

## SID Programmes

### Tandem Cycling

Tandem cycling has been very successful so far this year, I sourced funding to pay for a bus for members of the NCBI from Portarlinton/Portlaoise to attend for 6 weeks.

We are doing a Come n Try session on 18<sup>th</sup> June for Bike Week.



### Goalball

Students from Scoil Christ Ri, Mountrath CS and Rath NS have enjoyed goalball sessions.



**MULTI-ACTIVITY CAMP**  
For Children With Additional Needs  
**WHEN?** Monday - Wednesday, July 22nd-24th From 11AM-1PM  
**WHERE?** Portlaoise Leisure Centre  
**HOW MUCH?** €30 Per Child  
**AGES:** 6-16  
Activities Include - Soccer, GAA, Golf, Athletics, Wrestling, Swimming, Plus Lots More Fun & Games  
Any Questions Please Contact Cathiona Slattery At 086 793 5234

**BLAZING SADDLES**  
3 Day Learn To Cycle Camp  
For Children AGED 4+ Who Want To Learn How To Cycle, Or Who Need To Improve Their Balance.  
**WHERE?** Astro, Portlaoise Leisure Centre  
**WHEN?** July 29th, 30th & 31st, 2PM-3.15PM  
**HOW MUCH?** €20 Per Child For 3 Days  
Suitable For Children With Or Without Additional Needs  
To Book A Place Please Call Cathiona Slattery In Laois Sports Partnership @ 057 867 1248 / 086 793 5234  
**GET THEM MOVING!**

# Laois Sports Partnership



## Mid-Year Report 2019

### Social Tennis Abbeyleix

The aim of this programme was to get people in the age category 50+ more active, to provide a social outlet and social interaction and to create awareness of Abbeyleix Tennis Club and tennis as a sport.

The programme ran for 8 weeks twice weekly and saw 30 register for the programme at least attending one session with a regular 12 people per session. For some people it was a return to tennis and other's first time to play. The participants enjoyed the social side of the program and felt better having some physical activity weekly with other's improving their tennis technique.

Following completion of this programme the club have agreed to extend the programme with a view to social membership. Participants also got to try out the Activator Poles which were used pre tennis session.



## INSIDE

School Programmes

Education & Training

Laois Walks Festival

General Participation Programmes

CSDO Programmes

SVT Activity & Wellness Hub

SIDO Programs

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## Laois Sports Partnership

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## School Programmes

### Primary School Basketball

St. Mary's Hall Portlaoise has been the venue for many a thrilling basketball match over the years, and the primary schools children who took part in our annual tournaments this May can be very proud to say they are now part of this great tradition!

May sees the culmination of the Laois Sports Partnership basketball programme for primary schools. Having grown from a series of one day blitzes, it is now one of our most keenly anticipated schools programmes each year.

Laois Sports Partnership has worked to promote participation in basketball by forging links between primary schools and local clubs. Over the last 7 years we have developed a programme where coaching sessions are delivered in schools by coaches from clubs in the county. Seamus Dooley from Portlaoise Panthers Basketball Club has been volunteering with the programme for the last number of years. His coaching skills and passion for the sport have been a contributing factor in the popularity of the programme and growth in numbers taking part year on year.

Coaching is offered to the schools over a 4 week period to pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class. Pupils in 3<sup>rd</sup> class can potentially receive the coaching for up to 4 years before they move on to secondary school. A record 23 schools took part in our coaching programme this year. Once the coaching has been delivered, all of the schools in the county are invited to take part in our tournaments run over 6 days in St. Mary's Hall Portlaoise. The tournament days give schools an opportunity to play against each other and use their new skills, in a friendly, non-competitive environment. All schools from around the county are invited with over 1,100 children taking part over the two weeks.

Part of the appeal of our Basketball Programme is due to its inclusive nature. We deliver the coaching and tournaments in such a way that everyone gets to take part, not just the most proficient players who normally get picked for teams. Children get to represent their school and wear their school colours – in many cases for the first time. They get to experience the atmosphere of a large scale sporting event, mixing with pupils from other schools around the county. The emphasis is on friendly competition, so no scores are displayed. Everyone receives a certificate for representing their schools. Our aim is to encourage participation and hopefully see children get involved with their local club.

We would like to thank all of the schools and teachers for their participation in this programme. We would also like to thank Seamus Dooley Portlaoise Panthers for their support, and all of the TY students from local schools who helped us to referee our matches, helping to make the tournaments such a success again this year.



### Sports Leader Award Secondary School Programme

We have completed 4 Level 1 courses with 89 participants in Mountmellick, Heywood & Colaiste losagain with a further course planned for Rathdowney Youth Cafe

## SID Programme

### Rock for All Football

Started 7<sup>th</sup> April and has been a huge success, I was approached by the chairperson of the Rock GAA who was looking for guidance in how to set this up, I advised the club about training and courses to complete.



