

# St. Catherine's Community Services Centre



## Annual Report 2016

## Foreword from the Chair

As Chair of St Catherine's Community Services Centre I am delighted to present the 2016 Annual Report. It details another year of positive growth and new initiatives and a stable financial position.

The Board of St Catherine's is entirely voluntary and has been that way since it began operating more than 40 years ago. As Chair I wish to record the gratitude of St Catherine's to all Board members, both past and present for their unstinted efforts, expertise and time. The current Board has devoted a considerable amount of time recently in reviewing and strengthening our governance policies and procedures to meet the standards rightly demanded of charities.

I would also like to thank our staff and our many volunteers and to note the great spirit of teamwork which exists between volunteers and staff. Some of the services we provide would not be possible without the unsung contributions of so many volunteers for whom their only reward is to serve their community. We are grateful that so many people are so generous in giving up their time.

The Board also wishes to acknowledge the significant leadership of the Director of Services, Niall Morris and our team of Managers and Co-ordinators in meeting the many challenges faced in the difficult years we have all experienced recently. St. Catherine's resources are limited and we depend on the commitment of the whole team in St. Catherine's who often work above and beyond what is expected of them.

We have always worked well with our funders and it is appropriate to acknowledge the support of TUSLA, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the HSE, Carlow County Council, the Department of Social Protection, KCETB, Carlow County Development Partnership, the Department of Justice and our other funders, sponsors and donors.

Looking to the future, we will have many new challenges and opportunities. I am confident we will respond effectively to both and continue to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

**Adrian Dunlevy**  
**August 2017**

## Note from the Director of Services

2016 was another busy year in St. Catherine's. We have strived to continue to add new services and develop existing services to meet the demands of the communities we serve where possible. Examples of this in 2016 include:

- The opening of the second ECCE/Free year room in the Kilkenny Road Childcare service offering an additional 11 places
- St. Catherine's launched a Community Savings Club to help people save regularly for Christmas, Communions and other expensive events thereby avoiding very expensive moneylenders
- The Making Connections LTI moved to St. Catherine's in April and we welcome the learners and staff
- An Access and Family Support project was piloted with Tusla Social Work

On another positive note our Meals on Wheels Standards of Excellence Quality Assessment Framework won the national "Community Innovation Award" from Age Friendly Ireland.

We could not continue to operate and grow without the support of a large number of people so I would sincerely like to thank:

- All our staff for their hard work and dedication
- All our volunteers and supporters without whom we couldn't survive
- Our Board members for their guidance
- Our funders and partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. We depend and work closely with other agencies in virtually everything we do
- The services based in St. Catherine's – Citizens Information Service, Accord, National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities and the other services that use the Centre
- The people of Carlow who continue to support us and use our services

**Niall Morris**  
**August 2017**

## 2016 In Figures

**127**

Socially Monitored Alarms and Pendants were Installed

**6** Teen Mothers moved into further training or education

**14** supported to stay in secondary school

**20,299**

Meals on Wheels Cooked and Delivered

**9** Want to Work participants secured jobs.

**5** went on to full time education/training

**33**

QQI Level 3 module awards earned by 19 Making Connections learners including 2 Majors

**7** Mothers from Moving On went on to further education/training/jobs

**11** earned QQI Level 4 Major Awards

**1200+**

Health related engagements with the Travelling Community

**61**

Members of the Traveller Community participated in pre-development programmes

**60**

Traveller Men engaged in health related group activities

**7**

Participants from the LFEL and PFW courses secured employment

**95**

QQI Awards delivered in Community Education

**22**

Participants from the Community Education LFEL and PFW courses progressed into further education and training

**54**

Teenagers and their families were supported through the Teen Parent Support Programme

**70+**

Volunteers engaged in St. Catherine's

**€29k**

Saved by 65 savers in our new Community Savings Club

**192**

Children attended our 2 childcare services weekly

### New in 2016

- A second ECCE/Free year room opened in the Kilkenny Road Childcare service
  - A new Community Savings Club opened in St. Catherine's
  - Making Connections LTI moved to St. Catherine's
- Access and Family Support project was piloted with Tusla Social Work
- Meals on Wheels Standards of Excellence Quality Assessment Framework won the national "Community Innovation Award" from Age Friendly Ireland

## **Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to provide quality services responsive to local needs, based on equality, diversity, justice and inclusion with a view to empowering and enriching individuals, families and communities in Carlow and its environs.

## **Aims:**

- To ensure work is responsive to local need with respect for equality, individuality and diversity
- To empower people to take control over their own lives and to participate fully in society
- Reduce barriers to participation of those most at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage

## **Objectives:**

- To involve and consult with participants, target groups and local community in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of all programmes and activities
- To work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups to ensure an effective, coordinated and strategic response to local needs
- To proactively encourage and facilitate the participation of those at risk of exclusion, poverty and disadvantage and to do this through the provision of information, support, community and developmental education
- To promote and support voluntary work as a means of providing services and to recognise and value the role and work of volunteers
- To evaluate and plan the work of St Catherine's on a regular basis in order to ensure that it is remaining responsive to identified need

## **Our Volunteers**

St. Catherine's would like to thank all our volunteers for their hard work and commitment to St. Catherine's in 2016. There were over 70 volunteers who regularly assisted in Meals on Wheels, Administration and Reception, Caretaking, Childcare and After Schools. St. Catherine's hosted our Annual Volunteer Christmas party in December to say thank you to our volunteers. Over 50 volunteers attended.

