

PROMOTING AN ACTIVE DONEGAL







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Message from Colin McNulty

Chairperson, Donegal Sports Partnership

As Chairman of the Donegal Sports Partnership (DSP) it gives me great pleasure to present the Company's Strategic Plan (2015-2019). This plan has been prepared following extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, seeks to build on previous strategies implemented throughout the existence of the Donegal Sports Partnership and incorporates the flexibility required to accommodate any future challenges and opportunities which the company may have to respond to during the period 2015-2019.

Donegal Sports Partnership has two key objectives: 'Increasing Participation' and 'Promoting Quality Education and Training' and aims to meet these through the implementation of a series of programmes, events and projects organised and four pillars: *Active Sports, Active Schools, Active Communities and Active Partnerships*.

I would like to thank the facilitator Claire McDonough, contributing stakeholders, the staff of DSP, the members of the strategic planning sub-group and all my fellow Directors for the considerable time and effort put into producing this strategic plan. I would also like to acknowledge the vision of John Treacy, CEO of Sport Ireland (formerly the Irish Sports Council) in developing, supporting and funding the Local Sports Partnership network in Ireland and to acknowledge the support of all our other funders (local and national) for their critical support of the Donegal Sports Partnership.

Donegal Sports Partnership's Strategic Plan (2015-2019) provides a clear vision for the company along with a range of detailed actions to be followed, across four pillars, over the next five years. It is now over to the staff and Board of Donegal Sports Partnership, working with all stakeholders, to deliver on this plan.

Colin McNulty

Chairperson,
Donegal Sports Partnership



Message from John Treacy

Chief Executive Officer, Sport Ireland

Sport Ireland (formerly the Irish Sports Council) has always placed a particular emphasis on ensuring the delivery of sport is progressive and serves the broadest possible range of participants, from every age group and from all social backgrounds. This is a fundamental principle of the Local Sports Partnerships which aim to remove any barrier that prevents participation in sport.

Donegal Sports Partnership undertakes a wide range of actions with the aim of increasing participation rates in their local communities. This strategy aims to build on the benefits accrued over the life of the previous strategies and to ensure that the Donegal Sports Partnership grows 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.

Education and Training is a key theme running through all four pillars of the strategic plan, Donegal Sports Partnership will therefore continue to deliver quality training and coach education to support and build capacity with the many volunteers involved in sport and physical activity.

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 *Donegal Sports Partnership* all the best for the future.

John Treacy

Chief Executive Officer,
Sport Ireland



Message from Myles Sweeney

Coordinator, Donegal Sports Partnership

As Coordinator of Donegal Sports Partnership it gives me great pleasure to present the next edition of *'Active Donegal'* our strategic plan which will take us up to the year 2019. In preparing this plan quite a number of hours have been invested in consulting, discussing, debating and finally agreeing a document that is practical for the development of participation sport in the county but also realistic given the limitations in resources.

Sport and Physical Activity play a huge role all across society in Donegal from our children through to our more senior adults and I hope that this plan will in a direct or indirect way support sports development especially to those who may have had opportunities to participate to date.

I would like to thank the DSP Staff and Board of Directors with special thanks to the Strategic Planning Working Group for all their guidance during the process, also to all our stakeholders for their contribution either through our online consultation questionnaire or via our focus groups.

I would also like to thank Claire McDonough for her understanding and patience in facilitating and preparing this document and for the breadth of experience she brought to the process.

We now continue with a clear focus and pathway for Donegal Sports Partnership for the next number of years which will further grow participation sport and physical activity among the Donegal population, we thank all our partners agencies who have worked with us in the past and hope that they will remain with us on this in the promotion of an 'Active Donegal'

Myles Sweeney

Coordinator & CEO,
Donegal Sports Partnership



Introduction

Donegal Sports Partnership Limited (DSP) was established in 2001 to coordinate the development of sport and physical activity in County Donegal. This has been achieved through the dual objectives of developing programmes to increase participation rates, especially by hard to reach groups and through the provision of high quality training and coach education programmes.

Donegal Sports Partnership is supported and governed by a Board of Directors and has a staff of five full time posts; Coordinator, Administrator, Assistant Administrator, Sports Inclusion Development Officer and Community Sports Development Officer. Donegal Sports Partnership is an inter-agency and multi-sectoral organisation with representatives from all the main statutory agencies and the community and voluntary sector. Although its office is based in Letterkenny, the DSP works throughout the full breadth of County Donegal.

This Strategic Plan sets out the vision and mission statement of the Company, reviews the work undertaken to date in the three previous Strategic Plans, identifies its objectives, pillars and programmes and the subsequent actions to achieve these targets. The DSP's dual objectives of increased participation and the provision of quality coaching and training programmes are central to the implementation of this Strategic Plan and can be clearly marked across the framework of the four pillars; Active Sports, Active Schools, Active Communities and Active Partnerships.

The Strategic Plan will be supported by a number of Annual Action Plans which provide more detailed actions, targets and indicators for each set of goals. As well as providing an important framework for the DSP and its operations, it enables a level of fluidity to support initiatives and programmes which can further enhance the community in which it operates.



DSP Community Coaching Programme 2015



Sam Maguire, Airtricity FAI Cup and The Anglo Celt Cup visits the DSP Office



DSP Ethos and Core Values

The ethos of the DSP is to support and encourage all the people of County Donegal to participate in sport and physical activity for their own health and enjoyment. All programmes, training and projects implemented by the DSP have the same **core values**;

“Openness, equality, effectiveness, efficiency and inclusion in supporting and encouraging people to participate in sport and physical activity in County Donegal”

DSP Partnership Model

Central to the implementation of both the Strategic Plan and daily operations is the partnership model adopted by DSP. The multi- agency structure established by the Sport Ireland has proven very successful.

Sport Ireland (formerly the Irish Sports Council) developed the Local Sports Partnerships (LSP’s) network to address specific gaps in the sports sector. Their mandate is to create a sustainable structure for all Irish people to become involved in sport at a level of their choosing, regardless of their ability, gender or background. The national network of LSP’s was established to reflect current local government structures. The collaborative relationships with Local Authority Agencies are vital in advancing the participation agenda in local communities. The network of LSP’s will reflect whatever new local government structures are put in place.

Source – Irish Sports Council ‘Statement of Strategy 2012-2014

DSP Target Groups

The Local Sports Partnerships were established for the purpose of increasing participation in sports and physical activity amongst the population and specifically amongst those who engaged in little or indeed no physical activity whatsoever. Recent research produced by the ESRI and the Sport Ireland ‘*Sports Monitor*’ identified a considerable rise in weekly sports participation nationally, from 34% in 2009 to 46% in 2011.

Furthermore, it found that whilst participation in team based sports remained steady, participation in individual sports such as personal exercise, running, cycling and swimming had risen considerably. However, despite the general rise in participation over the last number of year’s common relationships between income, education, disability, poor health and nationality and low levels of participation in sport still exist.

In order to address the issue of low participation, Donegal Sports Partnership through the lifetime of this Strategy 2015-2019, will seek to provide opportunities for those most disadvantaged and marginalised in society to participate in sport and physical activity programmes. Amongst the hard to reach groups identified are Children and Adults with Disabilities, Older Adults (Over 65), Men (Over 35), Women, Low Income Individuals and Families and Youth (14-18 years). This list is not conclusive and it does not preclude the DSP from working with other hard to reach groups. However, these are the priority target groups which DSP will work with over the lifetime of this Strategic Plan.



