

**HERE FOR YOUTH
& COMMUNITY**

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



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FINANCES 2022

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

A few words from the Chair

It gives me great pleasure to address you our members in this Annual Report 2022 and at our Annual General Meeting. It has been my privilege to serve you as Chairperson of the Board for the past year, a year in which we have been rebuilding all aspects of our service following the impact of the pandemic. We are beginning to see growth in new areas, but most importantly we are beginning to see a revival of what was lost – in particular our volunteers and Youth Clubs. Volunteers are crucial to the delivery of our services, but they are also central to our ethos and approach to how we deliver our mission as a Community Based Youth Service. Youth Clubs represent our foundation and they show us what is possible when local people care about young people and want to make a difference in their community. They showcase the truest essence of our mission and the Board of W.S.T.C.Y.S. is committed to supporting and growing our clubs to reach as many young people as possible especially in rural areas. We are hopeful that over the next year the numbers of clubs will continue to grow through establishing clubs in new areas and through reviving those clubs that were most impacted by recent events.

We have seen immense change in the past year in terms of the movement of some of our people who took up new roles elsewhere as opportunities arose. This was an issue across every sector with the unexpected loss of so many experienced, long serving staff in a short space of time. We are aware that the profile of our team has changed in terms of age, experience, history with the organisation and connection with our approach. However, we are confident that those of you who have joined us in the past year are bringing energy, openness, transferrable skills, qualities and experience. We welcome you to W.S.T.C.Y.S. and hope that you are happy and fulfilled in your career with us. To those who have moved on I want to thank you sincerely on behalf of all our members, for your time, your effort, your creativity and your innovation.

We have also seen much change in the last year also in terms of the volume and range of services W.S.T.C.Y.S. delivered throughout the region. Significantly, new posts were funded in the Youth Justice sector and also in the Community Youth Work sector. These new posts will enable much needed consolidation of services that were to date under-resourced in terms of single staff projects, and expansion where possible to ensure service delivery in areas that were not possible to reach before now. Two new projects were also funded in Clonmel and Dungarvan/West which will allow much needed services to be developed in priority areas. The increase in resources, funding and support that these developments represents, shows the confidence and esteem that W.S.T.C.Y.S. is held in by our funders. This reflects on all of your efforts and on the calibre of staff we have in place in our Youth Service. The Board is very proud of our staff and of our quality service delivery to those who need it. We ask you to keep up the good work and thank all of you.

Good governance is essential to ensure the health of the charity sector. We are all aware of the challenges that have faced the sector and the impact that these have had on those volunteers who serve at Board level. Being a Director is a big responsibility and not for the faint hearted. W.S.T.C.Y.S. is very fortunate in the calibre and commitment of its voluntary board members. Through the 44 meetings held at board and board committees level throughout the year, our board contributed many hours of their time. This reflects how seriously each board member takes their fiduciary responsibilities on behalf of W.S.T.C.Y.S. members. It is safe to say that W.S.T.C.Y.S. has been in very good hands at governance level for 2022 and I would like to thank my fellow board members for their time and commitment and for their support for me as chair through the year.

FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT W.S.T.C.Y.S. COULD NOT DELIVER ITS MISSION WITHOUT INTEGRATION. THE BOARD, THE STAFF, THE MANAGEMENT, THE VOLUNTEERS, THE LOCAL TEAMS, THE CLUBS – ALL HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE W.S.T.C.Y.S. HAPPEN. IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT WE ARE ONE SERVICE AND THAT WE MUST BE ONE IN SERVING YOUNG PEOPLE AND SERVICE USERS TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY.
CLIVE SMITH, CHAIRPERSON

COMPANY SECRETARY REPORT

The Board, Staff and Volunteers of Waterford & South Tipperary Community Youth Service continued to work very hard during 2022 to deliver a high quality service to young people and adult service users in the community in the later stages of the Covid-19 pandemic and the lifting of restrictions. Once again, resourceful, innovative responses were required to maintain contact with those engaging in our services in their community and in particular to reach the most vulnerable, who became even more difficult to contact as a result of the whole experience. Through providing a carefully controlled environment at all times, W.S.T.C.Y.S. safely delivered our extensive services throughout the region.