## **Our Board**

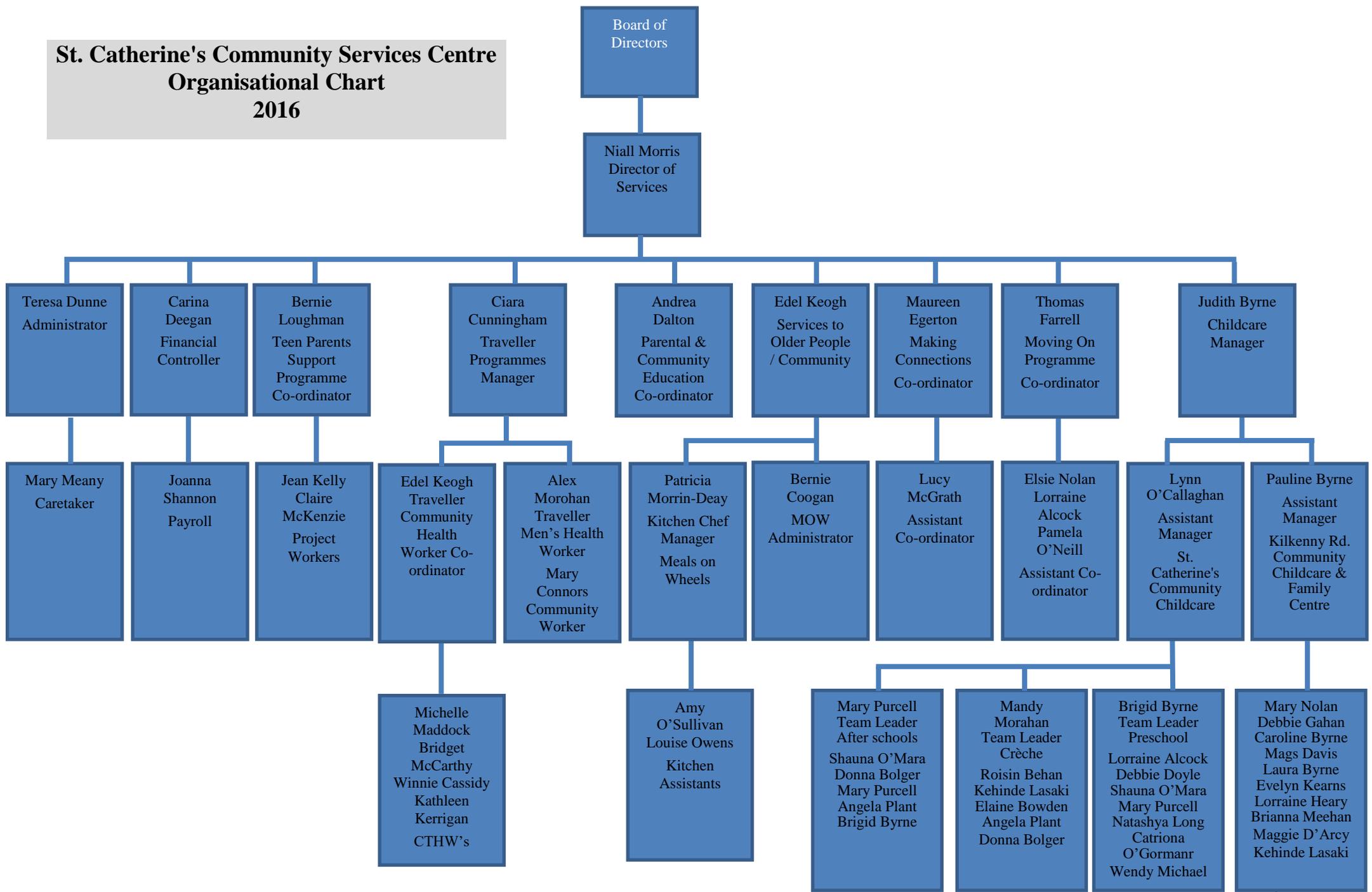
We would like to thank our Board members for their time and commitment to St. Catherine's:

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Adrian Dunlevy (Chair)    | - Frank Comerford (Secretary) |
| - Brian Buckley (Treasurer) | - Marian Duffy                |
| - Andrea Dalton             | - Maura Dowling               |
| - Sean Scanlon              | - Fr. Bill Kemmy              |
| - Fr. Tom Little            | - Eamonn Ellis                |

St. Catherine's Board met 10 times in 2016. The Audit sub committee met 3 times. The members are the Chair, Treasurer and the Director of Services.

A special thanks to Andrea Dalton who resigned as a Director in 2016 and welcome to our new Directors Sean Scanlon and Eamonn Ellis.

