

LAOIS SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2021



LAOIS SPORTS PARTNERSHIP
COMHAR SPÓIRT NA LAOISE

— SPORT IRELAND —



#LaoisActive

*“supporting sport & physical activity for all the people of
County Laois”*

contents

Foreword	4
Messages & Acknowledgements	4
Chairperson's Address	4
Message from John Treacy, CE Sport Ireland	5
Background	6
Who we are - Laois Sports Partnership	6
Functions of Laois Sports Partnership	7
Role of Laois Sports Partnership	7
Section 1: Work to Date	8
Section 2: How much Physical Activity?	15
Section 3: Process of Preparing the Plan?	16
Section 4: What is Sport?	17
Section 5: Analysis of Area Profile	18
Section 6: Implementation of the Plan	22
Section 7: Ethos & Objectives of Laois LSP	25
7.1 Theme 1	26
7.2 Theme 2	27
7.3 Theme 3	28
7.4 Theme 4	29
7.5 Theme 5	30
Section 8: Governance & Operational Planning	31
8.1 Sport Ireland	31
8.2 Laois Sports Partnership	31
8.3 Professional Staff	31
8.4 Planning & Resourcing	32
8.5 Resourcing	32
8.6 Other Resources	32
8.7 Human Resources	35
8.8 Delivery Approach	35
8.9 Monitoring & Evaluation	35
Board & Staff	36
Glossary of Terms	38

foreword

Messages & Acknowledgements



As Co-ordinator of Laois Sports Partnership it is with great pleasure that we launch our fourth Strategic Plan which we look forward to implementing over the next 5 years. While the plan outlines the many functions and priorities of the LSP, our commitment to increasing participation in Sport and Physical Activity remains the key outcome sought from this Strategy. We want to continue to provide quality participation opportunities which are inclusive of all ages, abilities and fitness levels. By achieving this we hope to inform, educate and enable the people of Laois to live a positive, healthy and balanced lifestyle.

This Strategy was developed following consultation with key Stakeholders and a review of current research and trends around participation in Physical Activity. The Strategic Sub Committee was also guided by the new National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland which was launched by Healthy Ireland in January 2016.

Key to the success of Laois Sports Partnership has been the strong involvement, support and investment by our partners, agencies, stakeholders and community organisations. A partnership approach to the planning, delivering and resourcing of LSP projects and programmes has resulted in a greater impact within the communities. We also greatly value the contribution of volunteers within sports clubs and community groups who are crucial in providing regular Physical Activity and Sporting Opportunities throughout Laois. I would like to thank the Board of Directors (past and present) and the Strategic Sub Committee for their continued support and contribution of time and effort to the workings of Laois Sports Partnership.

Thanks to C.E. John Treacy, Sport Ireland also and in particular the staff in the Participation Unit for their constant encouragement, support and advice. Thank you to Mr. Humphrey Murphy (ILC) for his valued support and professional consultation on this Plan.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of Róisín Lawlor, Catriona Slattery, James Kelly, Majella Fennelly, our Tutors, CE Workers, TÚS workers and volunteers for their assistance in the delivery of our programmes, without whom our goals could not be met.

Caroline Myers
Co-ordinator, Laois Sports Partnership

Chairperson's Address



Welcome to Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan, this plan has been developed following extensive consultation and review of the 2012 -2016 plan. Activity and Wellbeing is important for all people within our county and Sport Ireland continue to support Laois Sports Partnership as it develops and grows from strength to strength in development of their services.

The development of this Strategic Plan was a collaborative process that included deliberations with staff and Board members, consultation with key stakeholders and providers, analysis of results of research into participation levels and patterns at national and local level. The review also included the consideration of national and local plans and policy documents which have relevance in increasing participation in physical activity and evaluation and feedback from Sport Ireland. The feedback from the review has been extremely positive and highlights the professional approach to sports development being implemented by the Board and Laois Sports Partnership staff.

Laois Sports Partnership has adhered to its mission and ethos and together with its partner organisations has formulated, promoted, delivered, assisted and co-ordinated an annual programme of activities at key locations throughout County Laois. We will continue to serve the people of Laois with the intention of

fulfilling our mission to “Lead, co-ordinate, support, inform and deliver a range of sports and physical activity opportunities for our community”.

Sport and physical activity play a big part in the lives of people in County Laois and the growth of participation is evident through the numbers who are now participating in all activities. We now in the Laois Sports Partnership want all persons even those who do not take part in sports, easy access to both established and new sports as well as recreation and physical activity.

It is also now important that we continue to invest and develop our ranges of activities as there are ever increasing lifestyle health issues in Ireland. We work together with our local communities to create an environment that improves activity, health and wellbeing. With the population growth of the county it is key that Laois Sport Partnership continues to grow its strategic capacity and is supported as the lead agency for sports participation in County Laois.

To my fellow Board Members who support the governance of the organisation and to the Co-ordinator and staff of Laois Sports Partnership for their enthusiasm and dedication to their work, my sincere thanks.

Finally, I would like to thank Sport Ireland and our partner agencies for their on going support and commitment to Laois Sports Partnership. I am confident that while the plan provides significant challenges, it will enable Laois Sports Partnership to continue on in a positive and productive manner to ensure the implementation of the visions and goals of this strategy.

Eibhlin Smith

Chairperson Laois Sports Partnership

Message from John Treacy, CE Sport Ireland

I would like to congratulate Laois Sports Partnership on this innovative strategic plan as this strategy continues to build on the excellent work achieved to date. This development of a new strategic plan and vision for Laois Sports Partnership is based on leveraging off past successes and adopting a new innovative framework for increasing participation in sport and physical activity across Laois.

Laois Sport Partnership successfully delivered a number of programmes which has helped to foster community engagement in sport and physical activity. The Community Coaching programme was a great success in Laois, with several of the participants gaining employment in sports facilities within their local community. As part of the Sports Inclusion Disability programme, the Wheelchair Rugby and the Wheelchair Basketball leagues have helped to increase levels of participation in sport and physical activity among people with a disability in Laois.

The achievement of the overall strategy aims to build on the benefits accrued over the life of the first strategy and to ensure that the Local Sports Partnerships grow in strength and is the key agency in providing opportunities for more people to become involved in sport and physical activity in the next few years and beyond.

As with all strategic planning processes, the published document is simply the final phase and it is the consultation, evaluation and debate carried out during the process which gives life and value to this strategy. It is a culmination of the work of several partner agencies striving to create a more active local population.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the strategy process and I wish everybody involved in Laois Sports Partnership all the best for the future in implementing this plan.



