

## Upcoming Events



### Family Fun Walk & Fitsticks Gathering



Join us for this fun 5k walk around the scenic grounds and lake of Emo Court. fitWALKireland will be on hand to demonstrate the use of Fitsticks for fitness walking - not to be missed!

Venue: Leaving from Emo Community Centre, GAA Carpark.  
Grid Ref: N530056  
Date: Sat 1st of July  
Registration: 10.30am, walk commencing at 11.00am  
Cost: €2 per walk or €25 festival ticket  
Contact: Susan Lawlor, Festival Co-ordinator - 087 2574477

For more information, contact Laois Sports Partnership on 057 8671248



### Portlaoise Street Soccer League 2017

Date: Commencing 21st of June 2017  
Venue: Portlaoise Leisure Centre  
Time: 2.00 - 4.00pm

7 a Side Format - Free of Charge (males aged 16 - 40)  
Registration Forms available from Laois Sports Partnership office  
First 12 entries only will be accepted, no's strictly limited  
No late entries will be accepted on the day. Call 057 8671248



## BLAZING SADDLES

### 2 DAY CAMP

For Kids Who Want  
To Learn How To Cycle!  
VENUE: Emo Community Hall  
DATES: Wednesday, July 19th  
& Thursday, July 20th.  
TIME: 10am-12.30pm.  
COST: €25 Per Child.



### 3 DAY CAMP

Fun & Cycling!  
VENUE: Emo Community Hall  
DATES: Tuesday, July 25th,  
Wednesday, July 26th  
& Thursday, July 27th.  
TIME: 10am-2pm.  
COST: €50 Per Child.  
Family Discount Available.



For More Information Or To Book Please Contact  
info@laoissports.ie Or Telephone 057 867 1248

## Laois Sports Partnership

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Moneyballytyrrell,  
Portlaoise,  
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**SPORT IRELAND**  
LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIPS

# Mid-Year Report 2017



## Community Sports Hub Operation Transformation Programme



Launch night was held on 9th January 2017 with over 120 people attending. 6 leaders from 3 areas will go head to head on this challenge with overall weight loss announcing the winners which will be held after finale event Parkrun on 18/2/16. The main aim of this 6 Week Challenge was to create a fun and friendly atmosphere within your Community and around being physically active and showing your support for the 6 leaders within your Area. This event kicked off the Sports Hub with activities being organised for 6 weeks in the 3 areas and open to all in the community to participate and join in the weight loss journey supported by Chemco Pharmacy. Community support was essential for success with huge numbers turning out weekly to support the leaders and participating in activities such as Green Gym, Walking, Jogging, Yoga, Circuits, Spinning, Zumba etc.

18 leaders combined weight loss was 21 stone over 6 weeks with only 1 1/1lb separating the overall winners Vicarstown from Stradbally & Timahoe. 196 people participated in Vicarstown Parkrun with many for the first time from the OT programme. Very positive feedback from the community as well as the leaders with a huge sense of communities coming together. Below are some of the testimonials received.

### Mentally how do you feel as a result of SVT operation transformation?

Operation Transformation has inspired me to get out of the viscous circle of obesity and get the up and going again. I have received so much good in my life since I started the journey a few short weeks ago. I thought my life was over. I was finished and all I could do was wait for the inevitable horrible end I had accepted as my fate. But now its changed oh so much thanks to beautiful people such as and Dominic and the rest of the co-ordinators of SVT and of course to everyone who came along

to support me. I can't thank you all enough, you have literally saved my

life. **Timahoe Leader**

### What was your favourite physical activity over the 6 weeks?

Loved all the team challenges & walking football, I also want to knock a few minutes off my 5km time. My focus is to get out of the obese category and to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

**Stradbally Leader total loss 27lbs**



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www.laoissports.ie  
www.facebook.com/laoissp  
www.twitter.com/LaoisSportsLSP  
www.youtube.com/



## School Programmes

### Primary School Basketball

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

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

Laois Sports Partnership has worked to promote participation in basketball by forging links between primary schools and local clubs. Over the last 6 years we have developed a programme where coaching sessions are delivered in schools by coaches from clubs in the county. Seamus Dooley from Portlaoise Panthers Basketball Club has been volunteering with the programme for the last number of years. His coaching skills and passion for the sport have been a contributing factor in the popularity of the programme and growth in numbers taking part year on year.