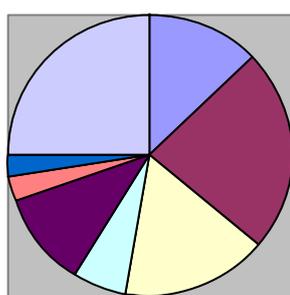
**St. Catherine's Community Services Centre  
Organisational Chart  
2016**



## Financial Overview

2016 Summary Profit and Loss Account		
	2016	2015
Grant Funding	1,292,431	1,128,949
Income from Services	269,840	234,207
Rental Income	45,250	48,335
Sundry Income	26,807	7,754
<b>Turnover</b>	<b>1,634,328</b>	<b>1,419,245</b>
Programme & Administration Expenses	-1,601,979	-1,460,413
Plus Other Operating Income		
Government Grants Received & Released	6,624	5,374
<b>Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>38,973</b>	<b>-35,794</b>
Plus Bank Interest Received	1,152	9,579
Interest payable	0	0
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>40,125</b>	<b>-26,215</b>

### St. Catherine's Sources of Funding 2016



■ HSE
■ DCYA
■ Fees
■ DSP
■ KCETB
■ Rent
■ Sundry
■ Tusla

Tusla = 25%  
 Dept. of Children and Youth Affairs = 23%  
 Health Service Executive = 13%  
 Service Fees = 16.5%  
 Dept. of Social Protection = 6%  
 Rental income = 3%  
 Sundry Income = 2.5%  
 KCETB = 11%

Sundry Income includes funding from Carlow County Development Partnership, Carlow County Council, CRISP, St. Stephen's Green Trust and individual donations.

St. Catherine's work is funded from funding agency grants for specific programmes and projects, service fees and rental income and donations. We would like to acknowledge the support of our funders, service users and all our donors.

# St Catherine's Childcare Service and the Kilkenny Road Community Childcare and Family Centre

St. Catherine's now offers two Community Childcare services in Carlow town with the opening of the Kilkenny Road Community Childcare and Family Centre in September 2014.

## St. Catherine's Childcare Service

St. Catherine's Childcare Service is a Community Childcare Service. We have provided high quality, child centred childcare and early years education in Carlow since 1975. We are committed to providing a service that focuses on the individual needs of the child and providing a warm and welcoming environment for children and their parents and carers. St. Catherine's is an Early Childhood Ireland Centre of Excellence childcare facility and offers the following services:

### Crèche

St. Catherine's offers a crèche service for Wobblers (12 to 30 months) and Toddlers (30 months to 3 years plus). We offer 28 places.

### Pre-School Service & ECCE scheme

The Pre-School provides an opportunity for children aged 2 years 10 months to school-going age to learn through play. There are 22 places in the ECCE or free pre-school service and 16 in the junior pre-school room.

### After Schools Programme

After Schools provides a play based developmental programme including homework support. It gives children up to 4<sup>th</sup> class an opportunity to socialise and play in a safe, secure environment outside school time. We have 34 after schools places per day.

## Kilkenny Road Community Childcare and Family Centre

Given the increasing demand for affordable childcare in Carlow, St. Catherine's, working with Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) and the Carlow County Childcare Committee, opened a new Community Childcare service in the Kilkenny Road Community Childcare and Family Centre in September 2014. Full and part-time childcare is available in the following services from 8.30am to 5.30pm:

### Crèche

The crèche offers full and part-time places for wobblers (12 to 30 months) and toddlers (30 months to 3 years plus). We offer 22 places.

### Pre-School Service & ECCE scheme

The Pre-School provides an opportunity for children aged 3 years to school-going age to learn through play. There are 22 places in the ECCE or free pre-school service in the mornings and

16 places in the afternoon preschool room. An additional ECCE room with 11 morning places opened in September

### **Our Guiding Objectives:**

- Provide a high quality child-centred childcare service that is affordable for families most at risk of disadvantage enabling parents to engage in employment, training and education opportunities
- Provide an integrated childcare service that meets the needs of children from diverse backgrounds including Travellers, Rohingya and other new communities and children who require extra emotional, developmental and family support and families engaged with Tusla Social Workers
- Work with and support parents by providing practical parenting help and family support
- Provide a safe and stimulating environment for children of all backgrounds where they will be supported to reach their full potential in all areas of development
- Link families into support services that meet their needs
- To up skill staff in training programmes such as Parents Plus to enable them to provide more family and one to one support

Many of our childcare places are taken by participants on education and training programmes in St. Catherine's including the Moving On programme and Learning for Everyday Life and referrals from the Teen Parent Support Programme and our Traveller Development Programmes. A number of children with more complex needs including welfare concerns are also referred by external agencies such as Tusla Social Work service.

### **2016 Outcomes**

- 155 childcare places were available between both services and 192 individual children attended
- 44 children graduated from Preschool prepared for the transition to primary school
- The Childcare Service enabled more than 80 parents from disadvantaged communities to participate in employment, training or education in St. Catherine's and other centres by providing access to affordable childcare and family support
- Parents and carers were supported with their parenting by staff providing practical advice and support in areas including hygiene, nutrition and effective play. This led to observable improvements in their children's wellbeing
- Each child's welfare was prioritised and their needs met via a range of supports. Through monitoring and recording the child's wellbeing the effectiveness of interventions put in place can be measured
- Parents and teachers reported that children attending the After School service became observably better at completing their homework and developed good homework habits
- 3 volunteers assisted in Childcare in 2016
- St Catherine's Childcare received €3663.58 under the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) Early Years Capital Grant to purchase equipment enabling us to offer the ECCE Free Preschool year in our second Preschool room. Kilkenny Road

Childcare also received €4718.10 to purchase furniture and equipment for the opening of the new ECCE room

- Both Childcare centres continue to implement the standards required to achieve the Siolta Quality Assurance Programme Award

### **Events/Activities**

- National Pyjama Day, held in March raised €243 for children's charities
- The Children's Christmas Party was held on the 22nd December in the Seven Oaks and was attended by staff, parents, carers and Santa
- Our Preschool Graduation was held in June. 22 children from St Catherine's and 22 from the Kilkenny Road received their certificates of attendance for the year. The event was attended by parents and guardians
- We had an end of year Fun Day in June for all the crèche and preschool children.

