



**Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership
ANNUAL REPORT
2020**



Organisation Name: Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership CLG

Organisation Type: A company limited by guarantee

Company number: 360763

Registered Office: Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, Quay Street Street, Sligo

Auditor: Mulhern Leonard & Associates, Chartered Accountants & Statutory Audit Firm, Mail Coach House, 15/16 Mail Coach Road, Sligo

Principal Bankers: Bank of Ireland, Stephen Street, Sligo

Solicitors: Carter Anhold & Co, 1 Wine Street, Sligo

Directors: Ms. Emer Concannon – Chairperson
 Cllr Marier Casserly – Vice Chairperson
 Mr. Jack Lynch – Company Secretary
 Ms. Kathleen Kane
 Ms. Maire Mc Callion
 Mr Tommy Craddock
 Mr.Gerald O Connor
 Ms. Tina Beirne
 Mr. Joe Mc Donagh
 Ms. Mairead Connolly (resigned 02/07/2020)
 Ms. Geraldine Delorey
 Mr. Michael Carty
 Ms. Emer Concannon
 Cllr Marie Casserly
 Cllr Donal Gilroy
 Cllr Gino O Boyle
 Ms. Cara O Neill
 Mr Kerry Larkin
 Aiden Tighe (resigned in 10/03/2020)/
 Mr. John Feerick (Appointed 09/11/2020)
 Ms. Rose Mc Gowan (Appointed 15/12/2020)

SSRP ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

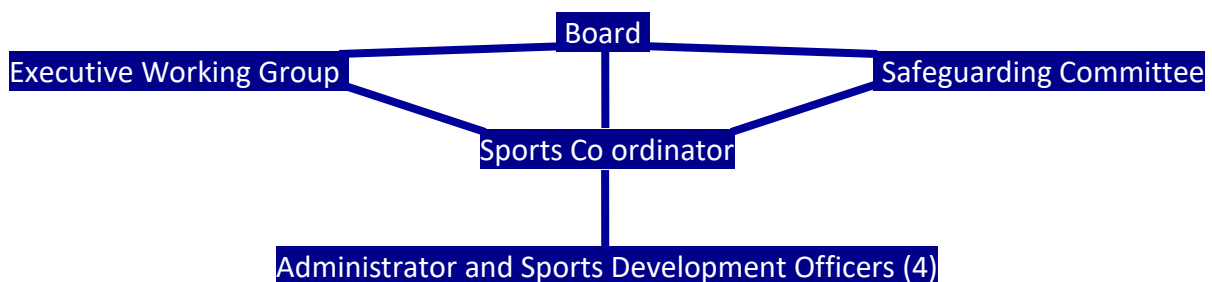


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chairperson’s Statement	3
Sports Co-ordinator’s Statement	4
Key Achievements	5
Section 1: Organisational Purpose	6
Section 2: Structure, Management and Governance	7
Section 3: Objectives, Achievements and Performance	9
Goal 1: Increase Participation	12
Goal 2: Build Capacity	31
Goal 3: Enhance Communications	36
Goal 4: Strengthen the Organisation	39
Section 4: Income Received and Expenditure for 2020	45
Section 5: Future Plans	47

Chairperson's Statement

As Chairperson of Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership I am delighted to introduce the SSRP Annual Report 2020.

Sport and physical activity is central to health and well being and quality of life in Sligo and this report reflects highlights of key programmes, events and services facilitated throughout the year.

While SSRP's Strategic Plan 'Building a Culture of Sport and Physical Activity in Sligo 2018 – 2023' informed our work in 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic introduced a high level of disruption to services which required management and capacity to adapt and be innovative.

During 2020 we witnessed a temporary shut down of clubs, community organisations and sport in general. This presented significant challenges to our staff in how they worked, with onsite initiatives being replaced by virtual programmes and physical activity campaigns.

Despite the many barriers to overcome the staff managed to respond by adapting and being innovative in their approach, which resulted in a wide range of initiatives taking place for a range of target groups. The new circumstances presented significant additional demands on our Sports Co-ordinator Deirdre Lavin and the staff, but they willingly gave of their time and expertise to adapt and create opportunities for participation very successfully. On behalf of the Board, I wish to express our grateful appreciation for this.

I would like to acknowledge the Board of Directors, the Executive Working Group and SSRP Committees for their work and commitment to SSRP, and for their effective oversight and management of the organisation throughout 2020. In particular, I acknowledge their positive engagement and commitment to the priority of ensuring SSRP has effective governance processes in place and is fully compliant with the Sports Governance Code by the end of 2021.

We extend thanks to the statutory agencies for their ongoing investment and support for SSRP including Sligo County Council, Health Service Executive West, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, IT Sligo and Sligo Leader Partnership Company. Also, we would like to acknowledge Sport Ireland for their support and guidance.

Central to the ongoing success of SSRP is the role sports clubs and community organisations play in working with us to make sport happen in communities across the County. We are very appreciative of the work of their many volunteers, despite the many barriers presented by the pandemic.

A key challenge facing SSRP is the management of our ambition and the demands for our services with the available resources, both staffing and financial. With this in mind, we are reviewing our structures to ensure we are continuing to optimise opportunities for people to be active, within the capacity of the SSRP.

I look forward to another active and successful year for SSRP in 2021.

Emer Concannon
Chairperson

Sports Co ordinator's Statement

I welcome the publication of the Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership Annual Report 2020, in what can only be described as a challenging year for sport and indeed the wider society.

Having said that, the importance of sport and physical activity in helping people cope with the challenges of the pandemic became very apparent early on and in response, SSRP together with the sporting community, responded with innovative ways to create opportunities for participation with a particular focus on the most vulnerable groups

SSRP's Strategic Plan 'Building a Culture of Sport and Physical Activity in Sligo 2018 – 2023' informed our work in 2020 while nationally we were guided by the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, Sport Ireland Participation Strategy and the National Physical Activity Plan.

At the start of 2020 SSRP set out to work towards facilitating opportunities for sport and physical activity, building capacity, facilitating strong sporting organisations and providing information. However, plans soon needed to be adapted once the pandemic arrived and I wish to acknowledge the collective and positive response from the SSRP staff. Different ways of working were required including the creation of new resources, the move to delivery of online programmes/ training opportunities and the promotion of different physical activity campaigns.

Working in collaboration with the many volunteers in sports clubs and community organisations throughout County Sligo is fundamental in enabling us to facilitate opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity and I wish to acknowledge everybody who overcame the barriers and challenges presented by the pandemic to support SSRP in making sport and physical activity happen for various target groups .

I extend thanks to the statutory agencies for their ongoing investment and support for SSRP including Sligo County Council, the Health Service Executive West, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, IT Sligo and Sligo Leader Partnership Company. In responding to the pandemic the positive partnership approach adopted with the Local Authority on initiatives including the 'In This Together' campaign and the 'Keep Well' campaign was welcomed.

I would like to acknowledge Sport Ireland for their ongoing support and guidance and the network of Local Sports Partnerships around the country for their positive engagement.

I wish to express my appreciation to our Chairperson Emer Concannon, the Board of Directors and the Executive Working Group for their work, support and guidance in successfully overseeing the organisation through an unprecedented year.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank the SSRP staff for their positive reaction, motivation, commitment and resilience demonstrated throughout the year, and given the necessity to work remotely, their capacity to sustain a positive and shared team spirit is praiseworthy.

The key outcome sought from the work of SSRP is to have 'More People, More Active , More Often' and this report reflects significant progress in achieving this through positive collaboration with all our stakeholders and we look forward to continuing to work towards increasing participation in 2021.

Deirdre Lavin
Sports Co ordinator

Key Achievements:



With our Partners our Key Achievements for 2020 include:

12,860

participants in sport and physical activity



1,438

Women in Sport participants (717 adults / 721 teenage girls)



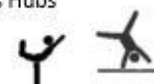
2,925

Children in Youth Sport (1,791 YSW & 1,134 Athletics Fest)



899

Participants involved in 2 Community Sports Hubs



989

Participants taking part in Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative



335

Participants involved in Sports Inclusion Disability Project



283

Participants involved in new Open Water swimming programmes



383 Coaches/ Volunteers supported in Education/ Training

140 participants involved in Safeguarding training

5 resources developed in response to Covid 19 to promote exercise at home with **7,839** participant reached

2,233 participants in **26** Sports Clubs/Community Organisations benefited from Club Development and Special Project funding



€68,776 grants allocated to **52** Clubs through SSRP Covid 19 Small Grants Scheme

116 different Partners engaged across Hub/ SIDO/ Youth Sport/ Urban Outdoor initiatives

22 NGBs engaged to support participation initiatives

Social Media Followers:
7,606 Facebook
1,553 Instagram
352 Twitter

*Sport & Recreation:
A Way of Life
in Sligo*

Section 1 Organisational Purpose

The aim of Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) is to work in collaboration with key statutory, sporting and community organisations to increase participation in sport and physical activity throughout County Sligo. This work is guided by the current Strategic Plan **'Building a Culture of Sport and Physical Activity in Sligo 2018-2023'**.



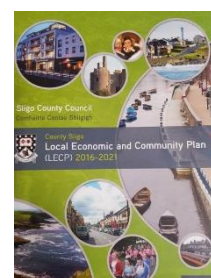
Strategic Plan Implementation

SSRP's Operational Plan for 2020 focussed on delivery of the four strategic plan goals:

- **Increase Participation**
- **Build Capacity**
- **Enhance Communication**
- **Strengthen the Organisation**

In 2020 SSRP focussed on supporting and enabling key target groups to participate in sport and physical activity.

The work of SSRP is also influenced by key national and local strategies:



Section 2: Structure, Management and Governance

Board Representation

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership is managed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is representative of all the major stakeholders in the sports sector. The Board composition is reflected in the diagram below:



Organisation	Representative
Sports Clubs/Organisations	Ms. Kathleen Kane Ms. Maire Mc Callion Mr Tommy Cradock Mr. Gerald O Connor Ms. Tina Beirne
Community and Voluntary Sector: - Sligo Community Forum/ PPN - Disability - Active Age	Mr. Joe Mc Donagh Ms. Mairead Connolly resigned 01/07/20 Replaced by Rose Mc Gowan on 15/12/20 Ms. Geraldine Delorey
Sligo County Council	Mr. Michael Carty Ms. Emer Concannon Cllr Marie Casserly Cllr Donal Gilroy Cllr Gino O Boyle
Health Service Executive	Ms. Cara O'Neill
Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB	Mr. Jack Lynch
Institute of Technology, Sligo	Mr Kerry Larkin
Sligo Leader Partnership Co. Ltd	Aiden Tighe (resigned in 10/03/20)/ Replaced by Mr. John Feerick on 09/11/20

We extend our thanks and gratitude to our Chairperson Ms Emer Concannon, our Company Secretary Mr. Jack Lynch for 2020 and we thank them for their service to the organisation.