In February, the wheels were set in motion for all-inclusive Gaelic football sessions for children with additional needs to play, learn and interactive in an environment suited to their needs at The Rock GAA Club. The much-welcomed 'Rock for All' programme sees children with additional needs such as autism, ADHD and visual impairments get the chance to have fun with their peers for an hour every Sunday. Their aim is to involve children from four to 16 years old around the county and of all abilities in Gaelic football in a fun, non-competitive way.

The brainchild for this project came from parent Laura White and Juvenile secretary of the Rock GAA club, Anthony Ging. Children with additional needs may like to partake in Gaelic

matches or physical elements of play. When Laura initially inquired about how her child could play and learn GAA skills, the wheels were set in motion.

Soon, almost 20 parents expressed interest in the novel idea to hold this in The Rock GAA club. With the success of the 'Rock for All' group, they have decided to change training times to coincide with Little Rockers to add to the fun and atmosphere of the mornings.

In recent weeks, they have been getting out in the fresh air, having loads of fun and picking up football skills along the way. Anthony is amazed at the feedback the idea has had so far. "This is bigger than we ever expected. We've had parents from Castletown, Clonaslee, The Heath, contacting us about this. I never realized starting this journey just how big it could get," said the juvenile secretary. "We want to build a community around this. We're really delighted with the support Laois GAA, Leinster GAA and Laois Sports Partnership have given us," added Anthony. Those interested need only to turn up with sports gear, enthusiasm and a sense of fun.

### Bealtaine Festival – Seated Volleyball

Volleyball Ireland did a taster session for the Bealtaine Festival which was enjoyed by young and old. We have ordered sets of the nets and hoping to have more days over the Summer and Autumn.





## SID Programme

As well as representing Ireland in the Floorball international, the GAA team will also host a wheelchair hurling demonstration during their stay.

The GAA team will represent Ireland in competition against Floorball teams from Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Morocco, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and United States.

The team is captained by Sligo player Pat Carty with Limerick Paralympian James McCarthy vice-captain.

Uachtarán John Horan said: "Thanks to the work of the GAA For All committee there is a programme in place to make our games as Inclusive as possible.

"Wheelchair hurling is a skillful game that lives up to the motto of the GAA being a place Where We All Belong and is really going from strength to strength.

"Through this invitation to play in Breda we have a chance to acknowledge some of our very best players with the opportunity to not only compete at a very high level but to represent their country in doing so.

### Walking

Fitsticks/Activator poles workshops have been completed in Portlaoise & Emo, An Activate Together Day for all groups that have taken part over the last year was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> March. As part of the Bealtaine Festival we organised an Activator Walk at Portlaoise Leisure Centre.



### Woodlands for Health

We received funding for 2019 and have now completed 6 weeks, we are using our Walking Leaders with support from Coillte to role out this programme. 3 of last years group have completed Walk Leader training and are helping out with the group.

### Krav Maga/Wrestling

Laois Down Syndrome and NCBI and children in direct provision are taking part in wrestling classes with Mirek in Portlaoise Wrestling Club.

### Activities for children in Autism Resource Centres

Activities have been completed with Abbeyleix school for 4 weeks.

### Activities for Kolbe Special School

This has been very successful with the help of our trained up TY's from Scoil Christ Ri, the children have just completed their final set of activities after a full year. This has been fantastic as this is something that they have not been able to do before.

### Balance Bikes & Learn to Cycle

Balance bike training is going well. Saplings school in Killeslin received training on the bikes.

Learn to cycle camp Easter – 30 children took part. 27 children were cycling their own bike at the end of the camp. We rolled this out with the help of our Older Sports Leaders.

Learn to cycle camp Summer – we have a date set for the Summer for 29<sup>th</sup> July.

### Fit for All Week

Club Vitae were part of the Fit for All week this year in which people took part in aqua aerobics classes.

A Rock Steady Boxing class was held in Portlaoise Combat Academy for Midlands East Parkinsons group and some members have continued to attend 2-3 times per week.



## Sports Hall Athletics Programme 2019 & National Sports Hall Athletics Schools Finals



The fundamentals of athletics, running, jumping, throwing are the core building blocks for participation in all sporting activities. Unfortunately many children do not learn how to do these properly, resulting in many children dropping away from sport from an early age.

One of the core objectives of the programme, is overall inclusion. The aim is to reach out to the many children who find themselves on the fringe of the mainstream sports clubs, like the G.A.A. and local soccer clubs, either by choice or by lack of local facilities or special needs.

So far this year our programme reached out to over 1,024 children, which included 22 schools in Co. Laois covering Ballacolla, St. Abban's, and Emo.

The Sports Hall Athletics Programme is aimed at teaching children basic athletic skills which will hopefully keep them involved in sport longer.

The National Sports Hall Athletics Final took place in Athlone I.T. on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March with St. Fiaccs NS, Graiguecullen representing Laois.



### Teenscene

Scoil Christ Ri, Mountrath Community School & Dunamase College had 123 students participate in events such as Zumba, Kickboxing.

Teenscene is a programme from Laois Sports Partnership aimed at 12-17 year old girls. It incorporates weekly, 1 hour sessions of indoor fitness activities.