DSP Operating Framework

'Active Donegal' has been developed as an overarching theme to help communicate the nature of the work of the partnership and is further organised along a framework of four pillars; Active Sports, Active Schools, Active Communities and Active Partnerships.

Active Donegal was developed to give a seamless and inclusive brand to all the activities of DSP which seeks to reach the same objectives of inclusion and participation by all.

- **Active Sports** refers to all sporting clubs and organisations throughout the county, from the well-known such as Football, Soccer, Athletics etc. right through to lesser known and newly emerging minority sports such as hockey, rowing, cycling and walking etc.
- **Active Schools** refers to all educational settings from pre-school, primary and post primary right through to Third level and Youthreach Centres.



Men on the Move, Ray Community Centre

- **Active Communities** refers to all community organisations and groups including physical community and resource centres as well as groups who represent and work on behalf of target groups such as Women, Travellers, Older adults etc.
- **Active Partnerships** refers to the nature of cross-sectoral and multi-agency work undertaken by the DSP in the implementation of all its programmes and can relate to funding, resources, facilities, working groups, joint programmes etc. This work supports not only the implementation of the DSP strategic objectives but also those of the partners, including local, regional and national Statutory Bodies, National Governing Bodies of Sport, Community Organisations and Cross Border Partners.

The diagram on the following page depicts the structure of the work of the DSP and the framework of the overarching 'Active Donegal' brand, supported by the four pillars. It illustrates how the dual objectives of participation and training are achieved through the implementation of a series of programmes, events and projects, organised around the four pillars to achieve the ultimate vision of an Active Donegal.



Come & Try Adventure Sports, Active Donegal Month 2014



Donegal Sports Partnership

Increasing Participation and Providing Quality Education & Training

ACTIVE SPORTS

- Club Development Prog
- Volunteer Support Prog
- Coach Education
- Training Education Prog
- Sports Leadership
- Social Inclusion Development
- Natural Environment Projects

- Training on the Club Development Toolkit & Sports Event Management
- Ongoing First Aid etc.
- Ongoing Coach Education with NGBs etc.

ACTIVE SCHOOLS

- Ag Sugradh le Cheile
- Teacher in-Service Training
- Girls Active
- Sports Specific Programmes
- Social Inclusion Development Prog
- Dedicated Third Level Projects
- Dedicated Preschool & Primary School Prog
- Active Schools Week & Active Schools Week

- Ongoing School Programmes (e.g. Go for Sport, Active Schools Flag, Girls Active, Ag Sugradh Le Cheile and In-Service Training)
- New links to national & EU events such as National Bike Week, EU Year of Sport

ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

- Training & Education Prog
- Community Sports Development (e.g. Sports Event Management, Community Hubs, Target Group Programmes)
- Natural Environment Projects
- Sports Specific Programmes

- Range of training (e.g. First Aid, Code of Ethics, Sports Events)
- Provide specific Target Group programmes (e.g. Seniors, Women, Disability etc.)
- Support specific programme which utilises the natural environment (e.g. walking, cycling, water sports etc.)

ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP

- Corporate Governance Strategy
- Operational Strategy
- Strategic Plan 2015-16
- Sustainability Plan
- Networking & Partnership

- Effecient Board & Executive Committee Procedures & Meetings
- Corporate Governance Handbook
- Internal Audit in Place
- Risk Register in Place
- Source additional funds for new and existing Programmes
- Continued Partnerships (e.g. Donegal Sports Star, Child & Family Services Committee, Donegal Marathon)

'Promoting an Active Donegal'

Objectives

Pillars & Programmes

Implementations



REVIEW AND CONTEXT

1.1. Review of Work to Date

The initial Strategic Plan 2002-2004 established the DSP as the coordinating body for the development of sport and physical activity in County Donegal. As such, it concentrated on establishing working relationships with schools, clubs and community groups as well as creating a solid corporate framework for the Board of Management and Staff.

The second Strategic Plan 2006-2011 concentrated on the key areas (increasing participation and the provision of quality education and training) across each of the four pillars (Active Schools, Active Sports, Active Communities and Active Partnerships). A detailed review of this Strategic Plan highlighted the high degree of flexibility on the part of DSP in its implementation of this Plan. As such, this flexibility ensured that the DSP was well positioned to take full advantage of opportunities for funding or joint programmes which emerged during the period 2006-2011.

During the lifetime of both these Plans, the DSP established and consolidated very effective partnership relationships both within the board of management and with all relevant stakeholders.

The third Strategic Plan 2011-2014 had five overarching goals which permeated through the implementation of the Plan and across all four pillars. These were:

- The consolidation of DSP structures and corporate governance, personnel and finance.
- To maximise the promotion and awareness of Active Donegal across the entire county.
- The maintenance of quality standards in provision of training and education programmes.
- The increased participation of target groups in sport and physical activity.
- To increase the use of the local environment and natural resources in the provision of sport and physical activity amenities.

The DSP have been very successful in implementing the programmes and actions set out both in the Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and in its Annual Action Plans. Once again significant progress has been made against all five goals, highlights of which are outlined in more detail in (Appendix iii).





1.2. Strategic Context

Much of the landscape of local administration has changed during the lifetime of the third Strategic Plan. These changes have had a direct effect on the structure of the DSP Board of Management. For instance, the six electoral areas of County Donegal have been reduced to five. FÁS has been replaced and along with the VEC's have been subsumed into the Education and Training Boards. The Local Development Companies have either been disbanded or consolidated, with DLDC and Inishowen Development Partnership remaining in Donegal. And finally, the Donegal County Development Board, the multi-agency development board has also been disbanded and replaced by the newly formed multi-agency structures under the auspices of the Donegal County Council.

The Local and Community Development Committees (LCDC's) and the Economic Development Committee (EDC) are currently preparing a Local Community and Economic Development Plan to identify and implement actions to strengthen and develop the economic and community aspects of the County. This will be informed by community and statutory consultations. These contributions and subsequent actions will be informed by second tier towns throughout the county, giving a specifically rural perspective to the consultative and the implementation stages. These second tier towns are: Ballyshannon, Bundoran, Donegal Town, Killybegs, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Bunrana, Carndonagh and Pairc Gno Ghoath Dobhair. It is also worth noting that a new LEADER programme 2014-2020 will also be coordinated through the LCDC.

*Go for Sport Sportshall Athletics Programmes
for Primary Schools*

**sport
ireland**

Arising from the merger of the Irish Sports Council (ISC) the National Sports Campus Development Authority (NSCADA) and the Irish Institute of Sport and Coaching Ireland, Sport Ireland, is the new streamlined and dynamic body which aims to drive the future of Irish sport. It came into operation with effect from October 2015.



1.3. Future Challenges

Over the last fifteen years, DSP has made steady progress in the realisation of its two central objectives;

- increased participation in sport and physical activity,
- the provision of quality education and training programmes.

This progress has only been possible due to the solid partnership and working relationships which the DSP has developed and strengthened over the years. These stakeholders including statutory agencies, sports clubs, community groups, crossborder partners, funding agencies and the Governing Bodies of Sport (NGB's). All have been vital partners not only in the implementation of the previous Strategic and Annual Action Plans but also in the operation of the DSP itself.

