

YOUTH
at the CENTRE

Waterford & South Tipperary
Community Youth Service



**Annual Report
2015**



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Company Secretary Report

2015 was a very busy year for Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service. The Board, Staff and Volunteers worked very hard to deliver high quality integrated services to young people and service users in the community, ensuring that services were relevant, innovative and responsive at all times. The complexity of the organisation demanded astute management of 70 full and part time staff, 20 C.E. workers, 34 projects with different thrusts and emphasis, all funded through as many as 8 funding stream and the management of 16 premises and facilities. The organisations track record of quality service delivery as maintained in 2015 is testimony to the efforts of all of those who gave of their time as volunteers and as committed workers from the Board to the grass roots. The year was not without its challenges and in particular the Board successfully faced the test of managing the succession of retiring Regional Director, Eoin O' Neill which was completed by the end of quarter 3. Other challenges involved managing the multiplicity of accounts, funder requirements and the myriad of day to day administrative and financial transactions. The organisation was successful in securing capital funding for replacing the roof at the Shy Centre, again a testament to the organisations track record of safe delivery of building projects. Challenges and benefits were encountered throughout the year through the many stakeholder and partnership relationships. The organisation, through its obvious commitment and valuable contribution on many structures across the region, has left the year in good shape for continuing to work together into the future on critical issues and priorities relevant to the communities served by W.S.T.C.Y.S. Overall the year was a very positive one.

Board

The Board met on 11 occasions during the year which included one extra-ordinary meeting at which the appointment of the new C.E.O. was ratified. The Board held its annual Review and Planning Day on Sunday 1st of February which provided an ideal opportunity to take an overview of the achievements made during 2014 and also to set the priorities for 2015. Membership of the Board for 2015 included the following 14 people: Chairperson - Michael White & Carmel Keoghan; Treasurer - Sean O' Callaghan; Secretary - Andrea Bourke; Crena Morrissey, Fr. Paul Murphy, Seamus Mc Grath, Sean O' Halloran, Joanne Walsh, Clive Smith, Mick Nevin, Karen Doyle, Dylan Roche, Daniel Roche. Carmel Keoghan succeeded Michael White as Chairperson of the Board by election held at the A.G.M. on the 30th of April 2015. Carmel tendered her resigned from the chair and from the Board itself at the Board meeting held on the 29th of October 2015. The Board appointed a Chairperson for each subsequent Board meeting to fulfil the role until the A.G.M could appoint a successor. Daniel Roche also stepped down from the Board at the October 29th meeting. The Board continued to manage and monitor the complex work of the various projects, clubs and services both effectively and efficiently at a time of considerable change, particularly with the retirement of the Regional Director, Eoin O' Neill after 35 years of service and the induction of the new C.E.O., Christina Fogarty in October '15.

Finance

The Finance Sub-committee chaired by Sean O' Callaghan held 10 meetings during the year prior to each board meeting. These meetings focussed on reviewing the accounts in detail, preparing reports for the Board and advising on all matters related to the financial affairs of the organisation. This committee oversaw and ensured that all of the organisations accounts were managed properly and within budget; ensured that the organisation had cash flow; set targets for reducing costs; agreed budgets and continued to work on reducing the organisations loans. Additionally, this committee ensured that the organisation fulfilled the terms required by funder Service Level Agreements. Budgets were for all projects and accounts at the end of December 2014 and these were strictly monitored monthly and quarterly to ensure they were in line with funding. The DCYA again gave additional funding through hardship grants and a number of the organisations projects benefited from them raising an additional €12,000 towards programme costs. Further representations were made to the H.S.E. and were successful in securing timely quarterly payment of grants for Y.P.F.S.F. projects as this was the only funding stream that was not being received in advance which was impacting on the organisations cash flow. A capital grant of €25,000 was received from DCYA towards the cost of replacing the roof on the original Shy Centre, which covered over half the cost. Further reductions were made on the premises loans which are now below €900,000, and this will continue to be a priority for the Board.

Facilities & Premises

2015 got off to a poor start as the Youth Centre in Ballybeg along with other community facilities was the subject of an arson attack and was completely destroyed. This was devastating for young people, volunteers and staff as well as the local community who rallied around to help. As the building belongs to the Council, the organization had to wait for the rebuild to start which commenced in the November. An SEAI grant was awarded to complete

insulation at Woodstown and EcoCerts were maintained on the organisations buildings where applicable. Limited remedial work was completed on the Elm Park Centre to seal the main piers and stop water leaking in under the floor. More work will be required on this problem. The roof at the Shy Centre was removed on what can only be described as the wettest day of the year and was replaced with the assistance of a grant from DCYA. Some modifications were made to the Millennium building to create more room options and staff offices were improved. Work commenced on a small Youth Café in the Carrick building. The plan is to develop such facilities in our other centres going forward where they do not currently exist.

Implementation Working Group

The Boards Implementation Working Group chaired by Michael White were tasked in 2015 with responsibility for overseeing the recruitment of a new C.E.O. and ensuring there was a smooth transition with regard to the exit of the outgoing Regional Director. This was highlighted in the Organisation Structural Review undertaken by Peter Clark in 2014 as a key risk area for the organisation and therefore required careful management. The working group took on the tasks associated with the recruitment process on behalf of the board including reviewing the Job Description, person specification, application process, shortlisting and interview process. A lot of time and effort went into ensuring the quality and integrity of the process so that the change involved was contained and well managed. This was successfully achieved and contained resulting in as little disruption as possible for service delivery, staff, volunteers and all service users.

H.R. Sub Committee

The Board agreed to establish a H.R. Sub Committee in December 2014 and 4 members of the Board were appointed to it. Chaired by Andrea Bourke, the H.R. Sub Committee met 6 times during the year commencing in May with the initial task of developing with management, a job description for Centre Posts of Responsibility which has since been implemented in 8 centres throughout the region. These posts are designed to improve communication, co-ordination and integration at local level and between local and regional levels. The H.R. Sub Committee also addressed the question of hiring H.R. expertise for the organisation and began work on clearly defining the organisations requirements. The group have identified potential professionals and have begun meeting with them to try to find the best fit and package for the organisation and support should be in place in the first quarter of 2016.

Governance

One of the big challenges facing all charities at present is the increase in governance and compliance requirements. Under the Charities Act 2009 the organisation was required to register with the Charities Regulatory Authority and this was undertaken by the Board on deadline. The Board also signed up to implementing the Code of Governance for Charities and hopes to reach compliance by Autumn 2016. In order to focus its efforts the Board made the decision in December 2015 to set up a Governance Sub Committee through which such matters will be addressed. This committee will commence working in January 16 and will be comprised of 4 board members along with Management support. Other priorities for 2016 will include signing up to the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising, as well as implementing other structural groups such as a Quality & Safety Committee for the organisation.

Project Work

W.S.T.C.Y.S. delivered it's programmes and services through 34 projects made up of 12 Community Youth Projects (D.C.Y.A.), 7 Garda Diversion Projects (I.Y.J.S.), 7 Community Based Drugs Initiatives (H.S.E. & R.D.T.F.), 3 Outreach Drugs Projects (H.S.E. & R.D.T.F.) and 5 special service projects including Making Connections Waterford (WWETB), Making Connections St. Tipperary (TETB), the SAOR Project (DSP), Woodstown Residential & Activity Centre & Youth Information (DCYA). Over the year these projects engaged 2,500 young people aged 10 to 15 years, 1340 adult service users aged 25 + years and delivered programmes and services through 220 active volunteer partners in the local community. One of the key challenges facing the organisation for the year was the continuing impact of funding reductions from previous years which restricts the range of service delivery on the ground. In tandem with funding reductions, projects continue to face escalations in administrative requirements and accountabilities without any additional resources. One of the key priorities over the year was youth participation and service user involvement and foundations laid in the year will be built on further for 2016.

Club Development

Youth Club work reached 335 young people through 16 clubs in 2015. A total of 77 volunteers delivered much needed weekly contact time for young people in their own communities building a sense of belonging, association, friendship and providing outlets for fun and social contact. The Club Development Group met 5 times during the

year and was well attended. Emphasis was placed during the year on outreaching into new communities looking for additional volunteers and seeking to set up new clubs, training, regional programmes and fundraising. Unfortunately Mount Sion Youth Club closed during 2015.

Volunteer Forum:

The Volunteer forum met 8 times over what proved to be a challenging year in 2015. During the year the Chairperson, Carmel Keoghan stepped down and this was a big loss to the group. Attempts to raise participation by inviting attendance by two people from each club or project were unsuccessful as it was found that volunteers coming from clubs and projects were already very committed and did not have time to get involved in the forum. Instead the existing group of volunteers involved have established themselves as a steering group which will plan the activities to be delivered with volunteers in the organization in consultation with clubs and projects. The steering group achieved success in producing two newsletters, launching the volunteer recognition pin and beginning to develop the volunteer database so that I.D. cards can be issued. An office was developed in Manor Street which is now shared with Club Development and this will provide an administrative base, meeting place and hub for the development of all activities. It is hoped that plans for 2016 will be much more accessible to the volunteers of the organization and if anyone has any interest in getting involved they will be very much welcomed.

Staff:

The organisations team of 57 full time and 13 part time delivered high quality, meaningful and relevant programmes and services to communities throughout the region during 2015. The central focus of all of the work undertaken was on young people, service users, volunteers, communities. The work undertaken can be very challenging and demands creativity and innovation from staff at all times. The Board recognises the achievements of staff and appreciates their efforts. In 2015 there was quite a lot of movement in terms of staff departures, recruitment and transfers. 8 staff left the organisation during the year including: Jean Murphy (PACT), Brianna Connaughton (SWAY), Niamh Foley (DAY), Tracy Nugent (Co. Waterford CBDI West), Pat Murphy (AXIS), Derek Phelan (Co. Waterford Frontline), and Orla Amos (Making Connections South Tipperary). The Board would like to acknowledge the work that they did during their tenure and to wish them well in their new endeavours. New staff joining the organisation include: Declan O' Driscoll (Woodstown), Brian Cuddihy (PACT), Michelle Kelly (Clonmel CYP), Eoin Dalton & Kate Finn (SWAY), Niamh O' Donovan (DAY), Carmel Keoghan & James Rockett (AXIS), and Eamonn Keogh (Waterford City Frontline). The Board extends a warm welcome to our new staff and wish them well in their efforts working with young people, service users and volunteers in a community context and hope that they will be happy in their challenging roles. Some internal movement also occurred with regard to Christina Fogarty taking up the new C.E.O. post, Pat Mc Bride stepping into the Centre Manager post at the Manor, Louise Marshall joining the staff at the Farronshoneen Centre, Ciara Jacob taking up the helm at the Millennium C.Y.P. and Jay Collins taking on the role with Co. Waterford C.B.D.I. West. The Board would like to pay a special tribute to Eoin O' Neill for his 35 years' service with the organisation. An event was held in October to mark the occasion of his retirement and to pay tribute to his tireless efforts, vision and leadership during his time at the helm of the organisation.

Youth Work Ireland

Youth Work Ireland continued to provide substantial support to the organisation throughout the year and in particular by assisting with the recruitment process undertaken to replace the outgoing Regional Director. The new C.E.O. was also inducted at national level ensuring WSTCYS maintained close contact with the federation's priorities. Regional Directors meetings were held 4 times during the year and provided a collective focus on issues such as Service Level Agreements with CDYSB, protecting Youth Information Services, Strategic planning and a series of working groups were established to develop particular areas of work such as the Integrated Youth Services working group. Youth Work Ireland set up strategic structures that involved meeting quarterly with key partners such as Tusla and also D.C.Y.A. which were very important structures for representing the priority needs and issues of the member youth services. WSTCYS relationship with YWI was facilitated by Paul Gralton, in his role of national liaison staff member. Paul co-ordinated funding applications to DCYA and oversaw Safeguarding and Garda Vetting structures at national level. The priority going forward will be to strengthen the Youth Work Ireland Federation by streamlining strategic planning, developing overarching imaging and branding and establishing representative fora so that the voice of member youth services is stronger collectively.

In conclusion, the Board would like to thank all the staff, the volunteers who have contributed at all levels of the organisation, and wish all the young people and service users well for the coming year. The Board especially wishes to thank Eoin O' Neill for the valuable contribution he made over the year.

Club Development Report

2015 was a further progressive year for Youth Club work in the region. At the end of 2015 there were 14 youth clubs affiliated. There were over 350 Youth Club members and 145 Club Leaders trained and fully involved. The six key areas of club development were – NQSFVLG, volunteer recruitment and selection, training, establishing new clubs, on-going support for the existing clubs, the Club Development Group and regional programmes. Overall we were encouraged with progress in terms of the increase in numbers of new volunteers and members who have become involved.

Club Development Group

The Club Development Group met 5 times during the year with meetings held in Edmund Rice Youth and Community Multiplex, Waterford, Carrick on Suir Resource Centre and Dungarvan Youth Centre, Dungarvan. Clive Smith was the Chairperson with the club development worker Annette Martin acting as Secretary. Fiona Treacy is now the new elected chairperson for Club Development. The meetings were positive with continued effort being made for an increased attendance from club leaders.

Volunteer Recruitment and selection

A net increase of 16 in the number of volunteer leaders is a direct result of a lot of hard work that was put into recruiting and selection in 2015. All candidates were fully interviewed and application forms completed before training commenced. It was positive and highly encouraging to see people getting involved in their own communities.

Training of Youth Club Leaders in 2015

During 2015, 12 participants took part in and completed the six week induction training programme. Dungarvan 7, Carrick on Suir 1, Dunmore East 3, Tramore 1. Two Child Protection Awareness Programmes were organised for club leaders in the Edmund Rice Youth and Community Multiplex, Waterford in March and in Farronshoneen Youth & Community Centre Waterford in June. In total 32 participants attended.

A volunteer training weekend was held in the Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre in May 2015 with the emphasis on “Personal Development” and the feedback from this weekend was very positive. Two Games Workshops were held in Farronshoneen in January and September with 16 participants attending.

An anti-bullying workshop was held in May with the ISPC in the Edmond Rice Youth and Community Multiplex.

Two Occupational First Aid courses were delivered by the Civil Defence Waterford in February and September in which 20 Club leaders received FETAC level 5 certificates.

A National Quality Standards Framework training workshop was held for club leaders in Farronshoneen September 2015 and delivered by Waterford and Wexford ETB Youth Officer.

Ongoing Club Support

Regular contact was maintained by the club development worker with all club leaders in relation to providing on-going support. Areas of support identified and provided included technical issues, insurance, Garda Vetting, Child Protection, and Club Resources, website and regular on-going issues and queries. Some Clubs required more support than others and the on-going training will help in addressing this. Clubs were supported in applying for the youth club grants that were made through the Waterford & Wexford E.T.B. and Tipperary E.T.B.