The aim of the programme is to highlight the importance of physical activity for female adolescents & to encourage a greater participation amongst them. The programme also allows for variety with students having a say in what they would like to partake in.



## Education & Training

### Sport & Physical Activity Grant Scheme

LSP Sport & Physical Activity Grants Scheme benefits many local communities in Laois. This year, there were two categories under which candidates could apply: Social & Community Groups and Individual Sports Clubs & Organisations

The criteria to be matched by applicants included the following:

- Innovation
- Sustainability
- Ability to meet objectives
- Number of participants in target groups,
- Partnerships within the organisation
- Support materials.

Grants have been awarded to a total of €6,000.



### Safeguarding

We have held 5 Safeguarding 1 courses with 92 participants, 1 Safeguarding 2 course with 11 participants and 1 Safeguarding 3 course with 7 people participants from a range of clubs and organisations.

### “Safe Sport” App

Sport Ireland “Safe Sport” app, is based on their Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport courses.

It is an information and guidance tool for everyone involved in sport for children and young people. The app is aimed at creating greater awareness and understanding about safeguarding and best practice principles in children's sport.

There are four key areas of the app which can be accessed from the home screen:

- Leader/Coach Parent/Guardian Club/Organisation Child/ Young Person

Within each section information and guidance is provided on "Fair Play"; "Good Practice"; "A Child Centred Approach"; and "Should or Should Not". The app addresses how to report child welfare and protection concerns of suspected child abuse to TUSLA Child and Family Agency and poor practice to the Club Children's Officer or National Children's Officer.

One of the features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else's child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are traveling on a journey.

For more information go to [https://www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code\\_of\\_Ethics/](https://www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/)

### Go For Life Fun Day

80 Older Adults participated in the Go for Life Fun Day held in St. Mary's Hall, Portlaoise on the 14th May as part of the Bealtaine Festival. Great fun was had by all.



The Go for Life Games, adapted by Go for Life, involve three sports that can be played in Singles, Pairs and Teams: 22 people participated in the regional games in Mucklagh, Co. Offaly.

- **Lobbers:** adaption of Petanque & Boules
- **Flisk:** adaption of Frisbee & Horseshoe Pitching
- **Scidil:** adaption of Ten-Pin Bowling & Skittles

It is important to remember that the emphasis of the Games is on participation & fun and they are to be played in as non-competitive a way as possible.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Go for Life Games was held in DCU on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Laois was represented by 15 players from across the county. A huge thanks to them and their supporters for rep-



### Basketball

Weekly sessions with NLN group. This is group of clients are participants on the Access program. The NLN and St. Francis enjoyed a very competitive match for a memorial game for student that had attended both school and centres. Mental Health group are taking part in basketball for 6 weeks which will be finished the end of June.

### Multi Activity Session

Weekly sessions with clients from RehabCare, Oak House, Mountmellick Acorn, Out Reach & Rowanberry. Clients from Dove House in Abbeyleix, Laois IWA Branch attending. Session is run by centre staff so I just have to check in on it now and again. Work experience students are also helping out with this as numbers have increased.

### Laois Lions Wheelchair Rugby Team

Training every Tuesday evening in Vicarstown. League day took place in Clonaslee Community Centre on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May. Six exciting games were played. Well done to the Laois Lions Wheelchair Rugby Team on winning 2 of their 3 games against Ulster & Munster. Well done to all the teams that took part; Munster, Ulster & Gaelic Warriors.

Funding was received through Dormant Accounts for a container to store the wheelchair rugby chairs and to make the hall in Vicarstown more accessible. A new door has been fitted and the container was delivered this week with concreting works going to be completed by the end of July.



### Tag Rugby & GAA Football Sessions

Leinster Rugby have rolled out tag rugby training with Rowanberry NLN & Mental Health group in March & April

### Wheelchair Hurling

Leinster Wheelchair Hurling training has commenced. Laois hosted the M. Donnelly GAA Wheelchair Hurling Inter-Provincial

Tournament on 13<sup>th</sup> April, what a fantastic day for the Leinster players which is made up of numerous Laois players. The day started off with the 2018 All Star Awards in which three Laois players Sean Bennett, Paul Tobin & Lorcan Madden received all stars. The three lads now go on to represent their province in a wheelchair floorball tournament in Holland at the end of June.

Three Laois men are among the 12 players who will make up the first ever international wheelchair hurling squad which was announced in Croke Park in June.

Three Laois men – Lorcan Madden, Seán Bennett, Paul Tobin – are a part of the 12-man panel made up of three wheelchair all-star hurlers from each of the four provinces.

They will travel to take part in the 2019 European Para Games Floorball International event that takes place in Breda, The Netherlands, from June 27-29.

Floorball is a game that is being considered for addition to the list of sports in the Paralympics and differs chiefly from wheelchair hurling in that players cannot rise the ball.





## S.I.D. Programme

### Training & Support of Volunteers

Working with Staff/volunteers in Rowanberry, Rehabcare, IWA and others, mainly around running Boccia, Basketball, Soccer, Athletics, Multi Activity sessions & Fishing. I have contacted the local centres and am trying to organise training for staff in soccer, basketball & Active Leadership.

