

2020 | Spring

newsletter | nuachtlitir

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Spring Newsletter and the first publication for 2020. Looking back on 2019 so much was achieved which our snapshot infographic over the page will reflect.

We couldn't have got off to a better start in the New Year with our annual favourites; the Lord Mayor's 5-Alive Challenge and the Change For Life programme. This year's LM 5 Alive kicked off on New Year's Day and had huge support from its namesake, Lord Mayor Paul McAuliffe. Paul has moved on to central politics but we would like to take the opportunity to thank him for backing Dublin City communities in their journey to better health and wellbeing. Speaking openly and honestly about his own fitness journey has no doubt inspired many of us to get active and healthy.

On 8th March Ireland will join countries around the world celebrating women's achievements for International Women's Day. We are getting behind the movement's mantra that an equal world is an enabled world by focussing on women in sport for this edition of the newsletter. Engaging more women in sport and physical activity is a pillar of the National Sports Policy and 20x20 campaign and inside are inspirational tales of how that movement is growing and what we are doing to support it.

Finally this edition will include highlights for the next quarter with particular focus on inclusion and integration in sport. We are very excited to introduce the first ever Sportsfest Ability which will take place in May this year. The festival is a week-long celebration of the power sport has to mitigate discrimination and exclusion in our communities.



## CHANGE FOR LIFE

### CHANGE FOR LIFE

A new year can mean a new outlook on health and wellbeing and here at DCSWP our programmes aim to facilitate and support people to change habits and embrace a healthier outlook on life. For many of us previous experiences of New Year change can be fleeting but DCSWP is committed to providing programmes that support sustainable paths to long-term healthier goals.

In previous newsletters we spoke about our 8 week flagship programme, Change For Life which runs between January and March. Change for Life is now in its 8th year and emulates the RTÉ Operation Transformation approach to developing sustainable health and fitness goals.

The programme has expanded significantly over the years and in 2020 that growth continued with the inclusion of a DCC Staff Change For Life initiative run by our Citywide Sport Officers. The classes took place in DCC's Civic Offices and Wood Quay Venue on Tuesdays and Thursdays over the 8 week period. As a new programme and in light of our female in sport theme we spoke to one of our many inspirational staff Change For Life participants, Avril Feeney about her experience of the programme.



# CHANGE FOR LIFE - STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## **AVRIL FEENEY**

*Avril, tell us a little about your own personal fitness journey and how important it is for you to partake in regular exercise.*

I have always exercised in some way mostly by walking and I would have tried step aerobics, even line dancing just to mix it up and keep me motivated.

I am a member of DCC's Sports and Fitness Centre in Finglas, a brilliant facility where staff can avail of special rates for membership.

A number of years ago I plucked up the courage to go to Griffeen Park in Lucan for parkrun and I haven't looked back since. I met a group of people there who were also first timers and over the first six weeks we talked, walked and jogged our way around until we could eventually jog the 5k without stopping. The sense of achievement was unreal but the best part of it was the encouragement from the volunteers and sitting down for coffee and cake afterwards. I took part in the Lord Mayor's 5 Alive last year and the experience was brilliant. It's great to be part of a team in our t-shirts and the atmosphere running around parts of Dublin like St. Anne's Park is amazing. It's a great sense of achievement receiving your certificate from the Lord Mayor at the end of the challenge. I am a mentor this year and my job is to encourage other participants who might be finding it difficult to get around the course. I've been there and I know exactly what it feels like so there's nothing better than a friendly word or two (or more in my case) to keep you going.



*What motivated you to sign up to the staff Change For Life programme and can you tell us a little bit about your experience of the programme?*

When the Change For Life programme was circulated to us on the floor by one of the staff we decided it was a good idea to do something together that would benefit us health wise. We signed up for two classes a week of circuits and boxercise, neither of which I had ever done before. The instructors Jim and Louise are brilliant and they cater for all levels of ability. If you can't do a burpee (like me) you can do a squat jump or a jumping jack – it doesn't matter once you keep moving. I haven't missed a class yet and I definitely feel fitter and stronger. I have met loads of new people and we really have great fun and we encourage each other through the pain! Change For Life also organised an excellent talk on nutrition and how making small changes to your diet can make a big difference to your health.

*This is the first year DCSWP introduced a staff Change For Life programme. You have embraced many of the sporting opportunities the Partnership has to offer – how important do you think this is not just in terms of staff becoming healthy and fit physically but also from a motivational and wellbeing perspective?*

I have taken part in any of the fitness and wellbeing initiatives on offer through the DCSWP. I couldn't emphasise enough the benefits the staff Change For Life programme has had on us in Planning. We did the Operation Transformation 5k as part of Change For Life where we walked and jogged our way around the Phoenix Park and the best part was sitting down together for tea and scones afterwards. It's great that Dublin City Council as an employer recognises the need to look after our welfare and facilitates programmes such as Change For Life.

I would advise other colleagues to sign up and take part in whatever programme is on offer. Don't overthink it because there will always be someone there at your level of fitness and you will get plenty of encouragement to help you achieve your fitness goal whatever that may be for you.