Coaching is offered to the schools over a 4 week period to pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class. Pupils in 3<sup>rd</sup> class can potentially receive the coaching for up to 4 years before they move on to secondary school. A record 19 schools took part in our coaching programme this year. Once the coaching has been delivered, all of the schools in the county are invited to take part in our tournaments run over 6 days in St. Mary's Hall Portlaoise. The tournament days give schools an opportunity to play against each other and use their new skills, in a friendly, non-competitive environment. All schools from around the county are invited with over 1,000 children taking part over the two weeks.

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

This year also saw the growth of our primary schools league. Piloted in 2016 for schools in Portlaoise, we were delighted to welcome new teams this year. The league finals were held on Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May when schools competed over 3 divisions. Teams from Gaelscoil Phortlaoise, Portlaoise Educate Together NS, Maryborough NS, Holy Family NS, Scoil Bhríde Knockmay, Scoil Bhríde Ballyroan and Presentation PS Portarlinton competed to reach the finals. The games were fought fiercely and sportingly to the cheers of supporters from their schools. Holy Family NS, Scoil Bhríde Knockmay, Maryborough NS and Presentation PS were finalists on the day and played 3 very close and thrilling division finals. The pupils from Holy Family NS just had the edge on their opponents this year and were eventual winners. Congratulations to all the schools and their teachers who took part and made the league such a great competition again this year.



The True Transformation program was effective in improving the physical and metabolic characteristics of our participant. This is evident in the reductions in body weight, body mass index, body fat percent, waist circumference, abdominal circumference, hip circumference and waist to hip ratio. All of these lead to improvements in metabolic and cardiovascular health.

The participants absolutely loved this programme and we have taken on board all of their comments and suggestions for future programmes, particularly the creation of the expert weight and measurement clinic, and online resources. We hope to incorporate these changes into future programmes.



### Active Community Walking Programme

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

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

We currently have 6 active walking groups with one new group established in 2017 Cullohill Walkers with over 30 participants weekly.



### 16th Annual Walks Festival

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Walks Festival will take place throughout Laois from 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. The Festival will take walkers on 28 walks at 28 different locations, with walking grades ranging from Moderate to Strenuous.



This years Festival will also include a variety of Family friendly walks with Laois Sports Partnership

**Family Fun Walk & Fitsticks Gathering**

Join us for this fun 5k walk around the scenic grounds and lake of Emo Court. fitWALKIreland will be on hand to demonstrate the use of Fitsticks for fitness walking - not to be missed!

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For more information, contact Laois Sports Partnership on 057 8611248



## Get Active

### True Transformation

We have held 2 True Transformation programmes with 30 participants in 2017 and starting a lifestyle intervention programme for Women over 50's.

Aim was to translate research findings into a simple, practical and effective community based lifestyle intervention that leads to long term improvements in body weight, body composition and metabolic and cardiovascular health.

#### Objectives

1. Deliver a fully funded 4 week community based lifestyle intervention programmes in True Fitness, Portarlinton, Co. Laois from 21st January until 18th February.
2. Assess physical characteristics of the participants pre and post intervention to quantify changes in physical fitness, body mass index, body weight and body composition.
3. Measure metabolic characteristics of the participants pre and post intervention to determine improvements in metabolic health. These measurements include fasting blood glucose and fasting lipid levels. This will be achieved in partnership with the MediCentre, Portarlinton, Co. Laois.
4. Use the data collected from this pilot work to influence wider scale, longer term community based lifestyle programmes in 2018.

Each week each participant attended 1 other TRX class per week in the True Fitness studio in Portarlinton and also attended the jogging and running interval session held on Tuesdays at True Fitness Portarlinton. They were welcome to attend any session that suited their schedule. All of the training sessions were composed of functional training and delivered by a trained instructor. They were also encouraged to take part in the flexibility classes (complimentary) during the week.