Regional Programmes

Youth Clubs Got Talent was held for the third year in Rathgormack Hiking Centre, Rathgormack, Co. Waterford on the 25th of April. It was a very successful event with 10 Clubs participating an increase of 2 clubs from the previous year with over 120 members performing. Feedback from the event was highly positive and it is now an annual event. A Barbeque for Youth Club members was held on Saturday 13th of September 2015 in the Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre. A total of 47 Youth Club members attended and the event was a great success. A Christmas colouring competition was held in December. 220 entries were received.

The auction for Club Development in conjunction with the Lions Club was held in The Munster Bar Waterford City on 10th December 2015 to raise money for the clubs. A team of volunteers supported by the worker approached over 75 businesses auction items by letter or personal visit and in some cases both. The response rate was over 98% with a successful acquisition of over 100 items to auction off on the night. Personal connections were used to secure as much support as possible from local businesses. The team worked together to design a brochure which was circulated internally throughout the organisation to ensure people had advanced notice of the types of items up for auction. This raised awareness and word of mouth and ensured a marvellous turn out on the night for the inaugural Christmas Auction of the Club Development Group.

National Quality Standard Framework for Volunteer-led Youth Groups,

During 2015 the club development group discussed the NQSFVLYG at its meetings, organised training for club leaders and has offered support to clubs on an individual basis. The NQSFVLYG will be used in deciding on the local you club grant and for the year end 2016 clubs are expected to complete an annual plan and progress report template in order to apply for 2015 local youth club grant.

Finally a big thank you to all the volunteers who give up their time every week to work with young people in the clubs.

AXIS Project

The Axis Community Youth Project was set up to provide “out of hours” service for young people within the Ballybeg area in Waterford City. The main aim of the project is to engage young people in positive alternative activities at high risk times when young people may be at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. High risk times refer to weekend times Friday through to Sunday. Throughout 2015 the AXIS Community Youth Project continued to provide an ‘out of hours’ service for young people within Ballybeg area and engaged 45 young people in positive alternative activities at potentially ‘high risk’ times during the weekends (Friday through to Sunday). Due to the devastating and unforeseen arson attack on the youth centre the project had to relocate to a temporary premises in February. This adversely affected attendance and participation and resulted in reduced space and a consequent drop in member involvement. The two part time staff members finished work with the project in April and August and two new members of staff started in June and October respectively. The summer programme was a great success and saw engagement from 25 young people in meaningful and worthwhile activities.

45 members were involved in the project during 2015 there were 18 females and 27 males all aged between 10-21 years. The project worked with 5 core groups over a 3 day weekend. Group 1: mixed gender aged 10-12, Group 2: male members aged 16-21, Group 3: mixed members aged 10-12, Group 4: male members aged 12-14 and Group 5: female members aged 13-15. On average there was 15 hours direct contact with young people each week. The project also ran Special Interest Programmes continuously over February to June and again from September to December.

Developmental group work took place for 2 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year with each of the core groups. Special Interest Programmes were delivered with 20 young people who were both existing members and previously unattached from the project. Programmes were on a 2 hour basis over a 6 week period. Programmes included: cooking (8 mixed genders, aged 10-13 years), craftwork (6 females, aged 11 years), fretwork (6 males, aged 13-15 years), late night soccer (16 males, aged 16 -21 years), younger soccer (males (8 young people 13-15), Halloween Howler (in conjunction with Ballybeg Community Youth Project), mid-term programme, summer programme and bag packing fundraiser.

The most difficult challenge this year was the fire that affected our centre in January 2015 and the relocation of the youth project, numbers dropped by 20 and increasing the member involvement proved difficult due to the physical size of the new youth project premises.

The core staff turnover in April and again in August impacted on the members and was felt as a huge loss for the young people involved.

The project work was supported by three adult volunteers over the course of the year, with two young volunteers, as well as two student placements. The volunteers were involved in every aspect of the running of the groups and were encouraged to bring their skills to bear on the positive development of the project. Our young leaders are now a valuable part of the groups that they are involved in and help plan and evaluate groups while modelling positive behaviour for the young people.

Ballybeg Community Youth Project

2015 was perhaps one of the most unusual and challenging years for the Ballybeg Youth Project. On the 24th January the Youth Resource Centre was destroyed by fire as a result of arson. This was in addition to St Saviours GAA Club and Saviours Crystal Boxing Club experiencing the same fate over this particular weekend. This was obviously a very serious and distressing event for the Ballybeg Community. As a result a particularly momentous response followed, primarily from the Community but the response to help was also city, county and nationwide, for which we are all very grateful.

Local parents, agencies/services (including ourselves), sport providers and school personnel came together to co-ordinate the different strands of support required to assist the Community in moving forward. This included support and safe space for young people, security in the Community and for other facilities, practical support around sharing much needed resources, equipment and materials, gathering and distributing donations and the organizing of the Community Fundraising Committee "Brick by Brick".

The Ballybeg Youth Project moved to the temporary location of the Neighbourhood Office in 61 Clonard Park and quickly re-established services from this location. Some use of St Saviours soccer club was also utilized during the Autumn period. Whilst the location has put limitations on some parts of the work we do, there was strong engagement with young people throughout 2015. Some generous donations were made to the Youth Project specifically to provide activities for young people and as a result the teenage cohort were able to participate in an outdoor pursuits programme during the Summer Programme. Cuts in funding over the years had seriously affected the provision of this type of activity for teenagers.

Despite a tricky start to the year the staff team which includes strong volunteer involvement, strived to maximize programmes and activities, with 122 young people participating at a meaningful level throughout the year. 20 Volunteers were involved in the running of the Project at various levels in regards to the direct work with young people and/or sitting on the Advisory Group. The team availed of different training opportunities such as Occupational First Aid, Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Fire Health and Safety, and Reflective Practice. 5 students were hosted on work placements (3 from WIT and 2 from secondary school).

The Project worked mainly through the medium of group work and which included educational and issue based work on topics important to young people and their development including resilience, friendship and Community, activities relevant to life skills and self-esteem, recreation, sport, drama, fretwork, cooking and art/crafts and some special interest programmes. Young People could access additional activities during the Summer and other holidays such as day trips, camping/overnights and longer activity times. Due to some generous donations in 2015 the teenagers involved, had a fantastic Summer Programme with outdoor pursuits and team building events.

The year reflected strong and positive participation from young people in terms of their commitment, expressing their needs and interests and planning their programmes and activities. All young people had at least one core club to attend per week and many had at least two points of contact on a weekly basis. Relationships and friendships were nurtured creating and maintaining a culture of respect within the Project and ensuring that it was a safe, enjoyable and creative space for young people to spend their time.

Strong outcomes for Youth Work were clearly evident this year with current members remaining very involved and committed to the Project despite the difficulties faced and limitations put upon the Project and helping where realistic and possible. Adult ex- members provided both moral and practical support to the staff and young people to help keep the service vibrant and meaningful and contributed hugely to their Community and Environment

Highlights in 2015

- The response and support received from the Ballybeg Community and Waterford City (Families, Colleagues and businesses)
- The strong evidence of outcomes for Youth Work across the board
- The young people across the Community in regards to their positive attitude and participation and friendships and relationships with each other

Clonmel Community Youth Project

Clonmel Community Youth Project went through further change during 2015 with a new youth worker being employed on 30th March. This led to a period of adjustment for young people and volunteers. Outreach was made a priority at this time to build the profile of project within the community and to allow leaders to build relationships within the community. A second CE youth worker was employed in July 2015, solidifying the leader team. The focus for the latter part of the year was recruiting new members and building the capacity of the project in Elm Park.

December was a difficult time for the project with the tragic passing of a member and the circumstances surrounding her death.

During 2015, one hundred and eleven young people engaged in the project through the medium of group work and one to one support. On average the project had 70% contact hours per week with members. The breakdown of the young people was 54 males and 57 females, of this number 52 males and 41 females were in the 10-14 years of age category, 2 males and 11 females were in the 15– 17 years of age bracket and 5 females in the 17+ age group.

Eight regular weekly group sessions that target a specific core group of young people were delivered throughout 2015, five of which catered for girls and young women and three for boys and young men. In these sessions, the members participated in the deciding, planning, implementation and review of their own programmes. These programmes had a specific outcomes focus and varied in content dependant on the interests, needs and issues of the young people. One to one support was carried out with two young women who were referred to the project by TUSLA.

Additional programmes and activities were also offered to the young people to further engage and increase contact time.

- A weekly Soccer programme ran in Clonmel Town FC & later merged with the CYD as a joint project
- Junior Drop Ins ran on a weekly basis in the Wilderness Centre & in Elm Park
- Senior Drop In was established in Elm Park in conjunction with CYD Project and ran on a weekly basis
- Easter & Halloween Programme ran during school holidays
- Summer Programme took place over a 9 week period with 52 participants

Highlights of 2015

- The recruitment of a new youth worker in March 2015
- The growth of the project in Elm Park & establishment of new groups
- The summer programme which engaged 38 young people over a seven week period and culminated in an awards ceremony, BBQ & Volunteer award
- Art projects completed by young people in particular the mural in the Cafe in the Wilderness YCC
- Memorial balloon release organised by members and held in the Wilderness area for the local community

Challenges of 2015

- The change in core staff for the third time in an eighteen month period
- The loss of a member through suicide

Volunteer & Community Involvement

A total of nine volunteers played an integral role in the delivery of groups and programmes within the project throughout the year. Eleven volunteers & staff took part in Child Protection Awareness training in November 2015. Key relationships have been established with the project linking closely with the local residents groups and the local soccer club. The project also continues to support the use of the centre by local community groups at off peak times.

Dungarvan Community Youth Project

In 2015 the Dungarvan Community Youth Project continued to develop and deliver a quality service with and for young people from the local community. It was a jam-packed and exciting year for the project with plenty of opportunities on offer for the young people involved.

During 2015 a total of 82 young people aged 10 – 21 accessed the project, 50 female and 32 male. 8 weekly core groups were in existence with the 10 – 14 years age group having the highest representation for both sexes, showing continuous growth for the project. In addition to the weekly groups the project facilitated further programmes reflective of the needs of the young people which included; the educational support programme, weekly drop in programme, seasonal programmes including a 7 week summer programme and one to one support when the need was identified. The project ensured that each young person had a minimum of two points of contact each week which had a positive impact on the relationships between the young people and the leader team but also enhanced the young people's ownership of the project and increased their levels of participation.

Throughout 2015 an emphasis was put on providing opportunities for people from the local community to get involved in the centre and to build their knowledge of the services that we provide. An inter-project approach was adopted as we joined together to run a number of different initiatives. During mental health week we ran a number of successful events such as a community walk and talk, coffee morning, holistic treatments including acupuncture, meditation and hand massage. We also held our second annual remembrance ceremony in December which saw a huge turnout from community members. There were a total of 11 volunteers involved in the running of the project throughout 2015 but we did experience a decrease in people's availability towards the latter part of the year as some continued on to employment or returned to education.

Highlights for the Project in 2015

- A highly successful summer programme ran for 7 weeks during July and August. There was an increase in the number of young people choosing to engage in the programme throughout the summer. The programme was mainly based in the local area – taking advantage of our local amenities - with activities such as hiking, beach trips, team challenges in the Lismore towers, treasure hunts, etc. as well as day trips for each group to finish off the programmes!
- 7 young people from the project completed their leaving certificate in June and continued on in education thereafter.
- 6 young people successfully completed a Junior Leadership training programme and then volunteered their time during the summer months to help with Summer Programmes.
- Our annual Trolley Dash in aid of St Vincent de Paul ran for the 3rd year, building momentum each year with over 40 families benefiting from the efforts of young people and the community.
- We received a prize again this year for our efforts in the St. Patricks Day Parade. Our entry was themed around Internet Safety and was creatively designed and delivered by the young people in the project with the support of the leader team. The young people embraced technology by turning themselves into Apps and life size iphones while sending out a very important message to the people of Dungarvan.

Challenges for the Project in 2015

- Again Mental Health issues were at the forefront for young people and their families in Dungarvan throughout 2015 with a noticeable increase in young people presenting with symptoms of anxiety and depression. The challenge was for the project to support these young people appropriately in a community with limited resources or referral paths.
- 2015 was a time of change in Dungarvan Youth & Community Centre with a turnover of two staff members over a short space of time. While trying to maintain the level of service provided within the centre, a strain was evident on the projects resources. This also provided an opportunity for change as two new staff joined the team and we began to rebuild the profile of the centre within the community and work together to establish an effective team.

Edmund Rice Youth & Community Multiplex

Edmund Rice Youth & Community Multiplex continued to grow and develop over 2015 as an Integrated Service Hub in the heart of Waterford Inner City. Underpinned by the principle of “Youth at the Centre”, a broad quantum of service to young people and the wider community was delivered during the year based on their identified needs and interests. The Youth Work Team in 2015 remained consistent in contrast to significant changes in the leadership of the Centre, arising from the progression of the Centre Manager into the CEO role with the retirement of the Regional Director in the final quarter. As the organisation’s HQ, the Centre contributed strongly to the overall operation of WSTCYS along with its strategic direction and relationships with funding bodies and allied services.

A total of 526 young people aged between 10 and 25 years were reached by the Centre in 2015 across a wide range of both targeted and universal initiatives, consisting of 6 weekly Developmental Core Groups, the XLC Junior and Leaving Cert. programmes and a variety of Special Interest and Seasonal programmes and events. Urban Youth Café, Chill OUT Sunday and Waterford Access Music grew and developed very positively over the year. Each was run by a Working Group of young people and volunteers and together reached and actively included a diverse community of young people, engaging them in positive supportive relationships and associations and generating meaningful responses to their shared interests and issues. Other examples of young people’s growing participation and leadership in the Centre were in the roles they took on in the delivery of both the YU-GI-OH community events and Guitar Programme, as well as in the input from all groups into their quarterly group plans and fundraising to support programme costs. An exciting development in 2015 was the inception of Manor Minds, a new Working Group looking at the critical issue of Youth Mental Health. In tandem with its core youth work purpose, the Centre constituted a significant organisational and community resource, accommodating many internal Projects and interventions and providing low cost or no cost access to space and practical support for community groups, self-help and support groups and enterprise and training initiatives including Scouts, OA, AA, Nigerian Community, Congolese Community, FTC, St. John’s Priory LTI and WASSA.

