



**Galway City Partnership**  
Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Gaillimhe

**a tide for change**  
an taoide ag casadh

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#### **Chairperson**

**Tommy Flaherty**

#### **CEO**

**Declan Brassil**

**Company Reg. No. 258847**

**(CHY 13937)**

**COMPANY REPORT 2020**

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## **Introduction**

Galway City Partnership (GCP) was established in 1996 with a mission to:

- ‘-tackle disadvantage and social exclusion, with a particular emphasis on those currently or in danger of becoming long-term unemployed’. And to
- ‘-enhance our target groups capacity to contribute fully to their own and their communities sustainable development.’

GCP has developed a depth of experience working with the most marginalised communities and excluded individuals in the city. In responding to needs identified through consultation, active-listening and feedback GCP has developed a range of services to communities and individuals throughout the city using a variety of funding sources.

### **Currently these services include:**

- Galway City Local Employment Service and TUS programme - funded by Department of Social Protection.
- Youth Advocacy Programme - funded by Galway Roscommon Education & Training Board.
- The BRIDGE Project - funded by Department of Justice and local partners.
- The Ballybane ACE (after class experience) club and Ballybane Study Club - managed by Galway City Partnership with staffing from GRETB and Tusla funding.
- Healthy Ireland – GCP supports the HI programmes of both the LCDC and CYPSC – funded by the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- The Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) – funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and co-funded by the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020.

SICAP work encompasses Community Development supports; the Galway Migrant Service; Enterprise supports incl. training; Employment supports; Education and training courses; The Incredible Years Programme and other in-school supports.

As a result of the wide range of services provided by GCP, we have established a network of relationships across related services through which we concretely express a commitment to inter-agency working.

### **Our aims and objectives**

The Articles and Memoranda of GCP state that the main object of our Company is to: *promote, support, assist and engage in (a) social development, (b) enterprise development to facilitate rural and urban regeneration (c) community development,*

*designed to benefit and promote the welfare of local communities or to deal with the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage or poverty.*

### **Key Principles to Guide GCP Practice**

GCP is committed to community development and while there is no one agreed or all-embracing definition of community development there are a number of key principles which inform and guide the practice of effective community development and GCP is committed to these. They are:

#### **a. Individual and Collective Action**

Community development is concerned with the development of both individuals and the community as a whole. Encouraging individuals and groups to participate fully and effectively in community activities may be a slow labour-intensive process, but it is the process itself which promotes self-confidence and a self-help orientation through the acquisition of knowledge and skills at individual and community level. The importance of training and support for both the individual and community group is vital to the practice of community development.

#### **b. Participation**

The principle of participation is central to community development. In practice community development seeks to identify and address the barriers which prevent people, particularly those experiencing disadvantage, from getting involved within community. All community development activity should promote genuine participation throughout the process of development. For us, the communities we talk about when we look at the process of development, are those geographical communities or communities of interest that endure disadvantage.

#### **c. Consultation**

As outlined in the participation stage, consultation is one of the most crucial elements of the community development process. One of the most important things to remember about consultation is that it is the element of the community development process which is most often manipulated and hijacked by those in power to claim they have facilitated participation.

#### **d. Empowerment**

Essentially the community development process must result in some a level of empowerment for both the individual involved and the community as a whole. Empowerment is fundamentally about choices. Enabling and supporting individuals and communities to determine their choices and to take responsibility for them.

#### **e. Equality**

By maintaining a commitment to the principle of Equality, community development aims to challenge the attitudes and practices of both individuals and institutions in society which marginalise and discriminate against other groups. Equality should be understood not as a process for making everyone “the same as” but instead it is a principle concerned with having access, opportunities and resources equal to everyone else within a society.

#### **f. Justice**

Development and change with social justice is fundamental to community development. As well as helping people to cope with the effects of change, community development seeks to encourage people to look beyond their own situation, to the situation of others and to look for similarities and differences in those situations. This is the first step towards questioning the status quo in order to challenge inequality and injustice in society. (Adapted from: "Understanding Communities – NUI Galway 2006)

**In addition to these key principles, it is the policy of Galway City Partnership to:**

- Be accountable to the people of Galway and to communicate effectively with them.
- Be inclusive of those affected by our decisions.
- Be creative, innovative and pro-active in responding to local needs.
- Listen, consult and respond in a flexible manner.
- Work with people and not for people.
- Be committed to an equal opportunities approach.

**The voluntary Board that led the company in 2020 were:**

Tommy Flaherty – Chairperson

Donal Walsh – Vice – Chairperson.

Paul Shelly – Treasurer.

Val Coakley - Director

Michael Coppinger- Director

Lorraine Grimes- Director

Aidan Harte- Director

Bridget Kelly- Director

Morgan Mee- Director

Brendan Mulligan- Director

Martin O Connor- Director

#### **Programmes of work**

In 2020, we carried out a range of work which we now elaborate on under various programme headings.

We do so to inform our Board; staff; funders; and other interested parties of the depth and breadth of the work undertaken by GCP as we strive to achieve our objectives.

## The BRIDGE PROJECT

### (Building a Receptive and Integrated Galway of Equals)

**BRIDGE** seeks to promote the effective delivery of reception and integration supports (including advocacy and capacity building interventions) to asylum seekers and third country nationals living in Galway City and County.

The project is coordinated by Galway City Partnership in conjunction with a local steering committee.

**In 2020 BRIDGE round 1** finished in April and we wish to acknowledge our funding partners Galway City Council; Galway Rural Development; HSE; Youth Work Ireland Galway and the Sports Partnership.

Over the 3 years of the project (2017-20), 20 actions were initiated under 4 outcomes. The success of the outcomes is seen in the grid below:

### Supports & Actions

PROJECT REPORT	SUPPORT/ ACTIONS	TARGET FOR 3 YEARS (APRIL 2017-APRIL 2020)	ACTUAL
	One to one Interventions	300	817
	Information sessions	6	60 Regular Information and updates meetings held in the 2 direct provision centres. Topics covered included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Right to Work</li> <li>▪ Bank Acc</li> <li>▪ Accessing University</li> <li>▪ How to Vote</li> <li>▪ University of Sanctuary launch</li> <li>▪ Miscellaneous</li> </ul>
	Health & Wellness info sessions	8	14 1. Aids West Sexual Health (x 2) 2. Aids West Drink and Drugs Awareness (x2)

<b>Outcome 1. Asylum Support</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Aids West Rapid HIV testing (x2)</li> <li>4. Parent and baby bonding (x4)</li> <li>5. Parent and baby yoga (x4)</li> </ul>
	Supported referrals to a range of counselling services	30	32 Mental Health General (GP) – 15 Counselling – 11 Special - 8
	Lang. IT supports	75 Participants 60 Accredited	86 participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 10 accredited</li> <li>▪ Active Citizenship 22</li> <li>▪ Nala 10</li> <li>▪ NUIG English Language (x2) 54</li> </ul>
	Bi-annual group support sessions promoting positive mental health and well-being.	6	6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wellness Day Bridget’s Garden</li> <li>2. Walk Yourself Well</li> <li>3. Domestic Violence Reponses Women’s Wellness</li> <li>4. Healthy Ireland – Exercise Diet &amp; Cricket (x2)</li> <li>5. Healthy Ireland – Exercise Diet &amp; Football</li> </ul>
	Once off project developing Induction Resource Pack	1	On-going Had sessions on what to be included in Welcome Guide and how to make a welcome video but then covid hindered completion.
	Development of a Mental Health and Well-being Resource Pack.	1	1 Done
	One to one	420 in city	579

<b>Outcome 2. Community Support</b>	interventions	120 in county	322
	Priority	75	75
	Transition to community workshops	6 Engagement of 180 participants (120 participants in City Workshop and 60 participants in the County Workshop)	15 City 6 workshops 105 participants 1. Westside Info session 2017 1. 2, Salthill Info session 2018 2. My mental Health My Story 3. How to Vote 4. Migrant Womens Group  Art Therapy County Workshops 9 40 participants 6. Loughrea Info session FRC Open Day2018 7. Loughrea Info session 2018 8. Kinvara (x2) 9. Ballinasloe (x3)
	Supported Referral Programmes (Worker accompanies individual/family members to make introductions etc.) to a range of community sector organisations including women's groups, school parent's associations, men's mental health programmes e.g. MOJO	45	45

	Introduction to Employment Programme Lang. IT supports	121 participants 63 Accredited	121 Participants 63 Accredited: 1. Communications & Employment Readiness 10 2. Learning to Learn 25 3. Community Development 16 4. Nala Blended Learning 15 5. Diversity training with FAI 10 6. Referees 9 7. Media Course QQI Level 3: Radio Production and Presentation 11 8. FAI Player Development (Coaching 1 & Safeguarding 1) 10 9. TECNOVATE NUIG- 6
<b>Outcome 3. Community</b>	Engagement participants/families per annum in city & county	345	460 2017 WRD & EG Social Inclusion Fashion Show 2018 UN Day Elimination Racial Discrimination / WRD
<b>Outcome 4. Community</b>	Establish Committee	Meet (x12)	12 meetings
	Train the Trainer Diversity Programme	20 accredited Trainers in Diversity Training	21 participants in Train the Trainer
	Diversity Training Support Pack	1	1 Done
	Programme delivery by participants in 10 community/public sector organisations	10	12 1. GTI students (x2) 2. Erasmus (x3) 3. Navan Com. Centre 4. NUIG (x3) 5. GCP

			1. 6.FAI 6. Primary school
	End of Project Seminar	Learning for National Policy and Practice Report Mainstreami ng Progress Report	Seminar in Feb 2020 ‘Your Mental Health Your Say’ with over 40 attendees

The success of Round One led to a second-round application, which was again successful and means we can continue our work until September 2022.

Our **Match funders this round** are: GCP; Galway City Council; HSE; Galway County Council; Croí Na Gaillmhe SVP; Tusla; NUI Galway; Saint Stephens Greens Trust and Galway Lions Club.