John Treacy

CE Sport Ireland

background

Who we are – Laois Sports Partnership

Mission Statement - “To Lead, Co-ordinate, Support, Inform and Deliver a range of Sports and Physical Activities for our community”

Laois Sports Partnership is a company limited by guarantee (Company Act, 2014) which was formed in 2001 under the direction of Sport Ireland to co-ordinate, promote and support the development of physical activity in Laois. We are governed by a Board of Management whose Members represent the statutory, community and voluntary sector as follows:

Laois County Council
Health Service Executive, TUSLA
Laois Partnership
Laois Offaly Education Training Board
Laois Public Participation Network
Primary School Representative
Secondary School Representative
Community & Club Representative
Disability Representative
Service Providers

The Board of Laois LSP meets on a two monthly basis to work on operational, governance and strategic planning issues. Over the past 15 years, the board members have provided a strong and dynamic input into the development of LSP. The Board also operates sub groups such as the executive finance, grants, governance and strategic planning committees. The commitment and hard work of the Board has been instrumental to the success of the LSP.

Laois Sports Partnership employs a full time Co-ordinator, Administrator and Community Sports Development Officer funded through Sport Ireland as well as a part time Sports Inclusion Disability Officer – 50% funded through Sport Ireland and 50% funded through local partners and local fund raising activities. Laois LSP also facilitates the placement of Community Employment Scheme participants, TÚS participants, JobsBridge internship as well as work experience students, all of which assist with the delivery of sporting activities throughout the county.

The key tasks that the partnerships are involved in include: -

- The creation and implementation of plans for long term local sports development
- The establishment of a sustainable structure to assist all those involved in local sports development to face the associated challenges - e.g. recruiting and managing volunteers, quality training, etc.
- Delivery of projects and programmes particularly for target groups - Establishing network at local level and liaising with existing initiatives

Functions of Laois Sports Partnership

The three main functions of the LSPs are: -

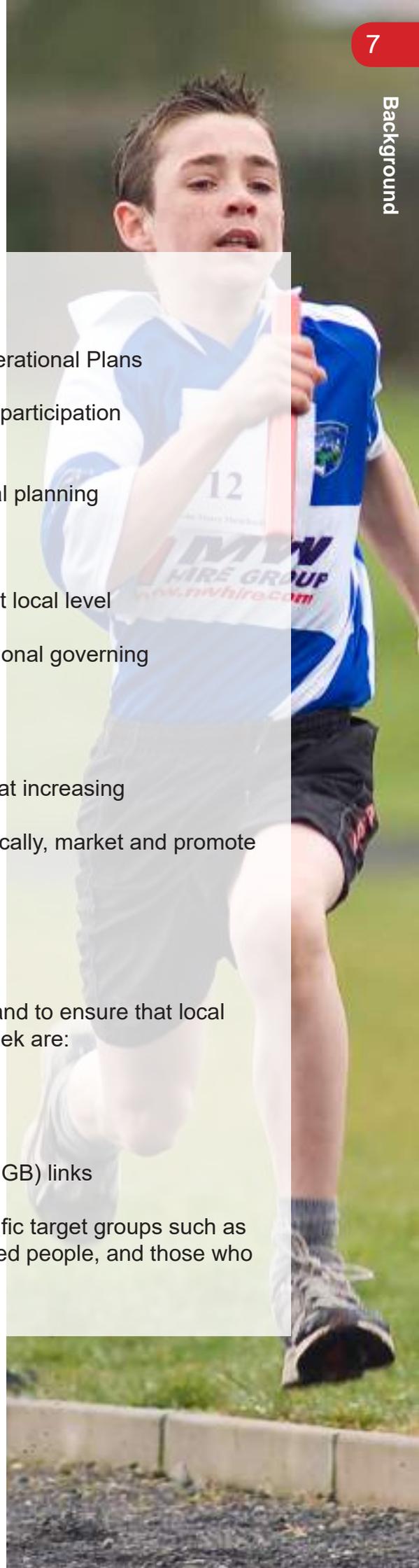
1. Information
 - Assistance and advice in the development of annual Operational Plans
 - Promoting the benefits of sporting activity
 - Disseminating information in relation to opportunities for participation
 - Initiating research for knowledge
 - Compiling a sports directory and database
 - Identifying needs and resources to form the basis of local planning
 - The establishment of a consultative forum
2. Education
 - Provide quality opportunities for education and training at local level
 - Provide training courses targeting volunteers
 - Provide access to sport specific courses through the national governing bodies (NGBs) of sport
3. Implementation
 - Develop a strategic plan for local sport
 - The development and/or delivery of programmes aimed at increasing participation in physical activity to suit local needs,
 - Increase the impact of national programmes delivered locally, market and promote sport

Role of Laois Sports Partnership

The key aims of the LSP are to increase participation in sport, and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect. Some of the outcomes we seek are:

- Club development
- Volunteer training
- Enhanced planning of sport at local level
- Local directories of sports bodies & facilities
- School, club, community and national governing body (NGB) links

Increased levels of local participation, especially amongst specific target groups such as older people, girls & women, people with disabilities, unemployed people, and those who live in identified disadvantaged communities.



section 1: work to date

Work to Date – Laois Sports Partnership

- Established working relationships with key providers across Laois including schools, sports clubs and organisations, voluntary organisations / groups and community development organisations.
- Implemented a range of programmes aimed at increasing participation levels amongst low-participation groups like older people, women and girls, disadvantaged communities and people with disabilities.
- Organised a number of mass participation events such as Operation Transformation National Walk Day, Laois Connects etc.
- Delivered a series of education and training courses for sports clubs and Continuous Professional Development for coaches and teachers. (These included Safeguarding 1, 2 & 3, Active Leadership, Occupational First Aid, Sports Leader Award UK).
- Identified sources of financial support (other than that provided by Sport Ireland) from local partners and agencies, which is used to deliver targeted physical activity programmes in association with the funders.
- Updated LSP website which provides a central hub to gather and disseminate information and to promote the breadth and scale of Sport and Physical activity on-going throughout Laois to the general public.
- Developed a comprehensive database of sporting clubs and organisations throughout Laois.
- Compliant with Governance Code and received status in July 2014 and extended in August 2017. (The Governance Code is a resource to assist community, voluntary and charity (CVC) organisations develop their overall capacity in terms of how they run their organisation to encourage them to check themselves against best practice in the management of their affairs.)



Our work with Children

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group:

1. Sports Hall Athletics
2. Primary Schools Basketball Programme
3. Be Active After Schools Programme
4. Primary School Badminton Programme

Sample Programme: Sports Hall Athletics

Aim of the Project:

The programme focuses on fitness and multi-skill development providing a grounding for all sports. It is totally inclusive, encourages children to get fit and provides participation opportunity whilst having fun.

Partner Agencies:

Laois County Council
Local Community Centres
CE Work placements

Main Outcomes:

Four week Athletics programme delivered in six locations in Community Centres across the County. Programme focuses on both track and field events with emphasis on fun and participation. Participating schools have the opportunity to take part in National Finals held each year in the National Indoor Athletics Arena in Athlone Institute of Technology. Over 1,500 children take part annually from 30 schools.

Our Work with Young People

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group:

1. Teenscene
2. Teenagers Body Conditioning Programme
3. Fit Kids
4. Health Lifestyle Seminar
5. John Treacy Marathon Challenge
6. Portlaoise Street Soccer League

Sample Programme: Teenscene

Aim of project:

To stimulate physical activity amongst teenagers particularly 12-19 yr. old females.