The participants were monitored each week with physical measurements, but they were also monitored and supported each week with direct emails between them and Dr Diane Cooper. Individuals with special dietary requirements e.g. gluten free, were provided with individual consultation and modified meal plans. A private facebook group was set up on the True Fitness page for to allow for group discussion and support among participants, but it also provided a platform for the programme professionals to answer questions and give advice. Finally, the pre intervention tests were repeated post intervention to determine any changes that took place.

The key findings of this True Transformation programme were that the short term, free living, community based, healthy living and weight loss programme is effective in improving the physical

and metabolic characteristics of a random sample of the population.

The current True Transformation intervention consisted of 3-4 sessions of physical activity per week combined with moderate caloric restriction, dietary education and health education. Typically, this low volume of physical activity would result in minimal changes in body weight over a 5 week time period, as would the moderate caloric restriction. When both are combined with each other and with dietary education and health education, the result is reductions in body weight, body mass index, and body fat percent, all of which have been shown to improve metabolic health in this population (Franz et al., 2007).



The programme also resulted in reductions in waist circumference, abdominal circumference, and hip circumference. There is an extensive body of literature available to support the fact that these changes are associated with significant improvements in metabolic and cardiovascular health in this population. The changes that were evident in the physical characters of these subject post 6 weeks of intervention are greater than that observed in the literature for exercise alone and mild calorie restriction over the same time period. There was a substantial decrease in the time it took participants to walk one mile pre and post intervention. This shows a great increase in fitness. Cardiovascular fitness is an independent predictor of health, which means the fitter a person is, the more protected they are against the development of a range of chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and certain types of cancers. This is a very important outcome measure of these types of lifestyle programmes.

## Sports Hall Athletics Programme 2016/2017

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

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

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



So far this year our programme reached out to 1,876 children, and included 34 schools in Co. Laois covering Ballacolla, Portlaoise, St. Abban's, The Rock Castletown etc.

The National Sports Hall Athletics Final took place in Athlone I.T. on Wednesday 22nd March with 48 students from Shanaghmore N.S. representing Laois.



### Sport Leader Award

We have completed 3 courses so far in 2017 with 50 participants through Mountmellick Youthreach and SVT Community Sports Hub

SPORTS LEADER AWARD



**We are looking for young people to take part in our leader programme!**

In association with  
Stradbally, Vicarstown & Timhoe Community Sports Hub

**Learn how to:**

- Become a leader
- Build self confidence
- Improve your organisation skills
- Better understand sport
- Develop your communication skills

If you want to have fun and learn new skills, then sign up and achieve your Sports Leader Award!

Course Dates: 26th - 28th of June  
Time: 10.00 - 3.00pm  
Suitable for young people aged 12 - 17 years old  
For more info and to register your place:  
call Laois Sports Partnership on 057 8671248 or email  
info@laoissports.ie (places limited)





### Teenscene

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

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

In 2017 3 schools involved with 95 participants taking part.





## Education & Training

### Safeguarding

We have held 6 Safeguarding 1 courses with 62 participants, 1 Safeguarding 2 course with 15 participants from a range of clubs and organisations.



### Sport Ireland Launches Safeguarding Refresher Resource

Sport Ireland have launched **Safeguarding 1 Refresher**, a web based education resource aimed at providing further training to those who have previously attended a Safeguarding workshop of equivalent.

The web resource, which was developed in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland, was unveiled today at a briefing event for National Children's Officers in Dublin, which was addressed by representatives of National Governing Bodies for Sport.

The content contains four modules which will provide persons in roles with regular responsibility for children an opportunity to learn about: best practice procedure; understanding of why safeguarding children and young people in sport is important; recognising the different categories of child abuse and identify the signs of abuse; and the responding, recording and reporting issues of poor practice or abuse. Safeguarding 1 Refresher can be viewed here. <https://able.ineqe.com/apps/sportireland/coaches/introduction.php>

### Fitsticks Gathering



Nordic Walking is the latest innovation in fitness walking and in Ireland there is growing interest in 'using the sticks for a fitness fix'! It can be done on virtually any outdoor terrain including tarred roads, concrete paths, forestry trails, sandy beaches, and grassy parks.