Board Meetings

Five Board meetings (a blend of on site and virtual) took place during 2020. Meetings took place on 29th January 2020/ 3rd June 2020/ 1st July 2020/ 10th September 2020/ 14th October 2020.

Annual Geneneral Meeting

The Annual General Meeting took place on 1st July 2020.

In accordance with the company's Articles of Association, the Chairperson proposed the retirement of one third of the directors of the company. The incoming Board included seven newly appointed directors.

Election of Officers::

- Chairperson: Ms. Emer Concannon
- Vice Chairperson Cllr. Marie Casserly
- Company Secretary: Mr. Jack Lynch
- Treasurer: Ms. Deirdre Lavin

Company Accounts:

The 2019 Annual Accounts for Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership which were presented by the company auditors Mulhern Leonard & Co. at the AGM on 1st July 2020 were formally adopted by the Board of Directors.

Executive Working Group

The Executive Working Group supports the Co-ordinator and the Board regarding policy initiation, monitoring of operational plans and finance/ human resource support. The Executive Working Group met on six occasions over the course of 2020 as follows:

23rd January 2020/ 13th May 2020/ 24th June 2020/ 8th September 2020/ 12th October 2020/ 4th December 2020.

SSRP Committees:

The SSRP Board of Directors assigned the Finance, Audit and Human Resource function to the SSRP Executive Working Group with a Terms of Reference approved and the group continued to fulfil this role throughout 2020. A Case Management Committee for Garda Vetting continued to be operational in 2020.

SSRP Staff:



Sports Development Officer Denise Mc Dermott finished work with SSRP on 17/02/2020 and was replaced by Deborah Sherlock who commenced work on 30/03/2020. We thank Denise for her contribution to SSRP and wish her well in the future.

Section 3: Objectives, Achievements and Performance

In 2020 SSRP set out an ambitious Operational Plan with the aim of increasing participation in sport and physical activity throughout County Sligo in line with the Strategic Plan for the organisation. However, once the pandemic arrived it was necessary to be adaptable and innovative in response to the many challenges encountered which required adaptations to the Operational Plan. The most significant change to our plans involved 'how' we delivered on our actions and the level to which we could deliver. The challenges with the pandemic to which SSRP had to respond included:

- The collective team/ shared onsite office based approach to sports development by SSRP staff was challenged due to the necessity for remote working.
- The level of restrictions regarding where people could exercise were significant, with people confined to a 2K or 5K limit for periods of time.
- Some service users/participants were particularly vulnerable with people aged over 70 and the most vulnerable including those with a disability told to cocoon.
- Access to venues, indoor and outdoor, was extremely limited or unavailable and swimming pools were closed.
- Increased responsibility on clubs and volunteers with regard to compliance with Covid-19 guidelines.
- Lack of availability of tutors and instructors for delivery of programmes and courses.
- Schools and various service providers with whom SSRP would partner with closed for long periods with very limited direct contact
- Restrictions on training and education opportunities for volunteers in sport.
- Technology challenges for many people trying to engage in zoom classes.
- Managing and keeping abreast of different protocols for different sectors eg Disability/ NGBs/Youth Sector/Education/LSPs.

While there were many challenges to overcome with the pandemic the capacity of SSRP to respond and adapt is evident from the various achievements outlined under the 4 organisational goals. It is noteworthy to acknowledge some of the opportunities afforded through the pandemic which included:

- An increase in the awareness of the outdoors for land-based physical activity including walking, cycling and running.
- Growth in the popularity of water-based physical activity, none more so than open water swimming.
- Use of zoom technology which enabled people to exercise in their own homes.
- Use of podcast technology which enabled people to exercise in their own time.
- New resources developed which will be of longterm benefit and use by SSRP.
- Awareness of the importance of sport and physical activity during the pandemic has the potential for longterm legacy.
- The potential to adopt a hybrid approach to engagement and programme facilitation, a mix of onsite and online.
- Through working in partnership to address the challenges for sport and physical activity presented by the pandemic we strengthened our relationship with Sport Ireland, the LSP network, statutory agencies and sporting organisations.

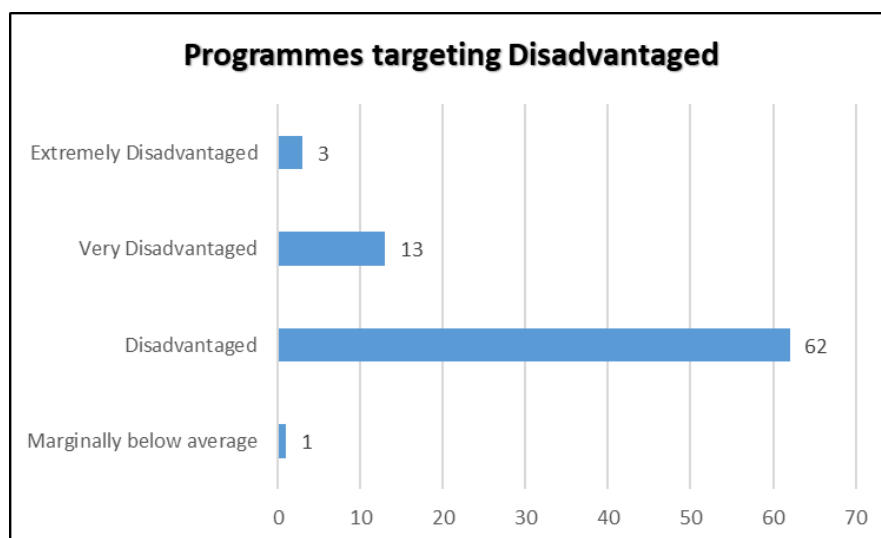
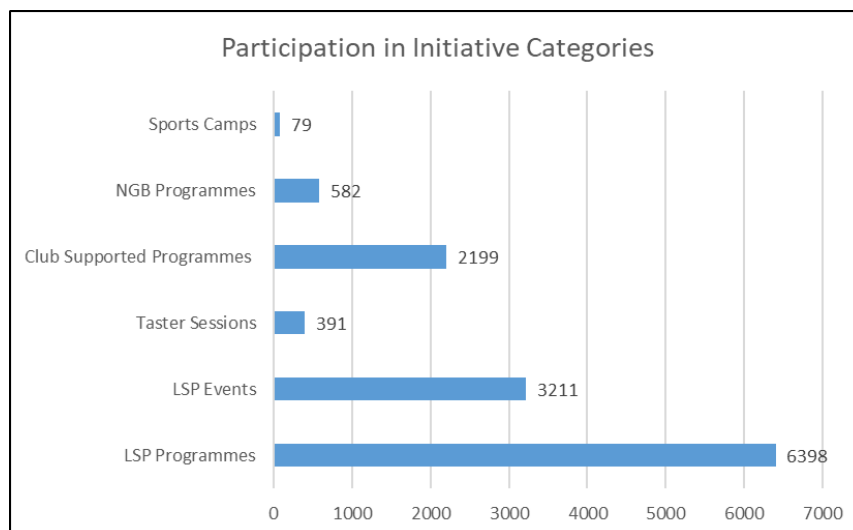
Goal 1: Increase Participation
Co-ordinate and facilitate a diverse range of sport and physical activity for all members of the community

This section of the report details some of the key achievements and outputs delivered in 2020 under the various objectives linked to Goal 1 of the SSRP Strategic Plan.

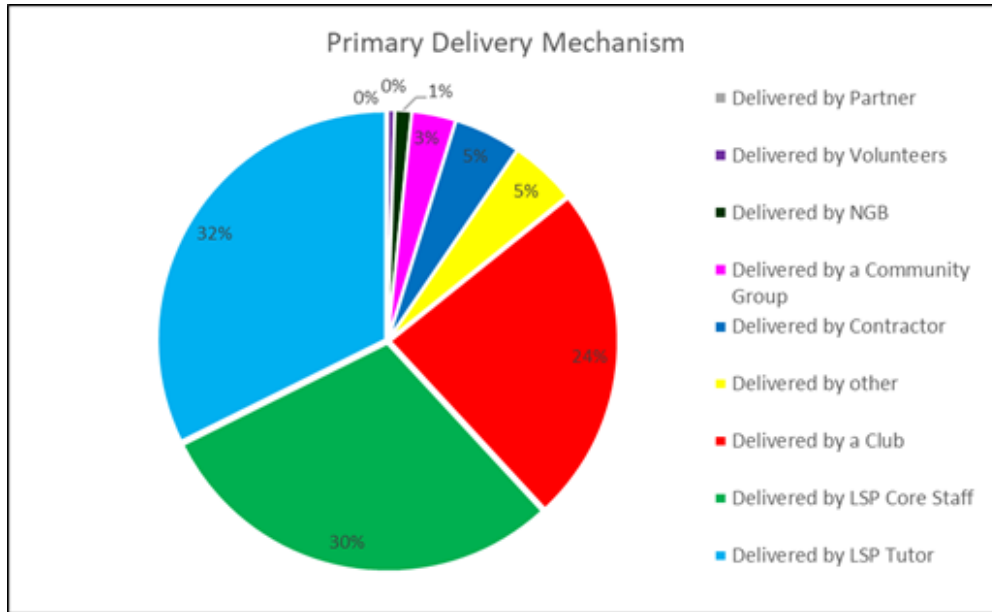
Data analysis from the SSRP activity register indicates the following:

Type of courses/initiatives	Number of participants
151	12,860

Engaging disadvantaged communities in sport and physical activity was a priority for SSRP. An overview of participation in initiative types and levels of disadvantage reached is reflected in the diagrams below:



SSRP utilised a range of delivery mechanisms for facilitating sport and physical activity opportunities.



Goal 1: Increase Participation
 Co ordinate and facilitate a diverse range of sport and physical activity for all members of the community.