### Parent's Feedback in 2016

"All of your staff are so friendly and approachable."

"When my daughter started in playgroup she could not speak. Now she is talking, spelling and ready for school."

"I think the service is absolutely fantastic. My child is so very happy and so are we. I would recommend St. Catherine's to anyone."

"Very happy with the childcare, great staff, services, my son absolutely loves it there, keep it up! Will be looking forward to September."

# St. Catherine's Teen Parent Support Programme Carlow, Kilkenny & Tipperary South

The TPSP is a free, confidential support service for teenage parents, their children and their families in Carlow, Kilkenny and Tipperary South. TPSP offer antenatal and postnatal support to teenage mothers and fathers up until the child is 2 years of age. The main emphasis of the TPSP is school retention, parenting and sexual health. The TPSP team offers one to one support, advice and information to meet the needs of the teen parent and their families.

Supports offered include:

- Support, information and advocacy on a range of issues including parenting, welfare rights and entitlements, legal issues, education and training opportunities and childcare options
- Heighten awareness of teen parenthood amongst mainstream teen service providers
- Enabling teen parents to stay in and/or return to mainstream education
- Providing teen parents and their children with an opportunity for social interaction and integration thus avoiding social isolation
- Providing young people with appropriate information and support to make healthy sexual choices

## 2016 Outcomes

- TPSP received 30 new referrals in 2016. 20 took up the service, 4 in Tipperary South, 7 in Kilkenny and 9 in Carlow. 13 cases were referred by Midwifery, 2 by Tusla Social Workers and there were 5 self-referrals. 17 cases were closed in 2016
- The Carlow/Kilkenny/Tipperary South TPSP were engaged actively with 54 teen parents and their families at the end of 2016
- 14 teenage parents were being supported to remain in mainstream secondary education
- Six teen parents progressed into further education including 3 who started on the St. Catherine's QQI Level 4 Moving On Programme for Mothers
- 7 teen mothers, 3 teen fathers and 2 grandmothers engaged in ante and postnatal classes. Another 2 teen mothers received outreach antenatal classes
- Three teen mothers and 2 teen fathers participated in our baby massage and yoga classes
- TPSP visited 35 secondary schools in the region to provide information, advice and support for students who are pregnant and those who are parents
- Of the 11 national TPSP programmes the Carlow/Kilkenny/Tipperary South TPSP is the only TPSP delivering a service across three counties

## TPSP's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday

In 2016 St. Catherine's TPSP marked its 10th Birthday with a celebration in the Kilkenny Road attended by teen parents, including the first teen parent in 2006, their children and family members, volunteers, staff and funders. Since March 2006 TPSP has supported 313 teen parents, their 317 children and their Grandparents

## St. Catherine's Traveller Programmes

St. Catherine's Traveller programmes aim to achieve social justice and equality outcomes for Travellers in Carlow. Developments in 2016 include:

- The "County Carlow Profile of Traveller and Roma Communities 2016" report was commissioned and launched by the Carlow Traveller Interagency Group (CTIG). The work was supported by staff from St. Catherine's
- In collaboration with the Traveller Mental Health and Well-Being nurse, more mental health support was provided to groups, families and individuals
- Traveller programme staff upskilled via training in the areas of mental health, Tusla Meitheal process, Suicide and Survive, National Asthma screening updates, medical card updates, domestic violence, Roma cultural awareness training, legal training on challenging accommodation decisions and cardio-vascular pilot health training including blood pressure and weight and stress management training
- An 8 week literacy programme run in partnership with KCETB
- Inputs into policy development via submission to and representation at the National Traveller Roma Integration Strategy Consultation process and a submission on the Caravan Loan Scheme
- The Traveller Programmes held a variety of open mornings on mental health including a Mensana event and a Tea and Talk morning, education, health screening with diabetes testing and cancer screening inputs, immunisation and SCIDS (Severe Combined Immunodeficiency) and older people's services.

### Traveller Community Development and Family Support

This programme works with Travellers in County Carlow and its environs and has developed informal learning opportunities that provide spaces for the community to understand and practice community development. The model of delivery of the planned programmes enables participants to evaluate their own learning, engage in personal and social development and collective action. The main areas of focus are education, housing, family support, health and welfare.

This programme aims to maximize Traveller participation in both activities and issues which matter to Travellers in County Carlow. It works towards increasing Traveller involvement, participation and representation on decision making bodies and on Travellers capacity to engage with these issues and advocate for themselves and their families. Capacity building is done through both individual and group work. Staff support and advocate on behalf of Travellers on issues including family support, education, health, housing and welfare issues. Interagency work is an integral part of the community development and family support programme and staff work extensively with a range of agencies and bodies.