Nordic Walking transforms 'normal' walking (where most of the work is done by the legs) into a complete body workout! Studies have found that the correct use of poles can increase intensity and burn as much as 40% more calories than 'normal' walking. Walking with Nordic Poles also helps to

- increase muscle strength
  - improve posture and neck/shoulder stiffness.
  - reduce impact on joints
- 18 people joined us for our Fitsticks Gathering on 18th May as part of Bealtaine

### Go For Life Fun Day

Approximately 70 Older Adults participated in the Go for Life Fun Day held in St. Mary's Hall, Portlaoise on the 18th May as part of the Bealtaine Festival. Great fun was had by all.



The Go for Life Games, adapted by Go for Life, involve three sports that can be played in Singles, Pairs and Teams:

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

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

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Go for Life Games was held in DCU on Saturday, 9th June 2017. Laois was represented by 13 players from Fifty-Plus Active Age Group Portlaoise, Camross ARG & Happy Hearts Portarlington. A huge thanks to them and their supporters for representing the County.

### Wheelchair Hurling



The Leinster Wheelchair hurling team are the reigning All-Ireland interprovincial champions and have three All-Stars on their team. Laois man Lorcan Madden is the current Hurler of the year & Tom Carrey Star Forward of the year, The team are coached by Jeff Phelan. The Leinster panel currently has



eleven members and we would love to get more involved. For people with a disability, it is a chance to represent your province and maybe win an All-Star or an All-Ireland. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Catriona in the office.

### Boccia

The 2017 all Laois boccia league has been ongoing since the beginning of the year. There are 14 teams from 10 centres entered this year. Round 1 is in progress at the moment. Round 2 and the finals will take place later in the year.



### Spinning Classes / Tandem Cycling

Spinning Classes have been taking place every Tuesday evening from 6 to 7pm for the Winter months but has been replaced by Tandem Cycling sessions for the Summer months. This is on Thursday evenings from 7 to 8pm, also at the Leisure Centre. We have four tandem bikes in action every Thursday. This activity is open to People with Visual Impairments and children or adults with Autism, dyspraxia or any lack of balance. (Only requirement is to be able to reach the pedals). Anyone interested in assisting as a pilot is very welcome to attend the session. If you are interested in taking part please contact Catriona in our office.



### Basketball

Regular weekly basketball session have been ongoing with the clients from NLN in St Marys hall. Up to 20 have been partaking in the activity each week. The session entails the guys working on dribbling, passing and shooting before going into a game and putting the skills into practice. The NLN enjoyed two fantastic games against the Tullamore NLN & St. Francis in very competitive games.





## S.I.D. Programme

### Laois Lions Wheelchair Rugby Team



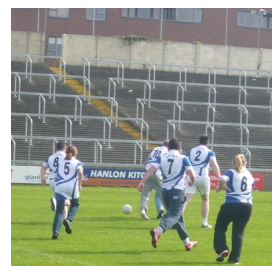
Weekly training sessions take place every Tuesday from 7pm to 9pm in Vicarstown Community Hall. The team continues to go from strength to strength. Competing in the Irish Wheelchair Rugby League keeps the guys focused on working hard and gelling



well as a team. The Lions hosted the latest league day in March this year and won their two games against Ulster & Gaelic Warriors. The next league day is on Aug 19th in Belfast and the team are training hard for that .

### Tag Rugby & Gaelic Football

NLN Clients took part in another 6 week program of both Tag Rugby & Gaelic Football sessions . Getting to try a variety of different sports helps the guys to improve all sorts of skills like their hand-eye coordination and gives



them a good understanding of playing in a team environment. Thanks to the GAA & Leinster Rugby RDOs for taking the sessions and putting the guys through their paces!

### Multi Activity Session

The Weekly Multi Activity sessions take place every Monday from 2 to 3pm in St Marys Hall. Clients from Rehabcare, Rowanberry, Oak House, Mountmellick Acorn Out Reach, Dove House, IWA and Nua Healthcare take part each week. Anything up to 30 participants attend each week. Activities



include some team games as well as individual activities such as indoor javelin and discus throwing.