Partner Agencies:

Health Service Executive, TUSLA

Schools

Tutors

Main Outcomes for Participants are:

To highlight the importance of physical activity for teenagers particularly female adolescents

To encourage greater participation amongst teenagers

To provide easily accessible physical activity opportunities for 2nd level female students

To offer 'new' activity opportunities, tailored specifically for this cohort

To involve the students in decision making at these sessions i.e. selection of music, themes (hip hop, boxercise etc.) and peer demonstration of set moves

To measure physical activity patterns of the participants before the programme, monitor adherence, and evaluate the impact of the programme after 4 month's duration



Our work with Adults

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group:

1. Community Coaching programme
2. Wellbeing in the Workplace
3. Laois Transformation
4. Portlaoise Triathlon
5. Healthy Lifestyle Programmes
6. Meet 'n' Train / Couch to 5k
7. Get Ireland Walking programme



Sample Programme: Community Coaching

Aim of project:

Delivery of specialised training and education courses for jobseekers

Partner Agencies:

Sport Ireland
 Dormant Accounts
 Health Service Executive, TUSLA
 Laois Partnership
 Laois Offaly ETB
 Laois County Council
 Dept of Social Protection
 National Governing Bodies of Sport

Main Outcomes for Participants are:

Assist unemployed people to become qualified as coaches, referees, physical activity leaders etc.

Improve the participants' job prospects within the sports industry

Motivate participants to pursue the progression routes which have been identified as part of the programme (employment, coaching, volunteering, further education, etc.)

Promotion of positive mental health through participation in sport; both for the participants themselves and in the communities in which they are based

Provision of coaching in disability, school, community and youth club settings

Examples of our work with Older Adults

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group.



1. Go for Life Games
2. Come & Try Sport Days
3. Older Adult Outdoor Gym programme
4. Physical Activity information provision
5. Yoga and pilates programmes.

Sample Programme: Older Adult Outdoor Gym

Aim of project:

Encourage older adults to get more active and to increase usage of outdoor gym's.

Partners:

Age & Opportunity
Older Adult ARG & ICA groups
Health Service Executive, TUSLA
Laois County Council outdoor gym facilities

Main Outcomes:

Gym/exercise sessions provided for participants
Increase in older adults taking part in regular physical activity
Opportunities for social interaction – particularly those living in rural or isolated communities.
Promote benefits of green exercise to participants for health and wellbeing
Proper technique taught by trained instructors

Our work with people with Disabilities

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group

1. Wheelchair Basketball
2. Wheelchair Rugby
3. Wheelchair Hurling
4. Soccer programme
5. Athletics programme
6. Information provision
7. Boccia League
8. Basketball
9. Tag Rugby
10. Gaelic Football
11. Tandem Cycling
12. Spinning Classes
13. Multi Activity Sessions



Sample Programme: Athletics

Aim of project:

To provide the opportunity for both adults and children of varying disabilities to participate in a variety of track and field events.

Partners:

IWA Sport
St Abbans Athletics Club

Main Outcomes:

The program runs across the months of June, July & August. The participants get to try out events both on the track and in the infield area. The field events tried include Shot Putt, Discus, Javelin and Club Throwing. The athletes learn the various techniques of the throwing events. Many of the participants take part in the IWA Grand Prix circuit of events that take place right across the country. Laois host one of the Grand Prix events each year. A Grand Prix awards event is held at end of the year at which many of the athletes have been award winners. Many have also gone on to compete at both Senior and Junior competitions abroad.

Our work with Communities

The following programmes are examples of our work with this target group.

1. Stradbally Vicarstown Timahoe (S.V.T.) Community Sports Hub
2. Laois Connects
3. Community Sports Development Officer

Sample Programme: S.V.T. Community Sports Hub

Aim of project:

A Community Sports & 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.

Partners:

Sport Ireland
Dormant Accounts
Laois County Council
Club & Community Organisations

Main Outcomes:

To support the development of exciting and dynamic opportunities to increase participation in sport and physical activity. To build capacity with stakeholders and smaller NGB's to deliver services not currently in the area and to develop sustainable local leadership for sport within Stradbally Parish. The legacy of this programme will be enable community to deliver best practice in decision making and policies for the benefit of all which will lead to long term sustainability and impact on the area's social, economic and environmental objectives for the future.



section 2: how much physical activity?

The National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland are based on international expert evidence and describe appropriate levels of health enhancing physical activity for the Irish population.

at least
60 mins
every day

Children and Young People (aged 2 – 18)

All children and young people should be active, at a moderate to vigorous level, for at least 60 minutes every day. This should include muscle-strengthening, flexibility and bone-strengthening exercises 3 times a week.

at least
30 mins
every day

Adults (aged 18 – 64)

Adults should be active for at least 30 minutes a day of moderate activity on 5 days a week (or 150 minutes a week). This should include muscle-strengthening, flexibility and bone-strengthening exercises 3 times a week.

at least
30 mins
every day

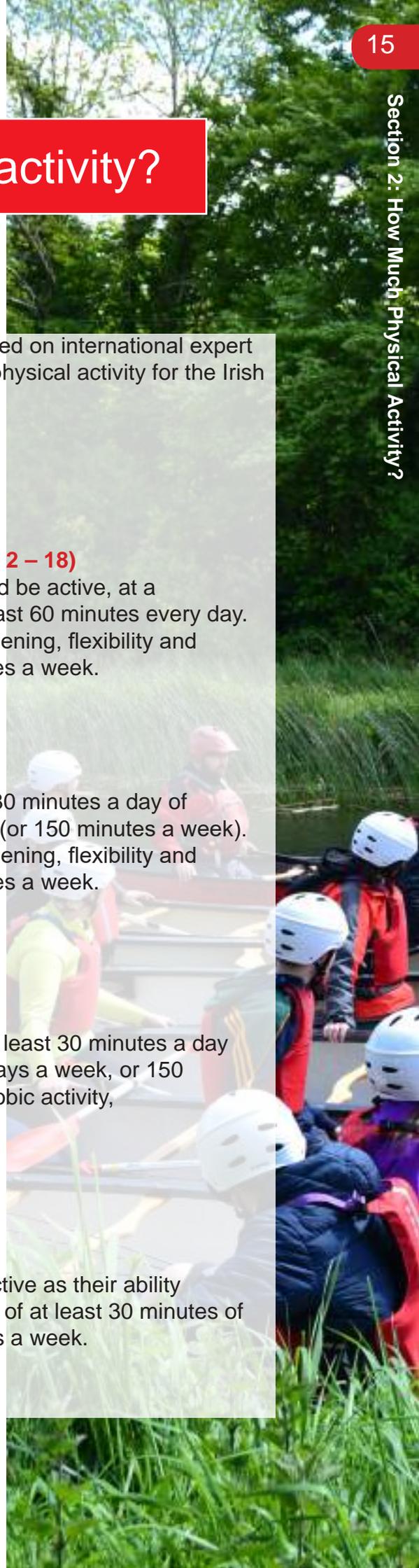
Older People (aged 65+)

Older people should be active for at least 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity activity on 5 days a week, or 150 minutes a week with a focus on aerobic activity, muscle-strengthening and balance.

at least
30 mins
every day

Adults with Disabilities

People with disabilities should be active as their ability allows. Aim to meet adult guidelines of at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on 5 days a week.



section 3: process of preparing the plan

An independent review of our work (conducted by Mr Humphrey Murphy, ILC) has verified the enormous scope and depth of all our undertakings and endeavours. Summary findings from the review can be viewed and downloaded from www.laoissports.ie/publications. This document was used as the baseline of our Strategic Plan 2017-2021. We will also conform with Sport Ireland's current Strategic Plan and all relevant National & Local Plans.