However, many future challenges face the DSP in order to allow the organisation to sustain and develop programmes which support the two main objectives, among the key challenges are:

- The consolidation of the current staffing structure to allow for the sustainability.
- Monitoring and support of current programmes and the growth of new start up programmes in order to engage low participation target groups.
- Continuing to raise the awareness and understanding of the 'Active Donegal' brand across County Donegal thus promoting the positive benefits of sport and physical activity to the wider community.
- Continue to review and evaluate programmes and projects in order to determine impacts on target groups and to further strengthen future programmes and initiatives.

- Reducing the barriers to allow participation in sport and physical activity especially at community and grassroots levels, including measures such as, access issues for those most marginalised, programme fees, and reduced costs for coach education workshops for volunteers in sport.
- Developing programmes which promote recreational outdoor sports activities by utilising the natural environment of County Donegal such as our coastline, mountains, trails, rivers and lakes.
- Continually building on the theme of 'partnership' to encourage greater investment and greater efficiencies in the development of sport and physical activity across Donegal.



Innovative Programme for Sport – Women's Sailing Programme 2013/4



1.4. Methodology

The preparation of the Strategic Plan took place during spring and summer 2015. The Board of Management set up a dedicated Strategic Planning Sub Group, which met regularly to oversee the process.

At the outset the Board of Management noted that following the successful implementation of previous three Strategic Plans, many of the major goals have been achieved, especially those around coordination, training and awareness of the benefits of participation. As such, it is acknowledged that the emphasis of this, the fourth Strategic Plan will centre on consolidation and maintenance of the work undertaken since 2002.

The following methodology was employed during the preparation of the Strategic Plan:

- A Strategic Planning Sub-Group was set up and at the outset agreed a brief for the preparation, a list of concerned parties and stakeholders to be consulted, agreed the methodology and timeframe.
- An independent facilitator was appointed to coordinate the preparation of the Strategic Plan in line with the brief set out by the Strategic Planning Sub Group.
- It was agreed to conduct a number of Focus Groups. These were held separately with Staff, Tutors and Sports Development Officers as well as the Board of Management.
- It was agreed to present a questionnaire to a 10% sample of all community groups, sports clubs and schools in order to gather ideas and feedback on the new Strategic Plan. This was to take account of the needs of the wider target population. This was conducted using online survey software. A full list of respondents can be found in (appendix iii).

- The questionnaires were supplemented by an open call through local media and via social media directing any additional groups and individuals to also complete the questionnaire.
- One to one meetings and emails also ascertained contributions from interested parties including media, etc.
- A number of drafts were prepared by the facilitator and edited by the Coordinator and then presented to the Sub Group at relevant stages.



Sports Inclusion Come & Try Day's







VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

2.1. Vision & Mission Statements

The Donegal Sports Partnership vision is ***“an Active Donegal”***

2.2. Mission Statement

The Donegal Sports Partnerships mission in the lifetime of the fourth Strategic Plan 2015-2019, is:

‘To ensure the sustainability of the Donegal Sports Partnership itself into the future, in order that it can continue to build capacity within sports clubs, schools and communities and to support them work towards an Active Donegal’.

2.3. Strategic Objectives

The DSP has two strategic objectives:

1. To increase participation in sport and physical activity for the identified target groups.
2. To provide quality education and training opportunities in areas such as coach and volunteer education, leadership and capacity building within clubs, communities and sporting organisations etc.



2.4. Operating Framework

The operating framework can be summarised as follows:

DSP plans to achieve its strategic objectives (increasing participation and providing quality education and training) through the implementation of a number of goals, organised across four pillars (Active Sports, Active Schools, Active Communities & Active Partnerships) in order to achieve an ultimate vision of An Active Donegal.



DSP & Finn Harps Schools Programme with pupils & staff at Coimin NS



ONE Donegal Summer Camp 2014



GOALS, ACTIONS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES



Each DSP Strategic Plan has been supported by the DSP’s Annual Action Plans. These plans are prepared annually by staff and outline in detail the specific targets and indicators which can be easily tracked to record progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This process has proven very efficient and helps to gather detailed information for inclusion in reports to Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and to Sport Ireland.

The following sections set out the goals to be achieved across the four pillars (Active Schools, Active Sports, Active Communities and Active Partnerships). It includes an overview of each goal, a list of actions to achieve these, details on how the actions will be implemented and a list of expected outcomes. Indicators and targets will be detailed in the DSP’s Annual Actions Plans; however, Section 3.5 provides some examples of the types of indicators which will be recorded.

3.1 Active Sports

Active Sports Overview

Donegal is very much a ‘Sporting County’ and recent success at national and international level amongst our sportspeople have provided much inspiration and encouragement to all. The DSP recognises the impact of sport and physical activity on the lives of many people from the recreational walker to the elite international athlete. Individuals, be that the junior sports coach or the national manager all set goals or face individual challenges.

The growing demand for quality education and training and coaching is evident across all sports and at all levels throughout the county. This has a positive influence on our continued participation in our respective sports and encourages learning, improving our coaching skills and knowledge base. It also assists with building capacity to deliver sport within our community. The DSP will continue to promote the benefits of sport and physical activity through its programmes, training and coordination initiatives.

“All sports coaches should do this course and be made aware of the impact they may have on kids who never get a chance and who are very influenced by their coach. It’s a very important job.” *Child Protection Course Participant*

Active Sports Goals

1. **Club Development Programme**
2. **Volunteer Support Programme**
3. **Education and Training Programmes**
4. **Coach Education Programme**
5. **Sports Leadership Programme**
6. **SIDP (Sports Inclusion Disability Programme)**
7. **Natural Environment Projects**





Active Sports Implementation

These actions will be delivered in partnership with sports clubs and organisations, schools of all levels, tutors, coaches, Sports Development Officers, NGB's, Coaching Ireland, Sport Ireland and the DSP Board and Staff.

- The **Club Development Programme** will continue to assist clubs/groups to grow and strengthen their organisations. This resource will provide personnel with support training and capacity building workshops on topics such as; leadership, governance, finance, event management, volunteer training and coaching encouraging clubs to aspire to a quality minimum club development standard.
- The DSP with the assistance of NGB's, Sport Ireland, Coaching Ireland and other LSPs will continue to develop its **Coach Education Programme** to support clubs to develop and strengthen their coaching structures in order to meet the demand at local level.
- **Education and Training** is a key theme running through all four pillars of the strategic plan, the DSP will therefore continue to deliver quality training and coach education to support the many volunteers involved in sport and physical activity. This will be supported by a dedicated Education and Training booklet which will highlight to volunteers, clubs and agencies the many sports workshops and programmes available.
- DSP will support clubs and groups to deliver sports programmes and events which take advantage of our **Natural Environment**, the focus will be on utilising natural resources such as our coast, rivers, beaches, trails and mountains to develop sports and recreational opportunities.
- The DSP through the **SIDP** will continue to build capacity around inclusion and the promotion of sport and physical activity for children and adults with a Disability through our schools and communities.