Disability Inclusion Training 9/03/19 – 20

people attended.



Autism in Sport Training 11/04/19 – 20 people attended

### Disability Awareness through Sport

Mountrath CS have taken part in Wheelchair basketball sessions as part of their TY programme to educate them on disability sports. LSP presented Clonaslee Wheelchair Basketball club with two sports chairs which were

purchased through the Healthy

Ireland fund and are being used for games and for camps and disability awareness through sport.



### Wheelchair Basketball

Junior & Senior- Every Monday evening in Clonaslee

6-9pm. The Irish Wheelchair

basketball league took part in

Clonaslee on 23<sup>rd</sup> March where 100 people took part.



## General Participation Programmes

### Operation Transformation

958 participants turned out to a lovely morning in Emo Court, Portlaoise, Durrow & Ballykilcavan House on the 12th January 2019. Supports were provided by SVT Activity & Wellness Hub, Laois Civil Defence, Zumba Laois, Community Volunteer Walking Leaders across the county and youth sport leaders. A huge thanks to all the volunteers who gave their time and assisted us to deliver walks across the County to provide more opportunities to people to get out and get active



### Try With TriLaois

23 people participated in the 2019 Try with TriLaois programme. These were first time participants who participated in an 8-week coaching sessions, which provided training in Swimming, Running and Cycling all based from Portlaoise Leisure Centre.

All participants of the programme completed the TriLaois Triathlon on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019 and over half have since joined the club.

This year 4 races were on offer:

- Try ( new in 2019)
- Sprint
- Intervarsity
- Junior Aquaton.

There were approximately 380 participants in the TriLaois Triathlon .

Since the introduction of the Try with Trilaois programme and the TriLaois Triathlon, the Trilogy Triathlon Club has seen a surge in membership numbers.

*Pictures courtesy of Noel Coss*



Operation Transformation National Walk 2019 Fun for all the family





## #Laois Active

### 18th Annual Walks Festival

The 18th Annual Walks Festival will take place throughout Laois from 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018. The Festival will take walkers on 27 walks at 27 different locations, with walking grades ranging from moderate to Strenuous. To download full list of walks visit [www.laoispartnership.ie/laois-walks-festival](http://www.laoispartnership.ie/laois-walks-festival).

**WALKING FESTIVAL 2019**

**Mon 1<sup>st</sup> July - Grade B - 8km - 2 hours**  
**AMBLESIDE, KILLAMICK, BOU**  
 The Fidda Inland approach loop features old bog tracks and peaceful wooded lanes.  
 Meet: Manor Water carpark. Grid Ref: 542044. 7.30pm

**Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> July - Grade B - 8km - 2 hours**  
**DUNSMITH WOOD, DUBLIN**  
 Along woodland paths running by the banks of the river Slane.  
 Meet: Dunsmith Wood carpark. Grid Ref: 541172. 7.30pm

**Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> July - Grade A - 12km - 1 1/2 hours**  
**FURZE MOUNTAIN, TIRAHANE**  
 This demanding walk goes up Furze Mountain and back into the historic village of Tirahane.  
 Meet: The Green Cross, Tirahane. Grid Ref: 552066. 7.30pm

**Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 8km - 2 hours**  
**EARL COURT DEMESNE**  
 A stretch of Earl Court Demesne (second largest walled park in Europe) passing former pleasure grounds, fields and Earl Court gardens itself.  
 Meet: Community Centre, GAA carpark. Grid Ref: 551056. 7.30pm

**Sat 6<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 10km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**ROCK OF DUNAMASE, PORTLADUNG**  
 Take in the wonderful views from the Rock of Dunamase and stroll along the woodland paths of Dyaner Wood.  
 Meet: Eyre Wood carpark. Grid Ref: 551176. 7.30pm

**Sun 7<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 12km - 3 hours**  
**The Ballagh, Derrin**  
 Country lanes and roads, with views of Mount Laturan and Blackstairs Mountains. Walk along part of the old Ballagh Coach Road.  
 Meet: St Francis Church carpark. Grid Ref: 548171. 7.30pm

**Mon 8<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 12 km - 3 hours**  
**REKETTYS BENCH, CUMMAGUA**  
 A mix of minor roads, sandy and wet and forestry tracks up into the Slieve Binnia passing Rekettys Bench waterfall.  
 Meet: The Heritage Centre. Grid Ref: 551188. 7.30pm

**Tues 9<sup>th</sup> July - Grade C - 8km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**BALLACULLA FAMILY WALK**  
 Starting from the village of Ballaculla, take in the rolling countryside of South Laois along quiet country roads and green lanes.  
 Meet: Hayes Shop, Ballaculla. Grid Ref: 527394. 7.30pm

**Wed 10<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 10km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**ROSSMORE BELLEFINN**  
 This walk is a tour for the wonderful views of the Burren on the Tay, Dullin and Wicklow Mountains.  
 Meet: Grass Park. Grid Ref: 525955. 7.30pm

**Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 10km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**CLILAHILL**  
 Stunning panoramic views across several counties, taking you along old quarry lanes, forest tracks and open countryside.  
 Meet: Community Centre at T.18. Grid Ref: 532742. 7.30pm

**Fri 13<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 12km - 3 1/2 hours**  
**RIDGE OF CAPARR, BUNSHALLY**  
 Enjoy a walk through Ireland's state-owned nature reserve as you stroll for the Ben Harney, a rare bird of prey.  
 Meet: Ridge of Caparr carpark. Grid Ref: 531061. 7.30pm

**Sun 14<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 12 km - 3 hours**  
**Portarlington Bog Walk**  
 The Derriogone walk is a community-owned walk around the picturesque Derriogone Lakes and bogland.  
 Meet: Newlawn Inn. Grid Ref: 554124. 7.30pm

**Mon 15<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 10km - 2 hours**  
**WOUNDALE**  
 The 'hill of the howling wolves' on the Slieve Murr Ridge offers spectacular views of Slieve Murr and The Swin etc.  
 Meet: Church carpark. Grid Ref: 535838. 7.30pm

**Tues 16<sup>th</sup> July - Grade C - 8km - 2 hours**  
**GRANVORTHY FAMILY WALK**  
 Quiet roads, lanes, open country and woodland views.  
 Meet: Gate of the Lake. Grid Ref: 533755. 7.30pm

**Wed 17<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 10km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**SPRING**  
 A challenging walk traversing the hills of the 18th century Cooper Estate with spectacular views of Laois, Carlow, Wicklow, Kildare and Tipperary.  
 Meet: Knock Church, Spring. Grid Ref: 533638. 7.30pm

**Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> July - Grade A - 10 km - 3 hours**  
**GATYADAWN**  
 Stroll along the Gatyadawn loop which runs old lanes, lanes, open countryside and forest paths.  
 Meet: Wexley's Pub, Gatyadawn. Grid Ref: 515885. 7.30pm

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> July - Grade B - 10km - 3 hours**  
**MCINCROWY MOUNTAIN WALK, MCINTURKILL**  
 Experience the natural views and the beauty of the Slieve Bloom mountains as you stroll along its woodland paths.  
 Meet: Slieve Bloom Recreational carpark. Grid Ref: 531025. 7.30pm

**Sun 21<sup>st</sup> July - Grade B - 12km - 3 hours**  
**CAPPANELLAN WOODS, DUBLIN**  
 Woodland walk through part of the Castle Derron estate (now owned by Lord Ashbourne).  
 Meet: Cappanellan Woods carpark. Grid Ref: 546194. 7.30pm

**Mon 22<sup>nd</sup> July - Grade B - 10km - 2 1/2 hours**  
**LEIGHACROFT**  
 This walk includes quiet walking on country roads with great countryside views.  
 Meet: Community Centre. Grid Ref: 534888. 7.30pm

**Tues 23<sup>rd</sup> July - Grade A - 13km - 3 hours**  
**GRAND CANAL, FISHERSTOWN**  
 Walk along the Grand Canal down the Burren valley passing wooded banks and green views to the village of Vicarstown.  
 Meet: Fishers Inn. Grid Ref: 541788. 7.30pm

**Wed 24<sup>th</sup> July - Grade C - 8km - 1 1/2 hours**  
**BALLINAGHIL-HEYWOOD FAMILY WALK**  
 This walk starts from the historic grange and skirts the Malrough, passing the Heywood Estate.  
 Meet: Heywood Demesne entrance carpark. Grid Ref: 543510. 7.30pm

**1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019**

**18<sup>th</sup> Annual Laois Walks Festival**

**27 Walks 27 Locations**

**"Get Ireland Walking" - Active Community Walking Programme**  
 Walking is the easiest way to get moving, get active and get happy. Get Ireland Walking is here to help you get started. We've got tips and advice for anybody who wants to start walking or has been and we have all the information you need to start a walking group - so you can get it with friends. For further information on this programme please contact Laois Sports Partnership (057) 867 1246 or email info@laoisactive.ie

**WALKERS PLEASE NOTE**

- REGISTERED walkers should buy an hour prior to each walk. It's just 10€ for the festival!
- Wear comfortable walking boots/shoes.
- Bring your gear.
- We walk as a group, please stay with the lead.
- Walk routes may vary slightly to those listed due to weather conditions or other matters.
- Being collected for and return for the duration of the walk.

**COUNTRY SIDE CODES**

- Leave no trace.
- No dogs allowed.
- On country roads walk in single file on the right hand side.
- Respect private property (fences, walls etc) and the road.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

On Laois Walks & Laois Walks Festival please contact:  
 Dunmore Harbour | Group Leader at 087 113 2524  
 Susan Larkin | Festival Co-ordinator at 087 237 8411  
 Laois Partnership at 0571 866 1900  
[www.laoispartnership.ie](http://www.laoispartnership.ie)  
[www.laoispartnership.ie/laois-walks-festival](http://www.laoispartnership.ie/laois-walks-festival)

Patricia Maher | Fund Development Officer at 087 174 2217  
[patmaher@laoispartnership.ie](mailto:patmaher@laoispartnership.ie)

Laois Tourism  
[www.laoistourism.ie](http://www.laoistourism.ie)

**SPECIAL THANKS TO**  
 Members of Laois Walks Committee, Committee Groups, the Local Development Associations, Coláiste Náisiúnaí Tuaiscirt and Walkers Services and Laois Tourism.