Laois Sport Partnership Strategic Plan Review

This review was undertaken within the following terms of reference

1. Context: The changing context in which the Partnership has worked to date (and the context against which the next strategic plan will be developed).
2. Themes: Achievements and shortcomings under each of the six strategic themes identified in the third plan (both qualitative and quantitative)
3. Governance: A Review of the Roles & Functions of LSP Board
4. Future: The Emerging themes to guide the new strategy reflecting National Policy e.g. National Physical Activity Plan, Healthy Ireland Framework, Sport Ireland, Healthy weight for Ireland, obesity policy & action plan 2016-2025 etc.
5. Consultation

Laois Sport Partnership (LSP), has pursued and delivered its sports participation remit and the specific objectives where identified within its strategic Plan 2012 – 2016.

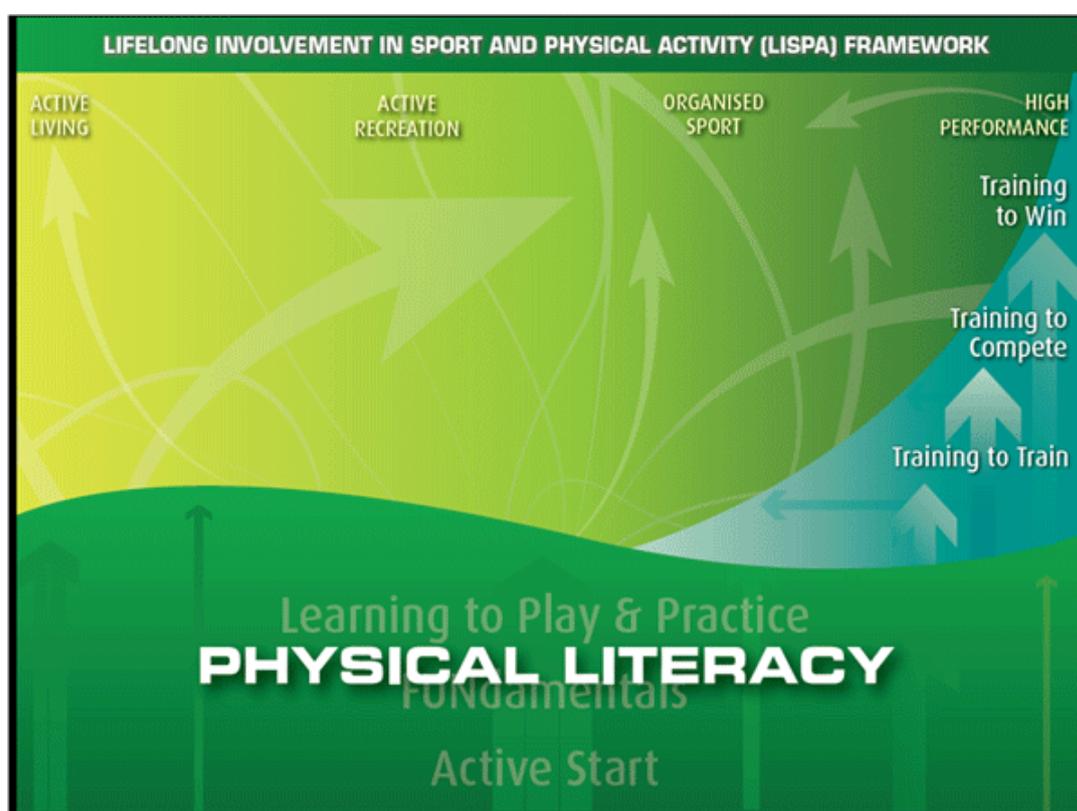
The LSP Board continues to provide a strategic direction and retains a meaningful oversight of the Partnership and there is further potential for the individual Board members to act as ambassadors for the LSP both within their own organisations and beyond.



section 4: what is sport?

“Sport” means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels (“Council of Europe’s Sports Charter 1993”)

We recognise and value Laois’ competitive sports heritage but we also recognise that competitive sports participation is not relevant for the majority of people in our community. Indeed the concept of sport in any form is not relevant to some people. Hence Laois Sports Partnership has adopted the Long-term Involvement in Sports & Physical Activity model (LISPA).



This model outlines the lifelong opportunities for individuals to be involved in some form of sport and physical activity. This involvement ranges from the “Active Start” and FUNdamentals2 - as delivered through various programmes locally and through National Governing Bodies raining systems.

While providing some support for those involved in competitive sports, the LSP is primarily responsible for leading and supporting opportunities for recreational participation in sports and physical activity in the county.

section 5: analysis of area profile

5.1 Socio Economic Profile Population and Actual and Percentage Change 2011 to 2016 for Laois, Statistical Indicator and Census Year

Laois	2016
Both sexes	
Population 2011 (Number)	80,559
Population 2016 (Number)	84,732
Actual change since previous census (Number)	4,173
Percentage change since previous census (%)	5.2
Figures in the above table for 2016 are preliminary figures only.	

The first results of the 2016 census show that Laois is one of the fastest growing counties in Ireland, with the population up 5.2 percent. The county's population now stands at 84,732, up 4,173 people from the 2011 census figure of 80,559.

5.2 Demographic Profile

Based on recent economic circumstances, rising lifestyle health issues and the population growth of the county, the need for the LSP is greater than before. In order to meet the challenges imposed by this changing context, Laois LSP must continue to grow its strategic capacity and reinforce its role as the lead agency for sports participation in the county.

5.3 Environmental

The work of the LSP will be guided by national and local plans outlined on page 22, including the Sports Monitor Report and other policy documents.

5.4 Legal

It is the policy of Laois Sports Partnership to comply with Child Protection and Garda Vetting and all other relevant legislation.



1.6 MILLION PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN SPORT ON A WEEKLY BASIS



PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

 **48.6%** MALE

 **41.5%** FEMALE

PARTICIPATION BY ACTIVITY TYPE

 **40.7%** as an INDIVIDUAL

 **9.1%** as part of A TEAM

ACTIVITY LEVEL



meet the National Physical Activity Guidelines*



are sedentary

*30 mins moderate physical activity, 5 times a week

TOP 5 SPORTING ACTIVITIES

- 1**  EXERCISE **13.7%**
- 2**  RUNNING **8.2%**
- 3**  SWIMMING **8.0%**
- 4**  CYCLING **5.5%**
- 5**  SOCCER **4.8%**

 **64.8%** WALK FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES 

5.5 Framework for LSP

The following Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities were identified.