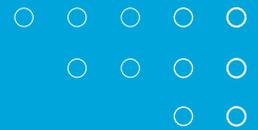
DCSWP would like to thank Avril and all of our brave 2020 Change For Life staff and community participants. Change For Life is made possible every year because of the spirit they bring to the programme. We hope the journey has sparked positive life-long changes to their health and wellbeing.

## €3.15million budget

56



Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership Staff



19 Sport Officers

2 Sport Inclusion & Integration Officers

7 Admin Staff

27 Co-funded Staff:

1 Health Promotion Officer 

12 Soccer 

5 Boxing 

6 Rugby 

1 Rowing 

1 Cricket 

2 Athletics 

136,058 participations in our 2,589 programmes



53%  
Female



47%  
Male

5,116

of these are  
participants with  
disabilities

3,825

of these participants  
are older adults

€53,900

in grants allocated  
to 98 clubs

675

people participated in  
Training Programmes

## BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

As a testament to the many trailblazing women (and men!) who have broken down gender barriers in all walks of life we chatted to our co-funded FAI Women's Development Officer, Pearl Slattery and IRFU Women's Rugby Officer, Larissa Muldoon about their experiences of being young women challenging gender prejudices in sport.

Pearl works closely with her colleague Keith O'Halloran promoting female participation in football in the city. According to her Mam, she showed an interest in the sport from the ripe-old age of 6! In the absence of a female team she joined the local boys team in Rialto after being spotted playing in the street by a local football enthusiast.

She was fully accepted by the boys as both a peer and rival and continued to play with the team until she was 15. At age 8 she started to double up on the training, joining the girls team in Templeogue. When asked if training in tandem with the boys helped her success Pearl agreed that it greatly helped her maximise her skills. In view of this herself and Keith advise girls taking a serious interest in the sport to train with both genders. Both of the officers encourage girls engaging with football to consider it the norm and work very hard to remove any gender bias. They both believe giving kids the opportunity to enjoy the sport from an early age is the key to growing the sport in Ireland and part of their work includes liaising with local clubs to make sure the future is bright for our female footballers.

Larissa started her rugby career at a slightly later stage in life. Transition year in Donegal offered her the opportunity to move from GAA player to Irish rugby star when her P.E. teacher struck up a romance with a rugby mad Welsh man.

Before TY Larissa admitted she wasn't even aware there was an Irish Women's Rugby team and little did she know she would be representing Ireland after being recruited just one year into starting college in Wales. She and her teammate Laura Feely have become role models around Ireland particularly in their proud hometown of Ballybofey where their on-pitch achievements are immortalised in a mural.



# WOMEN IN SPORT



Despite the differences in the game they play both Pearl and Larissa agreed that challenging traditional perceptions is crucial to increasing female participation.

Non-contact, Tag, Glow – whatever the choice, go for it girls!

We are proud to support you all the way.



## CHANGE FOR LIFE RUGBY BLITZ

As part of our Change For Life programme Larissa and Leinster Rugby were involved with our Tag Rugby Blitz on the 28th February, coordinated by Sport Officers Catherine Flood, Olivia Shattock, Michelle Malone, Fergal Scally, Will Morris. Age is but a number as the blitz age profile proved with our 80 participants ranging from 20 to 72 years. For the last 8 weeks these Change For Life participants have been training at least once a week in the lead up to the tournament with the vast majority of them having never picked up a rugby ball in their lives.

*"The guys have been have been amazing and went into it full tilt. They have come on leaps and bounds since they started and have grown in confidence a great deal."*

*"What I have really noticed is that it has brought people together in a way that only playing a sport can that no exercise class could."*

Six teams from Bluebell, Charlemont Street, Coolock/Artane, Crumlin, Inchicore and Fatima took each other on in what was a competitive but fun night in Bluebell Community Centre. Many of the Change For Life participants involved have been inspired to continue the sport and set up teams of their own to compete in leagues. The camaraderie on display between both teammates and rivals clearly showed how sport has the power to unify us in society.

*"When I see our eldest participant Bernie from Inchicore running from one end of the pitch to the other, going through the gaps in the defence without been tagged and scoring a try, it reminds us that age is only a number and just because we get a bit older every year we are still the same competitive person we were when we were young."*  
– Catherine Flood  
(Sport Officer)



# WOMEN IN SPORT

## #SPINWOMEN

DCSWP recognises that sport is an incredibly important tool and positive platform for inclusion in our communities. The fabric of Irish society has changed significantly over the past two decades and active efforts to integrate our migrant and minority population are a priority of DCSWP. In 2019 we appointed two Sport Inclusion and Integration Officers who work with minority communities to increase participation in sport.

We are delighted to support the FAI #SpinWomen mini workshop for coach development. This is a partnership venture with the FAI which aims to share insights into mechanisms that will promote participation and highlight potential. Coaches and leaders looking for guidelines and opportunities for networking can get advice from the workshop National campus on 22nd April.

