



2025 - Mid year

newsletter | nuachtlitir

Welcome

Welcome to Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership's first newsletter for 2025. The newsletter is just one of the ways we strive to keep people in our communities informed of, connected to and inspired by our sport & physical activity programmes, events and initiatives. Mid-year is always a great time to look back at the story so far and get a sneak peek at our exciting plans for autumn/winter.

There has never been an easier time to get involved and start your journey to getting and staying active. With over 3,500 programmes on offer there is something for everyone at DCSWP. Log on to our virtual hub, get in touch with your local Sport Officer and make that commitment today!

www.dcswhub.ie

Launch of DCC Mobility School

At the heart of every successful, sustainable and inclusive physical activity initiative lies positive collaboration. A fantastic example of the power of strategic partnerships and diverse services working together towards a common goal was the opening of Dublin City Council's Mobility School, the first of its kind in the city and the greater Dublin area. This was an important development for the Active Cities Project and the objectives set out in the Dublin City Council Sports Plan 2024 – 2029. The DCSWP Active Cities Officer worked closely with many partners, including DCC's Parks & Landscape Services, to enhance the existing velodrome in the park in order to accommodate the school.

On 06 March the school was officially launched in Eamonn Ceannt Park, Crumlin by Cllr Fiona Connelly representing the Lord Mayor Emma Blain.

The project seeks to create awareness about road safety among cyclists, promote the enormous benefits of cycling, improve flexible mobility and freedom of movement as well as reducing individual carbon footprint. By simulating the on-road experience in a safe and controlled environment, budding cyclists can learn how to respond and react with confidence to signage, signals and pedestrian crossings.

In addition to addressing safety concerns the facility seeks to transform existing attitudes to cycling in the urban environment. By increasing confidence through simulated training it is hoped that people will embrace cycling, not just as a mode of transport, but as something that brings joy and a sense of freedom to our movement around the city.



2025 FLAGSHIP EVENTS



Change for Life

Every year from January – March our Change for Life programme supports communities to start the year as they mean to go on by setting and smashing fitness goals over an 8-week period. Change for Life commenced in 2013 and over the last 13 years, the initiative has been a catalyst for real and meaningful change in the lives of our participants. While CFL is a multi-sport and exercise programme, education remains one of its most impactful elements; the programme incorporates health and nutrition talks, weekly weigh-ins and blood pressure checks all of which empower people to make positive decisions and take ownership of their journey to long-term health and wellbeing. The power of CFL also lies in its ability to embed healthy practices in our communities, setting a positive example for younger generations.

"Change for Life impacts a huge number participants of all ages and abilities in so many communities from all across the city by supporting them to make positive sustainable improvements in overall health and well-being" Darren Taffe (Sport Officer)



Lord Mayor's 5Alive challenge

We kicked off the year with the Tom Brennan Memorial 5k, the first race in the Lord Mayor's 5 Alive series, now in its 13th year. From day one of 2025, resolutions became a reality as this year's 5 Alivers took that all-important first step on the road to a healthier and happier new year. The Raheny 5 Mile, the Sandymount Night Run, the BHAA 4 Mile Road Race and a parkrun of choice completed the challenge this year. The weather was nothing if not predictable in early 2025 but there were no excuses from our resilient participants who pushed through the dark mornings and evenings and the less than perfect conditions to reach the finish line. Challenges like the 5-Alive have powerful outcomes – they test our physical strength and mental fortitude but ultimately give us the courage to take on new challenges in all aspects of our lives. Congratulations to all those who took that first brave step on day one of 2025.

"The Lord Mayor's 5 Alive Challenge has been a game-changer for me. It not only helped me get back on track with my fitness goals but also boosted my confidence and self-belief" Colin (5 Alive participant)

Active Cities Parks & Trails

The Dublin Active Cities Parks & Trails Challenge got underway for a second year on 01 July and will continue in parks and walkways across the city until 01 September. The challenge is a partnership initiative between Dublin City Council and Dublin's three local authorities. The initiative aims to inspire participants to explore parks and trails across the greater Dublin area, promoting healthy outdoor activity and community engagement.



Participants sign up to the challenge via the Dublin Trails app where 24 routes are listed along with a list of each trail and a map to support and guide competitors of all ages and abilities along their chosen route.

