LONGFORD SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

SPORT IRELAND

LOOK

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

Winter Newsletter

Welcome to the Longford Sports Partnership Quarterly Newsletter.

Inside, you'll find updates on a wide range of programmes co-ordinated by our LSP Development Officers across the county, along with news on ongoing research, new initiatives, upcoming opportunities, and much more.

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For more information email
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LONGFORD SPORTS PARTNERSHIP
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AN LONGFORT CONNECTED
Comhairle Chontae An Longfoirt
Longford County Council
People - Place - Opportunity

LONGFORD LEADER SPORTS STAR AWARDS 2026





Longford Sports Partnership together with the Longford Leader are excited to launch the Longford Leader Sports Star Awards 2026.

🌟Know someone who deserves recognition for their contribution to sport?

<u>Celebrate the people and teams making a difference in sport across Longford by submitting your nominations for:</u>

🏆 Hall of Fame Award (Exceptional Service to Sport)
🏆 Club Volunteer of the Year
🏆 Junior Sportsperson of the Year
🏆 Sports Ability Award
🏆 Team of the Year

Help us celebrate sporting excellence across Longford. Submit your nomination today!

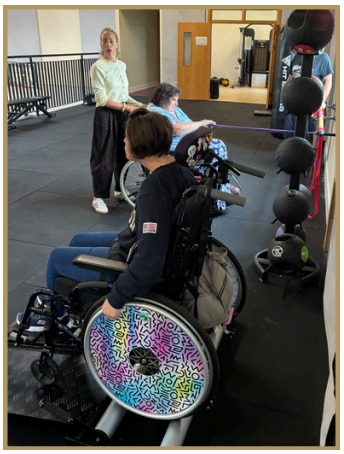
Nominations should be sent to LongfordSportsAwards2024@gmail.com stating name, club, and achievements. They can also be posted to Longford Leader Sports Star Awards, Longford Leader, Market Square, Longford N39 KN82. The closing date is 10am November 12, 2026.

Nominations via email: LongfordSportsAwards2026@gmail.com

NEW INCLUSIVE GYM SPACE







A new Inclusive Gym Space has officially opened at St Mary's Community Campus & Sports Hub, Edgeworthstown, providing a welcoming and accessible environment where people of all abilities can enjoy the benefits of exercise and physical activity.

Featuring carefully selected inclusive and adaptable equipment, the facility enables wheelchair users and people with disabilities to participate in gym-based activities comfortably and confidently.

The project was developed by Longford Sports Partnership in collaboration with the St Mary's Community Campus & Sports Hub Committee and Centre Manager Laura, with funding provided through the Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts Fund SIDO Capital Programme.

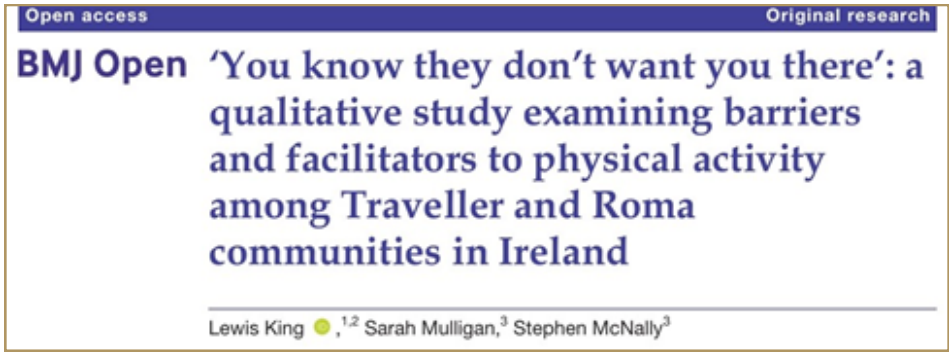
The facility is already supporting a range of inclusive programmes, including wheelchair-specific adult and teen sessions, Men's Shed programmes, and inclusive gym programmes for disability services and the wider community.