Objective 1.1: Co-ordinate and promote, a diverse range of sport and physical activity programmes for lifelong participation with a focus on low participation groups

A sample of SSRP projects which addressed Objective 1.1 included:

Active Sligo from Home Guide

‘Active Sligo from Home’ Guide



‘Active Sligo from Home’ was compiled by SSRP as an online resource to capture some of the many innovative ideas developed for home exercise during the early phases of the Covid-19 restrictions and in doing so support people to achieve the national guidelines of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity five days a week for adults, or 60 minutes a day for children. The resource catered for all ages, fitness levels and sporting interests and was categorised into 8 sections with links to; Children, Youth and Family Activities, Ageing Well Activities, Home Workouts/Fitness, Activities for All Abilities, Bringing the Outdoors Home, Find your Sport- NGB Activities, Coach Education/ Training and Mind Your Well being. The guide was updated on a regular basis as we moved through the various phases of the Covid-19 pandemic and was available on the SSRP website.

Active Centres

There were many Community Centres throughout Sligo supported by SSRP who made enormous efforts to encourage physical activity in their communities, particularly in rural areas. One example was Aclare Community Council who commenced a new Women’s Back to Fitness programme at Kilmactigue Community Centre encouraging and supporting 17 women to get active in a fun and social setting. Another site included Dromore West Community Council who piloted a new Box Fit programme, a mixed session of Boxercise and Circuits which quickly gathered interest locally and led to two filled sessions per week involving 40 participants. Getting off to a great start in January, Skreen Dromard Community Centre provided Circuit Training classes and a new beginner ‘Walk to Run’ programme at the track getting 46 locals active.

2020 saw the continued growth in the popularity of the Men's Only Indoor Rowing initiative with programmes taking place at Geevagh, Bunninadden and Enniscrone with 46 participants.

While classes initially commenced onsite, it was necessary to resort to Zoom classes throughout the lockdown.

Skreen Dromard Community Centre noted

"SSRP have worked with our centre providing support and advice, creating programmes to encourage and support more activity and fitness in our community. Taking on the new virtual sessions during lockdown, the group continued to keep their fitness and activities on track. With new challenges to overcome in the near future, we are confident in and much appreciative of all the support provided by SSRP".

GymFun Virtually

The successful GymFun programme at Sooeey Hall led by Sooeey National School Parent's Association adapted quickly during lockdown to switch to a weekly online, live and interactive recreational class. This 10 week Zoom programme was delivered in the hope of keeping children active from home

Speaking about the programme, a local Parent's Association volunteer noted:

"I cannot commend highly enough the Gymnastics classes that SSRP facilitated over Zoom during lockdown. There was great excitement when the option of continuing with the classes over Zoom came up, bringing a sense of normality for the kids still having their class every Wednesday. The classes were fun, manageable and the children still got to see their friends every week which was so important during those few weeks.

Thank you to all involved in making this happen. As always the support from SSRP was fantastic and it was great to see everyone adapt in such strange times."



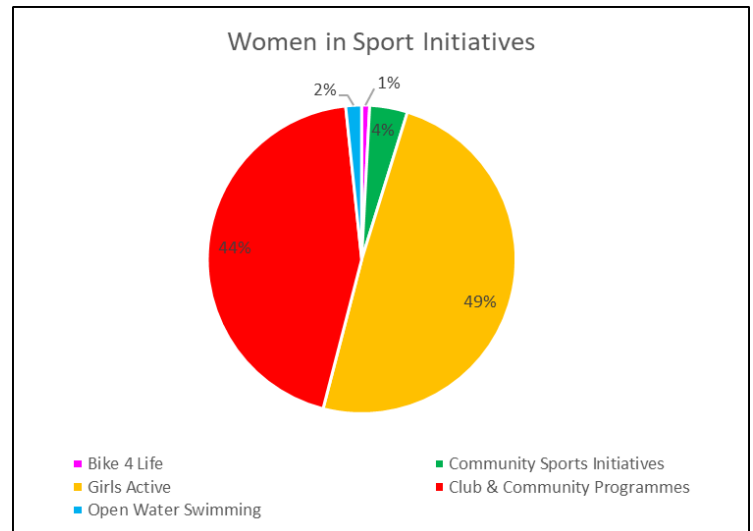
CADRA reaches out to Older Adults

From January to March, Carraroe and District Regeneration Association (CADRA) with support from SSRP facilitated a very successful chair-based programme at Carraroe Community Centre, filling the hall with eager participants, and delivering a fun filled hour of exercise and a great social network for older adults. With so many participants gaining benefit from the programme, CADRA recognised the value and importance of staying connected and providing a virtual weekly class during lockdown.



Women in Sport:

A sample of the Women in Sport initiatives for 2020 included :



Women on Water

Sligo Yacht Club in conjunction with SSRP facilitated women only Sailing training courses over the last few years. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, in 2020 the course had a different format, but the club were delighted to be in a position to facilitate the programme for 12 women. Trainees received guidance and support from female instructors, and the future plan is to mentor the participants into becoming leaders in their sport at the club.

Womens 5K Series

As the annual Sligo Women's 5K Series couldn't be staged in its usual format, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership (SSRP) in association with SuperValu and with support from local Athletics Clubs; Sligo AC, North Sligo AC, Calry AC, Tireragh AC, Corran AC, South Sligo AC and Sligo County Athletics Board developed an alternative plan to get the women of Sligo walking, jogging and running.



The SSRP SuperValu Women's New Way 5K consisted of a six week virtual 5K training programme for women of all ages and abilities throughout County Sligo with a key feature being a podcast to assist beginners with their training. Over 575 women registered to participate in one of the three tailored training programmes available ('Running Rookie', 'Breaking 30' and the 'Speed Queen')

The initiative represents a great partnership between the SuperValu stores, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership and the Athletics clubs and working together, the initiative has promoted and encouraged a healthy lifestyle for all involved and facilitated a pathway into Athletic clubs.



Sport and Inclusion

Building an inclusive culture in sport and physical activity for people with disabilities throughout County Sligo is the fundamental aim of the Sports Inclusion Disability (SIDO) Project, ensuring that people with a disability are given the opportunity to participate in a sport or physical activity of their choice in an enjoyable and meaningful way.

This target group was particularly effected by the pandemic given the vulnerability of many of the participants. Despite the challenges a number of initiatives were facilitated.



A sample of SSRP Disability Inclusion projects in 2020 included:

Activities For All

Supporting People with a Disability to improve their fitness, develop their physical skills and balance, and increase their overall physical activity levels in a fun way, was the focus for the Activities for All online exercise programme, a resource designed by Sport Ireland and the LSP network in response to the pandemic. The programme was facilitated in Sligo in conjunction with a number of local HSE community houses and was a response to the increased number of adults with an intellectual disability (ID) now living in community settings. The programme involved 13 HSE community houses and recruited 19 adults of various ability levels to participate in regular exercise sessions twice a week for six weeks. Using the home exercise resource a qualified SSRP fitness instructor delivered the online sessions via Zoom to the various houses involved. All sessions were adapted to include all ability levels and over 27 HSE staff working in the community houses over the duration of the programme supported the participants throughout.



Inclusive Playground Facilities

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership was delighted to support Sligo County Council in the development of an inclusive roundabout as part of the playground infrastructure at Doorly Park. At the launch Cathaoirleach Cllr Dara Mulvey, Mayor Cllr Rosaleen O Grady, Acting Sligo County Council Chief Executive Tom Kilfeather were joined by SSRP Chairperson Emer Concannon, SSRP staff and some enthusiastic participants who tried out the new equipment. Funding for the inclusive roundabout was provided jointly by Sligo County Council and SSRP through Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts.



Woodlands for Health



The highly popular Woodlands for Health programme, which involves walking in local woodlands and forest areas, returned for a period in September/October 2020 much to the delight and appreciation of the adults from Sligo Mental Health Services who participated. A series of 8 walks was completed in various scenic locations around the county and an experienced SSRP Walking Leader with support

from four Occupational Therapy (OT) staff from the HSE Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit based in Sligo led each walk. In line with Government Covid-19 guidance at the time, a maximum of 10 people attended the walks each week and again the feedback was extremely positive.

Social Soccer

Social Soccer, the inclusive community based Soccer initiative developed by SSRP managed to make a return for a number of weeks in the Autumn/Winter of 2020 under strict protocols to ensure the safety of those involved. Twelve adult participants from various backgrounds and some attending local Adult Support Services, signed up for the outdoor programme based at the Astro facility at IT Sligo. Two experienced SSRP Soccer coaches oversaw and delivered the programme and it proved a very welcome release for all the young men involved in what has been a difficult time for everyone.



Yoga Movement For Kids



Big Tree Yoga located at their facility in Caltragh provides the setting for the Yoga Movement for Kids camp which took place over three days. Aimed at children on the Autism spectrum aged 6 -12 years of age, the programme is designed to cater for each child's individual needs and strengths. The small numbers enable the instructors to support the children on an almost 1:1 basis helping them to develop their strength, co-ordination and flexibility through a combination of activities, whilst also developing their body awareness and self-esteem.

Indoor Archery

Archery is inclusive and the Carrowmore Archers Club new indoor element to their inclusive Open Archery programme continued to run weekly at Summerhill College prior to the start of the pandemic. Primarily targeting adults and young people with limited mobility/physical disabilities, the Archery sessions are run by highly experienced and supportive instructors from the club. It is these instructors who are central to the success of the programme as they put the participants at ease from the moment they arrive and progress through the sessions. They make the club and the sport accessible and enable people of all ages and abilities to participate.



North West Stormers go Outdoors



Local club North West Stormers teamed up with North West Adventure Tours to run a two day outdoor pursuits camp that was designed to include children with mobility difficulties and their siblings and parents. Now highly experienced at catering for all levels and abilities, the instructor from NW Adventure Tours put together an action packed couple of days which included Bushcraft, Cycling and Stand Up/Sit Up paddling. The children really excelled at all the activities and the club which was established for children with a physical disability is going from strength to strength due in no small part to the great work of the parents involved.

Surf 4 All

The annual Surf 4 All programme took place at Streedagh Beach targeting young people with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. It was delivered in a safe and welcoming 2:1 setting with two qualified instructors from SSRP facilitating one child in the water for each session. This format was adapted in order to deliver the Surfing programme safely and it worked extremely well with over 20 young people availing of a great week of sun, sea and surf. It also proved a very welcome respite for the parents of the children involved who, like all parents, had been trying to keep their children active and engaged throughout the difficult months of the lockdown. A number of parents commented that their children really thrived being in the water and their contentment when they are Surfing helped them not only to be active and to develop their Surfing skills but to be safe and happy during a time that was a challenge for all.



