



LOOK

New Year Newsletter

TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF
OUR UPCOMING EVENTS
WITH SOMETHING FOR
EVERYONE

LONGFORD SPORTS STAR AWARDS 2025

Longford Sports Partnership, with The Longford Leader/Longford Live and Longford County Council, celebrated the 2025 awards, honoring the dedication and achievements of athletes, volunteers, clubs, and communities across Longford.

Congratulations to all winners and nominees, and thank you to everyone supporting sport and promoting inclusion, participation, and lifelong activity in our county. ❤️



For more information email sports@longfordcoco.ie

Exploring Physical Activity Engagement in Traveller and Roma Populations: A Qualitative Study of Barriers and Facilitators



INTRODUCTION

This qualitative research evaluation explored the barriers and facilitators to physical activity participation among Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland, with the aim of informing the design of culturally tailored, community-based interventions. Using semi-structured interviews and focus groups, data were analysed through an inductive thematic approach and mapped to the COM-B model and Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF)

FACILITATORS

Community-based delivery: Trust in familiar, local settings (e.g., libraries, community centres) was seen as essential.

Cultural relevance: Activities reflecting traditions, such as dance for Roma participants, were highly motivating.

Social connection: Group-based programmes fostered belonging, motivation, and peer encouragement.

Role models and peer leaders: Participants highlighted the potential of Traveller and Roma instructors to increase trust and uptake.

BARRIERS

Structural and environmental barriers: Limited access to affordable, safe, and culturally appropriate facilities; transport challenges; and lack of dedicated spaces for group-based activity.

Socioeconomic constraints: Financial insecurity and competing priorities limited the ability to commit to structured programmes.

Cultural and social norms: Among Travellers, gender expectations influenced participation, particularly for women, while some Roma participants reported uncertainty about mixing genders in activity settings.

Discrimination and exclusion: Traveller participants described experiences of being turned away or feeling unwelcome in mainstream facilities, reinforcing disengagement. Roma participants, by contrast, did not frequently report discrimination, which may reflect normalisation, reluctance to disclose, or context-specific differences.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Develop culturally sensitive, co-designed programmes that incorporate community traditions and preferences.
- Provide accessible, low-cost, and local exercise opportunities to reduce structural barriers.
- Train and empower community members as peer leaders/instructors to foster trust and sustainability.
- Build partnerships with health and social inclusion services to integrate exercise opportunities into wider wellbeing initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The findings underscore that structural inequalities, cultural norms, and lived experiences of exclusion must be explicitly addressed to improve participation. Across both groups, the importance of culturally tailored, community-led, and socially engaging activities was evident.

For more information email Dr Stephen Mc Nally
pafh@longfordcoco.ie

CLUB DEVELOPMENT & VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FUNDING



Longford Sports Partnership

Club Development and Volunteer Support Funding

Longford Sports Partnership is pleased to announce the allocation of over €21,000 in funding to 47 Sports Clubs in Longford through our Club Development and Volunteer Supports Scheme for 2025.

This scheme is funded by Sport Ireland with the aim of supporting sports clubs affiliated to Sport Ireland ,National Governing Bodies, to increase participation.

For information about Longford Sports Partnership scan this QR code



visit Longfordsports.ie
phone 043 334 34 93 | email sports@longfordcoco.ie



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DRUMLISH INCLUSIVE SPORTS CLUB

Drumlish Inclusive Sports Club is officially launching this January and Longford Sports Partnership is delighted to collaborate with a dedicated committee committed to supporting inclusive sport in Longford ❤️

📍 Drumlish Community Centre

📅 Launch Day: Saturday, January 10

🕒 Time: 10:00–12:00

➡️ Join us for a fun, inclusive morning of games and activities for all ages.

🏃 Sports Taster Sessions – Athletics

📅 Saturday, January 17

📍 Drumlish Community Centre

• Ages 5–12: 10:00–10:40

• Ages 13–18: 11:00–11:45

✉️ Registration: Please email your child's age and any accessibility requirements email: disc2025@yahoo.com

We look forward to starting this inclusive sports journey together! 🙌



MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Following the positive evaluation of the summer programme, our ESF+ Officer will continue to support the Men's Multicultural Group to take part in a five-week swimming lessons programme. This initiative will focus on developing swimming skills while building confidence, water safety awareness, and overall wellbeing. Swimming was identified by the group as an important and practical life skill, and the programme responds directly to this need by providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for continued engagement in physical activity."