This round sees 37 actions under the 4 outcomes and the work will focus on:

- Operating a Homework Club
- Development of Schools of Sanctuary
- Children's Activities: Swimming
- Induction Sessions with new arrivals
- One to one advocacy support both in person and via phone
- Completion of a welcome Video
- Outreach to Loughrea / Gort / Ballinasloe in person and via zoom
- Developing Community Champions
- Information distribution.

# **Tús Programme**

## **Introduction**

The Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people. The work opportunities are to benefit the community and are provided by community and voluntary organisations in both urban and rural areas.

Tús is managed by local development companies for the Department of Social Protection, which has overall responsibility for the scheme. Participants work 19 ½ hours a week and the placement lasts 12 months. GCP manages the programme in the city. All the work carried out by participants in the TÚS scheme is community-based.

Our 2020 report is set in the context of Covid's impact and our responses. Over half of all Tús placements in 2020 were recruited and placed in the first quarter before the significant challenges of operating in the context of Covid-19 emerged. Support of essential social services, such as those provided by Cope Catering and the GCP Roaming Team, continued to function after March with the remaining groups either operating when permitted or remaining closed.

Other Tús personnel continued to work from home as was the case with several administration assistant positions. Maintenance and retail personnel were also assisting groups when conditions allowed.

Team Leaders worked from both home and office and participated in GCP's assistance with the Community Support Helpline. Participants continued to have access to the full range of Tús supports and communication was maintained with group liaison clients and related agencies. Covid-19 policies were introduced to enable a safe return to work when possible and the remaining 2020 placements occurred during a window of opportunity in the third quarter.

## Data Overview

- 46 Tús placements were organised in 2020 with 26 of these being arranged in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.
- 199 referrals were received from DEASP in August, the only round of referrals received during the year.
- Tús recruitment ceased after 16<sup>th</sup> March with the remaining 20 placements being organised in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- The contracts of participants who were due to leave Tús between late March and July were extended until between late July and September.
- Of 199 referrals received, 111 were repeat referrals who were not previously placed and 88 were first-time referrals.
- Meetings with the first-time referrals were prioritised and a number of these are awaiting placement when conditions allow.
- Tús worked with 23 placement organisations in 2020.
- Late in the year, before the most recent Level 5 restrictions were introduced, 24 out of a total of 53 participants were working with 14 groups with 10 of these participants working from home.

## Community Groups & Service Delivery

<b>PLACEMENT PROVIDER</b>	<b>ACTIVITY DURING 2020</b>
<b>Simon Community</b>	Participants worked as shop opened when conditions allowed
<b>Christ Apostolic Church</b>	Operations continued online
<b>NCBI</b>	Closed
<b>Galway City Partnership</b>	Tús administration assistant personnel operated from GCP offices and Roaming Teams were active in supporting social services
<b>Enable Ireland Charity Shop</b>	Closed
<b>Galway Community Circus</b>	Tús administration assistant continued to work from home
<b>Rehabcare</b>	Tús administration assistant continued to work from home
<b>Flirt FM</b>	Participants continued to work from home
<b>Castlegar GAA</b>	Participants worked a limited number of hours when permitted

<b>Ability West</b>	Tús administration assistant continued to work from home
<b>Olympic Boxing Club</b>	Participants continued to train service users in their locality as permitted
<b>Society of Saint Vincent de Paul</b>	Participants worked as shop opened when conditions allowed
<b>Liam Mellows GAA</b>	Participants worked a limited number of hours when permitted
<b>Shantalla Men's Shed</b>	Closed
<b>Blue Teapot Theatre Company</b>	Tús administration assistant continued to work from home
<b>Third Space</b>	Participant worked a limited number of hours when permitted
<b>East Utd. FC</b>	Participant worked a limited number of hours when permitted
<b>Salthill GAA</b>	Participants worked a limited number of hours when permitted
<b>Cope Galway</b>	Essential services, fully functional with Tús assistance
<b>Galway Lawn Tennis Club</b>	Participant worked as club opened when conditions allowed
<b>Galway Boxing Club</b>	Participants continued to train service users in their locality as permitted
<b>Bádoirí an Claddaigh</b>	Closed
<b>126 Artist run Gallery and Studio</b>	Tús administration assistant continued to work from home

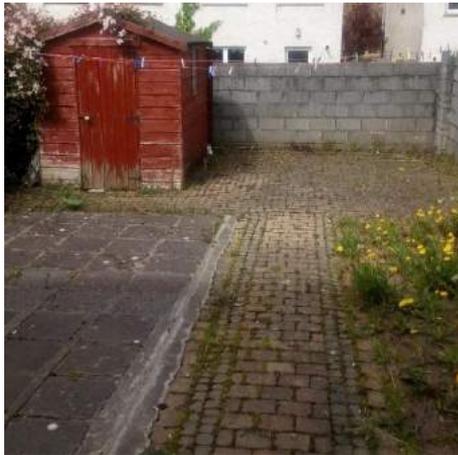
## Roaming Teams

Tús Roaming Teams are directly managed by GCP Team Leaders and respond to calls from local organisations by providing a maintenance and repair services to identified homes.

We maintained an active, visible and essential role in supporting the community during 2020 through our roaming teams. When restrictions were introduced in March, up to 40 families and elderly people were assisted on a weekly basis. Food was delivered through the Community Support Helpline in association with St. Vincent de Paul and the use of GCP vans. Window boxes were distributed to elderly residents throughout the city. People in need were reassured by phone that the full Roaming Team service would resume when permitted.

Referrals from the HSE and TUSLA were dealt with relative to the severity of the cases and three projects were started during this period.

We assisted a young family with two autistic little boys, one of whom was unable to speak. This was a particularly challenging situation as the mother was unable to get any rest due to services being closed. Her garden was overgrown, paved and unsuitable as a play area. TUSLA, EasyFix Ballinasloe, The Lions Club and SVP all supported us in transforming the garden. We helped with the building and the artwork to brighten up the walls.



An elderly resident is being helped in Woodquay where GCP, SVP, Cope, HSE, GCC and the Lions Club are supporting ongoing work. This home was in danger of falling into complete disrepair because the roof was leaking for many years. GCP Roaming team members are providing all the technical and administrative support required to renovate the house. Cope are providing emergency accommodation while the work is being carried out. The first phase of the project, repairing the roof, is now complete.

The Teach Corrib Day Care Centre on Seamus Quirke Road was fully painted by one of our teams during 2020.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Team leaders are encountering several challenges which can make placement difficult.

Significant mental health issues such as those related to social anxiety and substance abuse which have been exacerbated by the pandemic - uncertainty with childcare - illnesses and clients awaiting treatment which has been suspended due to the virus - issues with accommodation, language and Garda Vetting - placement providers being unable to facilitate clients in need of support - reduced confidence, motivation and lack of skills - ability of community groups to operate in the context of Covid-19.

In 2020, as with previous years, our dedicated team has been rewarded with cases where clients have utilised assistance and experience gained on Tús to progress into further education, training, community employment and full-time employment. The effects of Covid-19 have led to an increased number of long-term unemployed and we will, despite the significant challenges, continue to assist with individual progress.

While all expectations will be contingent upon developments in relation to Covid-19, community groups have expressed interest in taking on new participants and Tús at GCP will return to full capacity as soon as possible.

As the recovery from the pandemic emerges, there will be many opportunities for Tús to support community needs. Those who are disadvantaged, isolated or challenged in any way will need our support more than ever.

## **The Local Employment Service (LES)**

The Local Employment Service (LES) is a free service that provides a local gateway, or access point, to the full range of supports that are available to help jobseekers to enter or return to employment. We assist unemployed people to identify a personal path to help them re-enter the labour market.

The LESN supports/services to jobseekers include:

- Professional one to one support to assist with career progression.
- Access to Job Seeking supports (phones, emails, printing and photocopying)
- Access to job vacancy listing and information
- Professional CV
- Assistance with job application letters
- Assistance with job application forms & aptitude tests
- Assistance with Job Seeking Skills
- Interview Coaching
- Assessment of current education, training and skills experience
- Information on/referral to training courses available.
- Access to financial supports for accredited training
- Information on / Referral to Community Employment Schemes (CE)
- Information on supports available to jobseekers regarding “Starting your own business”.

2020 was a challenging year but in spite of the many changes, challenges and restrictions presented, the LES has not in any way reduced the provision of service to clients. The challenge has forced us to adopt innovative ways of engaging with clients remotely while protecting everyone’s wellbeing.

Although we were all back to office work full time under level 3 restrictions, staff have returned to working from home and attend the office 2-3 days per week. The city centre, Bohermore, office has introduced a pod pair system to minimise close contacts. All staff have access to technology and all have smart phones to interact with clients and with their LES and GCP team colleagues. Offices remained open throughout the year but with minimum staff.

Within the context of temporary company lay-offs and reduced work / training opportunities, the provision of a strong support service to our clients continued and the following are some of the progressions we achieved:

### **Progressions**

- 46 clients moved into full time employment, while a further 7 took up part time work.

- 42 clients took up Community Employment (CE) and another 18 went onto the Tús Programme.
- 247 clients participated on a full-time education or training (FET) course.
- 13 took up Third level education with the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) and 6 went onto the Back to Work Enterprise (BTWEA) to set up their own business.
- 42 clients participated on 'other' programmes such as CV clinics, JobsNet.
- 55 clients changed to a different welfare payment to better suit their circumstances.