[www.fai.ie/domestic/spinwomen-project-ireland-mini-workshop-reg-form](http://www.fai.ie/domestic/spinwomen-project-ireland-mini-workshop-reg-form)



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## SHOWCASING WOMEN IN SPORT

Women have been removing barriers, breaking records and creating milestones in sport for years. However seeing it is believing it for most of us which is why strategies to maximise the visibility of women in sport are so important.



Pundit Arena and the Irish Federation of Sport are joining forces to increase visibility through the 'Showcase your Sportswomen live' campaign. This campaign is supported by Sport Ireland and aims to showcase five sporting events via live-streaming, digital content and social media support.

We spoke to our DCSWP Sport Inclusion and Integration Officer Nuala O'Donovan who is Ultimate Frisbee mad and a huge supporter of developing the game. Playing Frisbee competitively has been around since the 1970's and in July 2019 the Irish Women's team triumphed, winning the European Ultimate Frisbee Championships. This is the first time an Irish national team has won gold at an international tournament making it a monumental achievement.

DCSWP will support the Showcase campaign by hosting an International Frisbee Test match between Ireland and Great Britain in Tolka Park on Saturday 18th April and providing volunteer support.



# WHAT'S COMING UP

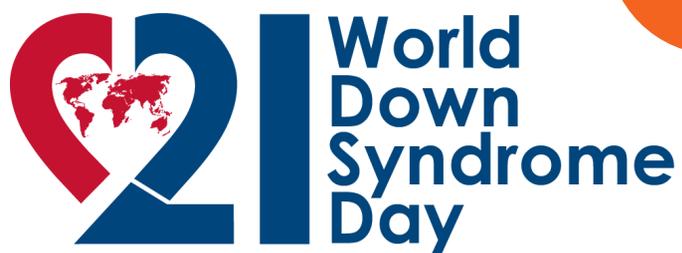
## NO LIMITS - SPORTSFEST ABILITY 2020

Physical activity and its benefits are for everyone and DCSWP is committed to empowering persons of disability to reach their potential.

We are very proud to introduce Sportsfest Ability 2020 which is our first dedicated week-long celebration of inclusivity and integration in sport driven by our dedicated Inclusion and Integration Sport Officers and supported by our many partners in the community. Sports on the agenda for the week include golf on the par 3 golf course in St. Anne's Park, Rugby, Football, Dance, Tai Chi, Frisbee and Rowing. The week takes place from 21st - 28th May. More information and a full list of events can be found at Eventbrite and by contacting the office at [sportsinclusion@dublincity.ie](mailto:sportsinclusion@dublincity.ie).



# Dublin sports fest ABILITY



## WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 2020

World Down Syndrome Day takes place on Saturday 21st March. The day aims to raise public awareness about what Down Syndrome means and how people with the condition can greatly enrich our communities. Dublin City Council's Bluebell Community Centre will host a multi-sport day in aid of this global event with cricket, rugby and Frisbee taster sessions on offer. In addition to sporting activities the day will be family focussed with entertainment and face-painters meaning fun for everyone! Registration for the event is via the Down Syndrome Ireland website;

[www.downsyndrome.ie](http://www.downsyndrome.ie).

# WHAT'S COMING UP

## VHI WOMEN'S MINI MARATHON

Whatever the occasion Dublin City Council/DCSWP is there to support major sporting events in our city. The VHI Women's Mini Marathon is no exception and our Sport Officers work very closely with our partners in the community to inspire such participation in citywide events. Aileen O'Connor, DCSWP Programme and Services Manager and Clonliffe Harriers club in Santry leads by example, motivating so many people to recognise the positive effects of taking on challenges like the mini marathon;

*"Believe in yourself, don't keep thinking about it, just do it."*  
 – Aileen O'Connor, DCSWP and Mini Marathon Legend



## VOLUNTEER TODAY

EXPERIENCE THE ACTION IN DUBLIN

Date	Stage
Monday, June 15th 2020	Group
Friday, June 19th 2020	Group
Wednesday, June 24th 2020	Group
Tuesday, June 30th 2020	Round of 16

[www.fai.ie/volunteers](http://www.fai.ie/volunteers)  
 #EURO2020  
 Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City Council

## VOLUNTEER FOR EURO 2020 TODAY!

Our EURO 2020 volunteer campaign is up and running and we'd love to see as many DCC colleagues, sports clubs, teams and businesses get involved in what promises to be a special event for Dublin City. June 2020 will be historic as we host 4 games in the UEFA European Championship Finals.

EURO 2020 is for everybody, and we've a host of roles for city volunteers to give fans a warm welcome and add to the incredible atmosphere throughout the tournament. Our city volunteers will be based citywide welcoming fans from Dublin Airport, through to City Centre transport hubs, fanzones and on-street at the key fan and tourist hot-spots. Be part of this truly unique event. If you would like to register your interest, please go to [www.fai.ie/volunteers](http://www.fai.ie/volunteers) and fill out your details. Let's make EURO 2020 an unforgettable experience for all fans, residents and businesses in Dublin.

"EURO 2020 IS FOR EVERYBODY – THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED"  
 CHRIS MCELLIGOTT  
 VOLUNTEER AMBASSADOR