Seniors Sport

Given the pandemic, facilitating opportunities for physical activity for the older adult was challenging but despite this a range of successful initiatives was facilitated including:



SSRP Ageing Well from Home Initiative



In order to maintain a connection with our older population during the pandemic, SSRP in association with Sligo County Council, the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists, HSE West, and Sligo Public Participation Network developed the 'Sligo Exercise at Home' leaflet to encourage older people in Sligo to be physically active on a regular basis to assist them in maintaining good physical and mental well being. Encouraging people to move more at home was a fun way older people could be active every day and the leaflet was delivered to over 2,500 older adults during April and May. In addition, SSRP linked with the HSE West Physiotherapy Services and Ocean FM, whereby older people could tune in to the 'Francie Boylan Show' twice weekly during the month of May to perform the exercise live. This proved extremely popular with older adults throughout the county, many of whom contacted Ocean FM to say they found the programme extremely positive and easy to follow. A follow up exercise programme targeting older adults during the winter months in conjunction with Ocean FM was facilitated in November.

Stronger for Longer

The new 'Stronger for Longer' programme developed by Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership in association with Healthy Ireland, Sligo County Council and Sligo Local Community Development Committee targeted men and women over the age of 50 to engage in a fun, supervised 8-week physical activity programme. Phase One of the online programme was delivered in October/November 2020 and targeted people from all over County Sligo.



The Stronger for Longer programme was facilitated by experienced exercise and fitness instructors who supported the 25 people involved in Phase One, to participate in a series of moderate intensity physical activity sessions twice a week throughout the 8-week period. The programme was extremely successful in terms of participation, with over 80% attendance rates at both programmes.

One participant who attended most of the sessions reported that she

“Found the class really good. As someone in my early fifties & experiencing the 'lessening' of youth and all that goes with that I found it great. A pain that I had in my hip certainly lessened, and I feel the class has benefited my upper body strength which I've much needed.”

Go for Life Games Workshop

The Go for Life games programme in Sligo involves a collaboration between Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership and Go for Life, the national programme for sport and physical activity for older people. Through the provision of fun, easy to follow, adapted indoor games, the Go for Life Games programme empowers older people to increase their physical activity levels in an enjoyable and



sociable environment. A Go for Life Games training workshop was facilitated by SSRP with eight local active age groups selecting two physical activity leaders (PALs) from their group to attend the workshop. These PALs were introduced to the three target games with the purpose of them teaching the games to the other members in their groups before participating in a Go For Life Games tournament between the eight centres involved. The experience for the older adults involved was a very positive one and each centre also received a Go for Life Games equipment bag from SSRP on loan to enable them to practice and hone their skills at each of the games.

Sport Ireland Older Adult Home Exercise Plan

SSRP worked in collaboration with Sport Ireland and the network of Local Sports Partnerships to develop resources for home exercise with the vulnerable group of older adults in mind. The resources were widely distributed by SSRP and well received by the older adult community.



Objective 1.2: Lead and co-ordinate collaborative, sustainable and community-led approaches in the development of sport and physical activity in disadvantaged areas.

East City Community Sports Hub

The Sligo East City Community Sports Hub represents a collective of progressive community organisations, sports clubs and agencies working together to increase participation in sport and recreation in the Sligo East City area. The project focuses on growing participation by offering a range of sporting activities, engagement with community group and sport clubs, encouraging community leadership and bringing stakeholders together to plan and deliver sport in the Sligo East City area. This project is funded by Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts and the Cranmore Regeneration Project. Below are some of the key highlights of projects delivered in the Sligo East City area. SSRP works with partner agencies including Sligo County Council, Cranmore Regeneration Office, Cranmore Co-Operative Society and the Health Services Executive to promote physical activity and health for residents of the East City area.



The East City Community Sports Hub got off to a great start in 2020, with plenty of activities for all, from adult Yoga classes to fun youth Multi Sport programmes, as well as a number of sports clubs including St. John’s GAA, East City Community Walking Group, Sligo Lawn Bowls Club and Sligo City Boxing Club delivering activities in the community.

The pandemic soon after brought everything to a halt, and in late summer local groups and organisations prepared and facilitated the safe return of sport. To allow the game to resume safely Sligo Lawn Bowls Club worked diligently with support from SSRP and the Bowling League of Ireland to complete their risk assessment and return to sport plan, resulting in 28 members successfully returning to play. The club has also installed new CCTV cameras at the Lawn Bowls Facility at Cleveragh Park, with support from the LCDC’s Community Enhancement Fund, SSRP and Sligo County Council Parks Department, which is a great addition to the club ensuring the facility is monitored and maintained safely.

St. John's GAA Club supporting Inclusion



36 young people from the East City area took part in an Indoor Gaelic Games programme at the Regional Sports Centre from January to March, supported by SSRP. With all club plans on hold from March to June, St. John's quickly adapted and put safe protocols in place to run a nursery programme at Cuilbeg, Carraroe throughout July and August, involving 49 children from East City.

Summer Supping

The weather was perfect for teenagers from the 'Big Brother Big Sister' Sligo project who enjoyed Stand Up Paddleboarding with Sligo Bay SUP during August, supported by SSRP.



Bunninadden Community Sports Hub

The Bunninadden Community Sports Hub represents a partnership approach between community organisations, sports clubs, schools and agencies working together to increase participation in sport and recreation in the Bunninadden community and surrounding localities. The project focuses on increasing participation by offering a range of sporting activities, engaging with community groups and sport clubs, encouraging community leadership and bringing organisations together to plan and deliver sport and physical activity in the Bunninadden area. The initiative is in its third phase with sport and recreational programming, club-community links, building strong organisational structures and providing education and training opportunities the key focus. This project is funded by Sport Ireland, Dormant Accounts. Below are some of the key highlights in 2020.



Bunninadden Community Centre

In early 2020 Bunninadden Community Centre offered a range of opportunities but similar to other communities the pandemic resulted in activities being paused. When the opportunity to return to sport presented itself in Autumn, the Bunninadden Community Centre piloted a 4 week living room fitness programme delivered over Zoom.

Ballinalack Community Park Outdoor Gym

Programmes planned for the Outdoor Gym at Ballinalack were postponed due to Covid-19 however a member of the local committee presented to SSRP the innovative idea to do a short video on how to safely use the gym equipment with the intention of sharing it widely in the community on social media. The purpose of the video is to use it as a tool to motivate people to use the equipment with the correct exercise techniques practised in a safe manner. It is intended that this resource will particularly benefit people when exercising on an individual basis. In addition, it is planned to share the exercise video on the SSRP website as a useful resource for people exercising in Outdoor Gym spaces which became increasingly popular during the pandemic.



South Sligo Community Park

South Sligo Community Park was supported by SSRP in finalising the upgrading of facilities at the Community Park which involved installing lights, enhancement work on the track and developing a long jump area. The facility will afford the opportunity for additional outdoor physical activity and critically, due to the lighting, it will enable programmes to be hosted after dark.

Objective 1.3: Provide increased opportunities for children and young people to participate in sport and physical activity.

Lets Play Sligo



At the outset of the pandemic and when schools were closed SSRP developed a 'Let's Play Sligo 21 Day Physical Activity Home Challenge' for children to take part in over a three week period. This linked in with the national initiative 'Lets Play Ireland' and was supported locally by Sligo County Council, Healthy Ireland and the HSE. The aim of this challenge was to get children physically active for the recommended 60 minutes per day in a fun and engaging way. All of the games and activities were designed so children could play either by themselves or the whole family could join in. SSRP developed a booklet and physical activity cards with instructions and activities. The booklet was distributed to a wide range of settings including schools, community organisations, FRCs and individual homes in targeted disadvantaged areas.

National Be Active Day

Sport Irelands National Be Active Day was held on the 28th of June. This was a concept developed by the 29 Local Sports Partnerships in conjunction with Sport Ireland and challenged all families to be active at home and participate in fun challenges. A printable list of games and activities was developed, all of which were adapted for people of all abilities and skill levels. There was a competition and a prize for the most creative National Be Active Day activity. Sligo had great engagement and SSRP received very positive feedback from many people who seized the opportunity to get active, with many posting images of their various activities to social media.



Youth Sport West



Since 1999 when it was established by Sligo VEC (now MSL ETB) the Youth Sport West project has gone from strength to strength in providing school-aged children the opportunity to participate in a range of extra curricular sporting activities. In the 2020 school year the project got off to a very



busy start, however once the pandemic started the programme ceased and was restarted with limited programming later in the year. Despite the disruption, 65 extra curricular sport and physical activity programmes were delivered in 15 different sports and activities across 41 different schools.

SSRP SuperValu Athletics Fest 2020 – ‘Staying Local’



The annual Super Valu Primary Schools Athletics Fest co-ordinated by Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership took place in September with over 1,000 school children taking part the over a week-long event. The 2020 event coincided with European Week of Sport (23rd to 30th Sept) and was selected by Sport Ireland as one of its

flagship events to celebrate the week-long programme of physical activity. This year saw the event ‘Staying Local’ with each school participating from their school grounds with SSRP Athletics officials timing the events in each school. The same great concept as years past, with the same great spirit but done in a new way!

The initiative once again proved to be a huge success with a record number of schools and participants enjoying the activities. Over 1,000 primary school children representing 36 primary schools from all over County Sligo took part. The event is now in its 16th year and continues to grow in popularity with the focus being on participation, fun and enjoyment. The event was kindly supported by Super Valu stores throughout County Sligo. During the week-long event, a team of volunteers from County Sligo Athletics Association, Athletics clubs throughout County Sligo and SSRP staff worked collectively to ensure the event ran off smoothly.



Balance Bike Programme

Following a successful pilot programme, Balance Bike training and programmes are being rolled out across County Sligo with an additional 2 pre-schools involved in 2020. SSRP in partnership with Sligo County Childcare Committee supported through the CYPSC Healthy Ireland fund are delivering on-site training to pre-school teachers through a qualified Cycling instructor as part of this programme. The training aims to give pre-school teachers the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to effectively deliver fun and practical sessions to children in their pre schools.



Girls Active:



Girls Active is an extra-curricular physical activity programme. It is a joint programme between the Health Services Executive West, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Youth Sport West and aims to increase the number of teenage girls involved in long-term regular physical activity through developing more supportive environments for girls' physical activity in schools. 13 secondary schools and education centres across Sligo delivered the Girls Active extra curricular programme for teenage girls at their schools with over 700 participants availing of the activities in 2020, with a mixture of onsite and virtual activities.