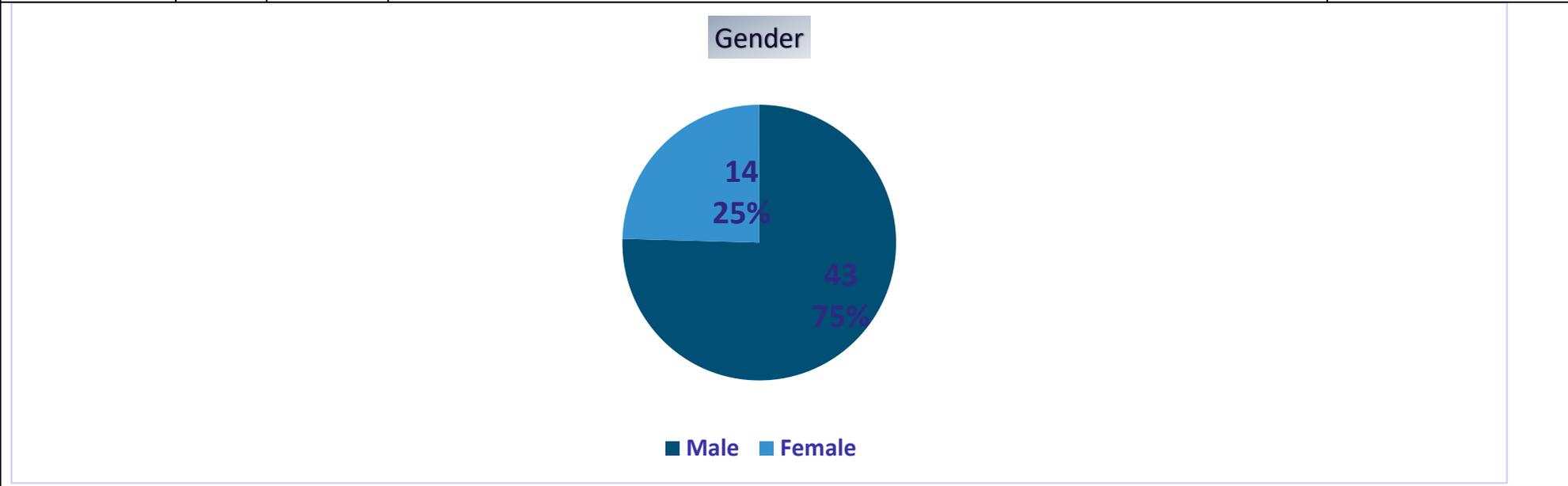
The Department of Social Protection has approved the recruitment of two additional Employment Guidance Officer to join the LES team in 2021 which reflects the growing unemployment level and need for our service. They have also approved a capital budget to upgrade our I.T systems. This has been very positive and will support our ability to interact with clients using the latest systems and apps. The referral of Short Term Unemployed clients was rolled out in late December but has temporarily been postponed by DSP due to current restrictions.

We have been engaging with Careersportal and have purchased MyFuture+. This is a web-based programme that will link our clients with their Employment Guidance Officer. Using their online Career File, LES clients will have access to a suite of helpful activities and tools that encourage self-reflection and support career learning, planning and development. We are confident that this will greatly support our work with clients as we continue to operate remotely and offers us a distinct advantage in our ability to offer online guidance support long after covid restrictions have lifted. In the meantime, offices have been adapted with Protective screens as we hope to soon return to face to face meetings. For the immediate future our priority is to continue to support our existing clients and welcome new DSP referrals when Government Guidelines permit.

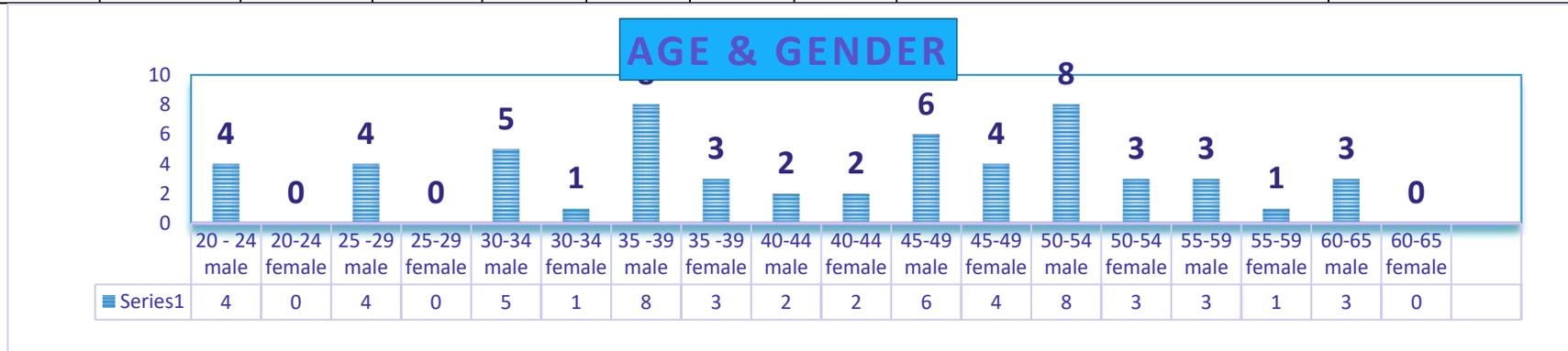
**The following snap-shop identifies and justifies the need for an intensive level of personal attention, guidance and support provided by an effective and adequately resourced LES**

Snapshot of 57 follow on 1:2:1's appointments registered over a 3month period by one Guidance Officer in the Bohermore Office

Gender:	Male 43	Female 14	LESN Survey Snapshopt of 57 follow on 1:2:1's from the Bohermore C	28/7/2020 – 12/11/2020 –	Total 57
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Age: Male: Female:	20-24 M=4 F= 0	25-29 M=4 F= 0	30-34 M=5 F=1	35-39 M=8 F=3	40-44 M=2 F=2	45-49 M=6 F=4	50-54 M=8 F=3	55-59 M=3 F=1	60-65 M=3 F=0	
	4	4	6	11	4	10	11	4	3	57



**Number Of Years Unemployed By Gender**

No. of years unemployed	1-3	4-6	7-9	<10						
Male	M=4 7%	M=17 30%	M=10 17%	M=1 2%						
Female	F=4 7%	F=4 7%	F=1 2%	F=5 9%						
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>						<b>57</b>

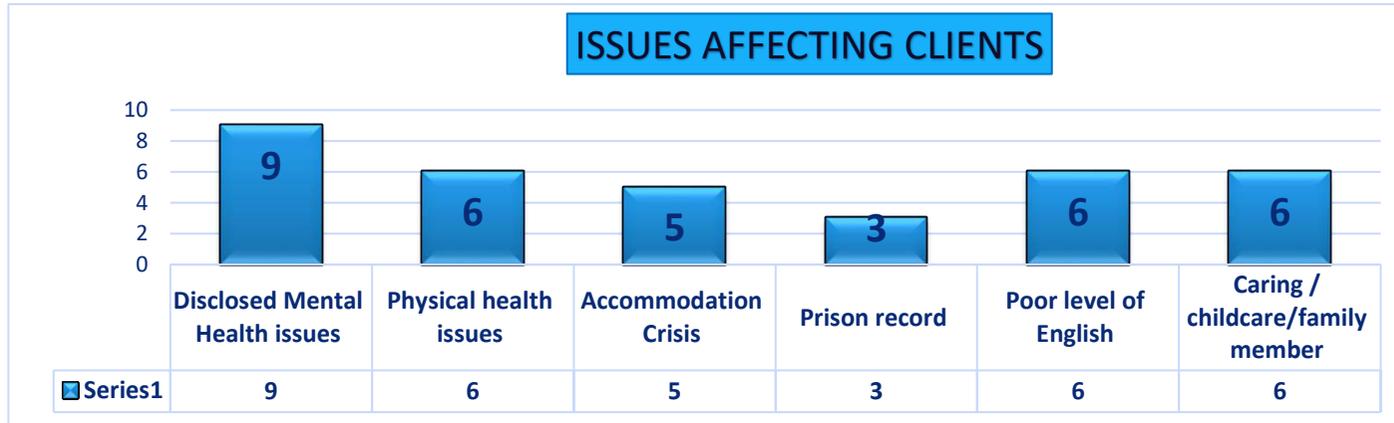
- **86% of referrals are unemployed 4 years and over**
- **30% over 10 years**



**Issues Affecting Clients include the following**

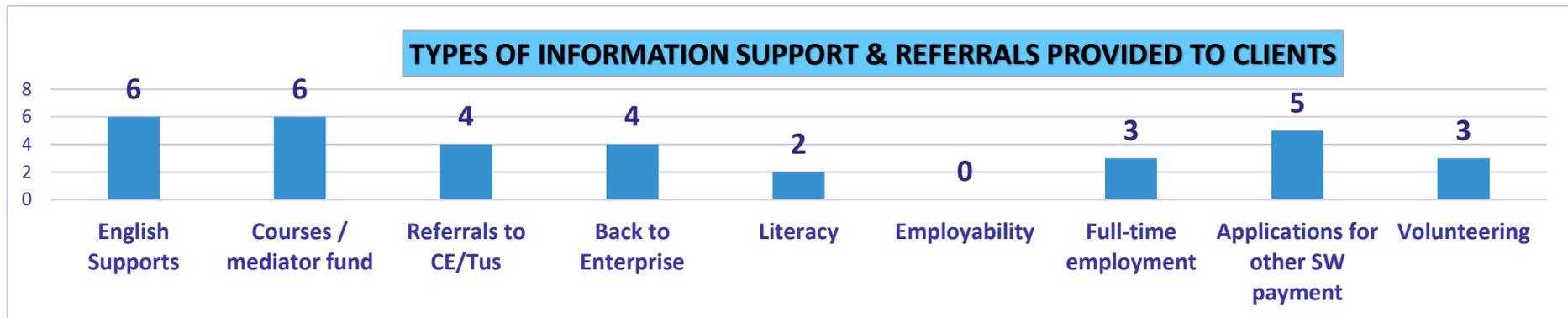
**Health Issues** Disclosed Mental Health issues – **9**  
 Physical health issues – **6**

**Other Issues: Disclosed** Accommodation Crisis –**5**  
 Prison record – **3**  
 Poor level of English – **6**  
 Caring / childcare/family member **6**  
 lack of work history/experience – As highlighted in the above data, this is an issue affecting a high percentage of clients