A special thank you to St Christopher's Services Longford, whose participants helped shape the development of the facility through a pilot Wheelchair Gym Programme.

Thankyou to our funders Sport Ireland, Healthy Longford, Longford Westmeath CYPSC and County Longford Arts Services.

For more information email tgillen@longfordcoco.ie

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY


Open access Original research

BMJ Open 'You know they don't want you there': a qualitative study examining barriers and facilitators to physical activity among Traveller and Roma communities in Ireland

Lewis King ,[1,2] Sarah Mulligan,[3] Stephen McNally[3]

New Research Highlights Opportunities for Traveller and Roma Communities

🏃‍♀️ Everyone deserves the opportunity to be active and healthy.

Recent research involving Dr Stephen McNally and colleagues explored the experiences of Traveller and Roma communities in relation to physical activity participation. The study found that barriers such as discrimination, financial challenges, limited access to facilities, cultural expectations, and a lack of awareness of available opportunities can make it more difficult for people to be physically active.

Key Findings

✅ Community-led activities increase participation
✅ Trusted local champions help build confidence and engagement
✅ Affordable and accessible programmes are essential
✅ Strong partnerships with local organisations create better opportunities
✅ Inclusive environments encourage long-term participation

What This Means

When physical activity programmes are developed with communities, not just for communities, participation and engagement increase. Activities that are culturally appropriate, welcoming, and locally accessible can improve health, wellbeing, and social connection for Traveller and Roma communities.

Working Together for Inclusion

Local Sports Partnerships, community organisations, and healthcare partners all have a role to play in creating opportunities that are welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for everyone.

Supporting active communities. Promoting health. Creating opportunities for all. 💙💚

LATE NIGHT SOCCER LEAGUE 2026







The inaugural Late Night Soccer League 2026 was a huge success, with fantastic participation from young people across the county.

A multi sector collaboration between Longford Sports Partnership, An Garda Síochána Longford, FAI, County Longford Youth Service, the LEAP Project, Foróige and The Attic House Longford, the programme provided four weeks of fun, teamwork and skills on display. Huge congratulations to all the fantastic young people who took part.

The competition culminated in an exciting finals event at Bishopsgate Stadium, home of Longford Town FC. Congratulations to Attic Juniors, who claimed the Junior Championship, and Edgeworthstown Eagles, who were crowned Senior Champions. Special congratulations to Xavier of Edgeworthstown Eagles, who was named Player of the Tournament.

As an official FAI-funded initiative, the league enjoyed tremendous support from players, partners and funders, with excellent attendance and enthusiasm throughout.

A sincere thank you to all participants, partners, supporters and funders, including Longford County Council, the FAI, An Garda Síochána, CLDAF, Longford Community Safety Partnership and ESF+ Social Innovation. Special thanks to Longford Town FC for hosting the finals and providing an unforgettable experience for all involved.

For more information email egillen@longfordcoco.ie

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Longford County Council's recent membership of Leave No Trace marks an important step in supporting the sustainable development and enjoyment of outdoor recreation across the county. This achievement reflects strong collaboration between Longford Sports Partnership, the Environment Section of Longford County Council and the Outdoor Recreation function, all working together to promote responsible outdoor access and environmental stewardship.

Through this membership, the Council is demonstrating its commitment to protecting Longford's natural landscapes while encouraging greater participation in outdoor activities. It will also provide opportunities for staff, community groups, clubs, schools and outdoor enthusiasts to engage with nationally recognised best practice in outdoor ethics, helping to ensure that Longford's trails, waterways, forests and recreational spaces can be enjoyed and preserved for future generations.

Longford will also host its first Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Forum in November, bringing together clubs, businesses, accommodation providers, outdoor enthusiasts and other key stakeholders to help shape the future development of outdoor recreation in the county. The forum will provide a valuable opportunity to share ideas, identify priorities and strengthen collaboration across the sector, with further details to be announced soon.