Strengths/Opportunities

Programmes

- Local tutors and coaching training programmes
- Development and delivery of programmes, meet and train, cycle for SID
- Securing funding

Relationship management

- Extensive network
- Operational relationships, clubs, communities
- Other agencies

Communications

- Promotion and communications
- Database/Clubs Directory
- Programme review, questionnaires, SPEAK

Board

- Board is effective at governance
- Management sub committees are used very well, good corporate compliance

Planning

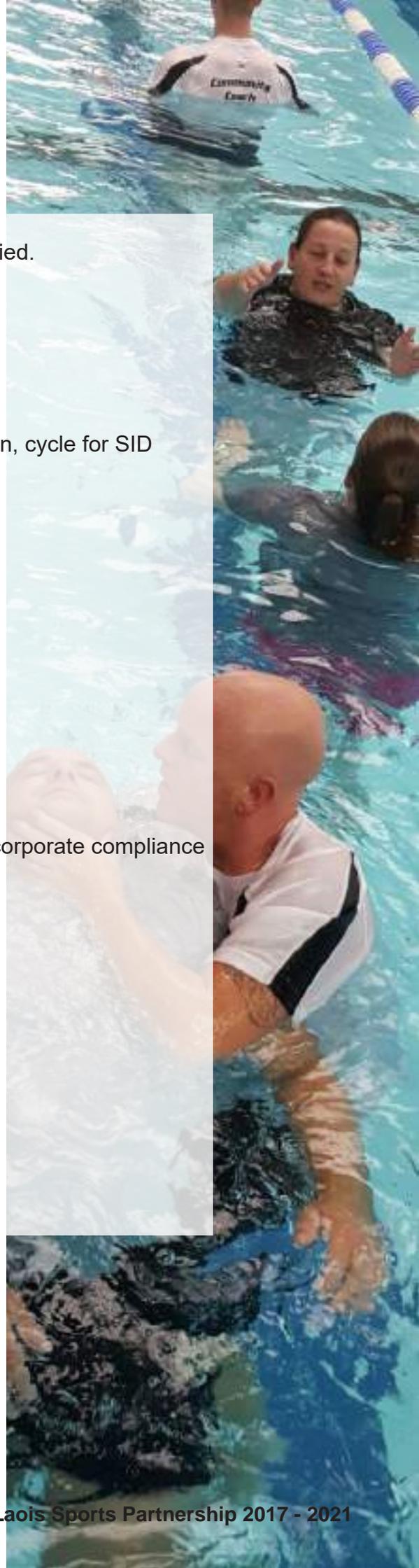
- Community level

Strategic Focus

- Grow the strategic focus of the LSP
- Integrate relationships
- Integrated programmes

Infrastructure

- Clarified role, strategic vision, sport development plan
- Better use of public and private infrastructure
- Sports Capital and EU funding policy



Challenges

Finance & Staffing

- Turnover
- SIDO funding

Strategic Clarity/Relationship Management

- Comparable roles with Local Authority
- Sufficiently strategic relationships
- Research.

Board

- More clarity/ongoing support for new Members
- Sourcing members
- Involvement at meetings

Sustainability

- Disability Programmes: maintaining involvement and numbers in disability sports
- General Programmes

Social Inclusion

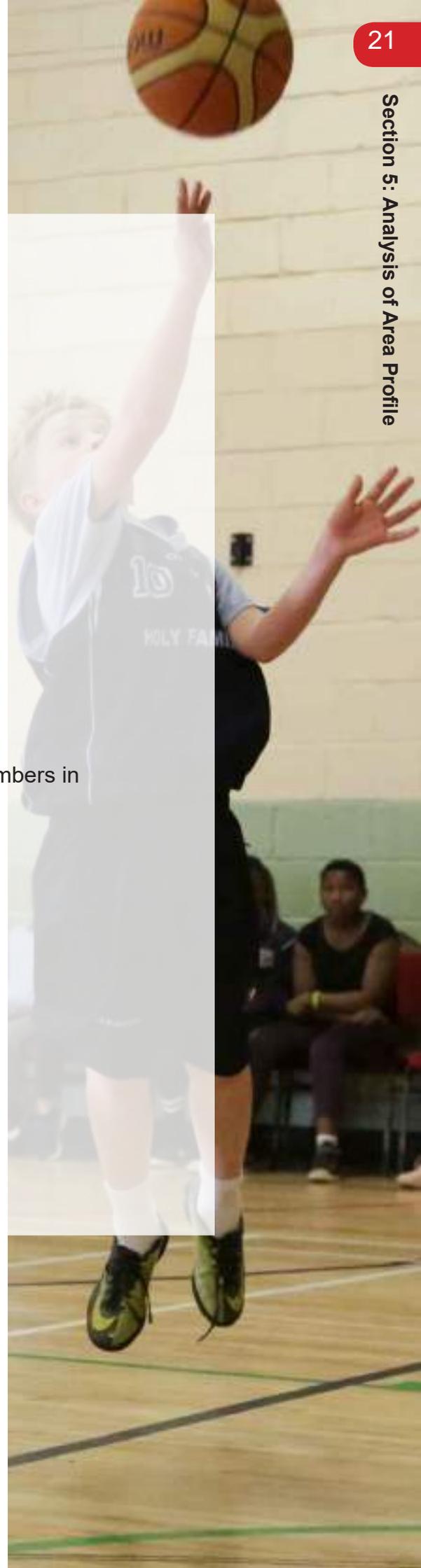
- Investment
- Mission Creep

Staff

- Staff development

Segments

- Millennials and others
- Political Change
- Changing participation trends



section 6: implementation of the plan

This strategy will be implemented with consideration of a wider range of other policies, strategies and plans at National and Local level – all of which have relevance in the context of increasing participation in physical activity.

Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

National

Get Ireland Active – The National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland
Changing Cardiovascular Health – National Cardiovascular Health Policy
National Cycle Policy Framework – Department of Transport
National Policy Framework for Children & Young People – Children & Youth Affairs
National Sports Facilities Strategy – Department of Tourism, Transport & Sport
National Disability Strategy – Implementation Plan
National Programme for Government – Department of Taoiseach
Statement of Strategy – Department of Tourism, Transport & Sport
Get Active – Dept. Education & Skills
Statement of Strategy – Sport Ireland
National Women's Strategy
Healthy Ireland Framework for improved Health & Wellbeing 2013-2025 – Dept of Health
Healthy weight for Ireland, Obesity policy & Action Plan 2016-2025

Local

Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021
Laois County Development Plan 2017 – 2023
Laois Walking & Cycling Strategy



National Plans

The two national plans most relevant in the context of our work over the next four years are:

Irish Sports Council Statement of Strategy 2012 (Sport Ireland)

In its most recent strategic statement Sport Ireland prioritises advancement of a Participation Strategy as a key area of strategic focus. The Local Sports Partnerships are seen as a key mechanism to create opportunities to suit people of all ages and backgrounds. According to the statement, the Local Sports Partnerships offer, on a very cost effective basis, services that had not previously been provided on such a comprehensive basis and would not be undertaken by other agencies or organisations due primarily to resource constraints. Sport Ireland states that the Local Sports Partnerships have been ‘hugely successful and remain a strategic priority.’ It commits the sustainable development of the national network by assisting and monitoring progress - while following the principle that Local Sports Partnerships understand best what is required in their local areas. On this basis they can generate the best results and greatest impact from the available resources.