The following summarises the types of information support & referrals provided to these clients

English Language supports	6
Courses / mediator fund	6
Referrals to CE/Tus	4
Back to Enterprise	4
Literacy	2
Employability	0
Full-time employment	3
Applications for other SW payment	5
Volunteering	3



In addition to the above 57 “Activation follow On 1:2:1” clients registered in the above 3 month period a further

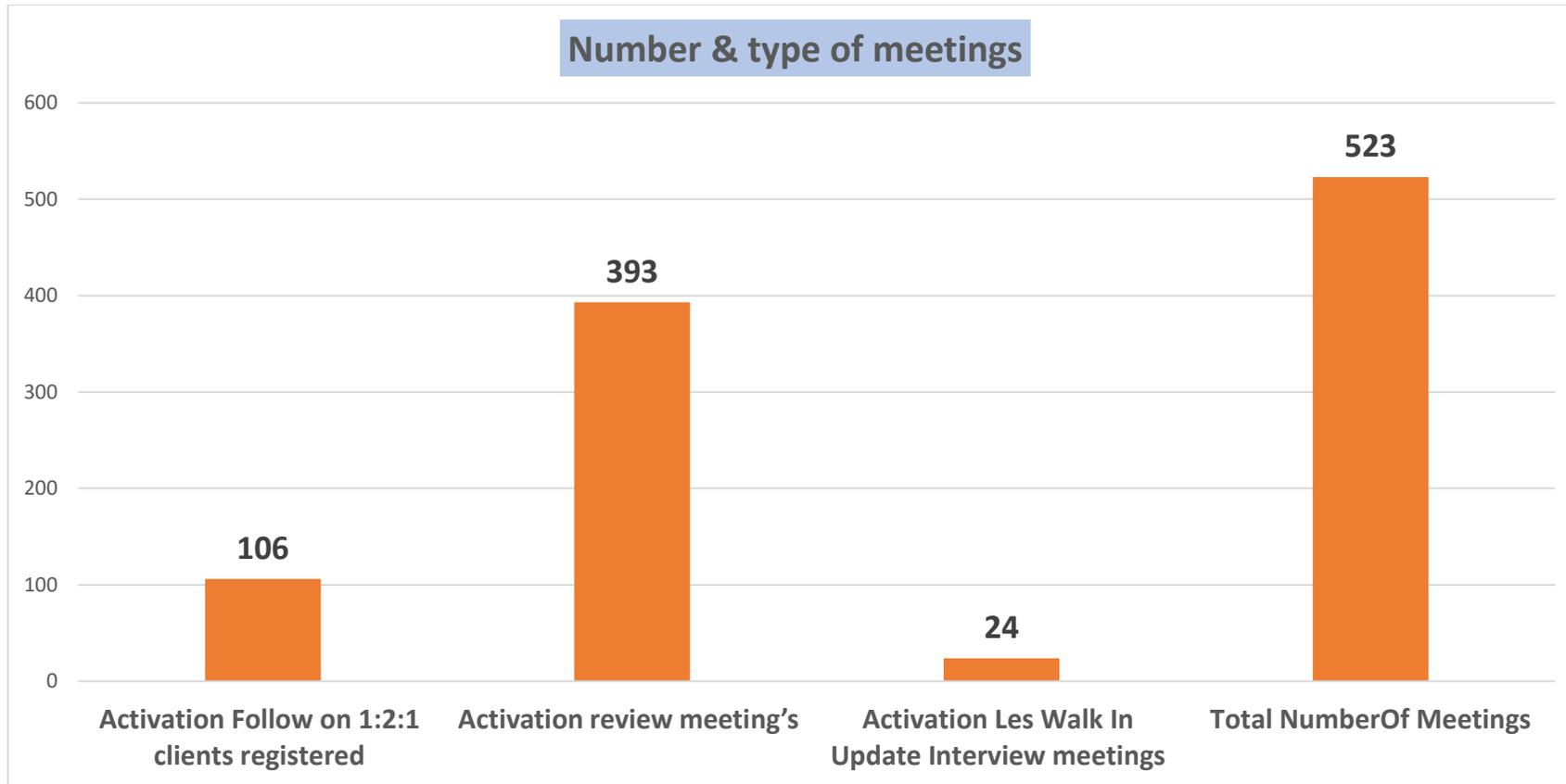
49 “Activation Follow On 1:2:1” meetings were completed in 2020.

389 “Activation review” meeting’s for existing clients

&

24 “Activation Les Walk In Update Interview” meetings were also completed.

Total of 523 Appointments



## Galway City Youth Advocacy Project

The need for intervention with young people who had left school, and were not engaging with any other service, was identified, and provision was made within the 2001-2003 Galway City Partnership Plan. Following from this the Youth Advocacy Service was developed in January of 2002, with initial funding coming for Galway City Partnership, FÁS and City of Galway VEC. GRETB is now the sole funding agency of the service, which is located in the Galway City Partnership offices, where day-to-day support for staff is available and where supervision, administration and monthly monitoring of the Service are carried out. The Youth Advocacy Service was set up with the primary aim:

*“To research and develop a tailor-made approach to career path planning within a community setting in order to meet the education, training and employment needs of early school leavers and young people with few or no qualifications”.*

The Galway City Youth Advocacy Service (YAS) is a community-based career guidance service for educationally disadvantaged and unemployed young people. The service works primarily with young people who have left school early or who have few or no qualifications and/or unemployed young people. The service operates within the “non-formal and informal sector” (*Youth Work*) and networks primarily with youth organisations, training centres and within the school sector.

The definition of early school leavers utilised within the service is:

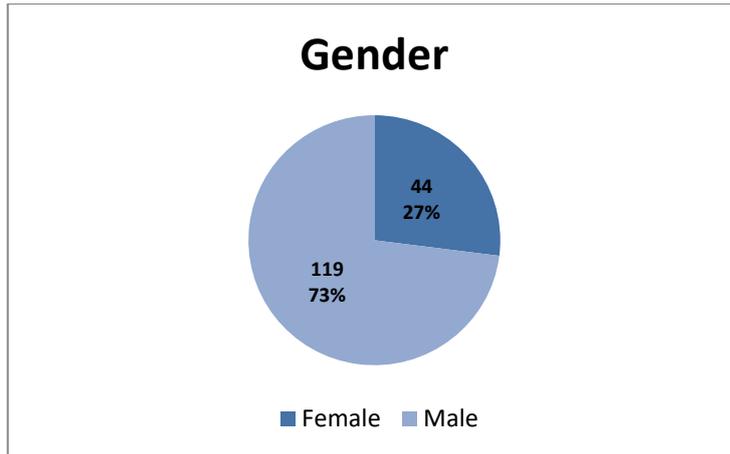
*“That early school leaving can be understood as young people leaving school before the legal school leaving age and/or leaving school with limited or no formal qualifications”* (Cullen, 2000).

Our dual stranded approach to service provision is:

- i. To meet directly with clients on an individual basis to develop their career path plan &
- ii. To develop a comprehensive database on the target group. The database developed within the service provides information in relation to caseload, geographical distribution of clients throughout the city, source of referrals, the education profile of clients and their progression.

### Client Profile

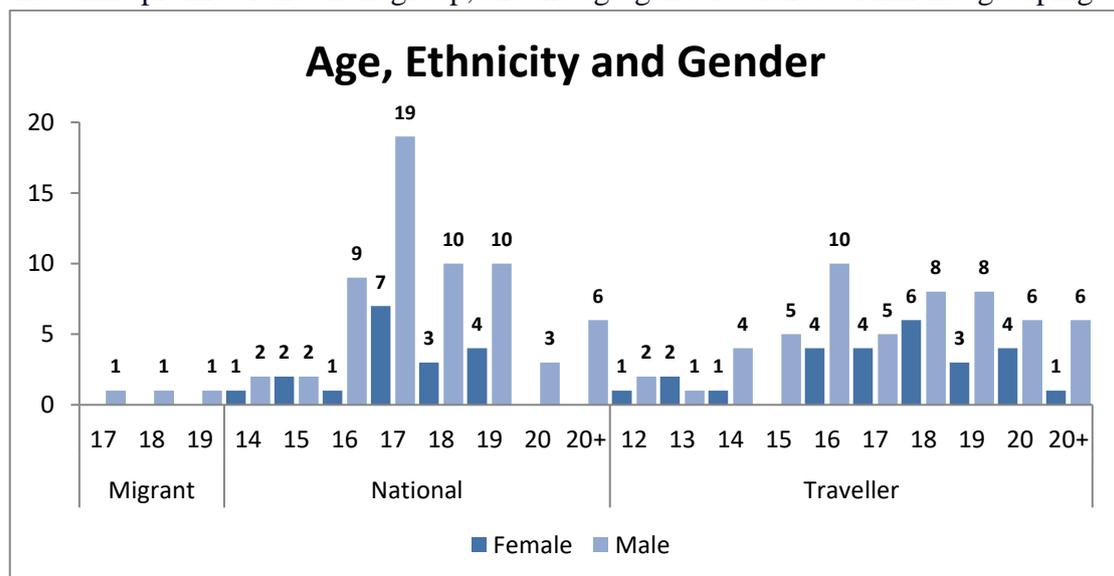
In 2020, the Youth Advocacy Service (YAS) worked with a total of 163 clients. The ratio of male to female clients has changed very little throughout the existence of the service, which has roughly been 2:1 - two-thirds male to one-third female. This year in 2020 the ratio which is outlined in the following chart is: 73% male to 27% female, which has seen a slight increase in the number of males that the service linked with.



Over the lifetime of the service the number of young people from the Travelling community accessing the service has also remained the same at approximately 1/3. In 2020 the number of young people from the Travelling community accessing the service increased to 50% which signifies the largest portion of this group. This echoes the multiple barriers that the Traveller community experiences. In 2020, additional work was completed for the GTM Traveller Research Project with circa 14 young school aged Travellers. The aim of this Research, led by the Dublin based ‘TASC’ group (Think-tank for Action on Social Change) was: “to gather baseline data with regards to the situation of the Traveller community in Education across Galway City with a specific focus on an exploration of the standards of literacy and numeracy achieved by the Traveller community”.