In the Dublin City area, locations were carefully chosen to ensure participants could fully engage with their surroundings, connect with nature, come together to enjoy sport and physical activity in a safe environment and appreciate the city's vibrancy from a different perspective.

DCSWP was extremely proud to be nominated by Nollaig Fahy from Dublin Tourism for Dublin City Council's Citizen Engagement 3 Castles Award. The winners were announced in a ceremony in City Hall on 05 June with Active Cities triumphing in its category.

Local Hero – Paddy O'Reilly, Recipient of Volunteer Award in Dublin City

In February DCSWP/DCC was proud to nominate Paddy O'Reilly, PE Teacher in Ballymun Trinity Comprehensive, Co-Founder of Ballymun Health & Fitness and all-round local hero for the Volunteer in Sport Dublin City Award 2025.

For many years Paddy has supported grassroots sports in Ballymun, an area that has experienced many challenges over the years.

Paddy has set up a number of different sports clubs in the area which continue to support people of all ages.

In 2020, Paddy and a small team of volunteers helped create Ballymun Health & Fitness Community Group with the aim of facilitating participation in sport. Emphasis was put on using sport as an effective tool to prevent youth substance abuse and as a potential mechanism for rehabilitation. This community group has had an enormously positive impact on people's lives, providing a sense of purpose, meaning and direction.

Paddy's work includes the establishment of the Ballymun Health & Fitness Festival, the Ballymun Community Games, the Orienteering route in Poppintree Park, and the Ballymun Bike Library.

Many of Paddy's young participants have spoken about the indelible mark these interventions have left on their lives as they enter adulthood.

Our programmes are made possible by community leaders like Paddy; it is his relentless determination and unparalleled dedication that has effectively transformed the lives of people in his area. Sport can change lives but only when there is strong local leadership and viable support. DCSWP is immensely proud to partner with Paddy in the delivery of initiatives and we hope that the future is bright for further partnerships with more local heroes. Every community needs a leader like Paddy but we also want to pay tribute to the many, many local people that volunteer their time and energy under his stewardship.



HIGHLIGHT INITIATIVES

Summer in the City Bringing Wellness to Your Doorstep



This summer Dublin City Sport & Wellbeing Partnership has been offering city dwellers, visitors and tourists the opportunity to refocus and recharge amid the energetic hustle and bustle of the city through our Yoga & Pilates in the City Programme.

Tucked away in the heart of Dublin's historic cultural quarter, Meeting House Square in Templebar has been hosting a series of free lunchtime Yoga and Pilates sessions over the month of July. This unique and immersive experience shows how we can find time and space to move, breathe and connect even in the most unexpected of places.

Delivering sports programmes in urban areas can help reimagine and reinvigorate public spaces in the inner-city. The initiative has transformed the square into a vibrant hub of activity at lunchtime and attracted curious and impressed passers-by eager to get involved! We are happy to report that due to popular demand, the series is continuing for the month of August.

Keep an eye on Eventbrite to sign up and experience the inner-city from a whole different perspective.

New York Jets Flag Football Programme

The New York Jets NFL Girls Flag Football League for first-year girls got underway in March, bringing an exciting new sporting opportunity to secondary schools across Dublin. The six-week programme from the New York Jets, in partnership with NFL UK & IRE and DCSWP, aims to introduce young athletes to the fast-growing sport of Flag Football while promoting teamwork, skill development, and fun.

Each participating school received teacher training and was also provided with equipment and resources to help integrate Flag Football into PE and extracurricular activities. As part of the initiative, NFL-trained coaches visit each school to run hands-on training sessions – this ensures students build strong foundations ahead of the competition phase.

The league culminated in a Championship Day at the Sport Ireland campus, a spectacular event featuring food trucks, music, and a family-friendly, tailgate-style celebration. Huge congratulations to Larkin College, Whitehall who were crowned the first-ever New York Jets NFL Girls Flag League Champions in Ireland.

The programme has received fantastic media coverage on Ireland AM, Virgin Media, and RTÉ News, highlighting the growing popularity of Flag Football in Ireland. With the support of the New York Jets and the wider NFL community, this initiative is not just about competition—it's about creating opportunities, fostering new skills, and inspiring the next generation of female athletes in Dublin.

Roll on next season!