[www.laoispartnership.ie](http://www.laoispartnership.ie)

**GRADES OF WALKS:**

- A = Strenuous
- B = Difficult
- C = Moderate

Grade C walks are suitable for families

## SVT Activity & Wellness Hub

### SVT Parish Rounders Started

The SVT Parish Rounders started up in Stradbally GAA. We had a handing over of gear to Justin from SVT and from Pascal who kindly contributed to the gear. Information went into the schools and surrounding areas for the introduction night being held on 31<sup>st</sup> March. We had a great turn out on the first night with plenty of training, blitz and games being planned for the coming months ahead.

SVT PARISH ROUNDERS Introduction Night!  
 Friday, May 31st 7.30PM-8.30PM Stradbally GAA Grounds



**SVT Community Games Finals** were held in Stradbally. This was taken on by the SVT committee in order to try keep the Community Games spirit alive in the area. Last year's event was poorly attended so it was decided as a committee we would help out organising and spreading the word to get it out. A hugely successful event where over 150 budding athletes turned out to compete for medals.



### Paddles Up Finale Day Portarlington



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**June: Bike Week** - We are organising three Casual Cycles with different routes and distances for people around Vicarstown, Fisherstown, Cuin Mhuire and The Rock of Dunamase with refreshments and bike hire.

**July: Vicarstown Multiactivity Summer Camp** 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July.

**Paddle Sport Training for Adults** running July & into August: Participants will receive level 2 skills in both the Canoe and Kayak, River Safety, River first Aid with three planned trip along the water in different areas. **August: Canoe & Kayaking Summer Camp.** 3 days of camp for children ages 10-18. Basic skills, fun games on the water, water safety skills and advice, lots of tips and fun trip at the end.



## SVT Activity & Wellness Hub



### May

Stradbally Community Day: a mix of entertainment from mini football matches, Irish Dancing, Singing, Bouncing Castles, Face painting, BBQ and Zumba on the day. A hype of activity on the day for the community in association with the 'Big Hello' and Stradbally GAA supported by SVT Activity & Wellness Hub.



### SVT Junior Park Run School Challenge: Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May

The Junior schools challenge has a new holder as Rath National School took the Shield Trophy this time after beating competition from holders St Colmans and schools from Laois and Kildare. A smaller numbers attended as many school were in the height of communion season. The Shield will go up for grabs again in September.



Timahoe are back with their running & walking groups every Tuesday & Thursday evening.

Numbers are growing every week.

### June



## #Laois Active

### Active Community Walking Programme

The Active Community Walking Programme, is part of the Get Ireland Walking initiative set up by Sport Ireland. It is designed to encourage communities to get together & get walking. It is as much a social event, as a fitness one. It is suitable for all fitness levels and is open to anybody to join at any stage.

The active participation of community members is vital to the success of the programme and to the establishment of a walking group within the communities that will continue to enable people to stay active and continue to enjoy their walking.

There are currently have 7 walking groups in Laois Mountmellick Walking Group, Mountrath Ramblers Walking Group, Portlaoise Stepping Out Walking Group, Port Trail Walking Group, Ballybrittas Walks, Cullohill Walking Group and Swan Walkers.

If your community is interested in setting up a walking group contact Majella Fennelly Laois Sports Partnership for further details. **For full listing of walking groups in Laois visit**

<http://www.getirelandwalking.ie/findgroup/#counties>



“Get Ireland Walking is a national initiative that aims to maximise the number of people participating in walking - for health, wellbeing and fitness - throughout Ireland “.





## Community Sports Development Officer Programmes

### HI Badminton Teacher Training

Shuttle Time is a comprehensive badminton programme for primary and secondary schools in Ireland.

The aim is to give all children a chance to try the sport by helping teachers deliver badminton lessons.

And it creates opportunities for smaller NGB'S to work in the schools and to let the pupils experience other sports.

9 primary schools 13 teachers completed this training

Teachers gain FREE affiliation to Badminton Ireland.

Teachers gain access to FREE lesson plans, a teacher's manual and online video resources and application upon completion of Shuttle Time course.

Following completion of the course participating schools received a kit bag worth €500. The kit bag includes 30 rackets, nets and 2 tubes of shuttles!

FREE access to the All-Ireland School event.



### Sport Leader Level 1 Award

Working with Staff/volunteers in Rathdowney youth cafe, mainly around upskilling the youth and getting them to complete sport leader award, Flare in the square events committee helping them with new ideas. The upcoming Queen of the Erkina festival which is open to young ladies to entry. We are going to get the participants involved in boot camp prior to the event.