The staff supported three migrant young people totalling at 2%.

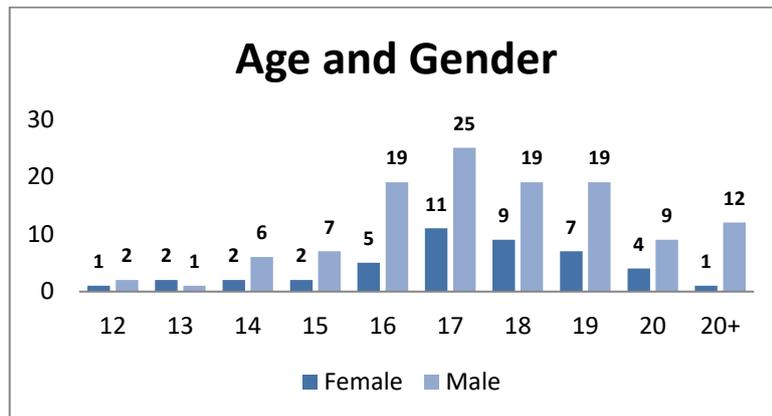
The settled community accessing the service was 48%. The following charts reflect the ethnic profile of the client group, and the age-gender balance within that grouping.



\*National – Irish citizens other than Travellers

The subsequent charts outline the age profile of the clients of the service. The YAS works primarily with young people aged 16-20, the service supported 8% of clients

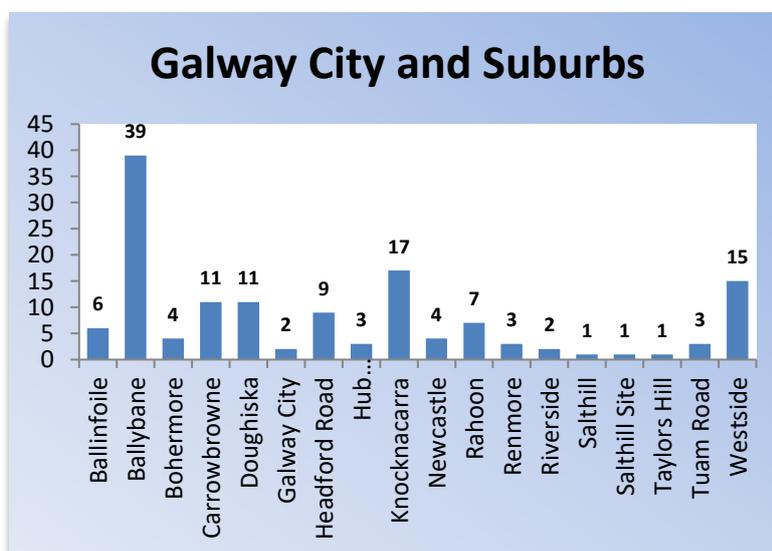
above the target age group in 2020. Older clients return to the service, many needing continued support to aid progression due to the current economic climate as a result of COVID-19. This is due to a mix of both service dependency and isolation where social exclusion is a reality for many clients. The establishment of Turas has also required working with a cohort of young people aged under-16 which accounts for 14% of our client group. As remains the case annually, the majority - 50%, of YAS clients are 16-19 year old males.



### Geographical Location

The office of Galway City Youth Advocacy Service, as a community-based organisation, is located in the Galway City Partnership offices. The YAS operates a citywide service that can be observed on the following graph.

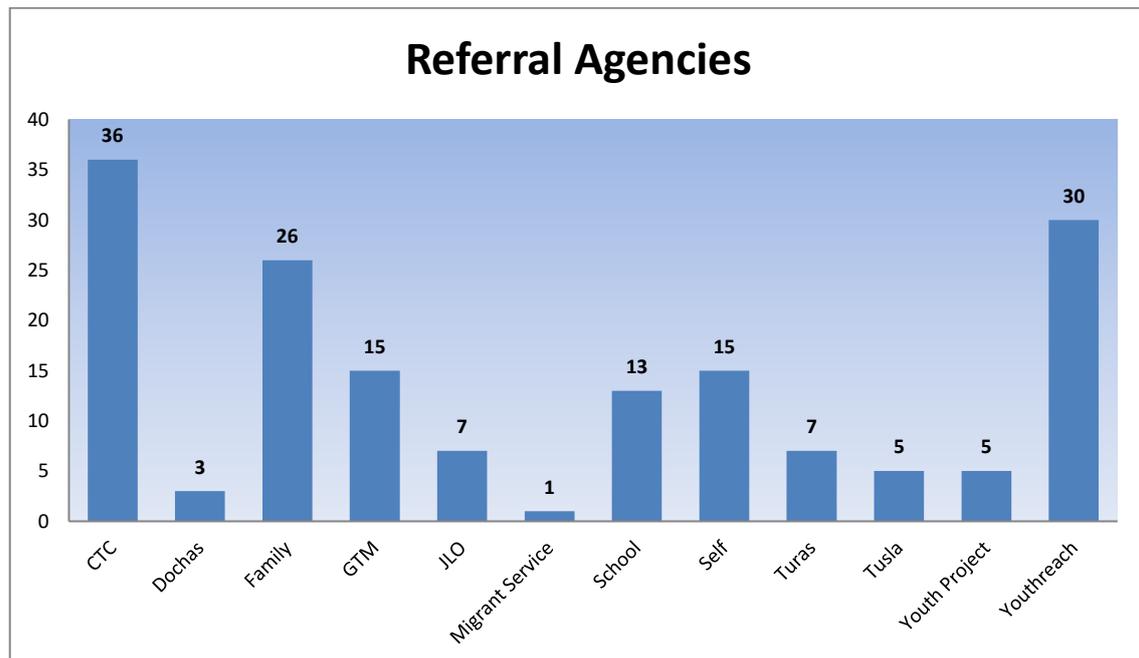
The majority of clients 50%, live in the Ballybane and Westside (including Ragoon, Newcastle, and Knocknacarra) areas, this is not surprising as they are both locations of high youth population and designated RAPID areas. 15% of our clients live outside the city, some of these young people would have attended second level school in the city and quite often the progression they have made or wish to gain access to is based in the city.



## Referral Details

We believe the Service is continuing to penetrate its correct target group and the impact, as a community-based organisation is evident. The evidence to support this is the number of self, family, community and stakeholder referrals, making a total of 53% of referrals.

The key source of referrals is through the training centres in the city, amounting to a total of 47%. This has seen an increase over recent years due to the need to support those ESLs remaining “in training”. The training centres that the Service links with include Youthreach, Community Training Centre, Dochas don Oige (Justice Project) Turas, and the National Learning Network (NLN) The education sector which includes schools Career Guidance, Home School Liaison personnel, the School Completion Programme and the EWB (Education Welfare Board) amounts to 8% of all referrals. The agencies and individuals with whom the Youth Advocacy Service is in contact with, receives referrals from and which are categorised as community and stakeholders are as follows: Co. Galway Advocacy Service, Brothers of Charity, INTREO, Galway Traveller Movement, TUSLA, Social Workers, JLO, Garda Diversion Projects, Probation Service, Prison Service, Migrant Service, LES, Social Workers, Foroige and Community youth projects. The subsequent graph summarises the referrals received from each particular agency in 2020.



All Training Centres that the Advocacy Service engages with have clearly established, effective working protocols for outside agency staff such as Advocacy during the COVID-19 pandemic. These include: dedicated ‘safe’ working spaces (such as the one pictured in the Galway City Youthreach) which allow for effective social distancing; use of PPE (mainly masks); sanitised work areas - cleaned down with

antibacterial wipes following each appointment; and the use of hand gels and sanitisers.

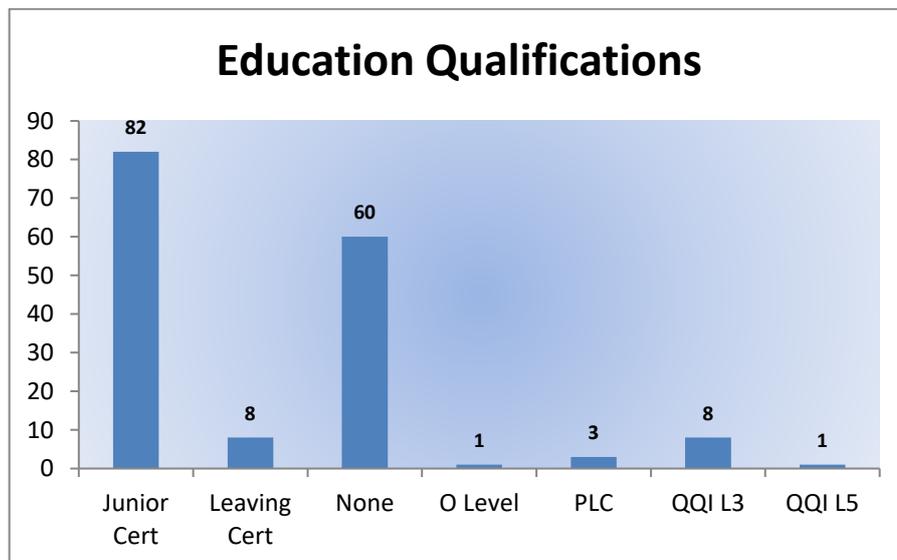


### Education Profile

The total number of clients with qualifications in 2020 was 63%.

- Junior Certificate standard – 50%
- Leaving Certificate standard – 5%
- FETAC & QQI Level 3 – 5%
- PLC and higher education – 3%

The education profile of clients has greatly improved since the service was established in 2002. There has been an decrease in numbers of young people with no formal qualifications in 2020 to 37%. In the past 18 years this had become as low as 28% in 2018 and 2019 from 54% in 2002.