Healthy Ireland - a Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 Department of Health (National Physical Activity Plan, Healthy Weight for Ireland, Obesity Policy & Action Plan 2016-2025, Healthy Lifestyle Consultation for Children)

The Healthy Ireland plan proposes a vision of ‘a country where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential and where wellbeing is valued and supported and at every level of society’.

Three goals are particularly relevant in the context of the work of Laois Sports Partnership:

1. Proposes promoting factors to increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life.
2. Seeks to reduce health inequalities including inequalities in participation in physical activity
3. Aims to create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play his or her part in achieving a healthy Ireland.

In 2016 Healthy Ireland produced the National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland. The National Physical Activity Plan promotes a vision of an Ireland where everybody lives, works and plays in a society that facilitates, promotes and supports physical activity and an active way of life and outlines a main aim to increase physical activity levels across the entire population. The plan sets two key targets that have relevance to the work of Laois Sports Partnership as follows:

1. Increase the proportion of the population across each life stage undertaking regular physical activity by 1% per annum.
2. Decrease by 0.5% per annum in the proportion of the population who do not take any weekly-physical activity.

On the basis of knowledge and experience around delivering physical activity in this region, this plan is hugely relevant in the context of the work of Laois Sports Partnership.

Local Plans

Laois Local Economic and Community Plan

The Laois Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (Laois LECP 2016-2021) is concerned with promoting economic and community development in County Laois in a collaborative way. The following are the relevant high levels goals of the LECP.

- Community: Enrich civic participation and empower communities.
- Promote equality and inclusiveness across all sectors.
- Recognise the diverse needs of people.
- Cultivate a strong County identity and an excellent quality of life
- Develop and promote ways of living and doing business that supports a sustainable environment and resilient communities.

(Specific goals relevant to Laois LSP are listed in the Plan, numbered 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9, see www.laois.ie)

Laois County Development Plan

The Laois County Development plan references sport, physical activity and recreation as per the following abbreviated extract:

Adequate and accessible provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities including swimming pools and public parks this is likely to become more important as densities in central areas increase. Open space policies will be considered in the context of these provisions. P 79

Furthermore, there is reference within the plan to:

- Encouraging and supporting communities to develop sporting facilities
- Cater for the sport and recreation needs across the community including those with special needs
- The enhanced availability and use of the outdoors as a recreation and tourism space and the development of trails in this regard
- Co-operating with LSP to 'exploring the potential for clustering facilities to provide a regional sports centre in a strategic location'.
- The need to protect existing sports facilities.
- Requiring appropriate provision by developers of sport and recreation infrastructure in the case of large scale residential developments.



section 7: ethos & objectives of laois lsp

Ethos of Laois Sports Partnership

Vision:

The vision of the Board of Laois Sports Partnership is for lifelong participation in sports and physical activities in county Laois.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Board of Laois LSP is to “Lead, Co-ordinate, Support, Inform and Deliver a range of Sports and Physical Activity opportunities for our community.”

Values:

The Board of Laois LSP values opportunities for all and particular supports for some.

Objectives:

Laois Sports Partnership Strategic Plan will be guided by four pillars:

- Increase levels of participation
- More sustainable infrastructure
- Greater access to training & education
- Improved access to information

The themes underpinning the pillars in our strategic plan are to:

1. Co-ordinate, lead and monitor recreational sports and physical activities in county Laois through partnership work
2. Increase the number of people taking part in sports and physical activities in county Laois.
3. Deliver sustained participation in sports and physical activity
4. Support the needs of physical activity recreational and competitive for groups and individuals
5. Communicate the sports and physical activity opportunities in the county

Laois LSP is committed to a culture of equality to advance participation opportunities for all and to this end has developed an equality statement to guide the work carried out. We recognise that not all people have equal opportunity to participate in sport and we commit ourselves to ensuring that all programmes reach out to under-represented groups and to advocate for a society where inclusive participation becomes the norm.

Laois LSP applies the principles of community development throughout all its activities by ensuring a bottom up approach to planning and evaluating.

Our themes, goals and objectives and outcomes:

The five strategic themes under the four pillars have been selected on the basis of factors such as:

- Consultations with the Board and staff of Laois Sports Partnership and key stakeholders.
- Extensive deliberations with the Strategic Planning Group appointed by the Board.
- Analysis of Local and National research (including demographic projections, physical activity levels and trends).
- Priority target groups as identified by Sport Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan.
- The main thrust and focus of the Corporate Plan and Local, Economic and Community Plan for the county.
- Resources available to us in terms of staffing levels and expertise and financial resources.

7.1 Theme 1 - Co-ordinate, lead and monitor recreational sports and physical activities in county Laois through partnership work

REF.	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS
1	Deliver new programmes/initiatives	LSP	LCC, LP, LOETB, HSE, Clubs & Organisations
1	LSP to be a sports hub for sporting communities within Laois	LSP	All partners on Board
1	Develop infrastructure plan for Laois	LCC	LCC, Clubs & Organisations
1	Develop and facilitate local projects	LSP	LSP, LCC, HSE, LOETB, LP, Clubs
1	Influence policies of Local & National plans	LSP	All partners on Board
1	Build on and create networking opportunities	LSP	All partners
1	Ensure LSP continues to practice good governance	LSP	All partners
1	Develop a Disability Action plan to ensure participation for all		All partners
1	Continue upskilling of staff and board members	LSP	SI
1	Monitor & Evaluate progress of actions and outcomes	LSP	SI

For each action under strategic theme, a number of priority objectives and associated outcomes have been identified. For each outcome, measurable actions and performance indicators will be outlined in annual Operational Plans. These will help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic vision and goals.

7.2 Theme 2 - Increase the number of people taking part in sports and physical activities in county Laois

REF	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS
2	Work in partnership to deliver programmes to marginalised communities	LSP	LP, LCC, HSE, LOETB
2	Continue to build capacity on current programmes	LCC	All partners
2	Increase the number of people with disabilities participating in sports and physical activity	LSP	All partners, CARA, Care Centres, Clubs
2	Increase the number of participation opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sports and physical activity	LSP	All partners, CARA, Care Centres, Clubs
2	Support clubs in the development of programmes to increase participation	LSP	All partners, CARA, Clubs
2	Monitor & evaluate progress of actions and outcomes	LSP	SI

For each action under strategic theme, a number of priority objectives and associated outcomes have been identified. For each outcome, measurable actions and performance indicators will be outlined in annual Operational Plans. These will help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic vision and goals.