#### 2016 Outcomes

- 42 Travellers participated in groups including Driver Theory, Swimming, Water Aerobics, Gym, Literacy, Healthy Lifestyles and Sewing with health inputs on cardiovascular health, breast screening, mental health, addiction and domestic

violence. Health promotion, education and housing were development themes in the groups and outcomes were fed into inter-agency groups

- 136 participants attended the drop-in service and were supported with housing, welfare, health and education issues. 265 individual contacts were made through the drop-in and outreach this year.
- The Carlow Traveller Forum met six times this year and focused on Traveller Pride, the Carlow College advocacy programme, accommodation and mental health
- Travellers participated as members of the Irish Traveller Movement accommodation working group, the Carlow Traveller Interagency Group and its Education and Accommodation sub groups, the Regional Traveller Health Unit and HSE Traveller Health Unit
- The Traveller team discussed the importance of state recognition of Traveller ethnicity with local councillors and TDs as part of the broader national campaign
- Staff represented St. Catherine's on the County Carlow Women's Forum and the Carlow Suicide Prevention Planning Group

### **Traveller Pride Festival**

The 2016 Traveller Pride Festival continued as a three day event. Overall the Festival was very successful and attendees reported a great sense of pride fostered in Traveller identity while the number of men participating and attending events was very strong. Day one was Culture Day and featured a tin smith demonstration, a craft and culture exhibition with pieces from the women's groups, Men's shed and from local families and a photography exhibition of the past and present lives of Travellers. A Traveller woman sang on the day and over 80 Travellers and over 20 members of the settled community attended.

The following evening featured a night of live performances in the Visual Arts Centre with local and national Traveller performers. This was a fantastic success and was attended by approximately 200 people, the majority of whom were Travellers.

A mental health morning was held on day three and was aimed at local Traveller families. The event featured speakers from Pavee Point, Carlow Regional Youth Services, the Mental Health and Well-being nurse and the Co-ordinator of the mental health services in St. Dymphna's hospital with an input on local services. Thomas McCann from the Travellers Counselling Service gave an input on Traveller Men's Mental Health. Approximately 45 women and men attended the event.

### **Traveller Men's Health Work**

The Men's Health Programme covers Counties Carlow and Kilkenny. The programme works to improve Traveller Men's health including cardio vascular health, mental health and to raise cancer awareness. It also works to increase Traveller men's participation around issues that affect the community. The Sheds saw new advancements in Bestfield in Carlow and the Wetlands in Kilkenny in 2016. The camper van was used in the farrier work and as a mobile location for health education and the provision of one to one support.

## 2016 Outcomes

- 14 men in Kilkenny participated in football and cardio-vascular programmes and engaged in one to one and outreach work through the camper van
- 3 men in Kilkenny engaged with family support and the cardio-vascular and mental health programmes, with additional support through the Mental Health Nurse
- 7 men in Carlow participated in the farrier and animal welfare sessions. Health inputs were also delivered to the group
- 18 men engaged in the Men's Shed in the Wetlands, Kilkenny
- 13 men from Bestfield, Carlow engaged in pre-development work and basket weaving
- 6 men engaged in the St. Catherine's Travellers Men's Shed, Carlow and worked on woodwork projects, gardening and the refurbishment of a cart. Health inputs were delivered including support from the Mental Health Nurse. Three men attended the cluster meeting for Men's Sheds in Athy
- The TMHW participated in planning for a parenting programme for Kilkenny that will be held in 2017
- Eight men were supported in progressing their recovery with mental health issues through collaborative work with other professionals and agencies
- 7 men attended a driver theory group and 2 passed their theory test
- There were 276 client engagements in 2016 with 133 drop-ins, 141 outreach contacts and 2 appointments

## Community Traveller Health Workers

The CTHW programme aims to improve health outcomes for Traveller families in Carlow. The programme is a needs-based response that supports Travellers, their children and their families and aims to improve participants' awareness and uptake of health services. The main focus is on cardiovascular health, diabetes and cancer screening.

The CTHWs facilitate a drop-in service for Traveller families three mornings per week to provide information and support around health needs such as doctor appointments, medical card renewals and cancer screening appointments. The CTHP represents and promotes representation of Travellers on the various different health committees, to influence policies and practices which impact on the lives of Travellers.

## 2016 Outcomes

- Culture Awareness Training was delivered to 14 staff of St. Luke's Hospital. This helped to create more positive attitudes towards Travellers and develop more culturally appropriate responses to their health needs
- There were 670 client engagements in 2016 through the drop in and outreach service
- An estimated 243 people engaged with CTHP, with approximately 50 of those being new referrals. Appointments and referrals were made to internal and external programs as appropriate.
- 165 referrals were made to health services and other service providers internally and externally

- Culture Awareness training was delivered to 2 in-house groups of 20 people and to 13 staff from St. Luke's Hospital Patient Partnership Forum
- 19 Traveller women engaged in health education groups focused on physical and mental health. Health inputs covered cholesterol, diabetes, blood pressure screening, weight management, stress management, domestic violence and cancer screening

## Community and Parental Education

St. Catherine's provide a range of community education courses designed to provide accessible courses at low cost to encourage people with no or low educational qualifications to re-engage in learning and training in a supported environment. The main courses provided are:

### Learning for Everyday Life (LFEL)

- LFEL is a 29 week QQI accredited course aimed at people disengaged from education and training with low levels of confidence that addresses basic learning needs while providing a Key Worker to work on the individual needs of the participant and their families
- Participants can achieve a Major Level 3 Award in General Learning completing six individual component modules including Maths, Communications, Personal Effectiveness, IT Skills, Office Procedures and Career Preparation
- The SOUL (Soft Outcomes Universal Learning) system is used to support one to one mentoring work and as a measurement of the personal development and growth of participants
- LFEL aims to progress participants into mainstream education, training and employment. One to one support and guidance is provided by the KCETB Adult Education and Guidance Service
- Intensive family and personal support is provided through an allocated Key Worker to address family, health, social and other issues that act as barriers to participation and progression
- Participants have the opportunity of attending one hour ESOL training per week to help with English language skills

### Preparation for Work

This is a QQI accredited part-time 11 week course that provides participants with an opportunity to prepare for and gain experience in the labour market and to explore progression options. It is targeted at people with limited or no experience of working and works to provide the skills and confidence required to gain employment. One to one support is also provided on progression options and family and personal issues.