A total of 36 volunteers brought their time, energy, skills and enthusiasm for positive Youth Development and Youth Support to the Centre in 2015. Volunteers are the defining feature of the Centre’s community response and were pivotal to achieving the range of work outlined above. Overall volunteer levels remain consistent with 2014 but staff did note an increased challenge around volunteer recruitment in 2015 despite a number of promotional drives. With challenges came notable highlights, in particular the attainment of a membership of 97 young people in Urban Youth Café’s Saturday Access by the year end, the central role played by Chill Out in the local YES Equality Campaign including a vibrant and well attended launch in conjunction with BeLonG To and 8 in-house Youth Gigs/Open Mics organised by WAM. The achievement of Junior and Leaving Cert. qualifications by so many young people through the XLC is always cause for celebration. The Manor Christmas Social was a great success as the year came to a close, attended by over 50 staff members, volunteers and young people. The obvious warmth, conviviality and collectivity of this event bodes well for 2016 and heralds a new phase in the development of the Centre as we strive together to create a real Centre of Excellence in the community for our work, now and in the future.

Farronshoneen Youth Centre Project

The Farronshoneen Youth Centre Project experienced a good year in 2015. By the last quarter of the year, the youth project was back up to its full accompaniment of 2 youth workers, with a renewed emphasis placed on involving new young people and the identification of new initiatives as a second point of contact. Outreach work was carried out from September-October 2015 as part of the on-going development work within the catchment area. This proved valuable to the project as new connections were made with local resident and the needs of young people in the area were further identified. New young people engaged with the project and local hang out spots were identified in the course of the outreach. The project was able to tailor groups and programmes to engage young people at vulnerable hours and increase the profile of the project within the local community.

The Dunmore Road area has a large mixture of diverse cultures and as a response the centre facilitated the establishment of some new programmes that attracted young people from non-Irish national communities and this helped with integration of young people into the programmes of the Farronshoneen Centre and the local community.

During 2015, 206 young people aged 8 to 19 years were engaged in the Farronshoneen Youth and Community Centre (core groups and centre activities combined) on a regular basis with an average of 65% contact time weekly. The breakdown in terms of the Farronshoneen Youth Centre Project and its core groups are as follows: the majority of young people in attendance were between 10 to 14 years with 30 males and 45 females within this age category. 7 males and 2 females were within the 15 to 17 age, with a total of 84 young people attending core groups and 122 young people attending special interest programmes at the centre.

Five weekly core groups ran over 2015, with two catering for young women, two for young men and one mixed teen group. Two special interested programmes also operated under the Farronshoneen Centre Youth Project including Dodge ball (collaboratively with the Farronshoneen Community Youth Project) and a Movie Club, along with three short term programmes- Introduction to Bakery x 2 and a 6 week Arts and Crafts programme. Five special interest programmes were also run under the Farronshoneen centre programmes including too Hip Hop, Zumba, Indian Dance (Bollywood) and classes teaching music instruments.

The centre was opened for 338 days during 2015, which include the centre's use by external community groups, to include a number of the local resident groups and also the Farronshoneen Community Youth Project which operates from the centre.

Challenges

Attracting and retaining volunteers with specific skill sets. Unfortunately, 4 volunteers, two with the art project and two with the drama group, have left for a variety of personal reasons during 2015.

While both the Farronshoneen Community Youth Project and the Farronshoneen YCP, had a total eighty young people engaged in the Summer Programme 2015, it was still felt that the availability of other programmes from schools/colleges/sporting organisations and some members having to accompany their families on extended summer breaks, all have had an impact on young people's availability during the summer.

Given the large geographical area of the Dunmore Road, there is an issue of young people being unable to attend the centre if their parents are not in a position to drop or collect them. This has impacted on the level of commitment that the young people can give to the project and centre but also limits opportunities for additional points of contact.

Highlights

A youth working group was established in May 2015 to plan the older teen summer programme involving two representatives from both Farronshoneen youth projects, both project staff and a

volunteer who works weekly with the teen group. This working group meet once a week for six weeks for a period of an hour. With the support of the workers and the project volunteer, the young people planned all aspects of their seven weeks Summer Programme including the programme content, transport arrangements and the costing of the programme. The group also took responsibility for the preparation of an Oakwood trip involving all members of the teen groups. This working group also supported a fund raising opportunity to help contribute towards the running costs of the Summer Programme across all age groups. There was a continued development of young people's skills attending the music group and staging two shows in the centre, one in April at which 50 people attended and a second show in December when the young people staged a programme of 17 songs in front of an audience of 60 people.

Indian dance expanded to 4 classes with a total of 45 young people attending throughout the year, and also took part in a competition in Dublin.

Volunteer and Community Involvement

The volunteer base in the Farronshoneen Youth and Community Centre remained consistent throughout 2015 with 14 adult volunteers (10 female and 4 male) supporting the work of the centre. Eight of these individuals are long term volunteers who continued their involvement in the Youth Centre, while three were new volunteers who remained with the project on completion of their student placement. The project also trained four junior leaders in June, 2015.

The centre youth project also supervised three students, two of which were Applied Social Studies Students with W.I.T.

The centre advisory committee met twice during 2015 which further enhanced the centre's link with the local community and included representatives from resident's groupings, local services providers, youth representatives and volunteers.

Finally, the centre facilitated the selling of tickets to the "Debs Ball" by a committee made up of students and parents from De La Salle, following a decision by the school not to support the running of the Ball. The committee were extremely grateful for the use of the centre on such short notice and the Ball was a great success, without any incidents.

Farronshoneen Community Youth Project

During 2015, Farronshoneen Community Youth Project engaged ninety young people with a consistent membership of 64 young people in five established core groups, three support programmes, and two special interest programmes. A further core group and two special interest programmes were established in 2015. One support programme was extended to twice weekly. The common trend throughout work with the core groups was to build an increased awareness of their power to influence decision making. This was reflected in enhanced participation in programme planning, with very constructive contributions by members, within their own groups, and also with inter-project and seasonal programmes. Members participated in a working group with leaders, which was responsible for the organisational aspects of the summer programme. It also resulted in members establishing two special interest programmes, computer coding, and an anime meet-up group with members from both youth projects.

Issue-based programmes focused on personal awareness, friendships, peer learning, and substance mis-use. Special interest programmes included Hip-Hop dance, and Dodgeball. Three exam year students accessed maths lessons with the project.

Summer and other seasonal activities were carried out jointly with Farronshoneen Centre Youth Project. Three weekly full-day and one half-day programmes were carried out over seven weeks in July and August and included a wide range of recreational, team building, sporting, and social activities. Seven young people who did not attend the summer programme were accommodated through a weekly drop-in. Seasonal activities included trips away, and centre fun days, sports, outdoor pursuits, scavenger hunts and an elaborate murder mystery. Three secondary school students carried out work experience with the project, and expressed feeling more confident as a result. One student assisted two members to edit a DVD which their group had made the previous year, and parents attended a small "premier" of the result. Three exam year students again accessed maths grinds with the project.

During 2015, the project again prioritised the involvement of young people from the more marginalised areas, including prioritised time for continuous outreach, follow up, and additional contact. Ten of these young people attended between two and four times weekly on a continuous basis. Six young men in their 20's were facilitated to use the games room on a regular basis, which enabled staff to maintain contact, and provide assistance with job-seeking. Three of the young men registered to vote with a small amount of support.

The young people cited the benefits of their involvement as having fun, increased confidence, making new friends, learning to work with others, learning new skills.

Overall, eight volunteers were involved in the delivery of programmes in 2015. Volunteer recruitment was carried out in conjunction with centre staff, through door to door work, newspaper advertisements, posters, and on WSTCYS website. The project worked with Farronshoneen Youth and Community Centre with the worker attending fortnightly centre management and strategic planning meetings, servicing the advisory committee, and assisting with fundraising and centre events. Both workers delivered Child Protection Awareness training to WSTCYS volunteers. The combined work resulted in the establishment of the centre gathering momentum, with increased positive feedback and queries from residents, parents, and some referrals from local schools.

The highlights for the project over the year was again the very positive feedback from the young people in relation to their own groups, and the regular successful joint activities with Farronshoneen Youth Centre Project, and young people taking the initiative to form their own groups. The hatchling project, which was initiated by a younger group, delighted everyone. Challenges for the project were maintaining a strong volunteer base, as leaders work situations changes, and presented challenges in maintaining the momentum of parts of the work. Issues recurring during the year were cyber safety, making agreements on the use of social media and snapchat within the centre, and conflict between young people in their community. The last quarter of 2015 was challenging, with some uncertainty, due changes in the staff team and the departure of the long-term worker.

Overall, 2015 was a positive year, where the objectives of the leaders and members were fulfilled. Issues the young people have identified as a priority for next year are mental health and social anxiety, body image, cyber bullying, and substance misuse.

Frontline Project

2015 was a busy year for the project and the emerging needs and trends identified through the service are highlighted as follows:

There was an increase in the amount of injecting users attending. Some people attended having contracted the Hep C infection. Methadone and prescribed medication use was high amongst the opioid-dependent group. Increase in the numbers of young people living in the care of the state. Housing crisis and unrealistic rental supplements caused huge problems again this year for the target group, and these situational and psycho-social factors were often associated with relapse. There doesn't seem to be an end in sight.

There was high-risk benzodiazepine use amongst the younger age group and earlier involvement in the criminal justice system. Drug use and offending, and drug debt and intimidation were on the increase. More psychological interventions were needed for drug-induced psychosis, overdose and self-harm amongst 12-21 year olds.

Quantitative Information:

44 young people were supported on a 1:1 basis

5 different groups were offered to participants.

Drop-in group (60 male and female participants over 42 weeks)

10 week abstinence and relapse prevention programme rolled out with Saor Project with 10 participants

10 week abstinence and relapse prevention programme rolled out with Wytec 6 participants on and off

4 week abstinence and relapse prevention programme rolled out with participants involved in the Criminal Justice System 4 participants on and off

Education & Prevention in Youthreach with Leaving Cert 1 & 2's on a weekly basis over the year 15 participants weekly

5 week Active Health and Drugs Education programme rolled out with 6 participants of the Traveller Community in conjunction Emma McGuire Traveller Womens Project

Acupuncture and Meditation offered to a group of young men in McGwire House Mens Hostel for 6 weeks, 10 participants

40 Family members made contact with the project and were supported individually and referred to Family Support Services.

Volunteers & Community Involvement:

2 Volunteers were involved with the project overall on a weekly basis over 42 weeks. Both of these volunteers supported the delivery of the group-work sessions. Assistance was provided by volunteers in relation to IT skills and other administration needs.

Highlight for 2014:

The project worker supported a group of young people to participate in a day trip to Mount Melleray and Glensallagh in Cappoquin, Co. Waterford for a hike in partnership with the Saor project.

Inner City Community Youth Project

In 2015 42 young people engaged with the project on a weekly basis supported by a staff team of 6 volunteers. This year, older and previous members of the project became active in meeting an identified need for young members of their community by supervising and supporting the running of homework clubs for 16 children on a weekly basis giving those volunteering an opportunity to develop their own skills and for local children, the opportunity to take part in positive community based educational and youth work supports

Members engaged in a number of age appropriate programmes reflecting the identified needs of each group; highlights include intergenerational programme, team building and life skills development, Youthbank youth entrepreneur programme, positive mental health workshop training and a comprehensive summer programme.

The group work process ran in parallel to a number of special interest programmes and activities available to all young people from the catchment area, activity based clubs included arts and crafts, sports and cookery and fitness programme. 10 members took part in an intergenerational project in collaboration with St Bridget's Family and Community Resource Centre. The project applied to Waterford City and County Art Grants and were successful. The Intergenerational project took part in a programme to write and act in their own play based on their life experiences, which was performed in Wyse park as part of the 2015 Harvest Festival. The group have recently received a grant from the Community Foundation of Ireland to host a street party in our community which will be their next piece of work together.

As co-facilitator of Waterford Youthbank the project has supported the committee in two grant rounds funding 9 local groups and project throughout the city and county. The group have continued a strong partnership with Waterford Local Enterprise office to promote and support youth entrepreneurship within local youth groups. Our Co-Facilitator Sarah Dempsey was nominated by the group for a Waterford Youth Committee Youth Award and won the overall prize for her commitment and dedication giving up her own time to ensure the success of Waterford Youthbank both locally and nationally.

All programmes delivered during 2015 aimed to encourage a level of trust and belonging among service users. Encouraging a level responsibility for programme planning and evaluating which ensured input into the development of the project enabling staff to put in place age appropriate responses to issues and concerns identified and/or vocalised by participants.

Direct contact during 2015 was 1.5 hours to a maximum of 5.5 hours per week. On average each young person was in contact with the project for 4 hours per week. Overall the project has been successful in maintaining a service for young people under difficult financial constraints with the support and commitment of the staff team, young people and the advisory committee whose dedication to the project ensured positive direction and support.

Millennium Community Youth Project

Throughout 2015 the Millennium community youth project engaged 40 Young people through core group work, education support and special interest programmes. 2015 was spent building the project and recruiting unattached young people from the community. Outreach was a key priority for the project for the period of 2015. The focus for the project was to build on member involvement, create positive relationships with new members and maintain young people's involvement with the project.

Throughout the year the Project engaged 40 young people, aged 10-21 years, in developmental group work for 2 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year. Groups included 3 male groups, 1 female group and 1 mixed gender group. Group 1: Males aged 10-11 years, Group 2: Males aged 10-12 years, Group 3: Males 12-14 years and Group 4: Females aged 11-13years.

YELL homework: 16 young people mixed gender (Mon-Thurs for 5th and 6th class from the local schools). During 2015 the project continued to complete outreach for young people aged 16 plus but this proved a disappointing result.

Developmental programmes with core groups include Team Building, Bullying, Mental Health, Healthy Basic life skills e.g. Cooking, Decisional Making, Intrapersonal Skills programmes.

In addition to their core group work young people had an opportunity to avail of 1:1 work, Informal Drop In and Peer Support to receive support from the leader team.

Mid – term activity programmes took place catering for all core groups. Activities included outdoor pursuits, additional drops –in's, team challenge, sports, cooking and other day trips based on interest. An 8 week summer programme took place between July – August catering for all young people. This included day trips, residential, Special interest programmes, Inter project Soccer and additional Games room time. Christmas, Easter and Halloween themed programmes ran within the designated months. At Christmas groups focused on reviewing the year with the young people and celebrating their achievements.

YELL homework support continued to offer 16 young people with a safe space and supportive environment for them to complete their homework.

A challenge for the project in 2015 was the staff change over. In June 2015 the newly recruited staff member received a job offer elsewhere in the WSTCYS organisation and left the position. June and July was overseen by a temporary worker and 2 dedicated volunteers and in late August the project recruited a new full time staff member. The change over in the staffing proved difficult for the young people and on-going, trusting and positive relationships were broken. Going forward with the project the new staff member will continue to create, build and maintain positive relationships with existing members and unattached young people.