Journey to the Women's Mini Marathon

Over the past four years the Journey to the Women's Mini-Marathon Community Programme has facilitated the participation of hundreds of females from our communities through our supportive and inclusive 12 week training programme. Year on year we have seen how taking part in major sporting events like the mini-marathon becomes far more than setting fitness goals; these are transformative experiences that build confidence, resilience, self-belief and create lifelong connections. The programme continues to grow each year with 250 women crossing the finish line in June 2025.



Dublin City Half Marathon Community Engagement



In 2025 DCSWP sought to build on the success of previous engagement initiatives by launching the Community Engagement Half Marathon Programme in the lead up to the main event on Sunday 30 March. The aim of the programme was to work in partnership with and create a team of participants who would go on a journey together to run, jog or walk the inaugural Dublin Half Marathon. We put out a community call to action through our team of Sport Officers with links to clubs and individuals and the response was overwhelming with a total of 225 participants signing up for the challenge of a lifetime.



The programme was launched in the NEIC by An Taoiseach Mícheál Martin after which participants received expert guidance, coaching, motivation and support along the way from the DCSWP and the Co-funded Athletics Officer team.

The 13.1 race course took our participants through the north city in Dublin before finishing in style right in the heart of the city centre on 30 March.

These programmes embody the principle that everyone deserves the opportunity to partake in major sporting events regardless of ability, experience or motivation. By removing barriers and building inclusive sports programmes, we can enable people to unlock their potential and create sustainable pathways to ongoing participation.

HIGHLIGHT INITIATIVES

HerMoves Young Voices Workshop

In May 2025 the Lord Mayor Emma Blain hosted the Sport Ireland Young Voices Workshop in the Mansion House, Dublin. The event was hosted in partnership with DCSWP and the Her Moves Sport Ireland campaign. The aim of the event was to encourage female teenagers to speak openly and honestly about their experiences in sport — and what they told us was inspiring:

- 🏃♀️ Sport gives them a strong sense of connection and belonging
- 💪 It helps them feel confident, strong and proud of their bodies
- 🎯 It builds resilience and a real sense of achievement
- 🎉 It brings joy, motivation and emotional highs
- 🌟 And for many, it's about breaking stereotypes and empowering other girls

Listening is essential but it is in doing that we can make real, sustainable and powerful change for young women today and in the future. Following on from the Her Moves workshop, the Lord Mayor met with DCSWP to explore tangible and practical steps that can be taken to start changing the landscape for teenage girls in sport. For the Lord Mayor and for DCSWP, real inspiration comes from within; young women need to see other females leading, achieving and finding joy in their chosen sports.

With this in mind the priority in the short-term is to work towards creating supportive and respectful environments through coaching and education. As a direct result of the collated insights DCSWP committed to the following:

- The delivery of a female-only referee coaching course which will commence during HER OutDoors Week 2025 on 16 August in partnership with the FAI.
- The integration of female sporting needs into existing coaching courses. This will put females in sport firmly on the agenda and acknowledge the unique challenges that traditional coaching courses can sometimes overlook.

These commitments were announced by the Lord Mayor on the last day of her tenure in Herbert Park, Dublin. This is why listening matters. These girls are the future of sport, and their voices are shaping a more inclusive, supportive, and exciting space for everyone. The Lord Mayor's reign may have been slightly shorter than usual but it packed a punch in terms of impact. From the outset there was a determination to champion women in sport and actively address the many barriers that affect female participation. We would like to thank her for setting the wheels in motion for future generations.



National Weeks

Bike week 2025

Celebration and healthy competition brought communities together on Sunday 11 May at the Pedal Power Family Friendly Festival Event which raised the curtain on National Bike Week 2025. What better place to host the event than the recently enhanced Sundrive Velodrome in Eamonn Ceannt Park! The festival atmosphere meant everyone felt welcome and included regardless of age or cycling experience. The event sought to demonstrate the simple joy cycling brings to people's lives even in the heart of busy neighbourhoods and a bustling city. Pedal Power also showed the phenomenal work that Dublin City Council does to help facilitate cycling in the city.

Activities on the day included upcycling workshops and bike clinics for new and avid cyclists. The main event, the Pedal Power challenge, saw over 300 cyclists partake in a 5km cycle. Music was played along the route and cyclists were cheered on by onlookers as they made their way in a loop through the suburbs, along the leafy canal and back to the velodrome for more festivities.