### Active Leader Award

Portlaoise Suaimhneas Community Childcare group

19 childcare workers attended and felt more competent and comfortable to deliver inclusive, safe and fun games back in their setting in Treo Nua.



## SVT Activity & Wellness Hub

### SVT Easter Multiactivity Camp Vicarstown – 40 participants ages 8-13

We had another great camp in Vicarstown for our Easter Camp. Fully booked up within a couple of days of being advertised. A wide range of activities was put on for the children and everyone got to try all activities and get to learn some new skills and make new friends. On the back of this camp we are going to run a summer camp.



### Timahoe Yoga – 40 participants over 4 weeks

Timahoe has been running for the winter and having a consistent number attending throughout. It will take a break for the summer and will be back in the winter months again.

### SVT Casual Cycle Vicarstown started last Tuesday of the month - week one 25 cyclists

As the weather picked up the Casual Cycle started ahead of time this year with cyclists getting out a few weeks earlier than normal. It's a great opportunity for people to get out for a nice

leisurely Tuesday around views. growing numbers.



cycle on a evening lovely scenic Each week is in

### SVT Paddles Up 2019 Program Started – 16 participants

Our 2019 Paddles Up Program started in April for 4 weeks with our Finale Day set for the 8<sup>th</sup> of June in Portarlinton. This year was a mix of ages from 10 + and all abilities instead of just hitting the transition year program. The aim this year is for participants to gain their skills and gain more membership for the club. We had a great turnout for our kayaking and canoeing for both sessions with all participants gaining their level 2 skills in both. Over the 4 weeks participants gained their skills and hours on the water. Each group thoroughly enjoyed the

experience and are going to feed back into the SVT Canoe & Kayaking Club in Vicarstown. Our Finale day was in Portarlinton Leisure Centre with the Portarlinton group where we paddled approximately 4.5 miles from Garyinch wood back to the leisure centre. The SVT group that were in attendance were presented with their certs on the day. A very successful program and the outcomes are very encouraging for new members for the club.



## SVT Activity & Wellness Hub



### Sport Leader Training – 19 participants

This Leader Training was done on the Easter Holidays for a group of participants in St Colmans,

Stradbally. It was a great success and most of the new Sport Leaders were on hand to help out at our Easter Camp and put their training into practice.

### January 2019

SVT Operation Transformation 5km Walk Ballykilcavan Stradbally 128 Participants  
SVT Stradbally 10km Oakvale Walk 40 walkers  
SVT Vicarstown Moyanna to Rock of Dunmaise 15km walk 54 adult walkers 8 Children  
Timahoe Tuesday & Thursday Walks – 50 walkers over 4 weeks  
Walk & Talk Sundays: 63 walkers over 4 Sundays  
Timahoe Yoga Started the last 2 weeks of January with 53 over the 2 weeks  
Vicarstown Park Run & Junior Park Run every Saturday and Sunday

### February

SVT Generation Transformation Finale Vicarstown 23<sup>rd</sup> Park Run – 120  
Junior Park Run Shield Schools Challenge – 193  
Timahoe Walk & Talk Sunday – 44 over 4 weeks  
Yoga – 84 over 4 weeks  
SVT Park Run & Junior Park Run Vicarstown – 161

### Timahoe Yoga – 45 over 4 weeks

Timahoe has been running for the winter and having a consistent number attending throughout. It will take a break for the summer and will be back in the winter months again.



### April SVT Timahoe Easter Egg Hunt – 120

The annual Easter Egg Hunt was another great success this year. The ages were split into two groups keeping the younger of the children in the safety of the playground for their hunt and the older children out around the green for the bigger hunt.

Children and parents had a great day on a sunny Saturday in Timahoe.



## CSDO Programmes

### Mountmellick Youth Reach

20 youth reach pupils attended and while 11 competed the active leader award this is a very hard to reach and challenging group .



### HI Tug of War Blitz

Primary schools Blitz day in Rathdowney on 21st June with 100 children 3 schools.

Tug of war is a non-contact sport where every member of the team is equal. It is a sport where the team work is more important than any one individual. All that's needed is a rope and runners or football boots. It can be pulled indoors in a sports hall or outside on the grass.

The Irish Tug of War Association are running a development project with schools around the country, co-ordinated by Cathy O' Toole and tying in with the Active School Flag initiative as well as Local Sports Partnerships. Development officers are calling to schools and giving a demonstration to students. Participating schools receive a free junior tug of war rope to keep. Three primary schools participating with 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> classes representing their schools A great day of friendly competition.

### Men's Shed



Some men's sheds cancelled last minute although there was great interest in the game initially different reasons, work, silage, funerals. Rathdowney and Mountrath attended and enjoyed the detailed attention from Frank.

The walking group were meeting, and we invited them in and the men's displayed the knowledge and the ladies really enjoyed the game also, a dad and his two daughters joined in over all a nice social and enjoyable morning in Mountrath at the Brigidine Convent.

Scooch has been designed to suit smaller spaces and can be played on any flat, smooth surface (wood, concrete, tight carpet) using the discs and cues this will re-

ally suit Men's Sheds as they can be limited to space.