One of the last large group events before schools closed and restrictions were introduced took place on the 5th March 2020, the annual Girls Active Activity Festival, with over 200 teenage girls in attendance from across County Sligo. There was an energetic atmosphere in the IT Sligo Knocknarea Arena as the teenage girls participated in a fun dance-based group warm up followed by taster sessions in a variety of activities, including; Pilates, Dance, Gym, Spinning, Boxing, Rugby, Indoor Rowing, HIIT Class, Archery, Kettlebells, Boccia and Skittles. This jam-packed day concluded with a yoga style relaxation cool down session led by the IT Sligo Health Science students.



Objective 1.4: Support and enable participation in community and sports facilities in the built and natural environment.

Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative

The Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative is a project funded through the Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts programme. The aim of the initiative is to increase the number of people in urban settings undertaking physical activity through adventure sports in the outdoors. In Sligo the initiative is enabled through the fantastic natural resources right on the doorstep of Sligo Town including the Garavogue River, Lough Gill and Cleveragh Park. The focus for the project in 2020 was on Kayaking, Rowing and Sailing.



River Development

In 2020 the Sligo Kayak River Development Committee was set up to look at and discuss kayaking on the Garavogue River. The committee has 14 members representing all the kayak clubs in Sligo, along with private and commercial kayak and water sports based companies located in the area. In January, they met and prioritised hazards for kayaking and water users and agreed to proceed with a project to improve safety around four hazards under the footbridge. Meetings took place with Sligo County Council and the Dept. of Fisheries on site regarding these hazards and potential options to reduce their risk. After a lot of research into booms and relevant providers, a company recognised by the British Canoe Union and UK Environmental Agency was identified as a provider. A final meeting took place in July with the booms approved by all parties involved in the project. The safety booms are currently being manufactured and will be installed in due course.



Kayaking on Temple House Lake

Temple House Lake in South Sligo is on the doorstep of the towns of Ballymote and Tubbercurry and is an ideal location to learn to Kayak on its flat calm water. The Sligo Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative saw 18 adults get a taste of Kayaking on Temple House Lake during summer 2020. For some of the participants it was their first experience of sitting in a kayak. Everyone really enjoyed the experience. These taster sessions allowed people to get a feel for this very enjoyable recreational outdoor water sport.

Following the taster sessions those who had a keen interest were able to sign up to a further Kayak Introductory Course that focussed on developing kayaking skills, water safety skills and knowledge giving people a lifelong skill for recreational physical activity on the water.



Strong Partnerships create Opportunities to Kayak

Sligo Grammar School Kayak Club hosted Sligo Community Training Centre students on an Introduction to Kayak Course for the third year running. This has become a very successful partnership where the club shares its resources to give opportunities to the wider community to experience Kayaking. The course ran over 3 weeks where Sligo CTC students attended the Sligo Grammar School Kayak Club facility and received coaching on the Garavogue River thereby building their skills and confidence on the water.

Also, Sligo Kayak Club hosted another successful WOW (Women on Water) Kayaking programme during the summer months when restrictions were lifted. This programme is a partnership between SSRP, Sligo Kayak Club, Canoeing Ireland, Bridge the Gap and Cranmore Co-op. The initiative helped create opportunities for women living locally to the Sligo Kayak Club on the banks of Lough Gill to experience Kayaking in a supportive friendly environment. The unique element of this women's only course is it is fully organised, delivered and coached by women.



Fair Winds Sailing Programme

Under the Urban Outdoor programme SSRP with the support of Wild West Sailing facilitated opportunities for teenage girls to experience the sport of Sailing. Active teaching in key areas of communication, co-operation and team skills, self confidence in both oneself and the abilities of crew mates, and taking responsibility for the safety and well being of oneself and crew mates were fundamental parts of the programme.

Mercy College Sligo, a school based in the East City area of Sligo took up the programme with 15 students getting involved. This programme benefitted all the students especially those with special needs and from disadvantaged areas.

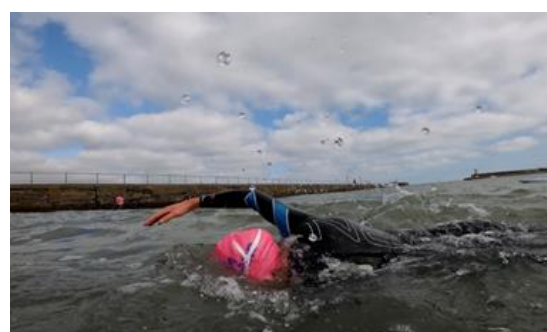


Growth of Popularity of Open Water Swimming in 2020

Recognising that increasing numbers of people are interested in Open Water Swimming but with some unsure where to start, local community organisations, Enniscrone & District Community Council and Dromore West Village Community Enhancement Group reached out to SSRP with a request to support the facilitation of programmes in West Sligo. SSRP linked with Swim Ireland's Participation Officer and their qualified coaching team dedicated to supporting beginners. With small groups of 12 and friendly experienced staff, this is the perfect introduction to open water swimming based at the scenic beaches of West Sligo. Combining these sessions with an abundance of encouragement, patience and most importantly, fun, we hope this will be their first step in their journey to becoming a true open water swimmer.

A representative from Enniscrone & District Community Council stated:

"People often turn to exercise at times of uncertainty to help deal with stress and promote positive mental health. Open water swimming in particular is an excellent stress reliever and people taking the course have really felt the benefit of their weekly dose of 'Vitamin Sea'. We are very grateful to SSRP for helping to organise the programme in Enniscrone. Programmes like this are hugely beneficial in teaching respect for the sea and confidence in the water."



Objective 1.5: Facilitate a series of 'trigger events' which connect people to participation.

Bike Week 2020

Bike Week 2020 showcased fantastic Cycling opportunities in Sligo with over 380 cyclists getting on their bikes.

Bike Week, a national celebration and promotion of all that is great about bikes and cycling, usually takes place every year over a week in June but as with many events in 2020 it was postponed due to the pandemic and rescheduled to take place in

September. Locally the week was co-ordinated by Sligo County Council and SSRP with support from many local cycling clubs and community organisations.



During Bike Week there was an opportunity to promote the newly opened Coolaney National Mountain Bike Park with Introduction to Mountain Biking sessions for women, men, children and teenagers.

The rescheduled time of year in autumn with its shorter evenings and Covid-19 restrictions, required a rethink of previous year's events, but an exciting schedule was planned for a variety of locations across the County and included innovative initiatives including a 'Dawn Bike to Breakfast Cycle' and a 'Sunset Cycle'. There was something for all ages and abilities.



Objective 1.6: Monitor the geographic provision of participation opportunities.

Actions delivered:

An annual operation plan for 2020 was developed and delivered which reflected a broad balance of programmes for all SSRP target groups across County Sligo.

An up to date Activity Register was maintained which monitored the delivery of key objectives and performance indicators within the Operational Plan including Objective 1.6.

Goal 2: Build Capacity
Assist the organisations and volunteers who provide sport and physical activity to develop and grow.

This section details some of the key achievements and outputs delivered in 2020 under the various objectives under Goal 2.

Objective 2.1: Empower sports clubs to facilitate and sustain sports participation for target groups.

Club Development

Given the pandemic and all the challenges it presented for sports clubs much of SSRP’s support to clubs in 2020 involved assistance and advice with regard to their policies and procedures for the ‘Return to Sport’.

1 new club development was supported in 2020 involving the Medh’s Dragon Warriors, a women’s only Rowing club.

6 clubs/ organisations received club development grants for new initiatives engaging 315 participants involving the sports of GAA, Volleyball, Boxing, Basketball and Soccer.



Special Project Grant Scheme 2020

SSRP facilitated a ‘Special Project Participation Grant Scheme’ with a focus on projects which increase participation in sport and physical activity in County Sligo in line with the SSRP Strategy . The scheme involved the allocation of €15,000 to sports clubs and organisations for club development initiatives and events. 20 projects were funded in the areas of developing water sports, sport in disadvantaged areas, club development, Sport for people with a Disability and performance targeted initiatives.

A summary of some of the clubs and projects funded under the 2020 Special Project Scheme:

Carrowmore Archers	Sligo County Boxing Board
Shuttle Stars Badminton Club	Red Hawks Basketball
North West Stormers	Sligo Life Saving Club
Sligo Higashi Karate Club	Yeats County Hockey Club
Valley Rovers FC	County Sligo Surf Club
Sligo Climbing Club	Gateway Boxing Club
Sligo Tennis Club	Lough Arrow Rowing Club
Sligo All Stars Basketball Club	Dynamo Gym Club
Owenmore Gaels GAA Club	Sligo GAA
Ballymote Celtic FC	County Sligo Swimming Club

Covid-19 Club Small Grant Scheme

Following the announcement of €70 million of funding by the Government to support the sports sector in response to the Covid-19 crisis, a Covid-19 Club Small Grant Scheme was rolled out nationally as part of a series of Covid-19 related funding schemes from Sport Ireland. Locally the initiative was delivered through SSRP with the grant scheme opened for applications in August. Clubs had the opportunity to apply for up to €1,500 for Covid-19 related expenditure associated with the reopening of their clubs and to implement Covid-19 related hygiene and social distancing protocols. 52 clubs and groups in Sligo were successful in securing €68,776 under the scheme. This measure is one of many introduced by Sport Ireland to support the sector in addressing the ongoing pressures facing clubs during the pandemic.



Objective 2.2: Assist in the development and growth of Providers especially in the community, education and health sectors.

Extensive work was undertaken to build capacity among community settings including After School groups, Men's Sheds, Family Resource Centres, Community Centres, Active Age Groups and Disability Groups.

Objective 2.3: Support the volunteer and coach experience through, guidance, training and education.

Coach Education

Support for volunteers and coaches through education and training continued to be a priority for SSRP in 2020. An ongoing Club Development Programme is in place, which provides grant aid assistance to personnel from sports clubs within County Sligo to undertake Club Training/Development initiatives. The take up on this scheme and the roll out of training was disrupted due to the pandemic but despite this a number of training programmes, both virtual and onsite, took place. Five training requests were supported involving 32 participants including the sports of Gymnastics, Badminton, Soccer, Surfing and Athletics.

Autism in Sport Workshop

Involving people with Autism in meaningful sport and physical activity opportunities can be challenging, and so ideas and practical strategies for sports leaders, coaches, teachers, special needs assistants, parents and indeed anyone working with people with Autism Spectrum Disorder provides a welcome training opportunity. The first Autism in Sport workshop was delivered in Sligo in February with support from the CARA Centre in Tralee.