### Community Education Courses

St. Catherine's facilitates access to short term community based adult education courses designed to provide participants with a good experience of their first step back into education. These courses are low cost and accessible with a fee reduction for people in receipt of social welfare. The courses provided in 2016 were Computers for Beginners and Improvers, MS Excel, Yoga, Make Up & Nail Art and Ipad for Beginners and Improvers.

A number of Benefit 4 courses were also run in 2016. These courses were aimed at people with little or no computer experience and were either over 55 and/or in receipt of social welfare. Each free course provided 8 hours tuition in using the internet and email.

## 2016 Outcomes

- 21 candidates presented 95 QQI modules for accreditation. One external authentication took place and it highly commended the standard of work produced
- 6 Learning for Everyday Life (LFEL) participants achieved a QQI Level 3 Major Award in General Learning while 8 participants achieved component awards. 12 completed a food safety module and achieved an EHO Primary Certificate in Food Safety
- 12 of the LFEL group progressed into further education in the BTEI formal strand, VTOS and Carlow Institute of Further Education, 4 into part-time employment and 1 joined a Community Employment Scheme
- The SOUL Record system showed significant personal growth and development amongst all LFEL course participants
- 18 participants enrolled on the Preparation for Work (PFW) course and 18 achieved QQI accreditation
- 17 participants successfully completed work placements
- 10 PFW participants progressed onto further education in the BTEI formal strand, VTOS, and Carlow Institute of Further Education with another 5 participants entering part-time employment
- 199 people participated in the short, generally evening Community Education courses. Evaluations of all courses were very positive
- 94 people completed Benefit 4 courses
- 38 families availed of family and individual support including families with children in care

# Moving On Programme for Young Mothers

The Moving On Programme aims to enhance the lifelong prospects of young mothers in County Carlow by enabling them to achieve inclusion in education, training, enterprise opportunities, the local labour market and their own communities. The main aims of the programme include:

- Enhancing the personal and social development of the participant
- The extension of the participants education and learning to enhance their life prospects
- Supporting the participants' parenting role and providing family support
- Engaging in advocacy and work to promote social change
- Raising aspirations
- Enabling young mothers to develop career pathways and progress to further education, training and employment

SILC 2015 shows that households with one adult and one or more children had the highest deprivation rate in 2013 at 59%, twice the national average of 29% and above the EU average. They also had the highest consistent poverty rate at 22.1%. 59% of lone parent households with one or more children experienced enforced deprivation. This compares to 29.0% of the general population. When the highest level of education of the head of household was lower secondary, 23% were at risk of poverty and over 14% were in consistent poverty. In contrast, just 8% of households with a 3rd level degree or above were at risk of poverty, and 4% were in consistent poverty.

The Moving On Programme seeks to address the issues of poverty and marginalisation for young mothers by providing:

- A 40 week community education programme
- A QQI Level 4 Major Award in Applied Employment Skills, equivalent to a Leaving Certificate qualification
- 1 to 1 personal development and support using the SOUL (Soft Outcomes Universal Learning) system to measure the personal development growth of participants
- Work experience and career guidance
- Group work projects such as a certified enterprise project

## 2016 Outcomes

- 12 participants completed the programme with 11 gaining the overall QQI Level 4 Major Award
- 5 people progressed into mainstream further education and training
- 2 people secured employment
- The SOUL record measured significant improvements in all participants levels of self-esteem, confidence and social skills
- 19 participants started the 2016/17 programme

# St. Catherine's Services for Older People

## Meals on Wheels

St Catherine's Meals-On-Wheels service provides hot nutritious meals to older people who are unable to cook for themselves allowing them to live independently in their own homes. The daily visit from the volunteer delivering the meal also provides social contact for recipients helping to alleviate isolation while also monitoring their well-being. Some Meals on Wheels facts and figures include:

- The service operates 5 days per week 51 weeks of the year including Christmas Day
- The service is staffed by a Co-ordinator, Chef/Kitchen Manager and Kitchen Assistant and a team of over 50 volunteers who help prepare, cook and deliver meals daily
- St. Catherine's Meals on Wheels caters for up to 100 recipients per day
- Meals are provided to 3 outreach services, Bethany House Alzheimer's Unit and Leighlinbridge and Fenagh Meals on Wheels services
- The cost of the main meal and dessert is €5.50.
- The service works in partnership with the Public Health Nurses to ensure that all referrals meet the specific dietary requirements of recipients including high protein, diabetic, gluten free and pureed meals
- The service maintains a Birthday book ensuring all recipients birthdays and other significant events are remembered and celebrated. The cards are made by volunteers and participants from the Delta Centre