### Family Fit Activity Session

St Fintan's Boys Gaelscoil in Mountrath at 2:15pm each week with the session start time being 2:30pm. Children and their parents arrived for 2:30pm and we began the sessions with a 10-minute practical health education workshop. This was followed by a 50-minute fun physical activity session. The sessions concluded at 3:30pm and there were 4 sessions in total in this pilot programme.

The children and adults expressed that they really enjoyed the sessions. The children were very engaged in the health education pieces and asked lots of questions. The parents expressed that they found the workshops to be very educational and informative particularly regarding quick and simple food swaps, in addition to understanding portion sizes, the sugar content in typical foods marketed at children and the importance of physical activity in health and wellness.

Our team worked hard to ensure that the ability of all adults and children in the group were catered for.



## CSDO Programmes

Two children in the group were diagnosed with dyspraxia, a condition whereby the children have extreme difficulty with coordination and movement. These children were also suffering from obesity, which compounded the issue, so we were very selective in the games and activities chosen so that all children could take part easily without any attention being drawn to them.

While each exercise and game incorporated into the physical activity session had a very specific focus in terms of developing a component of fitness, the most important objective was to ensure that the children and adults had fun and a very positive experience engaging in physical activity. The True Fitness team really enjoyed our time with the participants in this pilot programme and we are very grateful for the opportunity given to us by Laois Sports Partnership to pilot this programme.

The aim of this programme was to deliver 4 physical activity and health education sessions specifically tailored for parents and children in St Fintan's Boys National School in Mountrath. The aim was to deliver this in a fun, practical and creative manner so that the participants gained theoretical and practical knowledge about and learned the importance of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. We achieved this by delivering an evidence based physical activity intervention which also incorporated practical health education workshops.



### Waterways for Health

A collaboration approach was undertaken by both Laois and Kildare Sports Partnerships whereby the CSDO and Sports Hub Coordinator, respectively, facilitated the delivery of an 8-week intervention with participants. The programme engaged with participants in a 5-month long drug & substance abuse recovery programme in Cuan Mhuire. This group was selected because of their proximity to the Grand Canal, their vulnerability and

their limited access to physical activity; which prohibits them from leaving the confines of their centre and indoor work-out area.

Creating physical activity sessions that focused on developing components of fitness including cardiovascular fitness, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, mobility, balance and fundamental movement skills through games. Encourage and focused on team bonding and Communication. To help participants understand the importance and mental wellbeing of engaging in physical activity on and around green and blue spaces.

Hugely successful programme.

### Mountrath Community Activity & Food Fest

Over 700 people came out to celebrate their streets, cul-de-sacs, neighbourhoods & local communities. And all the clubs, groups and business in the area were invited to showcase what they have to offer in the Mountrath area.

Also, every nationality was invited to set up a table and showcase their dishes from their country while networks with the community and to have some fun. To encourage more life on the streets, feel safer and reduce loneliness and isolation.

To show what can be achieved when a small group of neighbours come together and try something special.



## CSDO Programmes



### Scooch has landed in Co Laois!

A great morning with the Mountrath, Mountmellick, Portlaoise, Portarlington & Rathdowney men's sheds in Mountrath at the Brigidine Convent. 28 men participated in this new programme and really enjoyed it. Very enjoyable game with little strain on the body, as some of the participants had knee and hip operations

Scooch has been designed to suit smaller spaces and can be played on any flat, smooth surface (wood, concrete, tight carpet) using the discs and cues this will really suit Men's Sheds as they can be limited to space.

Overall feedback from the men was great followed by the cup of tea and good social interaction. As well as physical activity there is the wellness and social factor involved.

### Healthy Ireland Primary School Golf

The pupils and teachers got a lot from this programme. There were two students that got great benefit and enjoyment out of it in Scoil Bhride. One boy, Patrick, who has down syndrome, and one boy, Niall who is in a wheelchair. Because our indoor equipment is oversized and Velcro it was something that they had no problem in joining.

The programme was 4 weeks long. In Killadooley I had 4 different sessions each week. Putting, chipping, irons and on the final week I brought my 12-foot-tall inflatable dartboard for long shots and a bit of fun between the students and teachers. They had never seen something like it before and were in awe. In Scoil Bhride I had to do it a little different. The school is a lot bigger so the Principal, Mr. Gunnell, divided the classes in 2 different weeks. I had the small classes up to 3rd class the first two weeks, then 4th, 5th and 6th the following two weeks. I covered everything I did in Killadooley but on a different time frame. Aim of the Golf Programme is To encourage local primary school children to participate in physical activity. To introduce local primary school children to golf.



### Healthy Ireland Primary School Functional Movements

This programme was rolled out to address the biomechanical problems that some primary school children may have when playing sports.

To increase the levels of participation in physical activity in the Rathdowney area by promoting physical literacy and efficient functional movement.

To increase the confidence of primary school children while participating in physical activity.

"The general theme of the sessions was to promote Fundamental Movement and Locomotive Skills in a fun based manner and progress children in the basic movements of running, jumping, landing, throwing, catching, striking and much more"