The 3 hour workshop provided the 20 attendees with an understanding of Autism whilst focusing on the delivery of sport and physical activity. The first workshop was extremely popular, filling up in a matter of days and plans are being put in place to deliver further workshops.

Volunteer Support Programme in Boxing

The SSRP Boxing Volunteer Support Initiative, funded under the Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts programme, supported 4 local Boxing clubs to develop their capacity and provide education and training opportunities for local volunteers and coaches. Volunteers from 4 Boxing clubs completed a First Aid Course and a Safeguarding Course while 4 volunteers also attended a Judging Course. All clubs were also represented at Sligo's Open Championships where the newly qualified judges put their new learning into practise.

In addition, SSRP was delighted to support the Connacht Boxing Council IABA to host 'Fighting Back, a Knock Out Week of Boxing Seminars', facilitated on Zoom with the aim of helping to keep local coaches, volunteers and members motivated during lockdown with 160 participants getting involved across the week.



Physical Literacy Workshop

The Understanding Physical Literacy Module (Online) was developed by Sport Ireland Coaching to provide a personal and professional development opportunity for those interested in developing their own physical literacy and/or helping others develop their physical literacy throughout the life course.

A course on this topic was facilitated over Zoom with 14 participants from parents, pre-school teachers to sports coaches completing the workshop; all coming away with a greater insight into what physical literacy is and how to develop it in their club/community setting.



Disability Awareness Training

Building the capacity of local coaches, sports leaders and volunteers to deliver high quality, inclusive and adapted physical activity and sports sessions for people with disabilities remains one of the key goals of the Sports Inclusion Disability project. In early 2020 sixty one students at IT Sligo received training in the area of Disability Awareness. In other years the students would proceed to put their knowledge into practice by volunteering on SIDO programmes but due to the pandemic this was not feasible in 2020.

Safeguarding in Children's Sport Courses

Implementation of the Sport Ireland Safeguarding in Children's Sport programme continued to be a priority with SSRP in 2020 and due to the pandemic the majority of courses were delivered over Zoom. SSRP provided the following training in 2020:

	Safeguarding 1 Awareness
No. of Courses	9
No. of Participants	115

Objective 2.4: Develop relationships, build capacity and facilitate shared participation initiatives with a focus on minority sports NGBs.

SSRP worked in partnership with many National Governing Bodies of Sport throughout 2020 including working partnerships on key initiatives with Swim Ireland, the Irish Amateur Boxing Association, Mountaineering Ireland, Cycling Ireland, Irish Bowling Association, Rowing Ireland and Canoe Ireland. A sample of NGB engagement is outlined below;

Introduction to Climbing

In February, the tallest portable climbing wall in Ireland visited Sligo as part of the Volunteer Support Project with Sligo Climbing Club, funded by Sport Ireland through Dormant Accounts. This event was the final event of a year's hard work by the Sligo Climbing Club developing governance, participating in training and capacity building for their volunteers and members.

The event was open to the public and gave over 250 people an opportunity to partake in a taster session in indoor climbing on the indoor portable wall.



Objective 2.5: Support inclusion and a positive culture in sport and physical activity amongst commercial providers.

SSRP worked with commercial providers with a particular focus on the outdoor recreation area.

Among the sporting opportunities provided in conjunction with the commercial sector were Cycling, Mountain Biking, Kayaking, Orienteering and Surfing.

Goal 3: Enhance Communications

Promote awareness about the needs and opportunities for sport and physical activity through a shared vision and a collaborative approach

3.1: Effectively communicate the SSRP brand, role and actions.

Ongoing promotion of the SSRP brand and logo through a range of mediums took place with investment in new brand materials.

Communications was built into SSRP programme delivery at the programme design stage.

As part of the Local Authority County-wide Community Response initiative, SSRP played a key role in promoting sport and physical activity as part of the solution to coping positively with the challenging circumstances during the various lockdowns and in doing so, played an active part in the 'In this Together' and the 'Keep Well' campaigns.



3.2 Manage the channels and systems of communication with SSRP's internal and external stakeholders.

Social Media Channels: The SSRP website and social media channels were updated on an ongoing basis with regular use of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

SSRP Website: In addition to the ongoing website management and updating in 2020, our Covid-19 response resulted in the development of new '#BeActive' and 'Return to Sport' sections with new and relevant content, as we endeavoured to signpost people to useful resources and supports to help them keep active.

Resources: a range of resources was developed and promoted for a variety of in-person and online programmes with a key focus on engaging disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups. In achieving this SSRP worked with local community organisations, family resource centres and statutory agencies in order to gain as much engagement as possible.

Newsletter: A bi-annual newsletter was produced and widely circulated.

Local Media: Regular press releases were submitted to the local print media while coverage of SSRP events through the local radio station Ocean FM was also pursued.

Video resources: A variety of videos were created in 2020 on the SSRP YouTube account as part of our Covid-19 response ranging from videos targeting youth activity during school closures to videos promoting the outdoors and instruction on safe use of outdoor gym equipment.

Campaigns: SSRP linked with a variety of national physical activity campaigns promoted by Sport Ireland including;

- The National BeActive Day 2020
- A 4 Week Physical Activity Plan for People with a Disability
- An Older Adult Home Exercise Plan
- A 'Your Personal Best' Men Over 45 Campaign
- Get Outdoors

3.3: Develop and strengthen the sport and physical activity network at agency and local level.

National Collaboration with the LSP network/Sport Ireland: Covid-19 presented an opportunity to collaborate more effectively with Sport Ireland and the LSP network. This resulted in a number of positive and tangible outcomes, as the Zoom platform allowed easier and more regular communication than pre-Covid-19. Outputs included the development of resources including the National Sports Day at Home resource, Older Adult resource and the Disability Inclusion resource. LSP Co-ordinator/Sport Ireland fortnightly meetings took place over Zoom and a number of CSDO Network meetings were held. Sport Ireland’s Participation Unit established a new National LSP Women In Sport Working Group in August 2020 and SSRP is delighted to have a representative on this important group, hoping to make a difference for Women In Sport.



Committees: SSRP staff engaged in a series of committees as part of their working in partnership approach to their work. The list of Committees and Boards with SSRP Representation in 2020 included:

National Sports Policy Sports Leadership Group	CARA SIDO network
Covid 19 National Sports Monitoring Group	Sligo Bike Week Steering Committee
Sport Ireland National LSP Co-ordinator Network	Cranmore Community Development Forum
Sport Ireland National LSP Evaluation Working Group	Sligo Traveller Support Group Youth Sub Committee
Sligo County Council COVID-19 Community Response Forum	Bunninadden Community Sports Hub Steering Committee
Sligo County Council Age Friendly Committee	Sligo County Boxing Board/Volunteer Support
CYPSC Active and Healthy Working Group	National LSP Women in Sport Working Group

Local Agency Networks: Throughout 2020 SSRP linked with Sligo County Council in relation to feedback on actions within the Local County Development Plan where SSRP was the lead agency. SSRP linked successfully with the LCDC with regard to accessing funding for initiatives under the Healthy Ireland fund. In 2020 SSRP continued to support the development of Sligo as an Age Friendly County. Collaboration in relation to facility development and usage took place. SSRP linked with the Public Participation Network (PPN) and availed of the PPN structures to share information and network. In addition, in response to the pandemic SSRP played an active part in the Sligo County Council led Community Response Team and worked closely with the Local Authority on a number of shared Covid-19 response projects.

SSRP linked with the HSE Health Promotion and HSE Primary Care to implement physical activity initiatives, while strong links were fostered with the HSE Disability Department to support inclusion in programmes.

SSRP worked in partnership with statutory agencies including Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, the Institute of Technology Sligo and Sligo Leader Partnership Company to achieve shared objectives in the areas of capacity building and community development through sport.

NGBs and Clubs: National Governing Bodies of Sport, local sports clubs and community organisations are a fundamental part of the SSRP network for delivery of sporting opportunities, and ongoing collaboration and communication with these groups is embedded in SSRP's approach to sports development.

National Committees: The SSRP Sports Co ordinator was invited to sit on the Sports Leadership Group which is chaired by the Minister of State for Sport, the remit of which is to oversee the implementation of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027. A number of meetings were facilitated in 2020. In addition, the Sports Co ordinator was invited to attend meetings of the Sports Monitoring Group which was established by the Minister for Sport with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic response.

3.4: Develop and monitor an effective SSRP Data Management System

Throughout the year the SSRP Activity Register was updated regularly by all staff.

SSRP maintained a directory of Sligo sports clubs, community organisations and target groups.

Adaptations were made to how SSRP communicated with participants based on new requirements under Covid-19 e.g. pre activity questionnaire etc.

Goal 4: Strengthen the Organisation:

Facilitate high standards of planning, governance and transparency in SSRP.

This section details some of the key achievements and outputs delivered in 2020 under the various objectives under Goal 4.

Policy review and development work was undertaken by SSRP.

4.1: Provide effective leadership and operations through a strong Board and staff.

5 Board Meeting, 6 Executive Working Group Meetings and an Annual General Meeting were convened.

Health & Safety – the Covid-19 impact:

Covid-19 brought with it a new layer of health and safety related work in addition to normal activity in this area including:

Covid-19 Risk & Opportunity Register: A risk and opportunity register specifically in relation to Covid-19 was compiled for Sport Ireland and SSRP's use with inputs from the staff and Board members.

LSP Return to Sports Protocols: SSRP staff invested significant time in developing a Return to Sport training workshop and linked resources for coaches, with over 50 coaches benefitting from capacity building to support them in their role under new circumstances. Covid-19 Officer packs were put together and distributed for coaches to ensure Covid-19 compliance for 'in person' activities. Risk assessments were adapted to include Covid-19 related risk for all activities.

Return to Office Protocols: Protocols were put in place for the safe return to the SSRP offices including risk assessment and hygiene, a contact tracing log, a clean desk policy, pre return to work questionnaire etc. This also included providing additional safety supplies and agreeing rota systems for office use.

Covid-19 Workplace Training: All staff were required to attend online Covid-19 Awareness Training as well as Covid-19 Officer Training where relevant. Temporary home working self assessment completed by staff and additional supports put in place.

Organisational Review and Restructure: In 2020, discussion was initiated around the need for and potential approaches to an organisational review and restructure of staff reporting lines, roles and responsibilities in the context of organisational growth and development over recent years.

4.2: Maintain and support an appropriate SSRP staff structure.