### Laois Athletics Championships/Summer Athletics Session

The Laois Athletics Championships will take place July 24th in St Abbans Athletics grounds. These games are part of the IWA Sports Grand Prix that takes place every year. The Summer Athletics Session for people with Physical & Sensory impairments take place in St. Abbans for July & August. Participants will be given the opportunity to experience various athletic events. This is a great chance for you to get fit and see how far you can progress.



## General Participation Programmes

### Operation Transformation

270 participants turned out to a lovely morning in Heywood Gardens on the 7th January 2017. Supports were provided by Laois Civil Defence, Zumba Laois, OPW and Heywood Community School.. Feedback was people wanted to two walks in opposite side of the county which Civil Defence would be happy with. Some felt 3.5k was too short but enough for other people. Zumba warm up was brilliant with everyone taking part.

Congrats it was a great event".



### Laois Transformation

Laois Transformation programme coincided with Operation Transformation. The 8 week programme offered the 16 participants the support they needed to take the first steps into introducing new healthy habits into their lives. This year's programme was delivered in partnership with Fitness instructors from our Community Coaches Level 3 under supervision from Portarlinton Leisure Centre. Sessions focused on a variety of physical activities such as Circuit Training, Strength & Conditioning & Aerobics and personal training.



Our Laois Team who participated in Go for Life Go Games 9th June 2017

### Try With TriLaois

28 participated in the 2017 Try with TriLaois programme. These were first time participants who participated in an 8-week coaching sessions, which provided training in Swimming, Running and Cycling all based from Portlaoise Leisure Centre.

All participants of the programme completed the Tri-Laois Triathlon on the 8th April 2017 and over half have since joined the club.

There were approximately 307 participants in the TriLaois Triathlon.

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





## SVT Community Sports Hub

Laois Sports Partnership in association with Sport Ireland are delighted to announce that Laois have received funding for a Community Sports and Physical Activity Hub from dormant account funding. Laois Sports Partnership received the funding following from an Active Communities Report which was completed in the Stradbally, Timahoe and Vicarstown area to increase participation in Sport. The hub will comprise of a part-time paid co-ordinator who will work closely with a community steering committee to increase the opportunity for people in the area to become more physically active. The Parish has a wealth of outdoor facilities which include - walking / cycling along the grass banks of the Grand Canal (which runs through Vicarstown) - fishing and water-based activities on Stradbally Lake and the Grand Canal - woodland walking trails in Dysart and Oughaval Woods near Stradbally - Fossey Mountain walking trails near Timahoe which we hope to utilise.

The aim of the CSH will be Increase the numbers in participation through physical activity, 'Build strong links between local schools and sports clubs, To support active community groups already in operation, Provide a platform to enable clubs to work together, 'Create and promote opportunities for outdoor activities including walking, cycling and kayaking, 'Bridge barriers that may effect the outcomes of an Active Community, 'Provide Leadership and Training opportunities within the community, Bring all appropriate (key) partners/ groups/people together .

Some of the activities that have taken place are SVT Operation Transformation Programme, Fun Run/walk, Sprocket Rocket, Easter Hunt, Canadian Canoeing, Walking Football, Yoga, Meta fit, Pilates, Zumba, Athletics Camp, Bikes & Hikes and Sports Leader Award.

**Sport Leader Award** 1 course completed with 15 participants receiving certification and 2nd course planned for July with 22 participants signed up.



### Fun Run/Walk Bank Holiday Weekend

Over 120 people participated in the 1st fun run/walk held from Stradbally to Vicarstown on 5th June 2017.

SVT Community Sports Hub hosted the 5km family fun run/walk fundraiser for the U14 Timahoe Ladies GAA Team, who were crowned Feile football champions for the first time ever in the history of the club after defeating Portlaoise on the [5th June 2017](#).

U14 Timahoe Ladies now represent Laois at the national competition in Cavan from 23rd to 25th June.



## Bikes & Bites

In association with Bikeweek.ie & Street Feast, the SVT Community Sports HUB has 110 participants on their Bikes & Bites! FREE FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!



### Learn to Kayak Course



### Come & Try Canadian Kayaking



### Meta Fit



### Athletics Camp