"It has also given me the confidence that I can do what any able bodied person can do and got me mixing with other participants with disabilities where I have made friends and look forward to meeting them at different events." **Junior Participant, SIDP Wheelchair Basketball**

Active Sports Expected Outcomes

- Increased participation in sport and physical activity of hard of reach groups.
- Increased number of coaches and tutors trained to recognised NGB standards.
- Continued growth in the number of school/club links.
- Improved recruitment, training and management of volunteers.
- Improved leadership and capacity building for clubs/groups through training on the Club Development Toolkit.
- Improved health and safety for sports events organised by clubs/groups.
- Improved understanding of inclusion and diversity in sports within clubs/groups.
- Continued provision of up to date information for clubs/groups on funding, coaching etc. through the DSP website, emails and social media platforms.
- Increased numbers of participants trained in First Aid, Safe Guarding 1, 2 and 3 etc.



Bike Week & Event Management Workshops 2015



3.2 Active Schools Overview

The education sector in Donegal has proven to be an effective partner in raising awareness of sport in physical activity to children and young people. This section with the support of the DSP and other agencies will continue to provide other opportunities to influence a life long appreciation of sport and physical activity among children and young people.

Active Schools Goals

1. **Ag Súgradh Le Chéile**
2. **Teacher In-Service Training**
3. **Girls Active**
4. **Sports Specific Programmes**
5. **Sport Inclusion Disability Programmes**
6. **Sports Leadership Programmes**
7. **Education and Training Programmes for Third Level**
8. **Dedicated Preschool and Primary School Programmes**
9. **Active Schools Week and Active Schools Flag**

Active Schools Implementation

These actions will be implemented in partnership with preschools, primary and post-primary schools, third level and adult education centres:

- Continue to organise participation initiatives of all sports in schools settings.
- Continue to implement the Active Schools Flag especially through participation in relevant DSP programmes such as Ag Súgradh Le Chéile, Buntús Refresher, and In-service Training.
- Implement Sports Leadership and other education and training programmes in second and third level settings.
- Implement initiatives which link schools to national governing bodies through organised activities e.g. Sports Specific Initiatives, National Sportshall Athletics Programme, National Bike Week and European Year of Sport etc.

- Continue to implement Active School Week through participation initiatives such as ‘WOW’- Walk on Wednesdays, FFF – First Feet Fridays – Walk Cycle and Scoot to School etc.
- Continue to use schools as a framework for accessing children and young people with disabilities and creating linkages with the SIDP Programme.

Active Schools Expected Outcomes

- Increased number of children and young people engaged in sport and physical activity.
- Improved standard of In-service training for teachers.
- Increased participation of children and young people with disabilities in sport and physical activity.
- Increased number of schools achieving an Active School Flag.
- Ongoing programmes and initiatives with Donegal Youth Council. Improved participation by pre-school and primary school children in sport and physical activity.
- Improved health and safety of sports events organised by schools.

“As a Physical Education Teacher for 15 years I have found the opportunities provided through the DSP invaluable and paramount to my professional development.” *PE Teacher & DSP Tutor*





3.3 Active Communities

Active Communities Overview

Donegal has always had a particularly active community and voluntary sectors and this is especially evident in the area of sports clubs and community groups. These groups are spread throughout the county and tend to use their locations to engage their communities in physical activity of all types from organised team sports to walking, cycling and water sports. DSP continues to build relationships with a wide variety of groups as a vehicle for delivering participation initiatives to marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

This objective is demonstrated by projects like Let's Walk Donegal, Active Seniors Kurling leagues and Go for Life Games etc. and the Men on the Move Programme, all of which were established during the last Strategic Plan. In the case of the Men on the Move Programme (which was aimed at men aged 35+ with low physical activity participation rates), the local community anchoring was critical to its success.

"Men who couldn't run 200metres are now running 5 & 10k's. I have lost 1.5 stone, some lads have lost 2 stone." Men on the Move Participant



Active Communities Goals

1. **Education and Training Programmes**
 - First Aid
 - Safeguarding 1, 2 and 3
 - Walking Leadership
 - Go for Life Games Training etc.
2. **Community Sports Development Programme**
 - Sports Events Management
 - Community Hubs, etc.
3. **Target Group Programmes**
 - Traveller Participation Programme
 - Active Seniors Programme
 - Men on the Move Programme
 - Community Hubs Programme
 - Women in Sport Programme
4. **Natural Environment Strategy Walking Programme**
 - Water Sports Programme
 - Cycling Programme
 - Recreational Running Programme (e.g. Parkrun, Meet & Train, Fit for Life etc.)
5. **Sports Related Programmes**
 - Run for Fun Leaders Award
 - Sports Event Management
 - Minority Sports Initiatives (Social Cricket, Badminton, Triathlon, Rowing and Sailing etc.)
 - Healthy Communities and Town Initiatives.

Members compete with great enthusiasm and excitement each week and look forward to every game. Kurling is not only for the 50plus groups it works well in inter-generational settings. People with different disabilities can also be facilitated and encouraged to join their local group. Active Senior's participant



Active Communities Implementation

These actions will be implemented in partnership with local community resource centres and target groups, local statutory bodies and the DSP.

- The **Coaching and Training Programme** as outlined in Active Sports will deliver a range of training programmes for local groups such as Sports First Aid, Sports Coaching and Leadership.
- The **Community Sports Development Programme** will further develop linkages and relationships between different community based organisations, target groups and sports clubs in order to improve standards of training and participation rates for the general community as well as specific groups.
- The **Target Group Programme** will focus on a number of very specific initiatives, as identified in the DSP's Annual Action Plans.
- The **Natural Environment Strategy** will endeavour to develop programmes which take advantage of the natural environment and use the landscape. The DSP will support groups wishing to create links between improving the health and participation of its members and using their local amenities.
- Continued support of disability sector with the **Sports Inclusion Disability Programme** and its initiatives and plans.
- The **Sports Event Management** Booklet and Workshops will serve as an aid to community and target groups wishing to organise community wide events in a safe manner. The preparation and publication of the booklet will be supported by several training workshops.

Active Communities Expected Outcomes

- Increased participation by the general population in sport and physical activity through initiatives like the community hubs and sports specific programme etc.
- Increased participation in sport and physical activity by hard to reach groups through targeted programmes for groups such as Active Seniors, Disability Groups and Men over 35 etc.
- Increased use of the natural environment and initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way and the creation of more community/environment linkages.
- Increased awareness of the health benefits of sport and physical activity through joint initiatives to dovetail with national health frameworks such as Healthy Ireland and the proposed National Physical Activity Plan.
- Improved health and safety at sports events organised by community groups.

"This is the first time I went out and did something with the community, so I met people I never knew before."
FitWalk Community Walker

It was good that it was fun and there was exercise in it, kept me going all the time." **Step on It participant**



3.4 Active Partnerships

DSP Active Partnerships refers to both the internal and external partnerships which have been established and are critical to successful DSP operations.

Active Partnership Overview

The collaborative nature of the work of the DSP has been vital to its development over the period of the last three Strategic plans. These collaborations include programmes planned and delivered in partnership with statutory agencies, schools, sporting organisations, community groups, crossborder agencies and representative bodies especially with those representing people with a disability and older adults.

This partnership model has been key to ensuring greater efficiencies in areas such as shared resources and facilities, targeting those most in need, promotion and marketing and in planning for the future.

Internally, the DSP Board of Directors have also adopted a more proactive approach to providing a more robust corporate governance framework. The DSP Board of Directors is representative of many of the key statutory agencies and community and voluntary sectors. During the lifetime of the last Strategic Plan, significant work was undertaken to strengthen the Corporate Governance of the DSP including:

- The establishment of an Executive Committee to provide a more in-depth and frequent support to the Board of Directors.
- The development of a Corporate Governance Handbook to implement company regulations as set out by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- The establishment of internal audit review procedures in order to provide openness and transparency as well as identify weaknesses within the organisation.