In 2015 the Millennium Project recruited 4 volunteers. All volunteers completed an extensive 6 weeks Induction Training including the Code of Behaviour and Child Protection Training. Project also had 3 student placements from the Waterford Institute of Technology and the Waterford College of Further Education. Throughout the summer months there was a huge commitment from 2 long term volunteers during the process of the staff change over.

North Suburbs Community Youth Project

The North Suburbs Community Youth Project completed its 8th year in 2015 and engaged 100 young people. At the year end, there were 94 consistent members. The Project worked directly with nine target groups: Four girls/ young women's groups and five groups for boys/ young men. Groups met on a weekly basis for 2 hour slots with 36 - 38 weekly sessions per annum. Increased contact time was provided through Special interest Programmes providing 8 – 10 extra contact hours per week. The Project worked mainly through the medium of **group work**. Groups met at least once a week with the opportunity to participate 3 – 4 times per week.

All young people were included in the quarterly planning of their specific programmes. Programmes were broken into: recreational & activity based programmes, interest & educational based programmes and issue/topic based programmes. Special interest activities included 3 craft programmes, gardening, late night soccer, a photography programme, CV development and interview skills, DVD nights, 2 drops – in's and 4 residential trips. A 6 week social and recreational programme was supported by Waterford Sports partnership consisting of sessions on listening skills, healthy eating, coping skills, peer pressure, smoking and interculturalism. Participants on this programme were rewarded with recreational activities including martial arts, pitch n putt, Dodge ball and boxing. Other Health and Fitness programmes included: a walking group, a one week FAI soccer camp, late night soccer, a 5 week Muay Thai martial arts programme, a boxing programme, 2 yoga programmes, Hiit and weight training (aged 16+), 2 x 6 week 'Fitness for teenage girls programmes including gym sessions, aqua aerobics, zumba, step aerobics and athletics. The Project also participated in national bike week and the annual team challenge. Several members attended an Ireland game and 2 Waterford united matches. Two mid-term programmes occurred with a highlight being a sponsored trip by Irish rail to Dublin zoo. Substance misuse sessions continued to be carried out by the substance misuse team. 3 members attended the Comhairle na Nog AGM in October. The summer programme took place over a period of 7.5 weeks. Highlights included funded trips under the National recreation week programme namely Kennedy Park and the Mahon falls. To utilise shared resources and skills over the summer months and to deliver a more inclusive, cost effective programme a number of joint activities occurred including a soccer blitz, 4 games sessions, a 5 week Pitch n Putt programme and a running group.

Important highlights from 2015 include one long term project member/volunteer receiving Waterford Voluntary Youth Council 'Positive role model' category. 2015 also saw 3 current Project members and 2 past members transitioning into a volunteer role providing additional support for the Project and progression for the young people.

In terms of funding and fundraising, 2015 was a very successful year for the Project raising approximately €5500 in additional funds. The Project also secured funding through Waterford Area Partnership to produce professional flyers usable for outreach and overall project promotion. Outreach for the project was on going and included 4 school outreach sessions.

The project maintained its high level of community involvement with 11 volunteers. 5 of these volunteers have been committed to the Project 7+ years. Training opportunities accessed included; Creative Tools for Development Education , Safe Talk, Child Protection Training, Occupational First Aid re - certificate ,Reflective Practice, HSE Skills for managing challenge, TUSLA Meitheal training and Squashy Couch Train the Trainer – Sexual Health education. On a National level in 2015, the Community Youth Worker completed the National Youth Council of Ireland monitoring and evaluation in Child Protection Training, attended an ISPCC seminar in Mental Health, the DCYA Value for money briefing seminar and attended a 2 day conference 'Youth on the Move' at NUI Maynooth.

The project continues its relationship with Tesco Food cloud to utilise left over food within the Project.

In the latter quarter of 2015, several meetings took place with regard to the use of additional space within the newly opened Carrickphierish Campus. The project relishes this opportunity and looks forward to what 2016 brings in the area.

Shy Project

The Shy Project went through a number of significant changes and developments in 2015. A number of long term groups came to a natural end, one of our longest serving volunteers passed away suddenly and the two core staff members who have a combined involvement of over 43 years moved on to other positions within the youth service. Young people and volunteers continued to be at the heart of the project and strengthened the projects place in the heart of the community. It was a difficult year for families and one of the keys issues impacting on people was the on-going struggle with mental health and the lack of services for young people under the age of eighteen. Young people and volunteers retained their clear sense of ownership and high regard for the project and their experiences and this shone through in their participation in and outcomes of the NQSF process.

The project included 96 young people for the majority of the year with an additional 12 young girls included in the last quarter. The age range was from 10yrs to 21yrs. The work was carried out through 7 core groups (2 girl's groups, 3 boy's groups and 3 mixed groups) each young person had a minimum of two points of contact (4hrs) each week and a core group of 20 young people who experience higher risk were engaged for a minimum of 5 points of contact (7hrs) each week. In addition there were 2 one hour drop in times, 1 late night drop in/movie night, small group booking in times on Friday evenings and a range of seasonal programmes including an intensive and successful 7 week summer programme. There were 3 new Special Interest Programmes this year, a Chess Club (weekly) a Walking Group & Dodge Ball (out of school term programmes). One to one work was carried out with 5 young people on a needs basis and used to compliment on-going group work process. The 16+ Programme supported 15 young people with a variety of practical tasks to increase employability and or access to training.

The focus of the work was directed by young people and volunteers and was underpinned by a concerted effort to increase youth participation and solidify effective and trustworthy relationships amongst peers and with caring adults. The programme content varied but was based on the needs/interests of the young people and the stage of group development. The programme included; group games, team building, indoor hockey & soccer, relaxation nights, debates/discussions on Syria and the refugee crisis, water charges, same sex marriage and austerity, poetry & short story readings, come dine with me, window art, photo booth, cinema trips and laser blast. Each core group started with a dedicated circle time to support young people to learn how to identify & talk about feelings and how to give and receive support. Young people, volunteers and staff successfully gathered all evidence required for participation in the NQSF process and the external youth officer conducted an observation on practice, two focus groups with current and past members. The continuous improvement plan was created and an annual report submitted at the year end. The project facilitated and supported ease of access to the S.H.Y. Centre for a number of groups including; AA, GA, Tusla and various local community & sporting groups. The project staff also supported 22 young people to participate in the national consultation process for the development of the National Youth Strategy which was launched in October.

One of the biggest challenges this year was the damage caused when the project successfully secured funding to replace the old roof on the centre. The ensuing leak caused serious damage and essentially meant for the last quarter of the year priority had to be given to recovering the building including; getting rid of water, using dehumidifiers, replacing damaged furniture and re-painting the entire upstairs and some of the downstairs of the centre. There was also a series of anti-social incidents in the last quarter against the building and local residents. The project took the lead to respond effectively and worked closely with the youth justice workers, centre staff, local residents and the Gardai. The highlight was once again the Annual Christmas Show which was entirely planned, organised and compared by a core group of 14 young people.

The work of the project was supported by a dedicated team of 17 local adult volunteers, 4 young volunteers (17yrs – 19yrs) and 4 helpers (14yrs – 16yrs). The invaluable support and involvement of local people ensures that the project is truly community based and sustainable long term. Their passion, commitment and loyalty is very much needed and appreciated.

Youth Information Service

In 2015, the Youth Information Service supported young people to develop the ability, skills confidence and knowledge to use and apply information to become active citizens and to fully participate in society.

A total of 8,732 information related tasks were undertaken by the staff of the Youth Information Service as a direct result of contact from enquirers during the last year. Out of this figure 7,422 were within the age category 15 to 21 – many queries were from repeat visitors or members of youth information youth groups. An overall total of 4,798 queries were dealt with in 2015 – an increase of almost 900 queries from young people, compared to 2014 totals. Top three categories were Education, Careers and Education & Employment. 1,357 young people were recorded under the heading of special services, which include secretarial services, photocopying, typing and CV preparation and supervised public Internet Access.

Over 1,074 young people had queries around youthwork. These included access to supports and information and advocating on their behalf to secure follow up interventions. These numbers show an almost 50% of an increase over last year in this category. This increase in engagement with the youthwork process demonstrates the re-focussed and strengthened approach of staff and volunteers to nuance a Youth-Work approach to Youth Information. Many of these queries resulted in volunteer placement and improved integration between the Youth Information Service and the wider range of youth projects of the WSTCYS. Higher numbers engaging with the YICs resulted in increased use of support services and supports.

The YICs set up and supported a Peer Information Research Group to investigate the information needs of young people around issues affecting them, including the impact of Cyberbullying. A Coding & Web design Programme with young people, research by this group contributed to the SCREENAGERS International Research Project carried out by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). There is a quote from the co-ordinator in the summary of research printed in late 2015. A new LGBT group was established Dungarvan for the first time. A weekly drop-in, facilitated by the YIC staff has enabled the LGBT Group to meet together in a safe and supportive environment. A First Steps Employability Programme was delivered to six unemployed young people during the summer, to prepare young people to take the next step to changing their own futures. Two young people from this group are now in full-time employment and one has taken up a training course.

All YICs were officially approved as Eurodesk Information Points in 2015. They were presented with banners and quality labels for each centre. The co-ordinator was chosen represented the National Network of 23 Youth Information Centres on the Eurodesk Co-ordination Committee, a National Structure in partnership with DCYA and Leargas.

Waterford Youth Information Centre

European Youth Week

To celebrate European Youth Week (EYE) 2015, young people produced a video with the support of YIC Waterford. The video is a sample showcase of the talent of some local musicians who took part in drop-in “Sessions at the Centre” in the Waterford Youth Centre premises and who took part in the process of unlocking their potential through music. The video includes original songs and one cover. To produce the video, no professional equipment was used: it was filmed using a simple Canon camera and sound was recorded and edited using free software. The aim of the video is to show young people from around Europe that music and the way young people embrace it as a form of expression is a universal theme and is something that can be used to share experiences between young people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Clonmel Youth Information Centre held an inter-schools table quiz for Transition Year students from three local secondary schools, and an open photography competition. Positive outcomes of these events were bringing together the schools in a safe youth friendly environment, to promote and encourage engagement and use of services within the youth information centre.

Travel and direct support structures for the regional centres in Clonmel and Dungarvan was restricted due to budget constraints. Travel cuts resulted in face to face support and training being limited to one day per month to Dungarvan YIC and one day per month to Clonmel YIC. Staff training and support suffered due to financial restrictions. In the face of these difficulties staff in all centres organised bag packs and fundraising activities which saw staff members from all centres travel at their own expense to take part in fundraising, a clear example of the dedication of staff to this service on how we did and always will rise to meet any challenges to our work with young people.

Volunteers participated in service delivery and development through participation in the Youth Information Advisory Group, which held quarterly meetings throughout the year and as active members of the Implementation Team of the NQSF.

2015 saw the Waterford Youth Information Service successfully complete the first phase of the National Quality Standards Framework Audit, supported by staff, volunteers and the ETB youth officer. Some very positive recommendations came out of the process we were very happy with the results.

The first apprenticeship series of workshops by the Dungarvan & Clonmel YICs were a huge success. Both workshops were delivered by the Senior Training Advisor with the ETB. The feedback from the students was very positive. Further workshops were requested by the CBS Dungarvan for 2016. Positive outcomes from an apprenticeship workshop - three students went on to acquire apprenticeships. All three students were members of the group who attended our Apprenticeship Workshop held in Clonmel YIC.

A new LGBT group was established Dungarvan for the first time. This group was established out of a need highlighted by the Dungarvan Youth Information Centre. A weekly drop-in, facilitated by YIC staff has enabled the LGBT Group to meet together in a safe and supportive environment.

Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre

Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre (WRAC) provides a unique, safe environment, located on Woodstown Strand, which enables the delivery of a range of personal and social developmental programmes for young People. Throughout 2015, Groups used the space and time afforded by the residential facilities of the centre to address a wide range of needs using Youth Work processes and methodologies, in order to deliver improvements in mental and physical well-being, social skills, and connections between young people and adults.

WRAC provided affordable residential facilities for groups and organisations who are making a real difference in the quality of the lives of young people and communities in the South East of Ireland. The usage details for 2015 were as follows:

- There were a total of 49 bookings, ranging from 1 to 3 nights, and concentrated in the months of June, July and August.
- 29 bookings were from internal WSTCYS Projects (19 Community Youth Projects, 4 Garda Diversion Projects and 6 Family Support Networks)
- 20 bookings came from external organisations (8 Youth organisations, 8 Scouting Groups, 2 local schools and 2 from Irish Basketball)
- 836 Young people used the Centre - 400 Young Men and 436 Young Women
- 43% of service users were in the age range from 10 – 14 years old, and 36% were in the range from 15 – 17 years old.

There were a number of Programmes run by the Community Youth Worker during the year, and these included:

- Self-Care Days for WSTCYS Volunteers and the Making Connections Group
- Youth Club Volunteers Leadership Weekend
- Hiking trips with the TYRE and AXIS Projects in the Comeragh Mountains
- Survival Days in the Mountains with the Inner City CYP and Clonmel Diversion Project

Highlights included:

- Increased numbers of young people used the Centre, from 558 Young People in 2014 to 836 in 2015 (up 50% year on year)
- Improvements to the physical environment for service users were put in place during summer 2015 (new attic insulation, new clothes dryer, internal and external painting and gardening, repair of stone walls, repairs and replacement of worn fixtures and fittings).

Challenges included:

- There was no youth worker based at the Centre until May, as the previous worker had left the post. An excellent CE worker helped out in early 2015 and throughout the year, but there were barriers as to how much could be achieved with the limited resources available.
- The flooding that hit in December 2015, and effectively wiped out the Centre, was quite catastrophic. Significant damage was done that has meant a complete refurbishment is needed.

Volunteers and Community Involvement

There has been only limited volunteer involvement at Woodstown in 2015, and while there is significant goodwill for the Woodstown Project in the area, there was limited community involvement also. This means that there is significant untapped potential for improvements in the future.

Woodstown occupies a special place in the hearts and minds of young people who have participated in WSTCYS Projects. Everyone seems to have only good memories of days and weekends spent by the beach, and the stories that are told of Woodstown have a deep resonance in the lives of young men and women. The flood has provided an opportunity to reflect, rebuild and reboot the WRAC, and make it better and more effective in its aim of delivering positive outcomes for the young people of Waterford and South Tipperary. Every cloud has a silver lining!