7.3 Theme 3 - Deliver sustained participation in sports and physical activity

REF	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS
3	Develop a Community Sports Hub	LSP	SI, LCC, LP, HSE, LOETB, Clubs, Communities
3	Deliver training/education courses	LSP	SI, NGB's, LOETB, Go For Life
3	Develop a youth, sport & leadership training programme	LSP	SI, Coaching Ireland, Youth Groups
3	Deliver and facilitate local & national programmes	LSP	SI, NGB's
3	Create training plan for care staff working with people with disabilities	LSP	SI, CARA, NGB's, Care Centres
3	Monitor & evaluate progress of actions and outcomes	LSP	SI

For each action under strategic theme, a number of priority objectives and associated outcomes have been identified. For each outcome, measurable actions and performance indicators will be outlined in annual Operational Plans. These will help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic vision and goals.

7.4 Theme 4 - Support the needs of individuals & groups for physical activity, recreational and competitiveness

REF	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS
4	Promote Laois County Council's new and existing facilities and infrastructure	LSP	LCC, Clubs & Organisations
4	Support Club Development & Sport Capital Grants	LCC	LSP, Clubs & Organisations
4	We will support the work and skill development of volunteers	LSP	SI, LP, LCC, NGB's
4	Ensure that all LSP programmes are adaptable for people with disabilities	LSP	CARA
	Promote the benefits of Physical Activity & Wellbeing	LSP	Mental Health Ireland, HSE, Community Groups
4	Monitor & evaluate progress of actions and outcomes	LSP	SI

For each action under strategic theme, a number of priority objectives and associated outcomes have been identified. For each outcome, measurable actions and performance indicators will be outlined in annual Operational Plans. These will help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic vision and goals.

7.5 Theme 5 - Communicate the sports and physical activity opportunities in the county

REF	ACTIONS	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	PARTNERS
5	Update/maintain club's directories web version	LSP	LSP
5	Continue to explore all avenues of media and utilise (print/digital)	LSP	LSP
5	Disseminate information provided by Sport Ireland and all sporting organisations to clubs, the community, statutory & voluntary sector etc.	SI	LSP
5	Provide information on physical activity for people with disabilities and update our database of disability organisations	LSP	CARA, NGB's
5	Work with the HSE to promote and support their national programmes	LSP	HSE, SI, Dept. of Health
5	Promote the key messages of National Physical Activity Plan & Healthy Ireland Framework	LSP	HSE, SI, Dept. of Health
5	Monitor & evaluate progress of actions and outcomes	LSP	SI

For each action under strategic theme, a number of priority objectives and associated outcomes have been identified. For each outcome, measurable actions and performance indicators will be outlined in annual Operational Plans. These will help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic vision and goals.



section 8: governance & operational planning

Laois Sports Partnership received the Governance Code status (see glossary of terms) in July 2014 and which was extended in August 2017. We will renew every three years in line with good governance and practice.

8.1 Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland will play a number of important roles in regard to the delivery of this Strategic Plan including;

- Assistance and advice in the development of annual Operational Plans
- Provision of technical advice, training and support to our Board and staff
- Provision of core and programme funding to assist the implementation of our annual Operational Plan
- Monitoring and evaluating our performance and impact including planning, governance, financial expenditure, etc.

8.2 Laois Sports Partnership

Laois Sports Partnership will lead the development of physical activity in the county with the support of key stakeholders and providers. There are three interrelated elements to the Partnership:

- The Board is an inter-agency group comprising representatives from some of the key stakeholders and sectors – including statutory bodies, community development organisations, schools, sports bodies, and the voluntary community sector. The Board has overall responsibility for strategic direction and for the implementation of this Strategic Plan through annual Operational Plans.
- The Executive Committee comprises the Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and co-ordinator. Meeting as needed to take responsibility for operations, finance and governance.
- Working sub-groups such as forums or project teams may be established as necessary to advance specific programmes, projects or initiatives. The Board will determine membership and terms of reference for all working groups and a member of the Executive Committee will chair them.

8.3 Professional Staff

The Co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Partnership and will form the main link between the Board and staff. The Co-ordinator will support the staff in developing and delivering annual work plans. The Partnership employs a team of professional staff who will be allocated key portfolios and will work closely with the Co-ordinator, the Board and other providers to develop and deliver programmes and events. Student work placements and employment schemes will be utilised for research and to oversee development and delivery of specific programmes. Tutors/facilitators may be employed on a sessional basis to deliver various programmes (e.g. Community Walking Facilitator, Teenscene, Club Development etc.)

8.4 Planning

The five themes and associated objectives set out in this document outline the focus and intent of Laois Sports Partnership up to the end of 2021. It is recognised, however, that new opportunities and ideas will evolve over the course of the plan and that the plan is subject to external factors and constraints such as personnel, funding and policy change. In order to manage the delivery of this Strategic Plan most effectively, annual Operational Plans will be produced at the beginning of each year outlining measurable actions, lead agencies and performance indicators.

The actions will be informed by our key principles and each operational plan will be subject to the scrutiny and approval of the Board.

8.5 Resourcing

Funding the implementation of this Strategic Plan will be sourced in a number of ways that include Sport Ireland. Sport Ireland provides funding on an annual basis to all Sports Partnerships under these headings.

Core Funding

This funding relates to costs associated with

- Staffing
- Overheads and administration
- Communications
- National participation programmes
- Education and training

Programme Funding

We can apply for part funding of

- Targeted local participation programmes
- Employment of a Sports Inclusion Disability Officer
- Employment of a Community Sports Development Officer

In line with the recommendation of the Fitzpatrick Review of Local Sports Partnerships in 2005 match funding (in cash or in kind) of at least 50% is originally required.