Active Partnerships Goals

1. **Implementation of Strategic Plan 2015-2019**
2. **Corporate Governance Strategy**
3. **Operational Strategy**
 - Human Resources
 - Financial
 - Information Technology
 - Communications
 - Administration and Data
4. **Sustainability of DSP**
 - Core funding; protection and growth
 - Source additional projects funds



ONE Donegal Cricket in the Park 2014



Active Partnerships Implementation

- Continued implementation of the Corporate Governance Handbook and Board of Directors Training.
- Continued operation of efficient and effective Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings.
- Efficient and effective management of all aspects of the operation of the DSP Office including administration, human resources, finance, public relations, Information Technology etc.
- Effective implementation of the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans.
- Development of management funding strategies to attract additional funding for new programmes.
- Continued participation in relevant networks and organisations such as the Donegal Marathon, HSE Child & Family Services, Donegal Youth Council, Donegal Sports Star Awards, and Finn Harps FC Schools Programme.
- Continued support and strengthening of the Disability Sports Forum and the newly created database of disability sports contacts.
- Continued support and consolidation of the Sports Inclusion Disability Programme and Sports Inclusion Development Officer.
- Continued strengthening of the role of the DSP as a key coordinator of sports development in Donegal.



Active Partnerships Expected Outcomes

- A *'vibrant and Active Donegal'*
- Implemented Strategic Plan
- Prepared and implemented Annual Action Plans
- Robust Corporate Governance
- Maintenance of Staff numbers and roles at DSP
- Effective and worthwhile relationships with all Directors and partner organisations.
- Effective and efficient operations including human resources, information technology, communications, finance and administration.



Primary Schools Sports and Active Seniors Festivals as part of Active Donegal month



3.5 Targets & Indicators

As noted in the introduction, specific targets will be set out and recorded in the Annual Action Plans. They will capture quantitative data from training sessions and workshops including the number of sessions held, as well the number of individual participants per session. Although not a conclusive list, some examples of targets set out in the annual Action Plans include:

1. **Active Sports** will set out targets for all training programmes from First Aid, Coaching and Safeguarding Children through to one off events.
2. **Active Schools** will set out targets to capture quantitative data from training sessions and workshops including the number of sessions held, as well the number of individual participants per session. This will be gathered for all training programmes from Buntús Refresher (all Levels), Teacher In Service Training, Girls Active, the SIDP Programme, the Active School Flag, the Preschool, Primary School, Post Primary Schools, Third Level and Adult Education Programmes and so on.
3. **Active Communities** targets will capture quantitative data from training sessions and workshops, specifically; Community Development Projects, Active Seniors Participation Programmes, Traveller Participation Programmes, Men on the Move Programmes, Women in Sport Programme, Walking Programmes and Water Sports Programmes and so on.
4. **Active Partnerships** targets will capture information regarding Board Meetings, Executive Committee Meetings, Financial and Company Returns, Office, Administration and Human Resource functions. External targets around relationship building, networking, multi-agency programmes and joint working initiatives may be more difficult to capture, but will be a significant indicator of the level and quality of partnership work.



Go for Sports, Sportshall Athletics for Primary Schools



SIDP Wheelchair Basketball Come & Try Session





APPENDICES

i) Board of Directors of Donegal Sports Partnership



Mr. Colin McNulty,
Local Government Officer
Donegal County Council



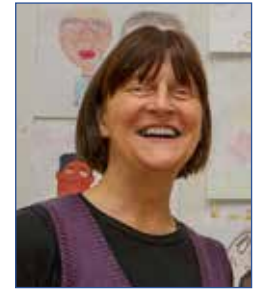
Mr. P.J. Hallinan,
Partnership Companies



Ms Anne McHugh,
Donegal ETB



Ms. Kathleen Bonner,
East Donegal Community
Forum



Ms. Anne McAteer,
Health Service Executive
West



Mr. Eamon Harvey,
Donegal South Forum Ltd.



Ms. Geraldine Boyce,
North Donegal Community
Network



Cllr James Pat McDaid,
Donegal County Council
Elected Representative



Mr. Joe Sweeney,
Inishowen
Community Forum



Cllr Jack Murray,
Donegal County Council
Elected Representative



Cllr Jimmy Kavanagh,
Donegal County Council
Elected Representative



Cllr Tom Conaghan,
Donegal County Council
Elected Representative



Dr. Lynn Ramsey,
Letterkenny Institute of
Technology



Ms. Máire Uí Dochartaigh,
Fóram Na Gaeltachta
Dhún Na nGall



Sports Disability Fora
Pending



ii) Benefits of Sport and Physical Activity

“Sport has a significant role to play in raising the levels of physical activity within the population and, in turn, makes a major contribution to the health of the population. The promotion of sport is therefore paramount. Increasing rates of participation in sport and physical activity requires multi-sectoral efforts involving agencies from education, transport, environment, health and sporting bodies’ at national and local level and across private and voluntary groups. Sport Ireland, since its establishment, has been active in generating support from all these sectors both directly and through the national network of Local Sports Partnerships.” Irish Sports Council - Statement of Strategy 2012-2014

There are many benefits enjoyed by those who engage in sport or even mild physical activity including improved health and wellbeing, enjoyment of the natural environment and increased social interaction. Respondents of evaluation reports from the various DSP Programmes cite several benefits including a greater sense of community, joining new social networks, improved mental health, improved diet and nutrition as well as the more expected outcomes of feeling healthier, moderate weight loss and improved fitness.



Errgial Cycling Club - Women's Cycle, Bike Week 2015

- Health:** National and International research has proven the link between incidence of chronic illness and disease and physical inactivity. The National Guidelines on Physical Activity for Ireland (2009) recommend thirty minutes of moderate exercise five days per week to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The percentage of the population who are overweight is almost 40% and those who are considered obese are 20%. During the lifetime of the previous Strategic Plan, the DSP implemented many specific programmes to encourage increased participation amongst certain groups including Girls Active, Go for Life and Men on the Move.
- Local Environment:** the landscape of Donegal is renowned and is particularly suitable for walking, hiking, surfing, etc. It presents great opportunities for the benefit of the community and its' health. This is most clearly illustrated in the emergence of the Wild Atlantic Way and opportunities for activity based tourism which it provides.
- Crossborder:** In the context of Donegal's border location, sport has been a very useful vehicle for the promotion of crossborder and cross community understanding. Many programmes, competitions and host visits have been enjoyed with crossborder partners in club, school and community settings over the last fifteen years. These joint initiatives have been very valuable in furthering cultural diversity, greater community cohesion and improved community relations.



iii) Highlights of DSP Strategic Plan 2011-2014

Active Sports

- Between 2011 and 2014, 1,750 club leaders, coaches and volunteers from 423 sports clubs and organisations participated in 81 Sport Ireland Basic Awareness in **Child Protection Workshops**. In addition to this, 204 leaders, coaches and volunteers from 128 sports clubs and organisations completed the ISC **Children's Officer Training Workshops**.
- Through various projects and programmes in 2013, Donegal Sports Partnership provided **education and training workshops** to approximately 3,280 people. Examples of workshops provided included Basketball Level 1, Fundamental GAA, basic, paediatric and occupational First Aid, Introduction to Strength & Conditioning, Sports Leadership and Water Safety.
- **Tag Rugby** with Errigal Eagles in partnership with Ulster Rugby, Finn Valley and Letterkenny Rugby Clubs. Participated in weekly coaching sessions with the opportunity to participate in blitzes and make half-time appearances at Ulster Rugby games. Schools programme established to provide a player/club pathway.
- **Wheelchair Basketball** - Initiated in 2010 targeting juniors aged <18 yrs. Fortnightly sessions hosted by experienced coaches are fun, challenging and inclusive to all irrespective of ability. The group has grown and are currently in the process of affiliating as an Irish Wheelchair Association Sport club – the first in the North West.
- 400 participants in **SIDP multi-sport come and try events** – providing a pathway to regular participation.