Ball Project

The B.A.L.L Project delivered a tailored response to the prevalent offences in the catchment area of Ballybeg, Larchville, Manor St. John and Lisduggan in the previous year. This also took into account emerging criminogenic needs of the participants with regards to the risk categories outlined in the YLS/CMI SV tool. The main offence categories were:

- Petty theft and the acceptance of same in the family home and lack of recognition of the consequences to the retailer/ business
- Assault and aggressive outbursts in the community and local school
- Substance misuse and hazardous use of alcohol impacting on motivation, financial strain and ability to self-preserve
- Opportunistic burglary due to impulsive tendencies and the influence of others

The project engaged a total of 39 young people aged 12 – 18 years during 2015. Of these, 24 were primary participants and 15 were secondary. A total of 6 referrals were received last year, 3 primary and 3 secondary. The young people scored between 4 and 6 on the YLS/CMI SV tool and were deemed suitable participants to engage by the Referral Assessment Committee. 12 young people completed their interventions with the Project, of whom 7 were primary participants. Young people participated through 4 core group sessions, 2 special interest programmes, 2 x 2:2 sessions and varied 1:1 points of contact on a weekly basis throughout the year with additional seasonal programmes at midterm, Easter, during the summer months and at the year end.

Effective networking with relevant agencies and families contributed to set outcomes being achieved. Interventions used included Family Work, Blended Learning Programmes, Sports and Team Games/Challenges, Developmental Group Work (*Crime Awareness, Drugs/ Alcohol Awareness & Education, Personal Development, Anger management*), Mentoring and One to One work, Education/ Training and School support and cooking/ independence skills. Evidence of progress was captured through the following methods:

- Reported improvements of communication and behaviour in the family home.
- Positive community feedback about the Project participants via community based workers, local sporting groups, peers, schools, local businesses and residents.
- Observations by staff and volunteers with regards to noticeable improvements in behaviour and attitude modification.
- The young people themselves identifying positive changes in their lives through their participation in the project.

Highlights for the Project in 2015 were:

- The progression of young people reaching adulthood and moving on into third level education, employment and apprenticeship.
- 4 young men sat and achieved their Junior Certificate and 2 their Leaving Certificate.
- Of the 39 young people, 12 disengaged having effectively completed interventions. 22 continued with the interventions of the Project through 2015 and into 2016. Of these 22 only 3 received a caution for minor offences.
- Relationships continued to progress between staff and young people through positive experiences and memories made during seasonal pro-social activities which included bog hopping, mountain biking, Dunmore East Adventure Centre and SUPing which also proved successful in addressing behavioural and attitude modification, risk taking and positive reinforcement.

Challenges for the Project in 2015 were:

- 2 young people transitioning into care with incomplete interventions and supporting that transition.
- The varied needs of the young people being beyond the remit and capability of the project coupled with their unwillingness to engage with appropriate services was also challenging and in 2 cases led to young men being detained in Oberstown. In both cases the care needs were not being met in the family home and there was chronic substance misuse and mental health issues.
- 3 suspensions in school and training centres due to cannabis use and behavioural issues occurred in late 2015. There is a concern for these young men with regards to running up drug debt and what may be expected of them in return.

6 local volunteers, 2 students and a local CE worker were instrumental in providing a community led response in which the young people had increased access to pro-social relationships within their locality. Relationships continued to progress between staff and young people through positive experiences and memories made during seasonal pro-social activities which included bog hopping, mountain biking, Dunmore East Adventure Centre and SUPing which also proved successful in addressing behavioural and attitude modification, risk taking and positive reinforcement.

Clonmel Youth Diversion (C.Y.D.) Project

The CYD Project was established in 2001. The project is based in the Wilderness Youth and Community Centre and St Oliver's Community Complex in Elm Park. Referrals are accepted from across the whole of Clonmel. During 2015 the Project supported 54 young people as some were disengaged and new referrals accepted.

The projects focus was on work with young people who had received cautions in line with IYJS guidelines. Young people received additional support in the areas of educational support, training and improving employability prospects. The Project endeavoured to provide a holistic service to young people in the Communities while challenging anti-social and negative attitudes. The project worked towards greater social inclusion in the Communities through outreach work with members of the Travelling Communities.

Primary referrals at the end of last Quarter of 2015. (young people who have received a JLO caution)		29 9 females 20 males
Secondary referrals at the end of last Quarter of 2015 (young people identified as being at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour).		25 7 females 18 males
Groups / One to One participants.		
Wilderness boys Group	Age 13-15	6
Younger boys group mixed	Age 12-14	6
Wilderness Young women's Group	Age 14-16	6
Traveller young men's Group.	Age 12-16	6
Traveller Girls Group.	Age 15-18	6
Monday night Soccer	Age 13-15	14
Elm Park younger boys	Age 12-17	6
One to one referrals. (4 females were referred for one to One intervention only.)	Age 13-15	
	Age 12-17	10

Group/Programme work during 2015

Young people received support in the following areas; early school leaving, job applications, information and applications to further training courses, C.V and interview preparation. Programme work (from the IYJS work plan 2015) Focus was placed on developing empathy with young people and the identification and provision of pro social activities and protective factors in young people lives. The Project addressed on-going issues in young people's lives which relate to alcohol misuse, myths about the dangers of cannabis and the dangers of social media. Crime awareness was addressed through worksheets, discussions and issue based programmes. Sections of the Copping On crime prevention programme centred on addressing young women's involvement in theft, fighting and aggression.

One to one supports

One to one support was provided to young people who presented with issues which were not suitable to being addressed in the group setting. 10 young people received on-going supports. Contact time was divided between issue based work and socially based activities to enhance personal development and address and challenge young people's attitudes towards their community. Life skills developed with young people centred on socialization, getting work ready, practical skills included theory test preparation, cookery, gardening and utilising local amenities as leisure activities.

Voluntary and Community involvement during 2015

Members of the Wilderness F.C supported soccer for young people in the communities, a tournament was held in the summer months. Six members of Clonmel Communities volunteered with various groups and had involvement with events throughout 2015. During the summer project participants interacted with members of Cahir Youth Club in joint initiatives.

D.A.Y. Project

The Day Project was staffed by one worker from April to September when a second worker was appointed to the vacant post. Over the course of 2015 the project worked with young people to tackle the most prevalent offending behaviours. The most common of these offences were public order, assault and the purchasing and consuming of alcohol. The official crime statistics provided by An Garda Síochána show a decrease in these specific offences at the end of 2015. The project worked with young people on a number of initiatives including special interest programmes and personal development programmes in addition to educational and social initiatives. 2015 was a year of great change and development for the DAY Project as participation levels increased and the project gained in both momentum and size.

Quantitative Information

Over the course of 2015 the project worked with a total of 52 young people, 24 female and 28 male.

A detailed breakdown of the age categories are provided below:

Age	Female	Male
12-14	11	13
15-17	5	9
18-20	8	6

The medium of smaller groups and 1:1 work allowed for tailored case management in 2015 and the project operated largely on a 1:1 and 2:1 basis. A number of young people did engage in 6 small core groups as follows:

- Older girls group with 7 participants aged 17-18
- Boys group with 4 participants aged 12-13
- Girls Group with 4 participants aged 12-13
- Traveller Boys group with 3 participants
- Older mixed group with 4 participants
- Junior Boys group with 4 participants aged 12

The remainder of the contact hours was spent on special interest programmes, 1:1 and 2:1 contact hours in addition to seasonal activities such as summer programmes, mid-term activities and community events.

Highlight of 2015

Mental Health week offered the highlight of 2015 for the DAY project as it incorporated many of the facets of youth work in terms of community involvements, relationship building and interagency work. The Project organised a number of events organised in conjunction with the CBDI and CYP. These events included a coffee and self-care morning which encouraged parents and local community members to reconnect with their neighbours and get chatting over a coffee, cake and even a manicure. The centre team also organised a community walk which was decorated with positive thoughts and messages for those taking part in the route. These events were widely attended by community members, young people and agencies such as Youthreach, Carriglea, CBDI, DAY project and CYP staff, volunteers and participants. This series of events marked a turning point for the DAY project as record numbers of participants and parents took part.

Challenges 2015

The project once again met the challenge of staff transition in 2015 which resulted in the project working with 1 youth justice worker for six months of the year. This transition occurred at a time of great change when the project was starting to rejuvenate and expand. The staff in the DAY project look forward to a fruitful 2016.

Volunteers and Community involvement

The day project had 5 regular volunteers who worked with groups throughout 2015 in addition to 10-15 reliable volunteers who were available for once off events and activities. This year the DAY Project took part in a number of community events in addition to the Mental Health awareness initiatives mentioned previously. Project participants took part in the Annual Triona Foley Fun Day in June 2015. The annual fun day is organised by a subcommittee and supported by the staff and young people of the Day Project and Dungarvan Community Youth Centre. The fun day offered young people an opportunity to give back to their community and get involved in the planning and facilitation of events and activities for neighbours, friends and family members.

In collaboration with the CYP the DAY project took part in the Annual Trolley Dash, this food appeal encourages young people to get involved in collecting non-perishable goods for St. Vincent De Paul over a 2 night period, over 40 families received food hampers as a result of this collection.

Additionally in response to an identified community need the volunteers and young people from the DAY Project took part in a community remembrance ceremony to remember all the loved ones that were lost during 2015 allowing the project to end the year in reflection and celebration with community members.

Edge Project

The EDGE Garda Youth Diversion Project is based in Carrick on Suir and engages with young people in the Carrick on Suir Garda District. However, the majority of referrals received were from Carrick on Suir town itself. 2015 was an extremely productive and exciting year for the Project with many highlights achieved and challenges faced. The Project engaged with 39 young people – 25 males and 14 females—aged 12-18 years. Participants engaged in group work throughout the year.

Group work continued to be a key intervention type with positive growth and development evident in all groups and individuals. New initiatives were set up and embraced by participants. The Project endeavoured to provide participants with needs based interventions that focused on diverting young people from criminal / anti-social behaviours through the provision of suitable activities and programmes designed and delivered to challenge behaviours, encourage and promote positive change, facilitate personal development and promote civic responsibility. There were 6 core groups engaged with in 2015. Each group received 3-4.5 hours of group work per week. Participants also engaged in additional points of contact and special interest programmes.

Examples of programmes and activities participants engaged in are: Alcohol & Drug Awareness, School Holiday Programmes, Personal Development, Residentials, Inter-project activities, Drop in, Community projects, Inter-project competitions, Outdoor Education, Crafts, Swim/gym, Late Night Soccer Leagues, Junior Leadership Programme, Supporting school attendance, exams and future ambitions, Information re alternative education and training options for ESLs. Group work was complimented by one to one work and parental contact and support. On average during term time the Project provided 21 hours of contact time per week. This was increased during school holiday programmes.

Highlights for the Project in 2015 were:

- 34 of 39 Project participants did not receive a caution last year. No secondary target group participants became primary in 2015.
- The Project entered the Dulux Lets Colour Competition. It involved participants coming together to plan and make a video entry to explain why the Project would like to win paint for our centre – ‘help us bring our inside out!’ The response we got from participants and the people of Carrick on Suir and its surrounds was completely unexpected. In the end, we came second by 50 votes, with over 8,600 votes. As we came in the top 3 we won the top prize. This was an incredible achievement for a GYDP based in a small town.
- Special Interest Programmes (additional contact) were a strong point of intervention in 2015.
- School holiday programmes were successful with 35 participants engaged meaningfully.
- In 2015, the Project also worked at raising the profile of the Project in the community through work such as Primary School Programmes, Transitions Programmes, Open Days, Information Evenings and Community Days.
- In 2015, emphasis was placed on the development of a sense of civic responsibility in participants as a result of key issues relating to anti-social behaviours in the town throughout 2014. Staff felt that if we could engage young people in positive activity that would raise their awareness of the ‘bigger picture’ in their own community and for their fellow community members, then they would be more pro social in their interactions with the community, its members and facilities. These activities included: Pink Party in aid of Breast Cancer – 6 young women and their families; SOLAS Run in aid of Cancer Care in the Community – 6 participants; Fundraising for the Project – 14 participants; Community Days – 5 areas, 82 young people, and 11 participants.
- The input and presence of local Gardai in the Project is consistently a positive intervention for all aspects of Project work. Our local Gardai also took key roles in the delivery of interventions to participants and supported staff in programmes and activities such as: Drug Awareness, Alcohol Awareness, Fundraising, Information Evenings for parents and community members, Open Days, Pink Party, Christmas Party. This encouraged the development of positive relations between young people and Gardai. It resulted in the breaking down of some tensions and pro criminal attitudes and behaviours towards Gardai.

- A key piece of work for the Project in 2015 was to raise awareness of Mental Health in participants – how to be mentally healthy, how to identify when additional support is required, what supports are available both informal and formal.

Challenges for the Project in 2015:

- Drug and Alcohol Misuse – this issue continues to be of concern for staff for Project participants. It is evident in the discussion with young people that this is a regular behaviour for many young people in the town and it is a challenge for young people to deal with the associated pressures.
- Mental Health- in many cases the Project has become the first point of contact for participants re this issue – whether it is personal experience or that of another. Young people are struggling to understand this issue.
- There continues to be a reduced Garda presence due to funding/resources resulting in undetected youth crime levels appearing to be high. This has the added impact of a reduction in primary referrals throughout 2015.
- The death of a past participant and the impact that this had on young people in the Project, their families and the centre staff team.

Volunteer and Community Involvement:

In 2015, the Project engaged with 4 volunteers, 2 WIT student placements and 2 junior leaders.

P.A.C.T. Youth Diversion Project

The PACT project operated during 2015 with the support of 10 volunteers and 4 students. The past year has been very positive for the project with staff engaging a total of 54 participants between 12 and 18 years of age who were engaged in a variety of activities. The breakdown ratio of Primary to Secondary participants throughout the year was 17:37. During 2015 the project received 16 new referrals, 6 were Primary referrals and 10 were Secondary referrals. Staff and volunteers worked to design and engage young people in interventions which aimed to reduce risk and increase each participant's ability to demonstrate behavioural change.

Disengagements during 2015

4 Primary referrals and 6 Secondary referrals were disengaged with the following outcomes: 1 is currently attending secondary school to repeat the leaving certificate examination. 2 young people were brief interventions whom had no further contact with staff or the JLO. A further 2 due to no longer requiring the support of the project who are currently engaging in Youthreach to study LCAP and continuing to attend second level education. Unfortunately 1 young person was unwilling to engage with the ethos of the project or to change their behaviours. 1 young person was moved to a high support unit in Galway and 3 young people were no longer willing to continue engaging with the project and were unwilling to explain why.

All participants by year end were still engaged in education or training. 1 secondary participant transferred to the Primary target group. The Project staff collaborated effectively with other stakeholders and agencies to meet the needs of participants, families and the wider community. This could be noted especially with the local School Completion Programme, Tusla and the Treo Project.