### Progression Details

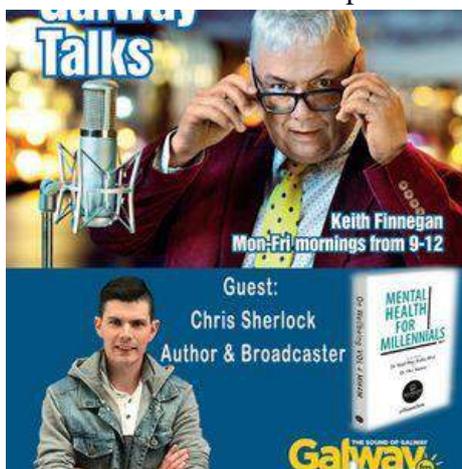
The aim of Galway City Youth Advocacy Service is to ensure that the majority of young people accessing the service make a smooth transition between education and further training and employment. The progression options which the young people involved in the service avail of include the following: Training Centres, Return to School, PLC courses, Employment, Apprenticeships, Occasional work, Self-Employment, Part-Time and Full Time Education options.

The following summarises the progression routes of clients with a total of 73% of young people currently in progression categorised in terms of Education, Training, Employment and Other as outlined below.

- Education – 20%
- Employment – 9%
- Training – 44%

The Youth Advocacy Service also has a cohort of young people who are actively engaged and seeking options available to them within the education, training and employment sectors. Young people who are actively seeking further education or employment and who have completed a Safe Pass and/or Driver Theory Test. This also includes clients who are pregnant, parenting and are carers and complete volunteer work, this total amounts to 22%.

Those not in progression, account for 5% of all clients, and the breakdown of the category not in progression is outlined as follows: prison, out of school, course dropout and unemployed. These clients experience crisis issues which negatively impact on their ability to engage and progress these include: accommodation issues, disability, peer issues, personal circumstances and prison.



*Former client of the Youth Advocacy Service, Chris Sherlock has published the story of his experience of being bullied at school, early school leaving and his subsequent path into broadcasting.*

### **The negative impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on Youth**

The negative impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on young people who are clients of the Youth Advocacy Service

1. The Pandemic has reduced education achievement & attendance; disrupted progress along their career-path-plan.
2. Work Experience Placements are difficult to find. Therefore, trainees will struggle to complete their mandatory module.
3. Outreach and visits to the home have reduced. Building and sustaining relationship has become more difficult.
4. Tailor-made responses to the needs of clients have insufficient resources due to competing demands. (“If you’re not answering the phone, I won’t be able to keep calling out to the house to check up on you”). Engagement and participation deteriorated.

5. Personal well-being has deteriorated; Health & well-being; increased isolation has compounded matters affecting 'harder-to-reach' young people facing multiple barriers to inclusion.
6. Advocates depend on stakeholder co-operation. Demands on space in facilities, timetabling and access protocols make the scheduling of appointments with clients formal (i.e. dealing with specific matters and 'orders of business' rather than relationship-building) and of short duration (rather than as a wrap-around support in response to the needs of the young person).
7. Access to services, public facilities; community centres, libraries are negatively impacted upon.
8. Reduced participation in Sport and Youth Projects.
9. Undermined future vision for oneself; goals and career choices/pathways disrupted. Some young people have to endure an accumulation of negative experiences. They have low self-esteem and lack confidence in their own capacity to learn. They may already face complex personal, social and family issues. They may have health issues such as poor mental health, substance use or antisocial behaviour.
10. Undermined relationships; switch to phone and digital rather than face-to-face has negatively impacted on tailoring career path plans. The learner's voice is not being heard over the needs of the organisation.
11. Undermined self-perception linked to learning ability and coping skills due to lack of clear pathways through the pandemic crisis. Unsure what the new normal may look like.
12. The pandemic has compounded the tendency among schools and training providers to prioritise the needs of young people who positively respond to supports i.e. 'the lower hanging fruit' / 'best value for money' are picked and those young people who put additional demands on resources are unable to be catered to.
13. Both education and employment have lost their aura of invincibility and enduring value. The importance of flexibility, lifelong learning, up-skilling and re-skilling need to be highlighted and promoted.
14. The importance of a healthy lifestyle, resilience, coping skills and competencies are as essential as qualifications.
15. Travellers, homeless, young people living in Hub Accommodation and young people with special needs are being marginalised even further as concerns grow about the needs of the majority of young people. Comprehensive supports to tackle complex needs are being over-stretched.

## Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

SICAP aims to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion and equality in Ireland through supporting communities and individuals using community development approaches, engagement and collaboration. Galway City Partnership welcomed the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2018-2022 and the opportunities it offered to consolidate and build on the work of GCP in working towards social, economic and cultural equality in Galway City and particularly welcomed the SICAP horizontal themes – community development, equality and collaboration – believing them to be fully compatible with the ethos of the organisation.

As the programme implementer in the city, GCP will focus this 2020 report on the impact of COVID-19 on services delivered and our responses.

### COVID-19 Impact on services

Individual clients, availing of **employment supports**, are normally met in person. One to one in person meetings proved difficult due to the COVID-19 restrictions, so it required a new way of communicating through text, email and particularly on the phone. Initially there were a considerable number of requests from clients regarding the Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

The closure of **schools** from the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and other disruptions during COVID 19 affected all sectors of society but it has been felt most acutely by disadvantaged children and their families. Challenges with distance learning, access to technology, re-engagement with learning, health and well-being have been reported from a range of agencies including Home School Liaison Teachers, Galway Traveller Movement and the Schools Completion Programme.

With the onset of COVID19 in March 2020, there were limited numbers in terms of course participants, closure of venues due to government lockdowns and a general sense of anxiety which all contributed to an adverse effect on course completion. Telephone contact was prioritised and maintained throughout the year. As a result of this telephone contact, it became apparent that there was a general lack of adequate computer equipment and/ or knowledge to complete online accredited courses. We refocused budgets to enable the purchase of IT equipment to go to disadvantaged and isolated individuals in the community. And 67 individuals have been supported to access **accredited education**.

### Community Education

Through **community education** we have supported a total of 145 individuals in 2020 through information and participation in unaccredited courses. Difficulties identified with the efficient delivery of online/virtual courses include not all individuals having the skills to use technology or not having access and / or training on technology. The pandemic has highlighted extreme social isolation in some cases, identified through conversations over the phone.

SICAP beneficiaries registered to **study English** as a second language have, in many cases, struggled with maintaining their studies online. They have, in many cases, lacked adequate access to laptops and other devices on which to continue their studies. Their devices when available are often shared. In addition, learners in Direct Provision or homeless accommodation have struggled to find access to appropriate learning spaces. Many learners have struggled to maintain motivation and focus. A number

of students in Direct Provision were provided with laptops and tablets to assist them with their studies. Tutors have continued to support students who were able to access online courses by providing phone and email mentoring and feedback.

COVID has **impacted on all LCGs** across the city. Groups tend to be established in the first instance as a result of the identification of a common need whereby people then choose to come together to address that need. Groups this year were faced with the huge challenge of somehow continuing their work without being allowed to ‘come together’. The Community Development staff team contacted LCGs across the city to find out what emerging needs each group had. They did this both over the phone or via email. GCP also liaised with GRETB Community Education staff who developed a survey for all community groups on their database. The survey asked detailed questions about the group’s needs, their level of IT competence, training needs as well as hardware needs. While GDPR did not allow for the specific sharing of responses from individual groups we were provided with a report outlining the overall responses. These figures showed us that of the 69 groups who responded 25 said they would be interested in engaging in on-line learning, 16 said no and 27 said maybe. 57 LCGs stated they needed IT training which included basic skills, using tablets and app such as Zoom, Seesaw, and MS Teams. 49 LCGs said they would require appropriate equipment to allow them to engage in online learning/meetings. 51 of the groups who responded had no experience of online learning/meetings in the past.

### **Galway Migrant Service**

Clients of **the Galway Migrant Service (GMS)** have been severely affected by the COVID-19 crisis and issues GMS are dealing with have become more complex due to the uncertainty and confusion around migrants’ rights and entitlements during the unprecedented pandemic situation. The COVID-19 pandemic related challenges have a worrying effect on GMS clients’ lives and wellbeing and their access to employment, education, training and housing and welfare supports.

The Immigration Services Delivery, a part of the Department of Justice that covers all areas of immigration into the State, has suspended most of its services back in March and has still not resumed their work to 100 percent capacity. The Department of Social Protection has suspended issuing Public Services Cards and, in some cases, migrants find getting PPS Numbers very slow and difficult. The Galway Local Garda Immigration Headquarters, that have been closed for Non-EU migrants’ registrations and residency renewals between March and the end of July, has re-opened but has a backlog of over 5,000 individuals awaiting appointments; therefore, the average waiting time for an appointment to get an Irish Residence Permit in Galway GNIB office is currently between 3 and 6 months, depending on the case. The migrant related Departmental guidelines continue to change and being updated frequently. Evidently, these changes and updates are very difficult for the migrant service users to locate and follow, especially when they have poor knowledge of English or/and knowledge of and access to the necessary technology and devices.

There has also been a noticeable rise in domestic abuse and homeless cases among migrant populations since the pandemic measures have been put in place.

Despite these issues SICAP continued to target those most marginalised and this is reflected in the following report (please note people may fit into more than one category):

### Individual Caseload by Target Group Report

2020 / Galway City (26-1)		LOT caseload (KPI 2): 706	
Target Group	Number	Percentage	
Disadvantaged Women	3	0%	
Disadvantaged Young People (aged 15-24)	59	8%	
Lone Parent	96	14%	
Low Income Workers/Households	96	14%	
New Communities	173	25%	
People Living in Disadvantaged Communities	116	16%	
People with Disabilities	64	9%	
Roma	2	0%	
The Disengaged from the Labour Market (Economically Inactive)	173	25%	
The Unemployed	439	62%	
Travellers	41	6%	

List of all SICAP target groups: Disadvantaged Young People, Disadvantaged Women, Emerging Needs Group, Lone Parents, Low Income Workers/Households, New Communities, People living in Disadvantaged Communities, People with Disabilities, Roma, Travellers, The Disengaged from the Labour Market, The Unemployed

### SICAP responses & collaborations

SICAP was represented in collaborations with local schools, the Schools Completion Programme and Galway Traveller Movement, to respond initially during COVID 19 to gaps emerging with *Distance Learning*.