The fun continued in Fairview on Monday 12 May with the Fire Ride event. Over 200 children from four local schools learned about the importance of bike safety in an interactive workshop. While promoting bike safety is paramount for young cyclists, participants also got to see the fun side of cycling with BMX and bike tricks' demonstrations.

In our communities Sport Officers delivered bike related programmes throughout the week in local schools and parks, including repair workshops and community cycles led by bike leaders



Women in Sport Week

DCSWP celebrated Women in Sport Week 2025 (3 – 9 March) by showcasing the wide range of ongoing female focused programmes and initiatives delivered by Sport and Co-funded Officers across the city. Activities included belly dancing, laughter yoga, dance fit, tag rugby, school football, fun fitness, skateboarding and boxercise. National events like Women in Sport week are the perfect time to introduce new local initiatives that reflect the spirit of the campaign. This year the Active Cities 'StrongHER' programme aimed at females in teenage years was launched in Ballymun. The programme seeks to address female disengagement from sport and exercise at a critical age.

The Come & Try Pitch & Putt Ireland Event was also a first and a highlight of the week. Further engagement with Pitch & Putt has followed reflecting DCSWP's commitment to exploring new and creative ways to reach everyone in our communities.

HIGHLIGHT INITIATIVES

Community Wellness Project

The Community Wellness Programme (CWP) is a collaborative initiative between Dublin City Council and the Health Services Executive. In 2024 an incredible 830 classes were delivered in the community as part of the project which is managed by DCSWP.

The CWP ensures that people with chronic respiratory and cardiac diseases continue to thrive in the community through individualised, tailored exercise programmes for respiratory and cardiac patients. Proven to improve quality of life and reduce healthcare costs, this ground-breaking programme started in St. Catherine's Sports & Fitness Centre in the South Central Area and has since expanded to the north city in Glin Rd Recreational Centre where specialist coaches guide participants through medical gym and wellness classes.

The programme has far-reaching consequences for its participants from a physical health perspective but testimonials also reveal its importance in providing an important social outlet and a space where people feel connected and supported.

Blades of Glory Celebrating Inclusion in Sport

In January, Dublin City Sports & Wellbeing Partnership hosted two very special inclusive events at Blanchardstown on Ice, bringing wheelchair users and their carers from across Dublin together for a unique and enjoyable experience.

Over two days, 80 participants from Avista CLG, Cheshire Ireland, and St. Michael's House took part, with the rink privately booked to ensure a fully accessible and welcoming environment for all.

The events gave participants the opportunity to experience the thrill of ice skating in a safe and supportive setting. Wheelchair users and their carers glided across the ice, shared laughter, and created lasting memories during this one-of-a-kind activity.

The initiative was organized by Sport Inclusion & Intergration Officers Mark Hughes and Tess Sutton, with significant support from Local Sports Officers Derek Ahern and others, showcasing a true team effort to make sport and recreation accessible to all. These skating days highlighted the power of sport to foster inclusion, connection, and joy among individuals of all abilities. DCSWP remains dedicated to supporting initiatives like this that make a real difference in the lives of participants and their communities.



Club Support Small Grant Scheme 2025

Every year Dublin City Council and Sport Ireland support local clubs via the Club Support Small Grant Scheme which is managed and administered by the DCSWP Administrative Team.

This year's grant scheme was advertised in early May and closed for applications on 23 May.

Every year the small grant, which ranges from €500–€1000, makes a huge difference to clubs looking to increase participation numbers across all age groups in their respective sports.

The amount may be modest but the grant helps transform clubs in areas helping them thrive in areas such as training and coaching courses, purchasing of equipment, administrative expenses and community club open days.

Farewell and Welcome Aboard

Since the last edition we have bid a fond farewell to three members of the DCSWP Co-funded Officer team who moved on to pastures new in 2024.

A huge thank you to our Swim Ireland Officer, Christine Russell, our IABA Boxing Development Officer, Ed Griffin and our Leinster Rugby Development Officer Kevin McCleery. Christine, Ed and Kevin worked tirelessly in communities across the city to give people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds the opportunity to enjoy their respective sports.