Active Schools

- From 2011 – 2014 under **Women in Sport initiatives** 1,050 teenage girls have participated in the Girls Active Programme in Post Primary Schools and Youthreach Centres across Co Donegal.
- In 2013, 1,300 primary school children from Co Donegal participated in the **Go for Sport – Sports Hall Athletics Programme** which included a school based coaching programme as well as opportunities to compete as a school team in the county and national Sports Hall Athletics events.
- **Special Schools Sportshall Athletics Programme** an annual programme initiated by Donegal Sports Partnership was expanded nationally during 2014. 70 children participating with all levels of intellectual disability on an annual basis. This is part of the SIDP.

Active Communities

- The consolidation of the **Sports Inclusion Disability Programme** and its Sports Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO)
- The establishment of the **Community Sports Development Programme** and the appointment of a Community Sports Development Officer (CSDO)
- Several very successful programmes including Men on the Move, Sports Inclusion Disability Programmes, Active Seniors Kurling and Bike Week Programmes, One Donegal Summer Camp etc.
- 800 walkers from all across Co Donegal participated in 55 guided walks as part of **Donegal Walking Week** 2011.
- 150 young people from Donegal and Derry participated in the **Community Relations through Sport Programmes** developed to address social exclusion, racism and sectarianism through sport.



- 5,000 people participated in a month long programme of sport related participation events, **Active Donegal Month 2012**.
- 1,892 people from all ages participated in a week long programme of events during the **2014 Bike Week**.
- **Innovative Programme for Sport & Recreation - Phase I & II (2011-2013)**
 - 12 Community/Sports Club Partnerships across Donegal and with €48,000 Investment over 3 years
- Participation figures for Innovative Programme for Sports and Recreation
 - 1,573 people participated in community based programmes / events
 - 138 people completed Good Relations training
 - 662 coaches and volunteers completed a range of Training and Education programmes including Sports First Aid, Child Protection and Sport specific awards
 - Over 600 took part in Cross Border engagement initiatives
 - A total of 5 Multi-Sport events were held across Donegal – total attendance 312
 - Two Sports Conferences hosted with over 300 Community Leaders & sports coaches in attendance over both events
- A dedicated **Disability Sports Forum** has been established, comprised of 15 partner members representing the disability sector, national governing bodies of sport and statutory agencies.
- A **network of disability sport contacts** has been established (over 100 partners to date).
- The Board of Directors has been very proactive in the **development of specific programmes** e.g. Social Inclusion Development Office, Community Development Programme etc.
- The development of **strong partnerships** with community organisations and state agencies in the development and implementation of projects such as the Men on the Move Programme, Active Seniors etc.
- Less hiring of private facilities such as hotel rooms for training, instead the norm is now the use of community, club and school facilities.
- DSP is now immediately **recognisable** as the coordinator and provider of the most extensive programme of sports related coaching and training including in the County.
- The **collaborative approach** adopted by the DSP is key to the success of many of its initiatives, enabling the greatest impact from shared resources, to strengthen links between its many partners to improve participation rates and increased opportunities to improve knowledge, skills and expertise of the many volunteers and coaches in the County.
- The value of the **partnership approach** to programme planning and implementation is evident across all four pillars.
- The Identification of **opportunities** for new strategic alliances and strengthen existing ones.
- DSP is now regarded as the leading source for **information and support** in relation to sport and physical activity initiatives and participation programmes in Co. Donegal
- **Support** of Sport Ireland and national network of LSP's.

Active Partnerships

- Over the term of the last Strategic Plan, Donegal Sports Partnership has reviewed their **governance structure** and has provided both a Corporate Governance Handbook and training for the Board of Directors in order to improve effectiveness.
- Additional **Board of Management structures**, systems and procedures have resulted in improved efficiency. Central to increased efficiency has been the establishment of an Executive Committee which meets more frequently allowing the Board to meet less frequently and therefore ensuring greater attendance and participation.



iv) List of Contributors

Donegal Sports Partnership wish to acknowledge the support received since its establishment in 2001. A sincere thanks to all the local and national agencies, community and voluntary groups, sports organisations, clubs and schools and education centres who have provided positive partnerships in the delivery of our many programmes and projects.

We also wish to acknowledge all those who supported the consultation process either through our online system of via our focus sessions.

Michelle Harvey, Abbey Vocational School
Lisa Gallagher, Ag Sugradh Le Cheile
Stephen O'Donnell, Aileach Football Club
Noel Foley, An Taisce, Donegal Association
Gerry Deegan, Archery Ireland
Rosaleen Breslin, Ardara Community Childcare Ltd
John Farren, Ballyliffin Golf Club
Antionette Clayton, Ballyshannon Youthreach / Donegal ETB
Paul Friel, Be Active ASAP
Manus O'Donnell, Beart GAA
Laura Deeney, Blaze Basketball
Louise Dowling, Blaze Basketball
John Lafferty, Bonagee United FC
Mary Kerr, Bright Beginnings Preschool & Donegal ETB
Rosemary Dunne, Buncrana NS
Sandra Dunmore, Bundoran Community Childcare
Eunan O'Brien, Castlefin Celtic FC
Rosemary Ryan, Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland
Mary Coyle, Coiste Fortartha Dhobhair Teo, Ionad Naomh Pádraig
Noel Ward, Coláiste na Carraige
Mary McGrenra, Comhlacht Forbartha An Tearmann
Anne McCormack, Confederation of Golf in Ireland
Rory Leonard, Confederation of Golf in Ireland
Gareth Patton, Convoy Arsenal FC
Lisa Doherty, Convoy Community Playgroup
Aoibheann Kelly, Creevy NS, Ballyshannon
Brian Allen, Cricket Ireland
Simon Williams, Croquet Association of Ireland
Patricia Byrne, Crossroads & Killygordan Community Playgroup Ltd
Carl Fullerton, Cycling Ulster
James McGuire, Cycling Ulster Youth Academy Member
Teresa Donohoe, Dancepl3y
Joe Boyle, Principal, Deelee College, Raphoe