## 2016 Outcomes

- 20,299 meals were cooked and delivered
- The Standards of Excellence Research and Assessment Framework was awarded the "Age Friendly Community Innovation Award" by Age Friendly Ireland
- The service featured in an Irish Times article entitled "Surviving or Thriving" that focused on innovative community health projects
- Meals on Wheels volunteers attended the annual Christmas volunteer party
- New volunteers were recruited through Carlow Volunteer Centre, local press, newsletters and existing volunteers
- New equipment and utensils were purchased and a new kitchen layout improved operations

## Socially Monitored Alarms/Senior Alerts Service

St Catherine's, as a member of the Carlow Older Persons Network has coordinated the provision of Socially Monitored Alarms to older people in Carlow town, Tullow, Leighlinbridge and surrounding areas since 2003. People over 65 with a landline or mobile can apply for the alarm. The alarm is monitored 24 hours a day ensuring older people in need can summon help instantly in emergency situations. It provides peace of mind and security for older people and their families allowing them to live independently in their own homes. The service can be accessed directly by people over 65 and referrals are also made through Public Health Nurses, the Gardai and local Community Alert representatives.

## 2016 Outcomes

- 127 applications were approved for new alarms, pendants and the reinstallation of used alarms
- Training was completed with Pobal on the administration of the SAS scheme
- Presentations on the SAS and Meals on Wheels service were made to the Carlow Older Persons Network, Carlow Kilkenny Age Friendly Forum and at a Carlow Library Information Morning

## Carlow Older Persons Network

St. Catherine's is a member of the Carlow Older Persons Network (COPN) that aims to engage with and support older people to fully participate in community life. The Network brings together individual older people and groups and local agencies to work collaboratively to identify and respond to needs and to share information and resources. The Network actively informs older people and the wider community about issues affecting older people and the activities of the Carlow Older Person's Network.

## 2016 Activities

- The Autumn Tea Dance took place in October and included a Fancy Dress and raffle. €785 was raised and was presented to the Carlow Alzheimer's Unit
- Bealtaine week in May hosted a number of events for older people

# Want to Work

Want to Work was piloted in 2014 by St. Catherine's. It is modelled on the successful Work Winner programme developed and run by Tipperary Youth Services since 2011. It provides young people most at risk of long term joblessness with meaningful work experience in jobs they are interested in, along with tailored training and high levels of personal support. Want to Work aims to progress participants into jobs or career related training or education. The 2015/2016 programme started in November 2015.

## Content

- The first 6 weeks are spent in job preparation. This includes numeracy and literacy assessments by KCETB, manual handling, first aid and workplace safety training and one to one meetings and workshops to discuss career goals and plans
- Work placements are sought in areas participants are interested in and have an aptitude for
- Participants are enrolled on the First Steps Internship programme for 20 to 30 hours per week for 26 weeks and both the participant and employer are supported to make the placement a success
- Career related training is identified and provided making the participant more employable at the end of the placement
- The group meets weekly to provide personal support, attend training and to build peer support and for one to one reviews

## 2016 Outcomes

- Over 60 people attended the Want to Work open day and 20 participants were selected and commenced the pre-employment phase in November 2015
- 15 people went on to participate in work experience and completed the programme
- 16 participants completed accredited Emergency Response First Aid and Manual Handling training
- 9 participants secured employment, 3 entered into full-time education and training in areas related to their career plans and 2 progressed into employment and training schemes
- All participants were supported to complete a CV and career plan and received one to one training in CV preparation, interview skills and career guidance
- Participants reported significantly increased levels of confidence and self esteem

# Making Connections

Making Connections is a KCETB funded Local Training Initiative that supports individuals who have become distanced from mainstream education and training programme and are experiencing isolation and marginalisation as a result of circumstances related to social and economic disadvantage.

Making Connections participants are referred from a range of agencies that support people who are in recovery from substance misuse and addiction, progressing from homelessness and those who are linked with the probationary and prison services.

Making Connections supports recovery through education, raising competency levels and offering tailored flexible training as well as meaningful daily activity. Recovery and social reintegration services are considered a guiding principle for substance misuse treatment (NDS) This supported environment offers the opportunity for learners to complete nationally recognised QQI level 3 modular and overall awards. The unique element of the programme is the 'one to one' delivery of the programme. The programme has the capacity for 18 learners.

## Key Elements of the Programme

- One to one tuition
- Part –time flexible learning
- Individualised learning supports
- Learner paced learning
- Scheduled appointments
- Continuous in-take through referral systems

## 2016 Outcomes

- 19 Participants completed QQI accredited modules
- 33 QQI Level 3 Modules Certified
- 2 QQI Level 3 Major Awards achieved
- 2 External Authentications completed
- 2 C.E scheme placements, 2 progressions into further training courses - KCETB Welding Course and KCETB Delivery Driving Programme
- 16 learners participated in a group project to produce a 2017 Calendar, the proceeds of which were donated to charity

Outcomes also include structured daily activity and learner led responsibility for appointments. Learners reported an increased awareness of supports and opportunities in education and training options. Learners report renewed interest in personal development which has resulted in improved levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.

## Other Activities and Events

### The Plots Community Garden and Allotments

The Plots Community Garden/Allotments are located in the Plots between St. Mary's Park and Rathnapish. The gardens were established in 2013 and contain a small training centre under the management of St. Catherine's Community Services Centre and 33 allotments.

In 2016 St. Catherine's worked with the garden committee and Carlow County Council to ensure the sustainability and continued development of the community gardens/allotments.