For more information email mnoble@longfordcoco.ie

PUBLISHED RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY EXERCISE PROGRAMMES



frontiers in Sports and Active Living

TYPE Review
PUBLISHED 21 October 2026
DOI 10.3389/fspor.2026.1960508

Check for updates

OPEN ACCESS

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RECEIVED 06 August 2026

Community exercise programmes for chronic disease and the emerging role of physical activity for health officers in Ireland: a narrative review

Stephen McNally*

Longford Sports Partnership/Longford County Council, County Longford Council, Longford, Ireland

Key Findings from New Research by Dr Stephen McNally

✅ Community-based exercise programmes can improve physical activity levels for people living with chronic conditions.

✅ Participation can enhance functional ability, health, wellbeing and quality of life.

✅ Programmes support people to self-manage their health and remain active long-term.

✅ Strong links between healthcare services and community physical activity opportunities are essential.

✅ The Irish Physical Activity for Health Officer (PAfHO) model helps connect people from health services to appropriate local exercise programmes.

✅ Community-based pathways can support people to stay active following rehabilitation and clinical treatment.

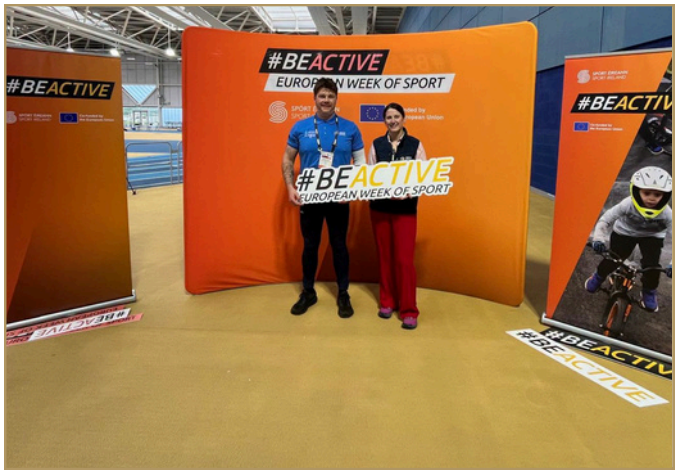
✅ The review identifies the PAfHO model as a promising approach to improving population health through physical activity.

Moving Physical Activity into Communities

Connecting healthcare, community organisations and local exercise opportunities to support healthier, more active communities across Ireland.

Published in Frontiers in Sports and Active Living by Dr Stephen McNally

EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT





🌍🏃‍♀️ Longford Sports Partnership was delighted to attend the European Week of Sport 2026 Opening Ceremony at the National Indoor Arena, Sport Ireland Campus.

As Ireland hosts this prestigious event during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, it was a fantastic opportunity to join colleagues from across Ireland, Europe and beyond to celebrate the power of sport and physical activity in building healthier, more active communities. The day included networking opportunities, programme showcases, inclusive activities and discussions highlighting the positive impact of sport at local, national and international level.

A huge thank you to Sport Ireland and the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport for hosting such a memorable event.

#BeActive #EuropeanWeekOfSport #EWoS2026 #sportireland #ActiveCommunities

#BEACTIVE

EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT

23 - 30 September

GIRLS GONE PADDLING





Fresh from receiving their Junior Cert results, the TY groups from Lanesboro and Cnoc Mhuire girls celebrated in style by taking to the water for a fun-filled activity of paddleboarding and kayaking.

Despite the chilly conditions, spirits were high as participants enjoyed plenty of laughs, adventure and teamwork while trying out new skills on the water. The programme provided a great opportunity to relax after the exam period, spend time with friends and create lasting memories in the outdoors.

Well done to all the girls who took part and embraced the challenge with enthusiasm and positivity. It was a fantastic morning on the water and a wonderful way to celebrate their achievements. 🌊🛶👏





For more information email afitzpatrick@longfordcoco.ie

ABILITY COACHING PROGRAMME







Congratulations to John Mc Hugh on receiving the Special Achievement Award at the Roscommon Longford Garda Youth Awards. This well-deserved recognition reflects his dedication, resilience and commitment to his community.

