

Sports Inclusion Development Programme

2010

Claire Grehan continued her work in bringing sport and physical activity programmes to people with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities.

Among the activities organised and delivered, or jointly planned and delivered in conjunction with neighbouring Sports Partnerships were: -

- Four come try days were delivered to 71 participants including children and adults with intellectual, sensory and other disabilities.
- Six athletes participated in the Midlands Athletics programme, which was delivered in conjunction with the Irish Wheelchair Association, Laois and Offaly Sports Partnerships.
- 42 participants took part in a variety of kit fit programmes rolled out by Claire and supported by Aura Tullamore leisure centre and Rahan community gym. 10 participants took part in a gym / multi sport programme in Rahan, 9 took part in a gym / aerobics programme in Aura Tullamore and, 23 men took part in spinning classes in Aura Tullamore.
- 125 participants took part in three Midlands Boccia League outings, and one Boccia Blitz. The Midlands Boccia League was delivered in conjunction with Westmeath Sports Partnership and was supported by teams from the National Learning Network (NLN) and Rehab Care. The Boccia Blitz was delivered in conjunction with Tipperary Sports Partnerships and was supported by teams from St Cronin's Day Services.
- The Offaly Sports Partnership and Offaly Centre for Independent Living Disability Sports programme continues to develop, but is still awaiting confirmation of funding from Pobal for its business planning phase.
- Midlands United Power Chair Football Club continues to flourish, despite the loss of its team captain, Stephen Devery in 2010. "Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam". They were runners up in the Association of Irish Powerchair Football (AIPF) League and Cup 2009 / 2010, and are currently top of the AIPF in the 2010 / 2011 league series.
- Following requests from disability groups for summer programme ideas, 31 participants enjoyed orienteering in Boora, Golden Grove and Tullamore Town Park.
- In conjunction with Special Olympics Ireland, Claire established a motor activities programme for people with severe to profound intellectual disabilities. 14 participants availed the programme, and as a result of this programme, the Sisters of Charity affiliated to Special Olympics Ireland and received support in the way of equipment and funding from Special Olympics.
- Following a request from the NLN, a six week basketball programme was established by Claire. 14 participants took part on the programme, and at the conclusion of the programme, a basketball blitz was held in Moate where NLN representatives from Laois, Offaly and Westmeath competed against each other.
- Wheelchair Hurling has now been identified as a key priority area of development for the GAA. To introduce the concept of wheelchair hurling, two come try days were carried out with the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) Sunshine Club. 12 participants with physical

disabilities attended the days and it is the intention of the Sports Inclusion Development Officers (SIDOs) in Offaly and Westmeath to establish a wheelchair hurling club in 2011.

- The Meet and Train Sports Ability programme was developed by Offaly and Westmeath SIDOs to create opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in a multi sport programme. 22 participants (14 from Offaly and 8 from Westmeath) took part in an eight week multi sport programme. Activities included orienteering, gym, parachute, aerobics, basketball and soccer. In the 4th week of the programme, participants spent a day in Tullamore Harriers Athletics Stadium, while in the 8th week; participants spent a day in Athlone Institute of Technology Sports Centre.
- Following the success of the Partnership's SPORTSHALL Athletics programme in mainstream schools, a pilot SPORTSHALL Athletics programme was delivered in Ballinamere National School's special education unit catering for children with intellectual disabilities (i.e. autism). 12 participants took part on the programme, and as a result of this pilot, participants from the programme participated on the SPORTSHALL Athletics programme being delivered in 30 mainstream schools in the county, and also competed in the inter schools SPORTSHALL Athletics championships in January / February 2011.
- As a result of Offaly not having a development officer for soccer, Claire delivered a soccer programme in conjunction with the service providers to enable them to take soccer sessions on their own every other week. 26 participants benefitted from this programme and service users are now better able to participate in the Football Association of Ireland's (FAI) Football for All league.
- To support delivery of the health fitness module implemented by the NLN, Claire delivered one multi sport programme to the NLN as part of this module in which 8 people participated.
- At the request of the Daughters and Sisters of Charity, Claire delivered two multi sport programmes to provide opportunities for service users to try out different sporting activities. 9 participants each (18 in total) from the Daughters and Sisters of Charity participated on this programme.
- One additional programme, specifically aimed at women with disabilities to become more active more often was also delivered by Claire to 21 women concentrating on aerobics and circuit training.

To date, a total of 810 (202 in 2008, 194 in 2009, 414 in 2010) people with disabilities have been reached by Claire, and the organisations she works with. Some have gone on and competed at national and international level.

Claire is one of 17 Sports Inclusion Disability Officers in Ireland funded from the Dormant Accounts, and is a member of the national network of Sports Inclusion Disability Officers. Funding for her post has been secured up until July 2011.