links between Schools and Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll-out the Sports Hall Athletic programme in partnership with AAI and the local athletic clubs. • Assist all County development officers in the delivery of their programmes. • Encourage the transfer of children from the CycleSafe programme to the local Cycling Clubs • Develop an information for schools on local sports club 	1.2 Clear pathway between schools and clubs will have been developed, creating greater coordinating between clubs and schools

	1.3 Promote inclusive games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in inclusion games for teachers 	1.3 Increased awareness of the importance of sport and physical activities for all children
¹ For more information on this programme, please see appendix A for details	Active transport in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mullingar Project education strand • Continue the roll-out of the CycleSafe¹ programme • Link with Green Schools travel ¹programme • Promote walking and cycling routes to schools around the country. 	1.4 There will be full support and education for schools on the active travel projects, in conjunction with partners
	1.5 Address the fall of in participation in sport by young people aged between 14-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and pilot new initiatives to retain and attract young people aged 14-19 to sport 	1.5 The decline in sports participation in this age bracket will be halted.
	1.6 Explore external usage of school facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate and assist in a pilot case study between a community group and a school facilities 	1.6 A sample of a pathway for community/school partnership will be developed

Strategic Area

OUR COMMUNITIES

A priority for Westmeath Sports Partnership is to ensure a focus on the delivery of quality programmes to targeted groups within the community, and to ensure that community groups and facilities are made aware of the importance of physical activity and sport and strong links are made between community groups and sports clubs in Westmeath.

2. Our Communities	Strategic Targets	How are we going to achieve our targets?	What will be the outcome?
	2.1 Explore and promote physical activity and funding to Inactive community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with current community supports structures • Increase links with active retirement groups and Go for Life¹ 	2.2 Appropriate Information, training and assistance on accessing Sports Funding will be available to all community groups.
	2.2 Increase and maximise facility usage for physical activity and sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with facility owners, look at flexible pricing strategies 	2.3 more local facilities will have 'open door policy' to all members of community for
	2.3 Develop links between Sports Club and Community group and disability organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and encourage dual use of existing and new facilities within sports clubs and community settings. • Promote and encourage 	2.4 A new pathway model between all sports and community group

¹For more information on this programme, please see appendix A for details

		<p>links at local level by working in partnership with Sports Clubs, Community Groups, Disability Organisations and Sports Development Officers within county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of local sport and physical activity programmes 	
	2.4 Promote and encourage social inclusion within Sports Clubs, Community Groups, Disability Organisations and Leisure Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and education in inclusion for sports clubs • Promote accessibility within all sports clubs and Leisure Centres. 	2.5 Increased awareness of social inclusion within community settings for all target groups
	2.5 Seek to address low physical activity and sports participation levels amongst unemployed people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot a programme in conjunction with relevant agencies 	2.6 More unemployed people will be encouraged to participate in Sport

Strategic Area

OUR SPORTS CLUBS/GROUPS

Westmeath Sports Partnership will continue to assist the development of new and existing clubs through training and education which will support the provision of sport and physical activity in Westmeath.

3. Our Sports Clubs/Groups	Strategic Targets	How are we going to achieve our targets?	What will be the outcome?
	3.1 Building further capacity of coaches, officials and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Club organisation and club management skills through workshops and training seminars • Coordinate and promote all coaching course being delivered in the county 	3.1 Sport Development workshops for clubs, coaches and volunteers will be delivered
	3.2 Encourage and support volunteer recruitment and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and utilise our Volunteering in changing times booklet • Develop, further, the links with Westmeath Volunteer Centre • Assist clubs in volunteer training and education 	3.2 Stronger links with the Westmeath volunteer network will be developed

	3.3 Encourage non-competitive /mass participation events and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and Replicate the 'meet and train' concept in other sports and target groups 	3.3 More people participating in organised events and programmes.
	3.4 Promote inclusive sports clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Inclusion Awareness Training for Sports Clubs, Coaches and Volunteers. 	3.4 Social Exclusion issues will be addresses.
	3.5 Promote a fun and safe environment for sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the Implementation all aspects of the Code of Ethics and Child protection policies. 	3.5 Programmes to continuing high standards will be delivered
	3.6 Increase number of adults participating in individual sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Individual sports activities among adults 	3.6 Increased participation of adults in individual sports

Strategic Area

THE PARTNERSHIP ITSELF

The Board of Westmeath Sports Board endeavours to ensure the partnership remains strong and effective.

4. The Partnership itself	Strategic Targets	How are we going to achieve our targets?	What will be the outcome?
	4.1 Create a partnership approach in all our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link and work with all partners to enhance collaboration for all our work 	4.1 An enhanced collaborative approach to delivering on the work of the Sports Partnership
	4.2 Increase our media profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications plan and use a multi-media approach to communications 	4.2 The Partnership will have more public visibility and access to media coverage to promote its work WSP will act as conduit for all individuals seeking information on sport and physical activity in Westmeath
	4.3 Seek to secure match funding for sustainability of WSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Financial Sub groups to seek out all funding available to the partnership. • Engage Partnership Agencies to meet match funding requirement. 	4.3 Adequate funding through partners and additional agencies will be available
	4.4 Ensure WSP is operated to the highest standards of good governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with outside expertise to ensure good governance 	4.4 The Partnership maintains its high standards of operation

	4.5 Implement a monitoring system for the Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce an annual operational plan defining how the Strategic Plan will be implemented	4.5 Our Strategy will be implemented in a focused and sustainable manner
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Programmes



The Buntús Programme is nationally coordinated by the Irish Sports Council and locally delivered through the Westmeath Sports Partnership. Developed to support Primary School Teachers in support of the Physical Education Curriculum to introduce young people to sport. Its aim is to play children play fairly making sport fun, co-operating and playing as a team. 65 Schools; 424 teachers and 7620 children received the programme to date.