8.6 Other Resources

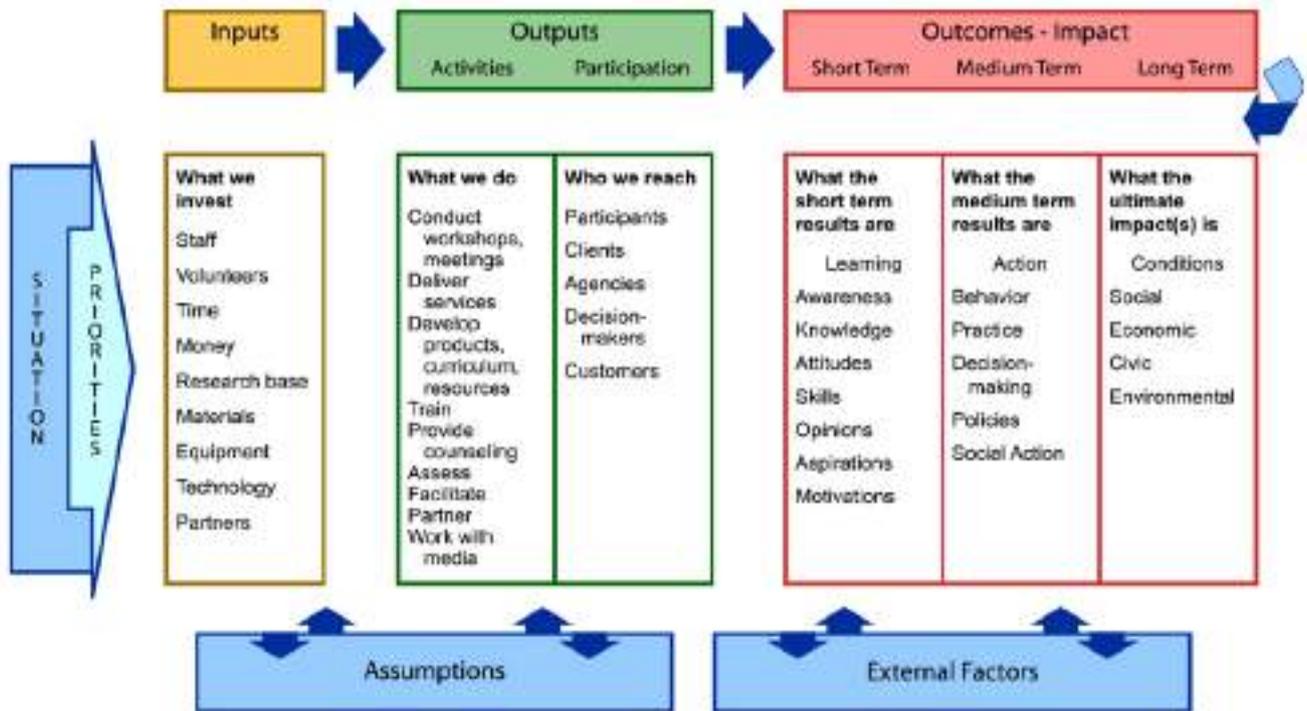
To complement the core and programme funding provided by Sport Ireland additional funding for specific actions in the annual operational plans will be sought from:

- Partner agencies in County Laois
- Statutory bodies, other government departments and European Union should opportunities arise
- Participants fees in certain circumstances
- Corporate funding or private sponsorship towards certain events

As we commence local delivery of this Strategic Plan, we will maximise all opportunities to secure external financial support for the delivery of our plan.



Logic Model for Programme Planning, Implementation & Evaluation



8.7 Human Resources

We will endeavour to maintain current staffing levels and to engage external tutors as necessary to assist in rolling out new and innovative programmes. However, given the need to achieve substantial improvements in participation levels right across county Laois, access to high quality committed and enthusiastic volunteer sport leaders will be essential. In conjunction with local agencies, we will endeavour to provide quality training for volunteers and persons eligible to participate on labour market initiatives to equip them with the skills necessary to lead our local participation projects. We will also endeavour to provide locally based work experience opportunities for the aforementioned trainees and for third level students of sport and recreation programmes.

8.8 Delivery Approach

While delivery of individual actions and programmes will vary, we will attempt to combine an approach that marries the twin aims of innovative delivery with the attainment of a legacy of long term sustained increases in participation. We recognise that once off interventions will not necessarily result in continued participation. We are also aware that should we continually take the lead we will create dependencies that will reduce the likelihood of local sustainability.

Delivery of individual participation projects will generally be based on a four step approach over a maximum of three years:

- Step 1 – Pilot a local innovative project
- Step 2 – Review and expand the projects
- Step 3 – Train local leaders and oversee their local delivery
- Step 4 – Phase out and hand over

8.9 Monitoring & Evaluation

We will monitor and evaluate this plan and our work on an ongoing basis using the Logic Model of planning, implementation and evaluation.

- Activity reports from the Co-ordinator and working groups will be reviewed regularly and checked against annual operational plans
- An annual report, which will attempt to gauge the outcome of our work will be presented at our AGM
- We will conduct an annual review of our work for Sport Ireland using the SPEAK monitoring system.
- We will study findings from independent research reports as these relate to us, especially the Irish Sports Monitor
- We will undertake an in-depth mid-term review of this plan in 2019 (to include a review of structures)
- We will undertake a comprehensive external review of this plan in 2021 in preparation for a new plan in 2022

LSP board



Chairperson
Eibhlin Smith
Laois PPN



Treasurer
Jamie O'Hanlon
Service Sector



Secretary
Ann Marie Maher
Laois Co. Council



Clodagh Armitagh
HSE



John Finn
Disability Sector



Louis Brennan
Community
Representative



Marion O'Boyle
Secondary
Schools



Karen Phelan
Primary Schools



Marian Condren
Laois PPN



Maura Brophy
Laois ETB

LSP staff



Caroline Myers
Co-ordinator



Róisín Lawlor
Administrator



Catriona Slattery
Sports Inclusion
Disability Officer



Sinead Ward
Administrator



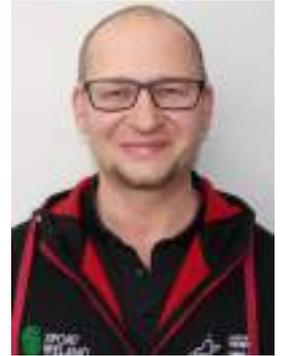
James Kelly
Community Sports
Dev. Officer



Majella Fennelly
SVT Hub
Co-ordinator



Margaret Moore
Administrative
Assistant



Piotr Maliszewski
C.E. Sports Tutor

glossary of terms

The following is a short explanation of some of the terms and acronyms used within this Strategic Plan:

Terms & Acronyms	Explanation
LSP	Laois Sports Partnership / Local Sports Partnership
Governance Code	Is a resource to assist community, voluntary and charity (CVC) organisations develop their overall capacity in terms of how they run their organisation. It a voluntary code provided free to all boards/ committees/ executives of not-for-profit groups to encourage them to check themselves against best practice in the management of their affairs
Active Communities	A sports and physical activity initiative which targets a specific community and surround area.
CSH	Community Sports Hub
SID	Sports Inclusion Disability Programme
CSDO	Community Sports Development Officer
Community Wide	A sports and physical activity initiative which targets all of the communities in County Laois.
Lifestyle Change	A change in behaviour which becomes part of an individual's regular routine.
SI	Sport Ireland
SPEAK	Sport Ireland annual report on work of entire LSP network
Monitor & Evaluate	Is a process that helps improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact.
NGB	National Governing Body: the controlling organisation of a sport for example the GAA or FAI.
Stakeholders	Individuals or groups that have a vested interest in a project, development or opportunity for sports and physical activity
Target populations	Sections of the community typically with lower than normal sports and physical activity participation rates. Such groups are identified as requiring additional support in order to increase participation levels.





Laois Sports Partnership
Portlaoise Leisure Centre
Moneyballytyrrell
Portlaoise
Co Laois
R32 YP11
www.laoissports.ie
info@laoissports.ie
00353 57 8671248