The immediate gap was the limited access of families to digital devices other than smart phones. Moreover, limited or poor-quality internet access, and parental concerns related to their academic capacity for distance learning were additional needs that emerged. Therefore, the transition to online learning was more challenging for many children and families from disadvantaged areas. When schools did not re-open during the summer period, continued collaboration took place to ensure targeted summer programmes to promote education and personal development took place within COVID restrictions. As schools returned in late August issues with distance learning continued as

schools made plans for short- or long-term future closures. The collaboration outlined continued with the objective of conducting technology needs analysis and responding where possible to gaps in digital literacy and technology.

### **Online Course Options**

In community education our beneficiaries were provided with not only **online** accredited course options but also received online unaccredited supports such as practical videos in Yoga and Cookery. These could be practiced in their own homes and at their own pace and proved very popular. Collaboration with GRETB, which developed a YouTube channel, proved successful. We provided lifelong learning opportunities in Healthcare and HACCP. Individuals were referred to GRETB's fetch.ie which organised online training in Infection Prevention and Control. In order to provide a **classroom- based learning** opportunity, a HACCP course started in the Maldron Hotel in Galway city. Unfortunately, it was forced to postpone due to restrictions and the two-day course finally finished in the Ballinfoile Castlegar Neighbourhood Centre three weeks later. Furthermore, a system of referrals was established between Galway City Partnership and VTOS (Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme) which provides several accredited full-time courses in disciplines of Healthcare, IT, Business, Media and Art. The VTOS services remained open for most of the year.

In promoting unaccredited education we **organised one-to-one short meetings** in GCP premises when safe to do so. At other times we **called to peoples' homes for a short chat**, to deliver of Acorn Tablets – at all times keeping a safe distance and remaining outdoors when possible. Supporting people who are socially isolated and giving them time to chat and supporting them in any way possible through online classes or referrals or just a chat to check in on them or do a follow up. Discussions with individuals and colleagues highlighted the need for Basic IT classes for individuals in the Community. In conjunction with the Galway Adult Basic Education Service (GABES), we **coordinated several Basic IT Skills courses** in Ballybane with a focus on parents of children attending DEIS schools. We then rolled out more IT classes in Ballinfoile and offered classes to individuals within the community and surrounding area. As a result of the need for IT classes we then set up classes in the Westside We provided IT support for users of the new Acorn tablets to support older people. This class commenced just before Christmas and is already proving a huge success. Telephone contact was prioritised and maintained throughout.

### **Innovative Responses**

SICAP staff developed new, and further enhanced existing, collaborations across the city in their response to COVID. One example of this is the collaborative work between GCP and the Galway Adult Basic Education Service within GRETB. Once the Level 3 restrictions were introduced, groups were supported to meet with reduced numbers in large spaces. Once Level 5 was introduced we no longer brought groups together in an indoor setting and we worked very hard to enable all groups to continue via zoom. This has entailed getting support from the Galway Adult Basic Education Service (GABES) of GRETB. GABES have provided tutors to our outreach centres for the past 12 weeks. One morning a week the support is aimed at adult learners who need to be able to use IT to assist them in accessing online learning, support their children's online learning i.e. by becoming familiar with emails, MS

Teams, Zoom, Seesaw, Google classroom. On another morning each week the tutors provide members of community groups support with zoom and MS Teams which then allows the group to continue to meet using an online platform.

We successfully accessed **funds** via the LCDC Emergency Funding stream to purchase laptops for the use of community groups. Group members can bring along their own devices or else are using these laptops.

### **Back to Work Enterprise Allowance**

**BTWEA client support** - BTWEA client support requirements were varied especially at the beginning of the pandemic as clients struggled to deal with the ever-changing situation. Some clients needed reassurance and hope, but one had to be careful not to give false hope to clients. Every client without exception required financial assistance during this period. Some clients were in a position to change the direction of their business and may have been forced into this change before they expected. This was illustrated by some clients moving their entire business on-line during the most severe restrictions and then were able to provide both a very cleverly planned on line platform and a standard platform for their business when restrictions eased. A Yoga client was one of these particular businesses that managed such a change very successfully.

Galway City Partnership are largely restricted to offering support to those within the city boundaries but within Enterprise Development in Galway City Partnership we did work closely with agencies that worked on a county wide scale, most particularly the Local Enterprise Office and a number of TD's and Councillors. This collaboration took the form of assisting clients with grant support applications and direction toward the most appropriate supports that were available.

### **Social Enterprise**

**Galway City Partnership Social Enterprise (SE)** supports were impacted by the inability of SEs to meet in person. Despite this GCP initiated a number of Zoom sessions where groups could identify their own needs. This was a means of them feeding into Galway City Council's report on the future physical infrastructure of SEs. GCP also supported several SEs in the administration of Small Capitol Grants Scheme that was funded by DRCD. Bounce Back Recycling, SCULL Enterprises, An Mheitheal Rothar and Galway Community Circus all received financial support under this grant scheme. GCP also supported smaller and start up SEs through individual work and sign posting. GCP have provided a physical space in Sandy Road to SEs through the Artisan Workshop. In 2020 Galway Traveller Movement initiated a project to look at the upcycling of furniture in the downstairs space.

The upper floor continues to be made available to local SEs as a meeting space, hot desks and an opportunity to network.



## **Galway Migrant Service**

Since the COVID-19 restrictions have been put in place, the Galway Migrant Service(GMS) has continued to remain a vital front line support service for the migrant population of Galway. Throughout the lockdown, GMS has continued to support its individual service users via email, phone and Skype. Most of the cases GMS has been working with throughout the pandemic, have been very complex and require much higher levels of individual support, advocacy and interagency work. The migrant support project officer has been working closely with the other local and national service providers to ensure the best possible service delivery under such unprecedented circumstances. The service has continued to successfully operate its well-established referral system. Our service users have been assured that all the usual supports and advocacy continues to be available to them and the Galway Migrant Service is fully accessible and operational.

## **Labour Market Training Courses**

All Labour Market Training Courses were facilitated in the Maldron Hotel in Galway City. This was the first time the course has taken place outside of the main Galway City Partnership offices. The decision to do so was made because of the social distancing requirements that are in place due to Covid-19 safety measures.

There were two new initiatives within Goal 2 planned and implemented in a direct response to Covid-19 challenges. The projects were audio visual in content.

The first project was a series of Video Tutorials illustrating how to operate various aspects of everyday technology. These were a response to the issues identified for people in participating in distance learning and included:

- 1) Explaining basic technology terms
- 2) How to create an email account
- 3) How to send an email
- 4) How to send an attachment with an email
- 5) Installing WhatsApp on to your phone
- 6) How to install Microsoft teams on to a laptop/computer
- 7) How to use your phone as an Internet Hotspot

The feedback for the tutorial series was very positive and as a result it was decided to make them widely available – see the GCP website ([www.gcp.ie](http://www.gcp.ie)) and the YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiZCFa1Hygzy4jSKFIhUBFw/videos>)

## **The Dina in the Classroom Programme**

The second project was again a direct response to a need that arose due to Covid-19 restrictions. The Dina in the Classroom programme was recorded as a resource after being suspended in March due to school closure - a programme that supports children's social and emotional wellbeing. Although schools re-opened the zoning system prevented the programme returning. The Education Officer approached Radharc na Mara, as a lead Incredible years school in the city, with the idea of recording several sessions. The Principal supported this idea and made the school and a staff member available.

Several weeks of preparation and planning ensued with all the relevant parties, including the SCP releasing a staff member to record the sessions. The sessions were then recorded and edited over 5 weeks and are now in circulation to five further schools in the city.

### **Galway City Community Response Forum & Community Call Helpline**

GCP actively participated in the Galway City Community Response Forum alongside Galway City Council, Galway City Community Network and other local organisations. We responded to needs as they were presented at this forum.

### **Community Development Work**

Our community development work focused particularly on interagency work and sought an integrated community response to the issues that arose as a result of COVID-19. This is reflected in more detail in the next section.

Some examples of GCPs community development work specifically responding to COVID are detailed below:

#### **Flower Window boxes for older and vulnerable people cocooning in Galway city.**

Galway City Partnership in collaboration with local community groups such as Ballybane Community Resource Centre, Ballinfoile Castlegar Neighbourhood Centre, Community Resource Centre, Ballybane Community Garden, Ballinfoile Mór Community Garden and Westside Community Garden and Resource Centre prepared 400 summer flower window boxes for older and vulnerable people living in our communities.

The first 180 boxes were prepared by GCP staff and delivered by the GCP Tús team the beginning of June. The main objective was to cheer people up, to help combat isolation and loneliness and to foster old and new relationships with older and vulnerable people living in our communities.