Through Longford Sports Partnership's ABILITY Coaching Programme, John has completed coaching qualifications in Athletics, Basketball, Table Tennis, Pitch & Putt and Badminton, along with training in Disability Inclusion, Safeguarding and Basic First Aid.

Despite living with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND), John has embraced every opportunity and used sport as a pathway to personal growth, confidence and community involvement.

In 2025, John completed an extraordinary cycle from Donegal to Longford, raising €20,000 and increasing awareness of FND. He is also a regular volunteer with inclusive athletics programmes, local LGFA and soccer teams, and recently began delivering Inclusive Table Tennis sessions alongside his coaching buddy Fidelma.

John continues to build on his achievements and is now in the process of becoming a Longford Sports Partnership Assistant Tutor, further enhancing his contribution to inclusive sport and physical activity in the county.

His positivity, determination and willingness to give back make him a fantastic role model for young people and adults alike. Congratulations, John, on this outstanding achievement.

SELF DEFENCE & BOXERCISE





Longford Sports Partnership was delighted to partner with The Attic House to deliver a fun and engaging Self Defence & Boxercise programme for local young people.

Under the expert guidance of LSP tutor Ken, participants took part in a series of sessions designed to build confidence, improve fitness, and develop practical self-defence skills in a safe and supportive environment. Throughout the programme, the boys and girls embraced every challenge, learning new techniques while improving coordination, strength, and overall wellbeing.

Just as importantly, the programme provided an opportunity for participants to work together, support one another, and develop self-confidence that extends beyond sport and physical activity.

The energy, enthusiasm, and commitment shown by the group throughout the programme was fantastic to see, and it was clear that everyone gained valuable skills while enjoying the experience.

A sincere thank you to Ken for delivering such an enjoyable and empowering programme, and congratulations to all participants on their achievements.

This initiative was supported through the Longford Community Safety Partnership and highlights the positive impact that sport and physical activity can have on young people's confidence, wellbeing, and personal development.

WOMEN'S WINTER CLASSES

This winter, Longford Sports Partnership is offering a range of programmes to help women improve their fitness, wellbeing, and overall health in a fun and supportive environment.

Women's Pilates Programme

Take time for yourself with our 6-week Women's Pilates Programme in Ballymahon Vocational School, running Wednesdays from 11th November to 16th December, 7.00pm-8.00pm. Pilates is an excellent way to improve core strength, flexibility, posture, balance, and relaxation. Cost: €25 for 6 weeks.

Register: https://buytickets.at/longfordsportspartnership/2513041

SCAN ME!

Women's Circuit Training Programmes

Our popular Women's Circuit Training classes are suitable for all fitness levels and are designed to improve fitness, strength, endurance, and energy levels while providing a welcoming and supportive atmosphere.

Ballymahon Vocational School - Mondays, 9th November to 14th December, 7.00pm-8.00pm (€30)
https://buytickets.at/longfordsportspartnership/2508809

SCAN ME!

Ardagh/Moydow GAA - Tuesdays, 17th November to 15th December, 8.00pm-9.00pm (€25)
https://buytickets.at/longfordsportspartnership/2510398

SCAN ME!

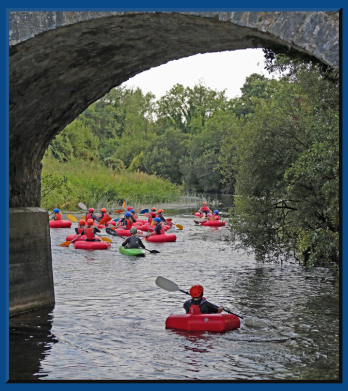
Longford Athletics Centre - Wednesdays, 18th November to 16th December, 8.00pm-9.00pm (€25)
https://buytickets.at/longfordsportspartnership/2510399

SCAN ME!

Places are limited for all programmes, so early booking is advised. Join us this winter for fitness, friendship, and wellbeing.

For more information email afitzpatrick@longfordcoco.ie



















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