#### 2015 Outcomes

- A total of 38 growers and 2 organisations were supported
- External organisations such as Delta Centre and Lá Nua took up allotments
- The back area of the plots was tidied up creating 3 extra plots
- Compost training took place with 18 growers taking part
- A polytunnel was put up to create space for growers to propagate their seeds
- A summer party was held in the gardens for the growers and their children
- Turkeys were raised for growers for Christmas
- A CE worker began work with the allotments
- The paths in the allotments were resurfaced to ensure ease of access for all
- Carlow Community Garden Network had its first meeting and the Plots allotments were represented at it

This was the fourth full year of the community gardens/allotments. It's continued success is due to the dedication of the residents on the committee and their passion to ensure it continues to thrive. During the year we did lose 6 growers who felt they could no longer commit to their allotments however their allotments were quickly taken up by other growers showing the demand for access to allotments. The community worked hard to continue to develop the Community Garden/Allotments.

### Counselling Service

St. Catherine's internal counselling service responds to the emotional needs of programme participants and service users. Clients are referred by Programme Co-ordinators and Managers and include teen parents and their families, members of the Travelling community and new communities, young mothers and their families and other service users.

The service is delivered in conjunction with PCI College, Dublin and is managed by their Practice Supervisor. Clients with complex needs are referred to specialist counsellors or mental health services by our Practice Supervisor. In 2016 6 people accessed the service. over 90 hours of counselling was delivered to 15 people.

## St. Catherine's Community Savings Club

The Community Savings Club commenced in January to allow people save for upcoming items and events including Christmas, First Communion and back to school costs. The aim is to encourage people to get into the habit of saving rather than borrowing, particularly from moneylenders and others offering high interest loans.

Based in St. Catherine's, the Club opens twice a week on Thursday evening from 5 to 6pm and Friday afternoons from 12.30pm to 1.30pm and savers can lodge any amount up to €50 per week. In 2016, sixty-five savers saved over €29k. The bulk of savings were withdrawn for use at Christmas.

## Access and Family Support Programme with Tusla Social Work and General Family Support

St. Catherine's entered into a six month agreement with Tusla to second two staff members to provide an Access and Family Support service to the Social Work Department in January. The service was extended in June. The aim of the programme is to:

- Facilitate and support supervised access visits between parents and children in care
- Provide family support to empower parents and enhance parental ability
- Link families into support networks and community services

Family and individual support is widely provided to participants and service users accessing most St. Catherine's services and programmes. Support was provided for a wide range of issues including accommodation, domestic violence, sexual abuse, child protection and welfare, access, education and rights and entitlements.

Intensive support is also provided to families with children in care. This support coupled with the increased confidence and self-esteem that parents derive from participating in community education improves parental capacity by building on the strengths of parents. This can prevent children going into care as well as helping children return from care to their families.

The International Women's Group ran for 6 weeks and 34 women attended

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## Inter-Agency Collaborative Work

St Catherine's were represented on or worked with the following in 2016:

- Carlow Traveller Network
- Regional Traveller Health Network
- Carlow/Kilkenny Traveller's Health Committee
- Carlow Traveller Interagency Group
- Carlow Integration Forum
- Tusla Child and Family Partnership, Prevention and Family Support structures
- Teen Parent Support Programme National Inter-Project Committees
- County Carlow Public Participation Network (PPN) and Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC)
- Aontas Community Education Meetings
- Carlow Older Persons Network
- Carlow Older Persons Forum
- Carlow Kilkenny Joint Older Persons Service Providers Forum
- Carlow Age Friendly County Committee
- Community Education Network
- County Carlow Children and Young Person's Services Committee and Sub-Groups
- Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee
- Irish Traveller Movement Committees
- Comhairle na nOg
- HSE Traveller Health Unit and sub groups
- Traveller Mental Health Advisory Group
- St. Luke's Traveller Forum
- The Plots Community Garden Committee

## Additional Services based in St Catherine's

- **Carlow Citizen Information Service**

Citizens Information is a voluntary organisation serving the people of Carlow since May 1983, Their mission is to increase people's awareness of their rights and entitlements and to empower them by providing a free, confidential, independent, impartial, accurate, integrated and comprehensive information and advocacy service.

- **Accord**

Accord is a voluntary organisation that aims to promote a deeper understanding of Christian marriage. They offer people the means to safeguard and nourish their marriage and family relationships through the provision of pre marriage courses and counselling services.

- **Legal Aid**

Legal Aid provides legal services in relation to civil law matters to eligible persons. These legal services include legal advice and legal aid. Legal aid means representation by a solicitor or barrister in civil proceedings in the District, Circuit, High and Supreme Courts.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous**

AA is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- **Al Anon**

Al Anon Is a support organisation for families, relatives and friends whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking,

- **Grow**

A Mental Health Organisation, which helps people who have suffered, or are suffering, from mental health problems. Members are helped to recover from all form of breakdown, or indeed, to prevent such happening.

- **Overeaters Anonymous**

Overeaters Anonymous offers a program of recovery from compulsive eating. Worldwide meetings provide a fellowship of experience, strength and hope where members respect one another's anonymity. OA charges no dues or fees; it is self-supporting through member contributions.

- **National Advocacy Service**

The National Advocacy Service (NAS) was set up to provide independent, representative advocacy services for people with disabilities.