Odhran Doherty, Disability Sport NI
Louise Toner, Donegal County Childcare
Frieda Gallagher, Donegal Derry Vipers
Rachel Leonard, Donegal Equestrian Centre
Jude Bromley, Donegal Fibromyalgia Support Group
Emmett Ryan, Donegal First Aid Services
Sean Dunnion, Donegal GAA
Dónal Sharkey, Donegal Ladies LGFA
Inga Bock, Donegal Local Development Co. Ltd
Kate Campbell, Donegal Local Development Co. Ltd
Dermot Simpson, Donegal Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic
Orla Campbell, Donegal Playgroup
Frank Craig, Donegal Post
Kevin Sinclair, Donegal Town Basketball Club / Four Masters GAA & Donegal Town Rugby Club
Pat Ward, Donegal Town FC
Siobhan Mc Laughlin, Donegal Travellers Project
Orla O'Reilly, Donegal Trec
Aoife Gillespie, Donegal Youth Council
Bridget McDyer, Donegal Youth Council
Charlene Logue, Donegal Youth Council
Connor McGinty, Donegal Youth Council
Eamon Connaghan, Donegal Youth Council
Erin McCafferty, Donegal Youth Council
Meadh McDaid, Donegal Youth Council
Megan McGee, Donegal Youth Council
Naomi Bradley, Donegal Youth Council
Niamh Mayne, Donegal Youth Council
Sean Harkin, Donegal Youth Council
Sean McGettigan, Donegal Youth Council
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Tim Runge, Donegal Youth Council
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Donal Gillespie, DSP Tutor
G, Education Second Level
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Colin Farrell, Errigal Eagles Tag Rugby
Sylvia Lockhart, Errigal Motorclub
Connell Herron, Finesse Gymnastics Club
Chantelle Grant, Finn Harps Schools
John Campbell, Finn Harps Schools
Sharon Bradley, Finn Valley AC Coach
Martin McDevitt, Finn Valley Leisure Centre
Finola Wootton, FitWalk Tutor
Maria McGill, FitWalk Tutor
Shane Barr, Football Association of Ireland
Karen McCormick, Foyle Sailability
Charlie Keeney, Frosses National School
Anthony Harkin, GAA
Sean McCrudden, Gartan Outdoor Education & Training Centre
Ursula MacPherson, Gartan Outdoor Education & Training Centre



Patrick Morgan, Gortahork Youthreach
Jimmy McVeigh, Green Schools (An Taisce)
Peter Sharkey, Gweebarra Canoe Club
Seamus Devine, Illistrin Football Club
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Kieran McDyre, Individual
Oisín Ó Cleirigh, Individual
Paddy Gallagher, Individual
Paddy Stevenson, Individual
Shauna Patton, Individual
Stephen Friel, Individual
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Ciarán Murphy, Irish Sailing Association
Kidcare, Kidcare Preschool
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Eamonn Doherty, Letterkenny Lawn Bowling Club
Gerry Clarke, Letterkenny Tennis Club
Gillian Kennedy, Letterkenny Youthreach
Richard Gibson, Lifford Celtic Football Club
Aidan Callaghan, Lifford Youthreach
Suzanne McGeady, Little Dreamers Preschool
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Lee Doherty, LYIT Canoe Club
Jacqueline Dillion, Magh Ene College, Bundoran
M. Shields, Medisize
Martine Melly, Meenagowan NS
Stephen Ferry, Men on the Move
Bill Vaughan, Mental Health Ireland
Margaret McTeague, Mevagh Family Resource Centre
Jackie Strain, Milford Community Playgroup Ltd
Joe Ferry, Milford United FC
Sandra Melis, Montessori Eirne
Brian McGarvey, Mulroy Hoops Basketball Club
Fiona Kelly, Mulroy Hoops Basketball Club - Ray
Fergus McAteer, Mulroy Soccer Academy
Winnie O'Neill, Náiscoil Dhomhnach Óg Teo
Attracta Winters, North West Area Board Basketball & Letterkenny Blaze
Darragh Cox, Ocean FM
Mike Barry, Paddlesurf Ireland
Sean, Pentathlon Ireland
Paul Kernan, Pobail Le Chéile

Junior Convenor, Portsalon Girls Golf Initiative
Ann Marie Meehan, Primary School Principal
Damien O'Connor, Rathmullan Cycle Club
Paula O'Donnell, Ready Steady Grow Childcare Centre
Kit Boyce, Rosapenna Golf Club
Roisín McGlynn, Rosie & Jim's Playschool
Breda Tinney Cassidy, Saimer Community Childcare
Paucic McKinney, Scoil Iosgain, Bunrana
Cróna Houston, Scoil Mhuire
Leala Curran, Scoil Mhuire Ramelton
Linda Doherty, Smarty Pants Montessori & After School Club
Jane Doherty, SNA / ASLC Tutor
Gary Duffy, Soccer
Seamus Campbell, Special Olympics
Dermot McGranaghan, Sportshall
Michelle Hogg, Spraoi Le Chéile
Cathal Roache, St Bernadette's Special School
Lisa Hartin, St Columbas College, Stranorlar
Nicola Harris, St Columbas College, Stranorlar
Joe Kealy, St Eunan's Camogie, Letterkenny
Ailish Tully, St Patricks GNS
Sean Mc Groarty, St. Francis National School
Mary Ryan, Stepping Stones Playgroup
Eoin Halliday, Surf Kayaking / Wave Skiing
Noel McGoohan, Swilly Hiking Club
Tony McNamee, Swilly Rovers Football Club
John Paul Gallagher, Teacher
Anthony McGrenra, Termon GAA
Gillian Lowry, The Model Crèche
Pauline Barnett, The Playhouse Preschool
John Hunter, Three Rivers Badminton Club
Maxine McCreary, Three Rivers Badminton Club
Orla McGlynn, Tir Chonaill AC
Rosemary Dewhirst, Tir Chonaill AC
James Griffin, Tir Chonaill Gap CC
Mairead Cranley, Tir Chonaill Gap CC
Gavin Crawford, Triathlon 24/7
Brian Anderson, Twin Towns ABC
Richard Dougherty, Ulster Deaf Sports Council
Paul Callaghan, Ulster GAA
Marty McCann, Ulster Paddlesurf Club
Shaun Bloomfield, Ulster Rugby
Sarah McLoughlin, Vision Sports Ireland
Seamus Doohan, Walking Donegal.net
Agnes Morrissey, Willbrook Preschool / Afterschool



v) Sample of DSP Strategy Testimonials & Case Studies

Sports Inclusion Disability Programmes

My name is Paul Dawson and I have secondary progressive MS which has confined me to a wheelchair. Previously I lead a very active life as a firefighter and keen fitness enthusiast. For some time I have been searching for an activity to challenge me and reignite my motivation in life. I currently study distance learning for a degree to mentally challenge me.

Earlier this year I was informed of Donegal Sports Partnership and their activities in the disability sector. I was provided with a hand bike and advised of points of contact in my locality namely Tir Chonaill Gap cycling club.

The entire experience has been a personal revelation. I initially trained on my local running track with the local schools support. I have progressed to road work and intend on completing several 10 km for local charities with the Dublin city marathon my ultimate goal.

I cannot stress enough how this service has helped me rediscover appetite for life. An unbelievable system like the sports partnership provides an opportunity to disabled people that should always be supported and encouraged by all levels of society. Well done to all of you involved.