Funding was successfully secured for SSRP Sports Development Officer posts from Sport Ireland and local agencies while funding was sourced for officer time to oversee projects linked to Healthy Ireland funding and Dormant Accounts funding.

Home working during Covid-19 - The SSRP staff moved to working from home in late March, held regular full team Zoom meetings during the early part of the first lockdown and moved to weekly Zoom meetings thereafter. All staff were set up to work from home with necessary supports.

There was a significant focus on staff training and development in 2020 with staff taking the opportunity to access online training in many areas including MSL ETB Covid-19 Training, online Sport Webinars by NGBs and Sport Ireland, Sport Ireland Return to Sport Covid-19 Awareness and Covid-19 Officer Certificate Training, Sport Ireland M1 training, Safeguarding and Disability courses tutor training for online delivery and the IPA Professional Certificate in Governance.

A staff funding strategy planning review process was undertaken for 2021 by the Executive Working Group and presented to the Board for approval.

4.3: Implement effective governance, procedures and policies for the SSRP organisation.

Compliance with the Sports Governance Code continues to be a priority action for SSRP. All LSPs, NGBs and other bodies in receipt of Government funding through Sport Ireland are required to adopt the Governance Code for Sport by the deadline of 31st December 2021. Meeting the requirement involves a firm commitment from the Boards of funded bodies to adopt the Code in spirit, in practice and to grow towards better governance practices which will make organisations more effective. The Board of Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership supported by the Sports Co-ordinator and staff is currently prioritising achievement of the Code as part of the 2021 programme of work.



Good Governance and Best Practice The IPA Governance Project

The limited company LSPs co-ordinated the submission of a business case to Sport Ireland with regard to additional supports required in the area of governance, including HR and Health & Safety, as part of the 2020 budget process. This was successful and as a result, in January 2020, the limited company LSP Co-ordinators met to discuss a co-ordinated approach to addressing governance in the context of the co-ordinated use of this additional resource.

In March 2020, the Co-ordinators and Chairpersons of the limited company LSPs, including Sligo met in Dublin with representatives of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) to discuss a possible approach to governance support.

The IPA was appointed by this group to review current governance standards and practices and to provide a framework of best practice policies and guidelines to support the LSPs in achieving compliance with the Governance Code for Sport.

A core deliverable of the IPA governance initiative was a governance compendium of key good practice policies and supporting governance documents that SSRP could contextualise, as appropriate, for our organisation.

A training session for the SSRP Board was included as part of the initiative. SSRP held the first part of this training in December 2020 with the second part to be scheduled for Quarter 1 of 2021.

Draft framework documents and relevant policies were provided for review and feedback and the project steering group collated all the feedback and sent a collective, consensus response to the IPA in September 2020. A final draft was issued in late December which is to be reviewed by the SSRP Board in early 2021.

Governance Training for Board and Staff - Sport Ireland provided a number of key training supports in 2020 which were attended by SSRP Board members and staff including webinars on Board Roles & Responsibilities and a Governance Enhancement Seminar. The Co-ordinator commenced the IPA Professional Certificate in Governance in September 2020 with a completion date of April 2021.

4.4: Maintain and support an appropriate SSRP financial resource base for the SSRP organisation and its programmes.

All actions relating to finance were reviewed by the Executive Working Group as part of their delegated function in overseeing company finance after which information was presented to the Board for approval.

An annual SSRP budget was prepared and presented to the Board for approval. Processing of monthly invoices and payments were ongoing with up to date accounting records maintained and income and expenditure reports prepared and presented for adoption by the Board.

Records and documentation to compile the 2020 Year end accounts were collated for the Company Auditor and SSRP liaised with the Company Auditor in the filing of the 2020 Annual Returns with the Companies Office.

Funding applications were prepared and submitted to key bodies including our main funder Sport Ireland and local funding agencies including the HSE and Sligo County Council.

As our main funding body Sport Ireland investment to SSRP in 2020 included:

Sport Ireland Core investment supports SSRP work in areas including core salaries, the delivery of National Programmes, Education & Training initiatives, Community Sports Development Officer, the Sports Inclusion Disability programme, Women in Sport programmes and general participation programmes. In 2020, SSRP secured €300,008 through Sport Ireland core funding.

Sport Ireland Dormant Account investment supports a range of sport and physical activity programme opportunities for LSPs and NGBs which support the achievement of the objectives of the National Sports Policy and the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) with the grant scheme specifically targeting; 1. The personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged; 2. The educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged; 3. Persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000).

SSRP secured funding of €112,885 in 2020 for 2 Community Sports Hubs, an Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative, a Volunteer Support programme and SIDO Capital project.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Sport Ireland supported LSPs and NGBs through a Covid-19 Restart and Renewal Fund. SSRP was allocated €87,377 for a range of initiatives which included €68,776 to administer a Covid-19 Club Small Grant Scheme designed to support clubs with the implementation of Covid-19 related hygiene and social distancing protocols during the return to sport period in summer 2020.

Successful funding applications for targeted projects were also made to Sligo County Council and the HSE, our main local funders.

4.5: Develop appropriate evaluation systems to determine and illustrate the impact of SSRP's processes and programmes.

SSRP evaluation processes are informed by Sport Ireland systems. Sport Ireland established an evaluation unit to oversee the evaluation of project impacts and the work of LSPs and NGBs. A systemic evaluation framework through national level monitoring using a combination of demographic and physical activity measures has been developed. In 2020, SSRP participated in Sport Ireland project evaluations on the Community Sports Development Officers project and the Urban Outdoor Adventure Initiative which is ongoing. Also, an overall review of the LSP network was also undertaken in the form of an LSP Insights Report to which SSRP contributed information and data from a County Sligo perspective. An LSP Evaluation Working Group is facilitated by Sport Ireland and SSRP is represented on this group by the Sports Co ordinator.

At project level, SSRP has adopted the use of the Sport Ireland Single Item Measure (M1) in order to assess the impact of our work. The M1 is an internationally validated self-report measure that allows an organisation to track an individual's rate of participation in sport and physical activity at the start of the programme, at the end of a programme and a follow up 3 months later. Sport Ireland continues to support Local Sports Partnerships and National Governing Bodies to collect impact evaluation data for their participation programmes using M1, with the intention of having a significant national data sample size to interpret trends and impacts. Locally the data collected is invaluable in improving our understanding of what makes a physical activity initiative successful (or not), which will influence how we meet the National Sports Policy targets and our Strategic Plan objectives.

In 2020 the SSRP M1 data collected demonstrates that LSP initiatives are targeting the right people with key M1 data collected for a range of programmes including:

- Stronger for Longer
- Open Water Swimming
- Women's New Way 5K
- Girls Active
- Bike Week


A key finding across all the data is that many of the programme participants are not meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines at registration which suggest SSRP is successful in targeting inactive people. Furthermore, the data demonstrates that LSP initiatives are successful in sustainably moving a significant percentage of people from inactivity towards activity by the end of particular programmes.

4.6: Continue to enhance insight amongst SSRP staff and partners regarding the programme elements which have impact.


Regular review by staff of project impacts linked to actions associated with objective 4.5 were undertaken throughout 2020.

Case Study: Stronger for Longer

Participants took part from the following towns in County Sligo



- Grange
- Drumcliff
- Sligo Town
- Strandhill
- Skreen
- Beltra
- Ballysadare
- Ballymote
- Tobercurry
- Curry



8 WEEKS

FITNESS BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMME FOR MEN AND WOMEN OVER 50's.

THE PROGRAMME WAS DELIVERED BY EXPERIENCED EXERCISE AND FITNESS INSTRUCTORS WHO SUPPORTED PARTICIPANTS BY DELIVERING MODERATE INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SESSIONS TWICE A WEEK. SESSIONS WERE DELIVERED OVER ZOOM

PHASE 1: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2020

4 MALES

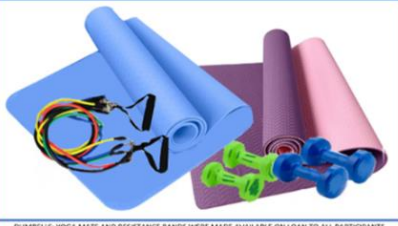
20 FEMALES

PHASE 2: JANUARY TO MARCH 2021

9 MALES

34 FEMALES

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED FOR PARTICIPANTS



DUMBELLS, YOGA MATS AND RESISTANCE BANDS WERE MADE AVAILABLE ON LOAN TO ALL PARTICIPANTS

Benefits: Improved Health, Stronger Muscles, Improved Immune System, Greater Flexibility, Improved Quality of Life, Increased Energy Levels

Testimonials:

- "I really enjoyed the classes. Miriam is brilliant, and I am feeling the benefits of the classes. Thanks for sponsoring them!"
- "The Leader, Ailua, was excellent and set the programme to give maximum benefits to all. This was done taking individual abilities and their safety into consideration. Having the equipment supplied was a great help!"
- "I have really enjoyed the programme. I would not attend any class until the Covid is no longer a risk, as the more time with Ailua was something I had not looked forward to every week. I would not see this ever held again in the New Year. I would not mind paying a bit more as it is great value for money!"

Partners: LCDC, hi, An Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialáin Áitiúil (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government), pobal (government supporting communities), An Roinn Sláinte (DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH)



Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership Open Water Swimming Programmes



OVERVIEW

A partnership approach between Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Swim Ireland and Community Organisations to promote safe open water physical activity programmes in rural areas in response to the local demand during the Covid-19 pandemic. Two programmes were run – An Introduction to Open Water and Open Water Skills Programme.



AIMS

- To increase physical activity opportunities.
- To promote safe open water programmes in 2 rural communities.
- To provide an opportunity to keep active safely during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- To improve participant's confidence and technique in open water swimming.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Positive collaboration took place between Swim Ireland, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Enniscrone Community Council and Dromore West Community Enhancement Committee.
- A partnership agreement was put in place for each site agreeing roles and responsibilities of SSRP, Swim Ireland and community organisation.
- Suitable instructors and lifeguards were identified to deliver the programme who are registered with Swim Ireland.
- The programme was promoted locally through the SSRP and community organisations, with all participants registering on the Swim Ireland website.
- The programmes were 10-12 weeks long, in groups of 12 participants.



OUTCOMES

125 participants were involved in Open Water Swimming Programmes at 2 rural sites, Enniscrone and Aughris. A follow up Open Water Swimming Event, as part of European Week of Sport involving 158 participants was held in Enniscrone. Successful funding applications have been made by Enniscrone Community Council, SSRP and Swim Ireland to invest in 6 buoys and a storage container. Increasing the collaboration opportunities between Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Swim Ireland and local Community Organisations has been a key outcome of the programmes.