In August 2020, another 200 window boxes were prepared by members and volunteers of the Ballinfoile Mór Community Garden and 12 members of the Foróige Youth Project and their youth workers. This was a great success and the window boxes were delivered to 200 older people across the city by the Galway City Community guards. It was a great example of working collaboratively in difficult times and was also an opportunity to further develop relationships between members of the

community garden and some of the youth in the area. The recipients of the boxes were delighted to receive them and GCP now has a database of older people from right across the city. It is envisaged that a befriending phone system will be put in place by GCP over the winter months to reach out to these people. Galway City Partnership provided funding for this initiative. Referrals came from key agencies in the city working with older people such as Cope, St Vincent de Paul, Galway Contact, The Community Guards, Age Action, Croí na Gaillimhe, various community groups across the city and from the Galway City COVID Response

### **Care Box Initiative**

GCP developed Care Packs which were distributed to older people who were identified as a result of calls made into the Community Response Forum Helpline and also based on local knowledge within the communities, by PHN's, Cope and St Vincent de Paul. The packs contained instant porridge, pen & notebook, liquid soap, tea bags, playing cards, Magazines or Multi-activity books, water, mindful colouring book & colours, disinfectant spray, shampoo, hairbrush, toothbrush, toothpaste, Vaseline, facecloth, tissues, jigsaw, knitting needles and wool, Galway Age friendly Programme board and marker, subway vouchers and information resources such as Healthy Galway exercise leaflet for older adults, Community Response Helpline number and booklet, HSE COVID booklet in plain English, Minding your Mental Health leaflets, SICAP supports across the city and other relevant local resources depending on the need of the older person.

In total GCP staff delivered 100 bags to older people across the city. The feedback from recipients has been positive in the extreme. People were really, really delighted to receive the bags and commented on the thoughtful contents and useful information provided. The connections made by GCP staff and a large number of older people across the city has been fantastic and we hope to be able to build on this in the future.



### **Highlighting the needs of People with Disabilities**

Galway City Partnership supports people with disabilities through resourcing Access for All. This is a group made up of people with disabilities, local organisations, groups representing people with disabilities and local stakeholders such as Galway City Council. People with disabilities are recognised as being one of the most alienated and disadvantaged groups in relation to accessing services, income, housing, transport and overall, wellbeing. This was particularly highlighted in 2020 during Covid 19 where they were one of the more vulnerable and at risk groups. Access for All continued to meet over

this time, where they actively used the Zoom platform. This facilitated a number of people who in other times would not have been able to participate in physical meetings as a result of access and health issues. Access for All brought the issue of the opening up of Galway city to the public through engaging with Galway City Council and Galway Chamber of Commerce. The needs and concerns of people with disabilities were highlighted and the real impact on peoples lives was illustrated through concrete examples. As a result Galway City Council carried out a local publicity campaign in the press and on social media.



### Digital Support for Older People

With funding received from the LCDC Emergency Fund and GCP we have purchased 24 smart tablets which are being configured to support digital needs of older people. Digital adoption is a significant challenge for many older adults and SICAP staff identified this resource as a means of easing this transition. Loneliness and isolation are unfortunately very prevalent in our communities due to COIVD- 19 and it is hoped that this initiative will enable older people to stay more connected with their families, friends and communities. Three SICAP staff have completed training and prepared the tablets and worked closely with members of the Alliance of organisations working with older people in Galway and other community groups to identify and support suitable older people for the tablets.



## **Ballybane ACE Club**

The Ballybane ACE (after class experience) club is managed by Galway City Partnership with staffing funded by GRETB. The club runs Monday to Thursday from 3-6pm and caters for children from the surrounding community between the ages of seven and twelve.

It is a fun activity club that encourages growth, respect, enjoyment and togetherness. Children are involved in a wide range of activities which help develop their creativity, self-expression, language and communication skills. We aim to provide the children with rich learning experiences through Art, Music, Games, Stories, Drama and Language work.

We also receive funding from Tusla and St Vincent de Paul. This funding covers the day to day running costs of the club. COVID has meant a lot of changes, depending on the level of restrictions for the club. March to June 2020 the club was closed to face to face interactions. Staff prepared weekly packs and delivered them to the children's houses. Regular phone calls were made to the children and their families to check in and see if additional support was required. The club opened again on a face to face basis from September to Christmas. Numbers were somewhat lower than usual and an extra room had to be booked to accommodate the distancing of the children. Otherwise the programme ran without hitch and the children were delighted to be back with us in person.

### **What the children think....**

- “I like it, it’s fun. You get to learn things.”      “I like doing Art and basically everything.”
- “I like everyday you make new friends and you do something different everyday.”
- “I like everything. I love the Art and also the word searches, they are fun.”
- “I like that we do a mixture of work.”      “I like doing seasonal art.”
- “I love this club so much. I like how we do Art.”      “I like the teachers.”
- “I like how we do Music.”      “It’s fun, we are learning a lot.”





### **Ballybane Study Club**

The Ballybane Study Club is managed by Galway City Partnership and runs with one staff member from GRETB as well as with support from volunteers (pre covid). The club runs from Monday to Thursday from 5-7pm. The programme is targeted at Travellers from the local community. It runs from the Ballybane Community Resource Centre. Congratulations to two of last year's graduates of the Ballybane Study Club, PJ Mongan & Ian Mc Donagh. Both have progressed onto 3rd Level - the first in their families to have achieved this-Well done to both.



### **Healthy Ireland Funding Round 3**

Galway City Partnership supports both the LCDC and CYPSC in their roll out of the Healthy Ireland initiative. Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative aimed at enabling everyone to enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential. The Healthy Ireland Fund is supported by the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

GCP supports the LCDC through the recruitment and management of a HI Co-ordinator, and by providing administrative support.

We support the CYPSC by being the legal body that holds the contract for the CYPSC HI work and administering the agreed funds.

### **Healthy Galway City (LCDC) Update:**

- The Stress Control programme was delivered in ARD Family Resource Centre, Doughiska, in February 2020. There were 51 people registered for the 6-week programme. The final session had to be cancelled due to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions.
- The Nature for Health (formerly Woodlands for Health) programme was due to begin in Merlin Woods on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March but had to be postponed due to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. The programme was rescheduled and was delivered over 10-weeks from September 2020.
- In May 2020, as part of the Safefood Community Food Initiative, Galway City Partnership, in collaboration with Foróige Ballinfoile, GRETB and the HSE, delivered a pilot project to support 17 families to cook and eat healthy meals together in their own homes. Following the success of the pilot project the programme was expanded to 84 families in the East and the West of the City during the summer and winter months, in partnership with Foróige, GRETB, Tusla and the HSE.
- Worked with the HSE Community Nutrition & Dietetics Service to develop an online healthy eating programme to support communities to prepare healthy and nutritious meals for themselves and their families during COVID-19 restrictions. The new online programme was piloted in December 2020.
- To promote daily physical activity at home among older adults who were cocooning due to COVID-19, we adapted an Exercise Leaflet developed by HSE Physio Services in Cork, for use in Galway. 3,000 exercise leaflets were delivered to older adults across the City. This was a joint initiative of Healthy Galway City and Healthy County Galway, in partnership with Galway Sports Partnership.
- In partnership with Galway City Council, Galway Sports Partnership and Galway CYPSC, 450 activity packs were prepared, and distributed to disadvantaged families across Galway City. The packs were distributed to coincide with National Play Day on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July with the view of encouraging physical activity during the summer months.
- The Healthy Galway City website, [healthygalwaycity.ie](http://healthygalwaycity.ie), was launched on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April. The website will act as an information hub, signposting people to reliable sources of health and wellbeing information and useful resources. It will also be used as a platform to showcase initiatives, programmes and events which aim to promote the health and wellbeing of the people of Galway City.

- To promote positive mental health and wellbeing as we adapted to living with COVID-19, a two-week radio campaign was run with Galway Bay FM from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July. This was a joint initiative of Healthy Galway City and Healthy County Galway. The Healthy Galway Wellbeing Campaign included radio ads, six scheduled interviews on the Keith Finnegan Show and promotion on Galway Bay FM social media and website.
- We partnered with Galway Sports Partnership Community Sports Hub in Ballybane & Doughiska, to deliver a number of Come & Try Sports programmes from September to November 2020. The programmes targeted children aged 7-10 years and included a range of activities including athletics, volleyball, soccer, and cricket. In total, 38 children participated. There were 8 sessions delivered in Doughiska over 5 weeks and an additional 16 sessions delivered in Ballybane over 8 weeks. The programmes linked with local sports clubs to promote sustainability.
- A range of physical activity programmes for the LGBT+ community were delivered online in response to COVID-19. These programmes were live streamed via Teach Solais Instagram.
- Through Galway City Partnership, and in collaboration with the Galway Age Friendly Programme and Galway City Culture and Creativity Team, we were successful in securing funding under the ‘Creative Ireland Positive Ageing and Wellbeing Challenge Fund’ to deliver a number of creative workshops. Due to Level 5 restrictions, it was not possible to deliver the Creative Workshops for Older People in-person as originally planned. To overcome this, we engaged with a local artist who can facilitate Creative Workshops for Older People from the safety of their own home utilising Acorn Tablets.

### **Healthy Galway City (CYPSC) Update:**

- Building on work undertaken in 2018 and 2019, Round 3 of the Healthy Ireland Fund was delivered in Galway during 2020.
- Galway City Partnership acted as financial agent and lead partner in the administration of the Galway Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) Programme of Work. This work comprised:
  - (In partnership with Galway Childcare Committee) the development of resources and delivery of practical supports to build capacity within childcare services to provide outdoor play opportunities for children and to make meal times healthy and social occasions.
  - (In partnership with Healthy Galway City, Healthy County Galway, HSE Health and Wellbeing and HSE Community Nutrition & Dietetic Service) delivery of the Healthy Food Made Easy programme in Galway County.
  - (In partnership with Foróige) the delivery of a Healthy Eating Programme to 100 families across County Galway.
  - (As part of a broad coalition of local services including Galway Healthy City) Delivering the Not Around Us campaign to de-normalise smoking in Galway.
- Additionally, Galway City Partnership undertook to act as financial agent and lead partner for projects delivered as part of Galway CYPSC’s Community Mental Health Fund. The Community Mental Health Fund is supported by the Department of Health. Projects delivered included:

- A Family Wellbeing Programme delivered by Galway Autism Partnership to children with autism and their families.
- A Family Wellbeing Programme delivered by Down Syndrome Ireland, Galway to children with Down Syndrome and their families.



*The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 is funded by the Irish Government and co-funded by the European Social Fund and includes a special allocation under the Youth Employment Initiative*