Buntús Start is a comprehensive child centred physical activity programme for children aged 2-5 years old. It is designed for use in pre-school settings to provide a wide range of learning opportunities for young children to develop their fundamental motor skills, manipulative skills, co-ordination and balancing skills and develop a positive attitude to physical activity.

This Sports specific programme is aimed at primary school children and their teachers in partnership with the FAI. The programme provides training and resources to teachers enabling them to deliver football related sessions during PE and afterschool programmes. 53 Schools; 324 Teachers and 6172 children received the programme to date



The Cycle Safe programme aims to assist young people in gaining the skills and knowledge to safely cycle and hopefully encourage them into the world of cycling as a mode of transport, and as a source of recreation and sport. 1081 students trained



Feet First programme aims to increase awareness in families of the importance of being active and make activity a natural part of daily living resulting in families being more active, more often. It aims to integrate sports and activities into today's lifestyle and into families in Westmeath. 170 children in 3 Schools have participated to date.



WSP is working actively to identify and promote opportunities for women to participate in sport and physical activity in Westmeath. Some of projects include: Women in Motion - Personal Development & Leadership Skills in Sport programme; Breaking down the barriers for women in sport conference; Girls in Action - programmes based on local needs to increase physical activity levels among girls and young women, and activities that raise awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.



'The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport' in Ireland is designed to provide guidance for those working with young people in sport. It is a practical set of guidelines for those involved in sport for young people. This course highlights the main principles of the Code and looks at measures that clubs can take to create and maintain the safest possible environment for young people. As well as undertaking child protection training, all clubs and organisations are encouraged to adopt child protection policies and

procedures as outlined in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. Westmeath Sports Partnership offers a 4 hour basic awareness course to all those over the age of 18 years.

Sports First Aid

This course aims to provide participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement an effective sports injury prevention programme and give competent first aid to the ill or injured until medical aid arrives in a sporting environment.

Defibrillator Training

Candidates learn how to recognise the signs and symptoms of Cardiac Arrest and Choking. Upon course completion candidates will be fully competent in the operation of an AED, Adult CPR, and the treatment of a choking patient. The course is delivered over 4 hours.



Go for Life is the national programme for sport and physical activity for older people. The aim of Go for Life is to involve older adults in all aspects of sport and physical activity more often. The thrust of the programme is to empower and enable older people by reaching out to active retirement associations, senior citizens groups, day care and community centres around the country, to ensure that more older people are more active, more often.

Meet & Train FIT4LIFE

A qualified leader within each group will set out a schedule suitable for your needs. The training nights feature group runs, with each group composed of people with similar fitness levels. These groups range in ability from complete beginners up to regular runners and they each train at an appropriate level.

Active Leader

This award is designed to provide a panel of trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic community based sports leaders, whose aim is to encourage more people to become and remain involved in sport and physical activity. The course is a mixture of practical and theoretical work and looks specifically at equipping leaders with the skills to work in a wide range of locations including local clubs, community groups, workplaces, community centres and sports clubs. The training will be an enjoyable experience and the participants are assessed throughout the course on attendance, interest, personal skills and leadership skills. This award also involves the satisfactory completion of a final practical assessment on either a warm up, activity based warm up, main activity or cool down.



Slí na Sláinte, meaning "**Path to Health**", routes was developed nationwide by the Irish Heart Foundation in association with Irish Sports Council. Bright colourful signposts mark these walking routes at Kilometre intervals. Westmeath has three Slí na Sláinte Routes in Athlone, Moate and Mullingar funded by Local Authorities.

Club Development Programme

This programme replaced Co. Westmeath VEC Youth and Sports Club Grant scheme. Clubs can apply for funding against agreed criteria in two Categories: Education/Training and Participation. WSP has allocated funding to over 100 clubs over the last four years.

SportsHall Athletics

The fundamentals of athletics – running, jumping, throwing - are the core building blocks for participation in all sports activities. Unfortunately many children do not learn how to do these properly with the result that they drop away from sport from an early age. In addition, with the onset of winter after Halloween, it is often too cold, wet or dark for schools or clubs to offer outdoor, after-schools activities to children. Westmeath Sports Partnership, in association with Athletics Ireland are therefore inviting primary schools to participate in an Indoor Athletics Programme. The programme is aimed at teaching children these basic athletic skills which hopefully will keep them involved in sport longer – and help build their self esteem. It is also unique in that all pupils, regardless of size, age or ability can participate - and have fun doing so.

Inclusive Games

Initiatives developed to encourage integration into sport and physical activity by people with a disability e.g. All ability summer camp, assistance swim & full teacher training, special needs training, and training for all service providers.

Provide training and education in relation to disability sport

Disability Awareness Workshops

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