Highlights for the Project in 2015 were:

- A total of 54 participants engaged in interventions in 2015 enabling them to access the Project 2-3 times weekly in order to receive support, address issues of need or risk and reflect on behavioural issues.
- 1 completed the Leaving Cert and 9 completed the Junior Cert
- 9 groups, a total of 37 young people participated in the Mini Company Enterprise Programme
- 17 young people participated in the Gaisce Awards with 9 completing the Bronze and 5 completing the Silver. 2 are still working on completing the Bronze and Gold award.
6 young people completed Manual Handling
12 young people completed Occupational First Aid
9 young people participated in the Disengaging Programme.

Challenges for the Project in 2015 were:

- Identifying and targeting those most at risk
- Challenging young people's behavioural, attitudinal issues and impulsive nature
- Challenging normalised Drug Use
- Maintaining young people's engagement in Education or Training and retention
- Recruit, maintain, develop and support volunteers.
- Generating and sourcing funding.

The project worked with 54 young people during the year and used a variety of approaches and methodologies. However the ethos of restorative practice within the Project remains the focus of both staff and volunteers and has shown to be an effective tool in working with participants and the wider community. There has been a noted increase in Public order and drinking by Gardaí and there have been a number of complaints by local residents. To combat this, local Gardaí have maintained a visible presence in the area at times when young people gather. The project responded to and targeted offending individuals and those at risk within the Ferrybank and Inner City communities with positive outcomes. All participants engaged with the project at year end were in education or training, therefore improving their long-term outcomes. Staff noted changes, reduced impulsivity, increased pro social skills and improved empathy. Young people presented readily to the project to develop their Curriculum Vitaes and engaged positively with programmes designed to enhance personal development and career opportunities.

SWAY Project

This year both existing staff members left their roles and new members of staff took up the Youth Justice Worker positions within the project. As such, 2015 was a year of endings, beginnings and managing change, while at the same time maintaining a consistent and approachable service for the young people of the SWAY Project. The new workers built up a network of community and professional supports to help them meet the needs of the young people in their community. Staff drew upon professional observations and the local knowledge of a number of stakeholders in order to carry out accurate needs assessments of current participants and new referrals and gathered information by a number of methods, including:

- Initial meetings with young person and parent/carer
- 1:1 sessions with young person
- Meetings and phone contact with parents/carers
- Discussion with local school principals, HSCL Officers and School Completion Officers
- Liaising with HSE Social Work Department where relevant
- Discussion with Community Youth Workers and Community Drugs Workers in the area
- Meeting with local residents affected by anti-social behaviour
- Information provided by volunteers and persons in the community
- Completion of YLS/CMI SV and YLS/CMI 2.0

The SWAY Project engaged a total of 55 participants for the period. There were 37 male and 18 female participants, all between 12 and 18 years of age. The project commenced interventions with 11 new participants during the year and 29 young people in total were disengaged. At the end of December there were 25 young people actively engaged in the project.

Core group work was delivered to 7 weekly core groups during. Almost all groups contained a mix of both primary and secondary participants and groups were formed around young people's age and level of risk/need. A total of 42 young people engaged in group work. In addition to this, one to one work was accessed by 24 young people during the year.

Programmes delivered across groups included Drugs and Alcohol Awareness, Education Support, Crime Awareness, Special Interest programmes as well as a very active Summer Programme, with outcomes for young people such as:

- Improved communication and listening skills
- Increased capacity to explore and address problematic behaviours
- Increased empathic skills/Increased sophistication of emotional language
- Reduced Impulsivity
- Increased pro-social behaviour
- Increased opportunities to explore and address issues with supportive adults
- Increased capacity to self-regulate behaviour
- Increased motivation to change

In one to one work, although the issues explored were specific to each individual, some common themes were:

- Contact with Gardai and addressing the behavioural aspects of offences
- School behaviour and attendance issues
- Mental health issues
- Family issues
- Peer Influence and its impact on offending behaviour
- Increasing employability – CV making and exploring training and education opportunities
- Exploring talents and interests

A highlight for the project was the successful engagement of a number of new participants who have been engaged in anti-social behaviour around the SHY Centre and around the local area over a number of months. This piece of work has a long term goal of reducing behaviours that are likely to put them in contact with the youth justice system, but also for the young people to feel they have moved from a position of being 'outsider' to 'insider', being supported by the project and feeling more connected to the community in which they live.

A challenge for our project has been associated with staff turnover. Both workers left this year, and two new workers began in the project in May and October. While the majority of participants have remained engaged through these changes, a number have disengaged. In this regard, a challenge has been retaining a sense of familiarity for participants in their core groups, while at the same time building new relationships between workers and young people.

The Project experienced a drop in the level of volunteer and community involvement during this period. Some volunteers have remained on with the project through the staff changes, while some have not. A priority for 2016 is to increase the number of volunteers supporting the work of the project, and it is hoped that this task will become easier as the new workers become more established in the community.

TYRE Project

The T.Y.R.E Project was established in February 2008. It operates from Tramore Community Care Centre on Pond Road, Tramore and works primarily with young people aged 12-18 that have come into contact with the Gardaí. The Gardaí and local authorities have been extremely supportive with the project and since the initial emergence of the project in 2008, it has grown quite dramatically.

The project at the end of 2015 had 45 young people engaged. 36 young men and 9 young women engaged regularly throughout the year within the centre or through outreach and on a family support basis. Throughout the year a high emphasis was placed on identifying risk factors of the young people and facilitating individual interventions through group work, special interest groups and one to one work.

The project consistently engaged 6 groups each week which included 5 boys groups and 1 girls group.

Boys Groups:

There were 5 boys groups ranging from the ages 12- 18years. Many of the programmes were needs led and often crisis driven with both primary and secondary referrals engaging throughout the groups. The groups consistently engaged weekly for between 1.5 and 2.5 hours. The needs of the groups were focused. Some programmes during the year included peer pressure, substance misuse, relationships, pro social attitudes, decision making, criminal and anti-social behaviour. There were a number of programmes that had very valuable outcomes throughout the year, these included understanding my crime programme, cooking programme, self-awareness behavioural workshops, community programmes and the summer programme.

Girls Group:

One girls group engaged throughout 2015. This younger girls group consisted of 5 girls aged between 13-15. Of these 5 girls, two are primary referrals and 3 are secondary referrals.

Some of the main concerns and issues that came up for these girls throughout the year was conflict resolution, relationships, peer education, sexual health, school support, self-worth as well as their anti-social behaviour.

Highlights

There were a number of highlights during the year for the project. The highlights below gives a small account of what stood out for the project in 2015.

- 42 young people were awarded with a wide range of community led, personal and professional and recreation based certificates and achievements during our Awards Night in December 2015.
- 530 young people in 5th and 6th class, as well as 320 1st year students were facilitated in conjunction with local Gardaí on issues of concern in 2015.
- 27 young people took part in Leisure and Recreation Activities during a robust Summer Programme.
- 11 young people aged 13 – 17 and 11 members of An Garda Síochana participated in a Community Soccer Match.
- 5 young people aged 15–17 years facilitated an Easter event in a high risk estate with 15 young people aged 6-12 years.
- 5 high risk young men participated in "Understanding My Crime Programme".

- A particular Success Story was two young men aged 16 that successfully completed their nationally accredited RLSS Pool Lifeguard course. Both have been in the Project since 2012 and had initially targeted this as a long term employability goal. Both passed the course with flying colours and it is hoped both young people will gain employment from this National Qualification.

Challenges

- Accessibility to drugs and psychoactive drugs over the internet: The internet has provided young people with an open market in which they can easily buy or sell illicit and psychoactive drugs. Through direct work with young people it is evident that they have significant insight into the hidden behaviour surrounding drug transactions over the internet. Young people were able to identify websites such as silkroad in which they could easily purchase illicit drugs.
- Incidents identified behind closed doors: It is known by workers that there are some incidents occurring in the Tramore area that are going unreported. The incidents are happening in homes and range from anti-social behaviour, drug use, intimidation and burglary. These are undetected crimes and therefore present a challenge to the workers who are trying to address them.

Volunteers and community involvement

The project is very lucky to have a C.E Worker. Niamh then Gavin devoted their time in supporting workers in developing, planning and assisting in programmes that were run. We would like to thank them for their enthusiasm and dedication to the project. In addition, there were 5 volunteers, 2 male and 3 females. Volunteers and CE Staff were certified in a number of courses throughout 2015 which included an Introduction to Psychotherapy and Counselling skills, Child Protection and Drug & Alcohol Training. The project was extremely involved within the community with engagement in Garda Soccer matches which helped build Garda relations within the project and young people. The Project also undertook Active Community Programmes for young people in high risk estates that help enhance young people's civic responsibilities. The project also facilitated parents programmes and schools programmes.

Cityside C.B.D.I.

Cityside CBDI continued to provide a range of services to the targeted areas of Waterford Inner-city, Ferrybank and the North West Suburbs. Current interventions take place in four centres: Edmund Rice Youth and Community Centre, Abbeylands Youth and Community Centre, Neighbourhood Office North West Suburbs, and during clinic hours of methadone clinic Thursday afternoon. The project has provided an accessible, non-judgmental and responsive service which aims to meet the needs of individuals and families affected by substance misuse and related issues.

During 2015 the project provided one-to-one support for 79 individuals 16 of which were concerned persons. The majority of those who engaged in individual support were over 25. Auricular acupuncture was provided for 68 individuals either on an individual or group setting through clinics. Primarily drug education and information was provided on a one to one level with at risk and actively using service users. In addition to this drug education was provided to young people at risk of drug use through education and awareness programmes and wider community initiatives detailed below.

Programmes

Cityside continued to provide a consistent non-judgemental flexible one to one service providing support, advocacy, information and referrals to relevant services. This was carried out with individuals engaged in or at risk of substance misuse and families affected. Interventions are carried out in one to one sessions, through brief intervention in the methadone clinic through information provision and access to holistic therapies.

Through this work service users demonstrated a greater understanding of the triggers of their drug use with increased awareness of the effects misuse has on themselves and others exploring the options available to them and how to make safer choices. As a result of engaging with this service, through assessment and planning individuals progressed on to other services appropriate to their needs with a better ability to engage with these services. The workers engagement with service users at the methadone clinic has improved the transition for those accessing the clinic to wider community services particularly when service users have progressed to GP methadone provision and continued to engage with worker outside of methadone clinic. The provision of needle syringe programme was undertaken when present at substance misuse service for methadone clinic weekly where the worker provides for the interventions when needed.

Acupuncture was provided in a variety of settings: one to one support meetings, at the methadone clinic, open community acupuncture clinics, service user group clinic, Brooke house aftercare group and with Ucasadh. Acupuncture has become for some an established as part of their recovery routine. Individuals attending this group have noted that is a safe environment for them and is supporting them in maintaining drug/alcohol free.

The worker continued to meet family members concerned and seeking support regarding substance misuse, on a one to one level and in a group setting. Work shops were carried out around creating safe boundaries building self-esteem, identifying needs/area of growth, and assertiveness. Members have been encouraged in the interest of self-care to build a coping skills tool kit. We have developed one for the group to share which holds reminders of positive coping skills and tools to use in periods of distress.

Family support members were encouraged and supported to attend outside workshops and respite facilitated by the family support network some of which included day trip, respite at Ballyvaloo Wexford, the Annual Family Support Conference, the Commemoration service and respite at Caldey Island.

An Education and Awareness event on substance misuse was delivered to the leaders of De La Salle Scouts. The evening was well attended and well received by the 15 leaders present. An education and awareness event was provided to a group of Venturers (aged 15-17). Drug information stall was held in City Square with the help of six volunteers forty one people filled out surveys on the day. Information session held for parents of the PACT project. Within the clinic the worker provided support and drug education in the delivery of the piloted naloxone programme.

Highlights or challenges:

A decriminalisation event was held in partnership with the Waterford City and county CBDI's the event was very successful with approximately 60 people attending with good feedback. The New IT system ECASS was introduced and the project continues to incorporate the use of the ECASS system into daily practice of recording.

Volunteers and community involvement: Cityside CBDI in collaboration with Waterford CBD delivered a six week Volunteer Induction Programme to twelve new volunteers who then supported the delivery of drug education programmes. Two volunteers continued to support the provision of auricular acupuncture clinics. Their dedication and support has been hugely beneficial in allowing the worker to provide more direct support work and co-ordination of clinics facilitating sustainable service delivery.

Clonmel C.B.D.I.

2015 was a successful year of operation for the CCBDI, support work for both family members affected by another person's use of drugs and support for users in recovery was a large focus of the work. 87 individual's accessed one to one support in 2015. Individual support contacts were made with 73 referrals to other services. The CCBDI maintained its community voluntary team to 4 people who are involved at a variety of levels within the delivery of the work. The volunteers received training according to their needs, which included Volunteer Induction Training, Drug Awareness, Child Protection and facilitation training.

Auricular Acupuncture.

On an individual bases in 2015, treatments took place using auricular acupuncture/Holistic Therapies. 42 peoples stress level were significantly decreased by the treatment it is also worth noting the importance of Mindfulness and meditation as many of those entering treatment have stated that they didn't know what it was and feel that they could have been more prepared for it. Also on discharge it is an element of the treatment that they find is missing. Following a focus group with service users they all felt that they have benefited from the combination of acupuncture and meditation. The feedback through the clinics was that individual level of stress was greatly reduced in people who attended and the relationships with local community members have continued to improve as a result of the interventions Clinics ran 2 days per week to accommodate service users outside of normal working times. The clinics are solely run by volunteers in the service.

Support Work

CCBDI offered support to people in the community who were affected by drug and alcohol use and for people who are seeking information about treatment. A total of 87 individual support contacts were made. The drugs worker continued to be involved in the Family Support Groups which were held weekly. 18 families were supported in a group setting and other families on a one to one basis which included referrals to other relevant agencies. A second family support group was established in Clonmel there are currently 6 members. There was increased motivation for service users to address issues relating to substance misuse with 12 individuals becoming or remaining abstinent throughout the year. Many service users also addressed associated issues such as housing, physical health, issues regarding children and progression routes to education and employment. Information on drugs and alcohol was provided to all service users during the year either formally or informally as part of the support offered. Individuals that had contact with the project reported that their state of mind had improved due to the work of the CBDI but also as a result of being referred to a service appropriate to the individual service user's needs.

Education and Awareness

CCBDI provided a number of Education and Awareness courses to the local communities in the area, in total 108 people engaged in Education and Awareness Programmes.