Christine's tenure saw the delivery of many new water-based initiatives - highlights included the Learn to Swim adult programme and the Female Artistic Swimming programme which was the first of its kind in Dublin.

Ed spent many years guiding young boxers through the stages of the Startbox Boxing Development Programme while educating them on the sports' history, which remains Ireland's most successful Olympic sport.

Finally, Kevin's work in the North West Area introduced rugby into the lives of young people through the primary and secondary tag and contact rugby programmes. School programmes such as these are critical in terms of building inclusive sporting cultures and ensuring greater diversity.

We wish all three the very best of luck as they take on new challenges.

New Staff – Welcome Raine Almeida & Mick O’Gara

Departures can also mean exciting arrivals and In March 2025 we were delighted to welcome our new Citywide Swimming Development Officer Raine Almeida to the team and Mick O’Gara who has recently taken on rugby development in the South Central Area.

Mick will be working closely with schools and clubs to promote the sport and provide opportunities for young people to fall in love with the oval ball. To get to know our new recruits a bit better, we spoke to Raine about how she started in the sport and what she hopes to bring to her new role.

"I started swimming at Nine to help with breathing issues, and it quickly became a big part of my life.

After joining a local swim club, my passion grew. I competed in Brazil, winning the State of São Paulo Championship multiple times and becoming a National Champion.

Since moving to Ireland, I've been teaching and coaching swimming, rediscovering my love for the sport, and developing a real enjoyment for cold water swimming. This led me to compete in a few races, where I had the honor of winning the 2.5km race at Lough Lene in 2023.

Swimming has shaped my confidence, discipline, and sense of community. As a Swimming Activator, I'm excited to create opportunities for others to experience the transformative power of swimming and change their lives, just as it has mine."

Impressive stuff from Raine who also shared her incredible story as part of Dublin City Council's Humans of Dublin series during Inclusion & Integration Week 2025.





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3.7 Million Budget

Dublin City Sports & Wellbeing Partnership Staff

20 Sport Officers

1 Health Promotion Officer

6 Admin staff

1 Active City Officer

2 Social Inclusion & Integration Officer

23 Co Funded Staff



Athletics



Boxing



Football



Rugby



Cricket



Swimming



Rowing

131,277

Participants in

3,253

Programmes

1,653

People with physical, intellectual
& sensory disabilities

5,217

Adults Aged 55+

379

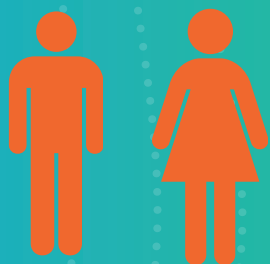
Participants from
New communities

3,117

Young people
10-21 years

20,084

Schools



45%
Male

55%
Female

331

people

Participated in

29

Training programmes

Sport for Young People
Small Grant Scheme

€127,600

Allocated to **170** Clubs

WHAT'S COMING UP

Dublin Sportsfest

Dublin Sportsfest 2025 is coming!

2025 is the eighth year of our flagship annual event, Dublin City Sportsfest. Sportsfest will once again take place during European Week of Sport (EWOS) which promotes more active and healthier lifestyles to millions of Europeans every year.

The goals and aspirations of EWOS closely align with DCSWP's vision for an Active Dublin City and the week-long event highlights the spaces, places, people and programmes that enhance the delivery of sport and physical activity initiatives in our great city.

Stay tuned to our social media platforms and our dedicated Hub for more details on what Dublin City Sportsfest 2025 has to offer.



Marathon kids 2025

The summer is out and school is back but Marathon Kids returns in 2025 for an eighth year to help kids stay healthy and active during the school day. The MK programme has been a huge success for DCSWP since its inaugural year in 2018 with over 60 schools in the Dublin City area signing up to the challenge each year. The initiative teaches young people about the importance of setting and committing to fitness goals over a defined period. Over 8-weeks children partake in running sessions, inching them closer to completing their first ever marathon. Participating schools finish their final mile together in Santry Stadium each year. The finale is one of the most important dates in the DCSWP calendar as children get to celebrate together and mark their brilliant achievement in memorable surroundings. The MK message is simple: set goals, stick to the plan and celebrate the accomplishment together,



Contact Us

For more information on all of our programmes, contact your local sport officer and see how you can get involved Today please scan the QR Code



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