For more information email mreilly@longfordcoco.ie

OUTDOOR SPORTS & DIVERSITY INCLUSION PROGRAMME

A six-week boxing programme took place during October and November at The Green, Edgeworthstown, in collaboration with LCRL Youth Services. The group met once a week for one hour and was facilitated by qualified boxing coach & tutor Nathan. This activity was highly requested by participants and proved to be very successful. Young people gained significant benefits, including improved fitness levels, enhanced boxing techniques, and a strong sense of enjoyment from taking part in the sessions.



For more information email egillen@longfordcoco.ie

YOUTH REACH INCLUSION GYM PROGRAMME

Longford Sports Partnership's Outdoor Sports & Diversity Inclusion Officer recently collaborated with a group in Youthreach Longford to deliver a bespoke Gym Programme 2026, led by LSP tutor Darren Bennett.

The programme kicked off the new year in style, with participants showing great enthusiasm as they worked to improve their fitness. Under the guidance of a fully qualified coach, the group learned how to use gym equipment safely and correctly while building confidence and motivation in a supportive environment.



For more information email egillen@longfordcoco.ie

ABILITY COACHING PROGRAMME-TAG RUGBY

Longford Sports Partnership, in collaboration with Leinster Rugby and Longford Rugby Club, is delivering Tag Rugby Coaching as part of the Ability Coaching Programme.

This programme supports adults with additional needs or from disadvantaged areas to become qualified Tag Rugby Coaches.

Participants are given the opportunity to complete the following:

- A Coaching Course with the relevant National Governing Body
- Disability Awareness Training with Active Disability Ireland
- Safeguarding 1 Workshop with Sport Ireland
- Basic First Aid Course

Tag Rugby Coaching Sessions

Longford Rugby Club

Thursdays: February 5th, 12th & 19th @10:00am–2:00pm

ABILITY COACHING PROGRAMME

Tag Rugby Coaching Expression of Interest



For more information email tgillen@longfordcoco.ie

COMMUNITY SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

A six-week Ladies Pilates programme recently took place in Ballymahon Vocational School, offering participants a welcoming and supportive space to improve strength, flexibility, and overall wellbeing.

The weekly sessions focused on core stability, posture, balance, and controlled movement, making the programme suitable for all fitness levels. As the weeks progressed, participants reported increased confidence, reduced tension, and a greater awareness of body alignment.

In addition to the physical benefits, the programme provided a valuable social outlet, bringing women from the local community together to stay active and prioritise their health. Strong weekly attendance and very positive feedback highlighted the overall success of the programme.

A special thank you to Mags, our Longford Sports Partnership tutor, for delivering engaging and high-quality sessions, and to Ballymahon Vocational School for hosting the programme. We look forward to running similar programmes in the future.



For more information email afitzpatrick@longfordcoco.ie



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LONGFORD SPORTS PARTNERSHIP 2026 SAFEGUARDING COURSES

Safeguarding Training workshops cost is €20 and is delivered online via Zoom on the following dates:

Safeguarding 1:

Code of Ethics Basic Awareness/Child Protection Workshop
Thursday January 22 at 18.30-21.30

Safeguarding 2:

Clubs Children's Officer
Thursday February 12 at 18.30-21.30

Safeguarding 3:

Designated Liaison Person
Thursday March 5 at 18.30-21.30



These workshops are essential for coaches, volunteers, and anyone working with children or vulnerable adults in sport and physical activity.



For more information email afitzpatrick@longfordcoco.ie

INCLUSIVE TAI CHI

📣 Inclusive Tai Chi for Adults with Additional Needs – New Venue Announcement 📣

Inclusive Tai Chi is moving to a new venue in January 2026! Classes will now take place at The Green, Edgeworthstown, an accessible venue with free car parking and beautiful surrounding scenery 🌿

📅 8-week programme starts: Wednesday January 14th

🕒 Time: 11:00am

👤 Open to: Adults with additional needs

Inclusive Tai Chi can be completed seated or standing. It is a gentle practice using slow, flowing movements and focused breathing to improve balance, mobility, relaxation, and overall well-being 🚶♀️



For more information email tgillen@longfordcoco.ie



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