Parents and siblings of drug users gained awareness, knowledge and support needed to deal with their everyday situations and shared their experiences with others in similar situations. In general, they have improved their quality of life and the life of the family unit. Parents who participated in programmes gained increased knowledge and awareness in substance misuse and improved their skill and abilities in tackling issues arising within their family

Policy and procedures

2015 saw continuing change for the CCBDI with the implementation of the NDRIC Framework which saw a move to a more integrated and person centered approach to drug/Alcohol treatment pathways and also saw the implementation of the Community Reinforcement Approach to addiction which is an evidence based approach to Drug and Alcohol Treatment. The CBDI worker worked alongside the Outreach Services and The SMT Team to support the Methadone and NEX service. A very positive working relationship has been established. Acknowledgement by the local community of the work that the CBDI is doing is a key factor in assisting the Initiative to influencing local policy. The project worked on a range of programmes which have an implication for policy.

Project maintenance

Every effort was made in 2015 to continue the work of the project, to sustain the services that already exist and to respond to emerging needs in the community. The CCBDI has demonstrated that the level of education and support in the targeted areas within the budget constraints represents high value for money and reaches high numbers of families and young people deemed most at risk of involvement with substance misuse. All administration work for the initiative was completed and annual report and work plan submitted.

Co Waterford C.B.D.I. (East)

The project is well established now in the local community and would ideally like to expand the services to other areas in the region. However this remains a challenge due to the added workload in relation to NDRIC and eCass in particular. Ideally the project would like to have acupuncture clinics in other areas in the region and also set up a Family Support Group in Tramore. The work next year by the staff and volunteers will focus on this expansion of the service.

The acupuncture clinics continued to run in Tramore with the support of volunteers. Three new volunteers were recruited in 2015 bringing the total number of volunteers to 6. Next year the new volunteers will be trained in Acupuncture, Arm massage and Reiki.

While the project was faced with many issues and challenges, the worker endeavored to maintain a high level of service for individuals, families and the community when faced with substance misuse issues. The project engaged on a one to one basis with 34 individuals, 22 females and 12 males, 26.5% of individuals engaging were family members/ concerned persons. The age of the individuals accessing the project were as follows: 4 aged 15-17, 3 aged 18-21, 27 aged 25+.

The project provided 370 hours of community auricular acupuncture clinics. 53 individuals accessed acupuncture as a form of respite and stress relief in 2015.

The project supported the Methadone Clinic and the Needle Exchange two Fridays out of every month. The project worker provided 66 working hours in total to the HSE. Approximately 30 individuals accessed the Friday clinic of which the worker provided brief interventions, information and harm reduction for most of the individuals.

Changes and Developments:

- NDRIC has been implemented and is working well in relation to referrals to and from The Substance Misuse Team.
- Ecass training was provided and may work well when fully implemented in 2016 especially in the area of reporting and record keeping.
- CRA training was provided for other agencies in the community which will result in further use of the approach.
- The project received new IT equipment i.e. a new computer with more to follow i.e. an iPad.
- The project had 2 families availing of the new Family Therapy which is for adolescent drug users which is provided through Squashy Couch.
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) was provided for 1 service user through Brooke House Mental Health Services. This therapy is provided on a one to one basis and group format. It is an evidence based approach for working with individuals with Dual Diagnosis.

Challenges:

- The lack of free childcare facilities for women with children under 2 who wish to access the service continues to be a challenge.
- The expensive transport cost and lack of transport services for individuals wishing to avail of services from the SMT e.g. for counselling or other services only available in the city.
- The lack of services for young people accessing the project e.g. The Tyre covers Tramore only.
- The lack of free counselling services for young people e.g. Adolescent specific counselling and the timely waiting lists.

- The use of drugs bought on the internet and the lack of information available on them and their effect (short and long term).
- The lack of mental health services available to adolescents and adults in the community in relation to Dual Diagnosis.
- The reluctance of GPs to refer to the project although they have knowledge of the service available, they continue to refer to the SMT directly.
- The lack of availability of services for young people whose parents are misusing substances.
- The time consuming paperwork of NDRIC is challenging and restricts the provision of the service at times.
- Not all services are trained in NDRIC making it difficult to provide a streamlined multidisciplinary service in particular for service users who need case management.
- The lack of detox options continues to be a challenge with community detoxes not often being supported by GP's and many residential treatment centres not having a detox option.
- The Frontline worker position remaining unfilled for the latter part of the year.
- The Lub project worker position not being filled for the latter part of the year.

While the project had many challenges, it also has many strengths. It is well established in the local community and endeavours to continue to provide a professional and streamlined service to all who access it. It must be noted however that the work being done would not be possible without the consistent work of the volunteers. Volunteers remain a valuable asset to both the project and organisation, their work to date has been priceless. In 2016 it is the objective of the project to continue to strive to overcome challenges where possible, further improving the service and also expand it to new regions in the Eastern County Waterford Area.

Co. Waterford C.B.D.I. (West)

2015 was a busy year for Co. Waterford Community Based Drugs Initiative (West) and also a time of transition. There was a significant change which saw the previous worker leave the post in April and the current worker commencing in June. While this resulted in a short period with no full-time worker involved in the project, every effort was made to ensure a smooth transition. Throughout 2015 the project continued the endeavours of previous years to respond to issues of substance misuse in Dungarvan and West Waterford by providing support, including one to one support to young people and adults engaged in, or at risk of substance misuse and to family members, both individually and within a group.

43 individuals accessed one to one support and a total of 55 individuals attended the Wednesday evening out of hours Open Access service throughout the year, some attended on a regular basis and some dropped in intermittently. 35 people availed of Auricular Acupuncture and 62 treatment sessions in all were provided in 2015. Reiki treatments were also provided from January to March 2015 in the Monday evening community clinic. 27 family members accessed family support in 2015 (4 male and 23 female), 5 of those family members participated in group support.

102 people benefitted from substance misuse education and awareness which was designed and delivered to meet the specific needs of each group. Substance misuse education and awareness was delivered through drug and/or alcohol education programmes, workshops and information sessions, and was also provided on a continual basis through support work.

The activities of Co. Waterford Community Based Drugs Initiative were brief interventions at level 1, 2 and 3 with those engaged in or at risk of substance misuse; holistic interventions to reduce stress and promote the achievement of goals for service users; support of the Methadone and Needle Exchange programme in conjunction with the HSE; harm reduction through information provision and capacity building; family support group facilitation; targeted drug education and training; representation of issues associated with substance misuse within the community; volunteer involvement and support and project maintenance.

An extensive community consultation was completed in late 2014 which informed the work throughout 2015. While the project endeavoured to work with the community to develop responses to substance misuse related issues, the following challenges remain real and pertinent to the community of Dungarvan and West Waterford:

- Antisocial behaviour, violence and criminal activity have become the norm in certain areas in Dungarvan particularly in relation to prescription medication misuse
- Intimidation relating to drug debt is an issue for families, there is victimisation of community members reporting and a huge fear of getting involved
- The effects of substance misuse on the family and on the wider community is immeasurable
- West Waterford comprises a substantial geographical area, it can be difficult for the project to extend beyond Dungarvan hence those individuals affected by substance misuse in more rural areas are getting a limited service
- There is currently little response to homelessness in the County with no emergency accommodation available
- Services such as mental health and counselling can be difficult to access or there is a significant waiting time particularly in West Waterford
- The CBDI is very often a holding place for individuals and families until they can access an appropriate service, this places constraints on what can be done in the community in terms of education and prevention
- The dual diagnosis of those involved in substance misuse is poorly addressed in West

Waterford; services such as psychiatric and educational assessment can be particularly difficult to access

- The drug dealing of prescription medication is not being tackled effectively with the community reporting widespread Benzodiazepine use among young people
- Substance misuse is perceived as an individual problem as opposed to an issue that affects the whole community

The work of the project was enhanced in no small part by the support of four volunteers who committed several hours every week. Their continued involvement allowed the project to maintain a presence in the community and their input provided added value to the work of the CBDI. Without such support and dedication the provision of some of the services detailed would not have been possible.

One highlight of the year was a Positive Mental Health Awareness Event which was organised in collaboration with the DAY Project and Dungarvan Community Youth Project and was attended by 63 individuals from the local community.

Southside C.B.D.I.

Southside worked with 362 people in 2015 ranging from ages 13 – 75yrs. The project worked with 37 individuals struggling with alcohol and drug misuse, 22 family members living with people using and interested community people. In addition the project ran two community acupuncture clinics which provided holistic therapies as a form of respite to people living in the community. It also facilitated in partnership with a volunteer team of 10 people a family support group which supported family members to cope living with persons in addiction. The project also worked in partnership with the HSE to provide bi-weekly support in the methadone clinic and the aftercare programme in Brook House. The project sought and embraced every opportunity to up-skill using a community development and interagency approach which is illustrated in the activities listed below. Furthermore a large amount of time was spent building the resilience of the volunteers, mentoring existing volunteers, selecting and recruiting new volunteers.

The project invested in identifying training requirements and supporting volunteers to access training. Volunteers stated that the main reason for wanting to volunteer with the project was to give back after having a positive personal experience with Southside. Southside now operates a community clinic on Monday evenings which is solely run by volunteers and has provided hand massage to 30 people and together with a worker provided auricular acupuncture to 106 people. In addition a team of volunteers deliver in partnership with the worker: community reiki clinics and the family support group. One of the highlights during 2015 is the low cost respite accessible to the community as a result of trained volunteers.

The wide range of supports that Southside offered, allowed people to access the project who although are known locally to have a drug or alcohol issue are not in a place where they are ready to name it. Regardless these interventions provide a non-judgmental and safe place for people to begin looking at making a health behaviour change in a safe and supported way without stigma. The project continued to collaborate with other stakeholders and provided bi-weekly support to the methadone clinic and quarterly support to the after-care group in Brook House.

The issue of supporting family members living with persons in addiction and with a mental health issue continued to be a challenge in the Southside communities. A result of not having appropriate services to refer in to, in the mental health system impacts on individuals, families and the community. Naturally Southside continued to provide a listening ear and support family members to set boundaries around their own safety in the home. Homelessness and the lack of quality housing at the right price is also an on-going issue for people in addiction. This in turn made it difficult for people to engage consistently in a recovery plan, when they are living in chaos.

Despite the multiple challenges the project faced in 2015 and continues to face, the reputation of the project as a safe, non-judgmental place to access information and support is well founded through repeat referrals and word-of-mouth referrals. Southside will continue to meet individuals, families and communities where they are at in order to motivate pro-social healthy behaviour change.

The highlight of the year was the capacity of the project was increased as a result of the volunteers' commitment. The low cost respite they provide has allowed accessibility to other community and youth groups. As a result this has led to an increased visibility of Southside CBDI within the drug population.

Suir Valley C.B.D.I.

2015 was a busy year for the Suir Valley CBDI with many challenges and highlights during the year. Once again there was change in the profile of people looking for support. As has often been acknowledged in 2015 the larger percentage of those looking for support did so around their own or another's Alcohol use, this was often the main substance of those who also presented with a cocktail of substances (poly drug use). The project supported 79 individuals on a one to one basis, 48 of these were males and 26 were females.

The project saw an increase in service users who died either from their substance misuse or through suicide. One of whom was an 18year old male who died from his dependency to alcohol. This is a very worrying trend as young people's alcohol consumption has changed dramatically over the past 2 to 3 years. No longer are young people experimenting with the "softer" types of alcohol such as Alco pops or cans of lager or cider, they now go straight for the "top shelf" drinks such as Vodka, Whiskey etc., which they drink, without mixers. Some young people reported, "That they hold their noses to get it into themselves faster".

The worker engaged with 29 concerned persons re: another's substance misuse, 4 of which were male and 25 were female. This breakdown continues to support the theory that it is mothers who are the first to seek support for their children.

The project continued to build on the work of previous years by attending the Methadone clinic in Clonmel and expanding the drop in out of hour's service, which is supported by 2 volunteers.

Auricular acupuncture was offered as a means of reducing stress and remaining drug/alcohol free and also as a means of support for those wishing to make positive life style choices. This was offered at three different clinics within the area covered by the Initiative and on an individual needs basis. Thirty seven service users availed of acupuncture on a needs basis and an average of 12 people per week attended the local clinics. These clinics were supported by a volunteer who has trained in Auricular acupuncture and without her help it would be impossible to maintain the high volume of people availing of this service.

Education and awareness sessions were held in each area covered by the Initiative, with coffee/information mornings proving a successful way of engaging with communities. In total 289 people attended education /awareness programmes, of which 132 were young people. The project increased the number of young people it reached in 2015 and this was done by engaging with local youth and sporting groups during their summer programs.

The worker attended meetings where the needs of the area could be highlighted and remain on the correct agenda's is important to progressing the local needs, and progressing them regionally and nationally. The worker continued to do this by supporting community members to identify and report issues in their own locality.

The worker responded to changes in operating procedures both within the organization, such as Ecass, and those of statutory agencies such as TUSLA and probation, the worker undertook relevant training, to maintain best practice and to be compliant in all the work of the project. The worker and volunteers continued to build their skills through various training courses that were available.

Highlights for the project this year were the increased contact with young people through education and awareness programmes and also support during various summer programs such as Carrick United soccer blitz and NYP'S Summer games on the greens programme. These times were used to build relationships with young people and build the profile of the project. Also the members of the family group spent a relaxing few days in Caldey Island where they recharged their "batteries" and learnt new skills.

Waterford C.B.D.I.

2015 was a challenging, busy and productive time for the Waterford Community Based Drugs Initiative(WCBDI). The Initiative continued to deliver a flexible, comprehensive and service user centred approach to the communities of Ballybeg, Larchville and Lisduggan. In doing so the Initiative strengthened relationships with a wide variety of statutory, community and voluntary groups and also developed new relationships with new partners. The Initiative continued to work under the banners of Individual, Family and Community. The following synopsis will provide a brief insight into the complexity of responding to a multitude of identified substance misuse issues within the community.

Individual

In total the Initiative engaged with 89 individuals in 2015 who were directly or indirectly (17 concerned persons) affected by substance misuse. Individuals received interventions that were suited to needs such as Harm Reduction, CRA, Education and Awareness, Auricular Acupuncture, Screenings, Assessments and Referrals to appropriate services within the continuum of care. Of the 89 individuals 64 received interventions on the frontline in the community while the remaining 25 would have received interventions as part of a community and statutory partnership response in a weekly HSE opioid substitution programme. In terms of gender and substance of choice the breakdown is as follows: Male 54 / Female 35. Primary Substance on Presentation to Service: Heroin 41/ Cannabis 10 /Alcohol 10/ Cocaine 5/ Benzodiazepine 4 and Psychoactive Substance 2. As shown Heroin is prominently the substance of choice and for the first time it has eclipsed alcohol. This may be due to a number of factors, however the identifying and reporting from community drug services in relation to the emergence of heroin over the last number of years has yielded more capacity and resources in terms of response which in turn may explain the upturn.