"I got to try out a variety of sports & take up the one that appealed to me at present and hopefully in the future join other events. It has also given me the confidence that I can do what any able bodied person can do & got me mixing with other participants with disabilities where I have made friends & look forward to meeting them at different events." **Junior Participant, SIDP Wheelchair Basketball Club.**

"I cannot stress enough how this service has helped me rediscover appetite for life. An unbelievable system like the sports partnership provides an opportunity to disabled people that should always be supported and encouraged by all levels of society. Well done to all of you involved." **SIDP Handcycling Participant**

"These sessions were excellent for the pupils motor skills, team work and interaction and we could see the improvement all round at the end of the sessions. This also promotes an interest in the sport which some of our pupils now attend regularly on Sunday mornings. A big THANK YOU to everyone for providing Tag Rugby for St. Bernadette's." **The Errigal Eagles Tag Rugby initiative (SIDP)**

"Since its inception, the SIDP in Donegal has given people with disabilities a chance to get involved in sports that they not normally try. The programme has aimed to enhance and develop skills, encourage teams and friendships, promote physical activity and most importantly provide to them an opportunity to have fun. Hopefully the kids and adults introduced into the SIDO Programme will continue to enjoy taking part in sporting activities." **Physical Activity Project Officer, Health Promotion Dept. HSE West**

SIDP Education & Training Programmes

What some participants said...

"Very enjoyable and relevant, able to use this in many aspects of life."

"Very informative, excellent delivery, very friendly tutors."

"Gave me ideas for involving clients in games and sports for my future work."

"Enjoyed getting involved in different games and learning how they could be adapted to suit different individuals."

"More confident to take a session now and include everyone."

"Practical hands on session, good ideas and adaptations for different abilities."

"I can set aside my previous assumptions."

"Helps build confidence and knowledge."

SIDP Special Schools Sportshall Athletics

"Donegal Sports Partnership provided a six week athletics programme for our autism class. This involved developing athletic skills. The coach had an excellent rapport with the children and understood their individual needs. Different physical activities were introduced to the children to develop their running, hurdling, jumping and throwing skills. At the end of the six weeks it was clear to be seen the improvement in each child's athletic skills. We would gladly welcome this programme back to our class as it was extremely beneficial to our children and enjoyed by all." **School Principal**

Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops

Gartan OEC 15/06/15: "Everyone should do it and get the knowledge."

"Helped me understand problems that could occur working with children and how to understand their behaviour." "Awareness of your actions and how it can affect children." "We found out how to handle children and what the boundaries are."

DSP 09/12/14: "All sports coaches should do this course and be made aware of the impact they may have on kids who never get a chance and who are very influenced by their coach. It's a very important job."

Lets Walk Donegal Programmes - FitWalk Workshops

"I get great satisfaction from my walking classes because of all the positive outcomes related to working with different groups. The improvement in fitness, social interaction, increased wellbeing are just a few of the benefits gained. Friendships can be formed and walking partners found. I enjoy taking the sessions as much as I think they do taking part." **Walking Tutor**

Ag Súgradh le Chéile - Quotes from teachers

Parents of children had a great day. Very positive. Wouldn't suggest any changes.

"It was fantastic, well presented fun and active".

"Fantastic work done by facilitators and kids really enjoyed it".

"We loved all aspects of the workshop"

"A fun filled active and informative play session"



Community Walking Programme

"...we would have a really...close relationship....we're all one big team trying to achieve the same thing....let's get people active and healthy"

Community Walking Leader

"This is the first time I went out and did something with the community, so I met people I never knew before" Community Walker

"It....had a huge effect on (my) health positivity...and I feel....confident of exercise and see the benefits of exercise.....you don't realise how well you're gonna feel after it.....and everyone you meet is positive..... they're there to do a job and they all do it and that's it. Simple as that"

Community Walker

Women in Sports Initiatives – Girls Active

What I enjoyed about the activity

"The atmosphere, it wasn't too hard. It was fun".

"The fact that its exercise for free after school, so you can go straight home after";

"We got to exercise a lot", "You get to meet and spend more time with your friends",

"Music, Friends and working out, that if we wanted to push ourselves we could and take it easy if we wanted to".

"The activity was very fun, the music, the exercise the teacher and the craic".

"It was good that it was fun and there was exercise in it; kept me going all the time",

"I get to hang out with the girls without the pressure PE puts on us".

Ag Súgradh le Chéile - Quotes from parents

"Workshop was a great reminder to play with children"

"Thought it was all age appropriate, really enjoyable for all"

"Found the workshop fun and has given me some good ideas for playtime with my children"

"All aspects of the workshop was great. Loved interacting in this fun way with my daughter"

"It was very simple, but with great meaning and value"

"There were lots of activities included in the hour"

"Great way to meet other parents - great 1.5 hours"

Men on the Move

"I have been involved in coaching and managing teams for over 30 years. I took a break for a few years, just to enjoy life myself. I found the weight going on, and for the first time in my life I was 15.5 stone. Although I was fairly active, I decided I wanted to lose the weight and find a new challenge. As luck had it, I got a call to attend a meeting for "Men on the Move" at the St Johnston Resource Centre 2 years ago. 5 men turned up, and we were encouraged to get a few more interested men to form a group. We gathered 12 men to give it a go; we got our blood pressure and weight checked the first night and we haven't looked back. We have a fantastic coach in Russell Porter, and the Resource centre have been extremely supportive to us since. Men who couldn't run 200metres are now running 5 & 10k's. I have lost 1.5 stone, some lads have lost 2 stone.

We are a very close group, we work hard and get on great. We now have between 14 & 16 men taking part weekly. In times of joy and sadness we support each other. We go on holidays together and have climbed Croagh Patrick and Mount Errigal. We're meeting and making friends everywhere we go, and enjoying every minute. **Men on the Move participant**

Teacher In-service

As a Physical Education Teacher for 15 years I have found the opportunities provided through the DSP invaluable and paramount to my professional development. The area in which I specialise is the Sports Leadership Award. I believe everyone can, and should, give back to their local community. **PE Teacher**

Active Seniors Programme

With support from Donegal Sports Partnership in January 2014, a Kurling League was established. The third phase of the Kurling League was completed end of June 2015. East Donegal have 5 Clubs involved - Stranorlar, Lifford, Letterkenny, Killygordan and Raphoe. Members compete with great enthusiasm and excitement each week and look forward to every game. Kurling is not only for the 50plus groups it works well in inter-generational settings. People with different disabilities can also be facilitated and encouraged to join their local group.

Active Seniors participant

One Donegal Cricket in the Park

"I always wanting to try Cricket, but never got the opportunity – I had a fantastic day. We just had a conversation with one of the St Johnston CC guys about meeting up some afternoon and playing a game of Hurling & Cricket. A lot of the skills are transferable so it would be a great laugh" One Donegal through Sport. **Cricket in the Park Gala event participant**

Sports leadership Award

The sport and physical elements of each award and qualification creates a fun and dynamic focus on leadership and organisation skills with essential health benefits.

The courses help individuals become more confident, more skilled and more employable. Secondary Schools provide an opportunity for all Transition Years to avail of Sports Leadership level 1.

This program has recently been supported by the Sport Ireland/ISC and rolled out through various LSP's. Sports Leaders Award changes lives by 'inspiring people and communities through leadership qualifications in sport'. It provides nationally recognised qualifications that equip people with the skills and motivation to create and run sporting activities in the community. **PE Teacher**



Sports Can Conference

On Saturday 29th June 2013, Donegal Sports Partnership, in association with Sport Northern Ireland and the International Fund for Ireland hosted a Sports Conference highlighting the value of Sport to our Society, through promoting inclusion, embracing diversity and facilitating cross-community and cross-border engagement.





‘Promoting an Active Donegal’





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