"Great initiative, excellent coaching, Great sense of inclusion"

"Beneficial for mental and physical health and to boost confidence in the sea and also very important regarding our awareness of water safety too"

283

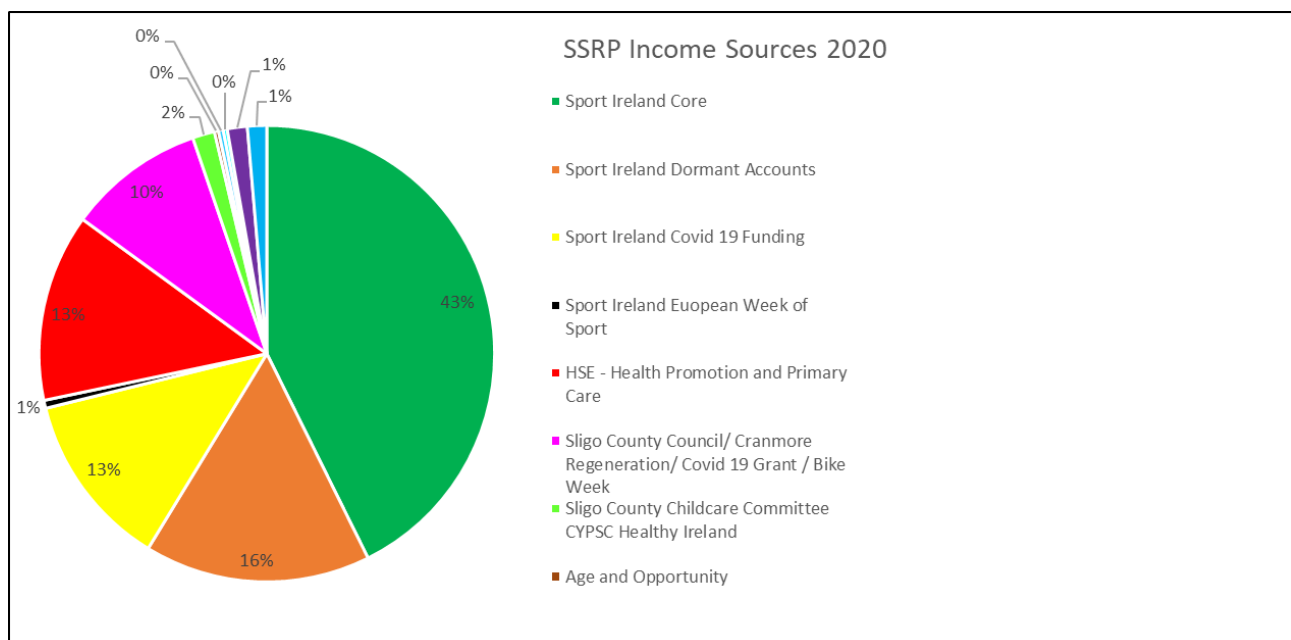
participants involved in the Open Water Swimming Programmes in total



NEXT STEPS

2021 plans in place are to pilot Swim Ireland's Daily Dippers at 4 sites, Introduction to Open Water and Open Water Skills at 4 sites, and a new Open Water Intensive Week at Enniscrone aimed at children who want to learn to swim and gain experience in an open water environment. This programme is designed to give participants the tools and knowledge about creating a safe environment for open water swimming.

Section 4: Income Received and Expenditure for 2020



SSRP Income Sources 2020:

Income Source	Amount
Sport Ireland Core	€300,008
Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts	€112,885
Sport Ireland – Covid-19 Funding	€87,377
Sport Ireland – Innovation Fund	€4,000
HSE -Health Promotion and Primary Care	€93,520
Sligo County Council	€20,000
Sligo County Council Cranmore Regeneration Project	€33,600
Sligo County Council Other - Covid 19 Emergency Fund	€1,000
Sligo County Childcare Committee CYPSC Healthy Ireland	€11,048
Age and Opportunity	€2,000
Sligo County Council Bike week	€13,710
Sponsorship	€2,400
Mountaineering Ireland	€2,000
Course Fees/ Project Income	€9,965
Youth Sport West Programme Income	€9,612
Total	€703,125

Benefit in Kind Investment by our Partner Agencies and Community Groups:

We continue to have a considerable and extremely important benefit in kind investment from many of our stakeholders. In particular, and in addition to the significant financial supports outlined above, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB (formerly Sligo VEC) has supported SSRP since its inception with office space for all staff, IT supports, payroll support and other key administration support while Sligo County Council provides ongoing support services in a range of areas including Community Development,

the Parks Department and East City Regeneration. In addition to the significant financial and practical benefits this brings to SSRP, of equal importance has been the development and strengthening of relationships and understanding between SSRP and these organisations over the years. We also acknowledge the investment of time by all our board members, and their wider organisations, NGB and sports club partners, school and community partners and all other stakeholders.

SSRP Expenditure 2020:

Expenditure	Amount
Wages and Salaries and Pension	€325,854
Office Administration/ Running Costs	€37,243
Health and Safety	€3,674
Website upgrade	€4,334
Education and Club training	€7,493
Special Project Participation Initiative	€10,675
SSRP programmes: Sports Inclusion Disability Project	€18,296
SSRP programmes: Seniors	€7,438
Dormant Accounts: East City CSH (programming)	€5,197
SSRP programmes: Sports Action Zones	€581
SSRP programmes: Active Communities	€8,828
Dormant Accounts SIDO Capital	€9,000
SSRP programmes: Diversity	€750
Dormant Accounts: Urban Outdoor programming	€25,164
Dormant Accounts Volunteer Support Initiative	€10,710
Healthy Ireland Programming	€6,492
Dormant Accounts: Bunninadden CSH Programming	€18,413
Dormant Accounts: Enniscrone CSH Programming	€2,416
SSRP programmes : Women in Sport	€7,044
SSRP programmes: Girls Active	€11,279
SSRP programmes: Ag Sugradh le Cheile	€332
SSRP programmes: Youth Sport West	€17,935
SSRP programmes: Athletics Awareness	€6,754
SSRP programmes: Community Walking	€1,410
SSRP programmes: Cycling	€21,875
Sport Ireland Covid-19 Funding	€61,089
TOTAL	€630,276

Section 5: Future Plans

The SSRP Strategic Plan 'Building a Culture of Sport and Physical Activity in Sligo 2018 - 2023' will continue to provide direction and focus for SSRP. Sustaining the resources within the Partnership to deliver the strategy will require SSRP, local agencies and the community to continue to work together in conjunction with Sport Ireland in order for SSRP to sustain and develop additional opportunities for participation.

Supporting a Safe Return to Sport:

SSRP will focus on supporting a safe return to 'on site' sport and physical activity as restrictions allow, while also building on the virtual opportunities developed in 2020. We will particularly focus on those most affected by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic including older adults, people with a disability and young people. Supporting coaches, administrators and volunteers within sports clubs and community organisations with a full return to their sport will be a priority.

Focus on Low Participation Groups:

The National Sports Policy has set an ambitious target of increasing sports participation in Ireland from 43% to 50% by 2027, the equivalent of 1% per year. To achieve this the policy highlights the need to tackle participation gradients by targeting groups in our society that participate significantly less than the overall average. These include people with disabilities, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, women and girls, and ethnic minority groups, such as the Traveller community. SSRP has an ongoing commitment to supporting these target groups and in doing so addressing the gradients in sport in Sligo.

In addition, Sport Ireland's Participation Strategy identifies population groups who are at the lower end of the sports participation gradients as a priority. Sport Ireland Core and Dormant Accounts funding streams which support initiatives targeting these groups will be actively pursued to support SSRP in this area of work.

Maximising opportunities from the trend towards Physical Activity in the Outdoors:

SSRP will grow its investment in outdoor sports and will prioritise sports including walking, cycling, running and swimming which is in line with the objectives of the National Sports Policy and which area seen as having the greatest potential for generating higher levels of active participation across the life course. The move towards exercise in the outdoors excellerated during the pandemic and sustaining this positive momentum in sports such as open water swimming, cycling and walking will be continued.

Strengthening Relationships with National Governing Bodies of Sport:

SSRP recognises the importance and value of engaging with NGBS with a view to partnering on the delivery of projects and plans to avail of opportunities to strengthen relationships in 2021.

Achieving the CARA Xcessible Bronze Award:

SSRP has committed to achieving the CARA Xcessible Bronze Award, a programme which aims to support and empower LSPs and other organisations to provide positive and meaningful participation opportunities for people with disabilities. The SSRP Sports Inclusion Disability Programme will continue to encourage and facilitate more people with disabilities to participate in sport and physical

activity and develop sustainable clubs and programmes in all settings. The pandemic was particularly disruptive for the services and supports available to people with a disability and hence a priority focus on this area of work is planned for 2021.

Compliance with the Sports Governance Code:

Full compliance with the Governance Code for Sport by December 2021 is a priority action for the SSRP Board of Directors and staff. The Government's National Sports Policy under Action 31 tasks Sport Ireland with overseeing a process whereby all NGBs and LSPs are fully compliant with the Governance Code for Sport by the end of 2021. SSRP is at an advanced stage of the journey towards compliance and is confident that the organisation will be fully compliant within the required timeframe.

Organisational Restructure:

The SSRP organisation has experienced significant changes since its establishment in 2001 and this is particularly reflected in terms of expanding service delivery levels year on year, resulting in additional staffing, responsibilities and administrative workload. The Board has identified the need for an organisation restructure and the process will be advanced in 2021.

Local Sports Plans:

The National Sports Policy under Action 8 has tasked Sport Ireland with supporting Local Authorities in developing Local Sports Plans consistent with the overall vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy. SSRP will continue to strengthen its working relationships with the Local Authority in line with the National Sports Policy objective regarding the development of Local Sports Plans while close collaboration with regard to facility development and usage will also be pursued.

Sligo County Development Plan:

SSRP will engage with the Local Authority with regard to the development of the County Development Plan with the purpose of ensuring sport and physical activity developments are prioritised for inclusion in the upcoming plan.



— **SLIGO SPORT** —
& RECREATION
PARTNERSHIP
— **SPORT IRELAND** —

**More People,
More Active,
More Often**

Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership
Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB,
Quay Street,
Sligo.

Tel: 071 91 61511

Email: info@sligosportandrecreation.ie