Family

29 individuals received interventions and support from the initiative who were indirectly affected by substance misuse (family member/concerned persons). Interventions provided included; Education and Awareness, MI, information and capacity building, acupuncture and access to Waterford's only peer led Family Support Group which met 42 times during 2015. Individuals had an option of a one to one support service or peer led group support from trained volunteers/facilitators who can offer support, information and an empathetic, confidential and non-judgemental space for family members to explore their concerns.

Community

2015 was a very busy year for the initiative in terms of providing a wide variety of Primary, Secondary and Universal sections of the community with education and awareness that covered topics as diverse as Treatment, Health and Safety Responses to Needle Litter, Blood Borne Viruses, Drug Policy, Service Provision, Cognitive and Physical Effects of Drug Use, Self Esteem and Assertiveness, Drugs and Criminality, Drug Debt and Consequences, Relapse Prevention and Harm Reduction. A wide dynamic of groupings availed of this service which included St Saviours National School, BALL Youth Diversion Project, Waterford City and County Council, Ballybeg Action Group, Lisduggan and Larchville Residents Association, Joint Policing Committee, Public Participation Network, Irish Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC) and the St Vincent De Paul. The Initiatives also welcomed the minister with responsibility to the National Drug Strategy Aodhan O Riordan TD who was a guest speaker at an awareness event in October entitled "Criminalising Addiction Are there Alternatives?" The event was attended by a diverse representation from community, statutory and voluntary groups from across the city and county.

In conclusion 2015 was a busy and productive time for the Initiative in terms of meeting a multitude of substance misuse needs within the community. However these needs would not have been met and responded to on such a comprehensive level without the skills, knowledge, time, commitment and laughter that the ten volunteers attached to the Initiative bring with them. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their support over the last twelve months, the service you provide your community is immeasurable.

Co. Waterford Frontline Project

The Co. Waterford Frontline Project operated on a part time basis for 20 hours each week and covered Tramore, Passage East, Dunmore, Kilmacthomas, Stradbally, Kill, Portlaw, Leamybrian and all areas in between. The project was funded by the South East Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force. The project primarily provides support, mentoring and outreach service to young people from 13 to 21 years who are involved in high-risk drug misuse and who are experiencing exclusion because of their drug use; to reduce the harm that people can do to themselves through their substance misuse and to support and encourage them to begin to address the issues and problems presenting in their lives. The worker was based in the Ard na Glenna Community Centre in Tramore and linked with local doctors, Gardai, Youthreach and community services in Dunmore, Kilmacthomas, Stradbally, and many other smaller areas in the county. The project worker resigned from the project during the last quarter of 2015 to seek full time work, as he had been in a part-time position for nearly nine years.

Challenges

The target group worked with during 2015 was high risk young people who were misusing drugs and they were identified as getting into a lot of trouble at home, at work, in school, probation, courts, etc. as a result of their drugs misuse. The project made contact with the young person by undertaking outreach work and engaged with clients referred from both statutory and voluntary agencies from throughout the county, and in particular with the homeless hostel and probation service. The challenge was the increased level of complexity of issues that the service users were presenting to the service with, which were influenced by the decreased level of resources available in mental health and housing. This resulted in more time being spent with service users and engaged for a longer period of time with the project worker. With the under 21 age group the most used drugs were alcohol, cannabis, and Benzos. There was also a noticeable increase in the number of the young people who attended our service who had used substances that had been bought on the internet.

Quantitative Information

During 2015 the project worked with and supported 33 individuals and each service user received some form of harm reduction relative to their needs and issues. Fourteen of those that the project engaged with in 2015 were classified as homeless. The main source of referrals was self-referrals, but a high proportion was also referrals from the men's hostel and probation service. The 33 individuals were consistently engaged throughout 2015 and the worker delivered approximately 350 individual sessions and identified the needs of each individual and linked them into appropriate services. A number of clients were referred into the detox nurse/ St. Otteran's methadone clinic/counselling service. Family members were referred to the CBDI and family supports groups.

The worker linked with 33 individuals providing support in their efforts to reduce their drug use, and also provided initial support to family members. The support offered to the young drug users involved one to one support, auricular acupuncture, and harm reduction, abstinence programs. A number of the service users were referred on to relevant re-education programs, such as Making Connections or community based programs to enable the young person improve their quality of life. In 2015 the project worker also attended the methadone clinic every Wednesday afternoon to offer additional support to clients that were linked into the project and provide information about the project and other projects in Waterford to clients who were not linked into any of the other support services.

During 2015 the project continued to see improvements in services namely, methadone treatment places are now available and are being engaged with by the project's client group. The project saw a leveling out of heroin use in the county, but an increase in substances being sourced via the internet, especially by young people and cannabis use amongst 12 to 21 year olds continued to be a presenting issue to the project.

The NDRIC client management system continued to be embedded in to the work of the project and this increased the amount of time that had to be given to administering the system during the period.

High point for the County Waterford Frontline Project in 2015 was the close working relationship it has with the many agencies, particularly the Men's Hostel, Probation Service, Tyre Diversion Project and the Tramore Youthreach.

Waterford Drug Outreach Project

In 2015 the project offered a service to 273 individuals from Waterford City and County. Main objectives achieved for 2015 included,

- a) Provided brief interventions which supported client motivation, behavioural change, and engagement with relevant services, advocated on behalf of service users to ensure appropriate service provision.
- b) Provided needs based key working and case management to service users who required it in line with NDRIC protocols.
- c) Provided a needle syringe programme in partnership with the HSE or other providers.
- d) Reduced drug and alcohol related harm for those using or at risk of harm through provision of information and development of service user capacities.

Quantitative Information

The project provided a service to over 273 individuals in 2015 and there were over 800 visits to the service from these individuals. In response to the needs of 123 individuals with a substance misuse issue, 252 referrals were made to 28 different services concerning the individuals' treatment and rehabilitation needs. Under the NDRIC system 60 initial assessments were carried out and 43 care plans were developed with service users, identifying their goals and ways of addressing their needs. Working closely with other agencies was an integral part of this process. 400 harm reduction interventions were provided to service users.

Highlights /Challenges in 2015

Continued opiate use amongst service users

Waterford Outreach Project engaged with a significant number of people from this group and 2015 continued to see improvements in services namely; more methadone treatment places are now available in Waterford. The methadone clinic in Dungarvan which started in January 2014 has expanded and has worked extremely well in servicing the needs of this cohort of people from the Dungarvan and West Waterford area. An agreement and commitment by the HSE to pilot a naloxone prescribing service in January 2015 supported by the Waterford Outreach Project amongst others, by means of training service users in administering naloxone in an opiate overdose situation.

Illegal use of prescription medication

In 2015 there were many hospitalisations of people who had consumed such drugs which they procured from the internet. These drugs are very popular amongst younger age groups presenting to the project, with their knowledge of the dangers of the drugs being often very limited.

Homelessness

Homelessness was a major issue for service users, 29 people presented as homeless in 2015 with a number of others at risk of homelessness. This adds to the difficulties clients face in struggling to address their drug use. Stable accommodation is a vital component to any treatment plan. The housing options available to them are extremely limited and often unsuitable

Mental Health Supports

35 service users presented with mental health difficulties along with a substance misuse issue. Of great assistance to the service users of the project was the Self Harm Intervention Programme (SHIP), 5 service users availed of their services.

Drug related Intimidation

The project dealt with 5 service users under serious threat relating to drug debts, a number of service users were victims of violent assault and harassment. All were informed of the new Garda unit dealing with such intimidation. 2 service users availed of the service one was happy with the outcome and one service user said it made the situation much worse.

Other Supports

In 2015, 22 service users were working with the social work service regarding the welfare of their children, a number of these service users were pregnant women. There was an increase in referrals to support services for those experiencing domestic violence. 5 service users were referred to these support services in 2015.

Development of services and adopting new protocols and policies

The NDRIC protocols continued to be embedded in to the work of the project in 2015. There has been a huge increase in the amount of admin work as a result, which has been a pressure for the worker. 2015 also saw the introduction of the ECASS electronic client management system to the project.

Highlight for Waterford Outreach Project 2015

The highlight for the project in 2015 was seeing the establishment of the TREO Special CE scheme. This has been a great progression route for service users of the project. Waterford Outreach Project enjoys very good working relationship with the scheme and has referred a number of its service users in various stages in their recovery.

South Tipperary Outreach Project

The Outreach Project's overall aim is to provide services & responses for persons 13 years of age & upwards who are involved in high-risk substance misuse. The service aims to minimize the harm that services users can do to themselves through substance misuse, and to support and encourage them to begin to address and manage such issues in their lives.

2015 was a positive year for the outreach project. In respect to this, service user (s/u) engagement continued to be the primary focus throughout the year. The project provided weekly support to the 2 methadone clinics servicing the Tipperary area and key worked an equal portion of clients to that of the lead agency (HSE). The project continued to receive a large number of 'first time' referrals throughout the year, with a total of 61 being received. 49 of these went on to receive further intervention. An additional 18 clients continued to work with the project from 2014 into, and in some cases, throughout, 2015.

However, equally as important, was the number of individuals who returned to the project throughout the year, subsequent to finding earlier project intervention beneficial and/or having built rapport with the worker. The project received service user returns on a monthly basis throughout 2015. The majority of the service users self-referred back in periods of difficulty and/or crisis. 50 such returns were received within 2015, with 49 following up and receiving worker intervention.

In respect to additional positive outcomes, 53 service users were discharged from the service throughout 2015, with over half of these (34) being determined 'stable' (as per HRB guidelines). Ten of the discharges included transfer to an additional service for alternative and/or additional support work pertaining to their addiction issues. 3 individuals with particularly chaotic drug using lifestyles were referred to and completed residential treatment, and received continued aftercare support from the outreach project.

The project continued to provide outreach support to areas of need throughout the year, where identified and appropriate.

Particular challenges identified throughout 2015:

- 1) An increase in the number of complex cases, particularly those with complex mental health issues, combined with a focus on key working (NDRIC) Difficulty of working with clients who are prescribed benzodiazepines and misusing same.
- 2) Lack of cohesion within services and the difficulty of accessing appropriate assistance for clients within an appropriate timeframe (if at all) (eg: mental health care/specific family supports) Lack of cohesion within frameworks of work and duplication of same in some instances (eg: Meitheal/NDRIC)
- 3) Increase in paperwork with the development of new recording system (ECASS)-both paper and electronic recording required throughout 2015.
- 4) Homelessness and generic difficulty accessing housing –particularly pertinent for clients who would be seen to be socially disruptive.

The project has been in operation over 10 years but continued to receive a large number of 'first time' referrals. 61 such individuals were referred in 2015, with 49 of these going on to receive further intervention. An additional 18 clients continued to work with the project from 2014 into 2015, with an additional 50 clients returning to the project for further intervention throughout the year, substantiating the need for the project in the area.

SAOR (Special Community Employment Programme)

The programme targets individual participants in recovery from substance misuse in Waterford City, County and South Tipperary areas.

Rollover commenced on 19th March 2015 with one supervisor (Kelley Hall) and one assistant supervisor (Lesley Hanrahan) and 20 participants.

Breakdown of Positions were as follows:

1. Secretarial/Administration Workers
3. Maintenance
3. Kitchen Assistant
3. Care takers
2. Retail Workers
3. Youth workers
4. General Operative
2. Support workers
5. Warehouse workers

During the year a total of 20 participants availed of the training activities supplied within the Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The training course covered a wide variety of options from;

First Aid, Health & Safety, Substance Misuse, Driving Licence, Diploma in Drugs Counselling, ECDL, Manual Handling, Sports & Leisure, Sports Massage and FAI Training. All training delivered was approved through FECTAC and certificated and included;. Social Care, Youth & Community, Barbering as well as Personal Effectiveness

Each Participant spent 11.5 hours based in their specific Work Placement. The remaining 8 hours was spent within the (ILP).

Summary

Overall a very successful year for all participants as they availed of further training, education and employment placements available within the project. 3 participants went on to 3rd level education and 4 gained employment. SAOR 9 will be approved for rollover commencing in March next year.

Making Connections South Tipperary

Making Connections South Tipperary is a local training initiative in adult education that provides QQI level 3 in Employability Skills training to individuals who have experienced substance/alcohol misuse, homelessness or substance related mental health difficulties. It is a flexible training programme that works on individual learning needs in small groups or on a one to one basis.

There were staff changes at the end of the year and Deirdre Matassa will take on the Assistant Coordinators role at the beginning of next year.

2015 was very busy with regular classes running throughout the year and 3 Major Awards completed. There was an increase in long term engagement and increased completion of modules.

Quantative information

62 referrals in 2015

49 registered for the programme

8 did not engage

24 still engaged

5 progressed to further education or employment

26 on the waiting list

16 received QQI certification

Groups/Programmes for the year

Making Connections ran small classes throughout a 4 day week and had a number of 1:1 classes also. The programme had a continual intake of learners therefore the number of groups' changed throughout the year. There was approximately 8-12 classes per week.

Highlights for 2015

Making Connections South Tipperary won an Aontas Star award in the Munster small organisation category. This award was in recognition for our contributions to adult learning as part of the adult learner's festival.

We had a very successful awards ceremony where learners received QQI certification and Dr Fergus Heffernan was invited to give a talk. This was hugely inspirational and an enjoyable day where learners gained recognition for their efforts.



We also held two successful team building days where we brought our learners to Woodstown Activity & Residential Centre. At Christmas time we had a Making Connections Christmas Dinner where learners were involved in all aspects of the day from preparation of food to decoration of the room.



Volunteers/community involvement

At present Making Connections South Tipperary does not have any volunteer involvement although we did take on two work experience placements in 2015 which greatly benefitted the programme.

Making Connections Waterford

3 Making Connections Waterford provided QQI Level 3 Major Award Employability Skills training to individuals who have experienced substance/alcohol misuse, homelessness or substance related mental health difficulties. It is a flexible training programme that works on individual learning needs in small groups or on a one to one basis.

The programme saw a number of changes in 2015 with the introduction of a larger amount of group work. All subjects can now be catered for in a group class. 6 Major Awards were achieved by individuals as a result of long term engagement, increased completion of modules and a greater number of hours offered to the learners.

Quantative information

42 registered for the programme
2 progressed to the Saor programme
3 progressed into employment
23 went onto to further education/training
13 continued with Making Connections
6 Major Awards achieved
48 minor awards were achieved

Groups/Programmes for the year

Making Connections increased group classes as per ETB funding requirements in 2015. The programme had a continual intake of learners therefore the number of groups' change throughout the year. Learners had a minimum of 2 classes per week.

Highlights for 2015

Making Connections Waterford held a very successful awards ceremony where learners were presented with their certificates. Both a past and present learner spoke about their experiences within the programme.