W.S.T.C.Y.S. is a complex organisation delivering an integrated service which in normal times takes careful management and co-ordination to maximise the resources and the impacts and outcomes they deliver. In spite of the pandemic, service delivery was maintained extensively and indeed in some areas, contact with service users was increased. Services and facilities were delivered through 82 full and part time staff, 20 C.E. workers, 39 projects, with different thrusts and emphasis, all funded through as many as nine funding streams and the management of 15 premises and facilities. With the assistance of 254 community volunteers, the organisation reached in excess of 10,500 young people and adult service users throughout the year through clubs, projects and services.

W.S.T.C.Y.S. Board of Directors

The Board were as usual very active during the year meeting for a total of 44 hours between Board and Committee meetings, with in excess of 200 hours of personal time being committed to the work of the organisation by the Directors collectively. The Board itself met on 10 occasions, the first two meetings of which were held by Zoom and the remainder in person. There was an overall attendance rate of 74% demonstrating the level of commitment by Directors. Membership of the Board for 2022 included the following 14 people: Chairperson - Karen Doyle served as Chair until September, at which time Clive Smith assumed the role having been elected at the A.G.M.; Treasurer - Sean O' Callaghan; Secretary - Rhiannon Kavanagh; Seamus Mc Grath, Mick Nevin, Andrea Bourke, Dylan Roche, Katrina Magoran, Pat Walsh, Dr. Sheila O' Donohoe, Jaclyn Delaney, Enya Lee (who was co-opted to the Board in May) and William O' Donnell who was elected to the Board at the A.G.M. There were no resignations from the Board in 2022. The Board was very happy to gain Enya, a past member of staff and very dedicated supporter of WSTCYS, and William O' Donnell who had been a Youth Club Leader in the past.

NAME	13TH JAN	3RD	3RD MAR	7TH	12TH	9TH	1ST SEPT	6TH	3RD NOV	1ST DEC
Karen Doyle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sean O' Callaghan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhiannon Kavanagh	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Clive Smith	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Mick Nevin	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Seamus Mc Grath	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Andrea Bourke	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Dylan Roche	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Patrick Walsh	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Katrina Magoran	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Sheila O, Donohoe	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
Jaclyn Delaney	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Enya Lee	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✗		✓
William O' Donnell	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✗	✗	✗

The Board effectively oversaw the governance of the organisation throughout the year with vigilance and care demonstrating conscientious undertaking of due diligence and responsibility for W.S.T.C.Y.S. in undertaking its charitable mission at all times. The complex work of the organisation and the effective deployment of its resources was monitored as effectively and stringently as possible in the best interest of the membership. The Board has in place a robust system for identifying and addressing risks to the organisation at all levels and careful attention was given to developments and changes in the policy environment that impact on the organisation. In order to focus efforts in crucial areas, the Board operated five Board Committees during the year: The Finance, Audit & Special Purposes Committee, the H.R. Committee, the Governance Committee, the Child Protection & Safeguarding Committee and the Quality & Safety Committee. It would be important to say that the Committees meetings were the focal point for discussion but that much additional work was undertaken by committee members and staff between meetings, which would be difficult to quantify for the report.

Finance, Audit & Special Purposes Committee

W.S.T.C.Y.S. Finance, Audit & Special Purposes Committee (F.A.S.P.) is made up of three directors, Sean O' Callaghan (Company Treasurer), Sheila O' Donohoe (Board Member) and Clive Smith (Board Member). The Committee was chaired by Sean O' Callaghan and was attended by the Finance Officer and the C.E.O. The Committee held 11 meetings with an attendance rate of 96% and committee members contributed approximately 80 hours of their personal time throughout 2022.

NAME	11TH JAN	1ST FEB	1ST MAR	6TH APR	12TH MAY	7TH JUN	19TH JUL	1ST SEPT	4TH OCT	1ST NOV	29TH NOV
Sean O' Callaghan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sheila O' Donohoe	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Clive Smith	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Christina Fogarty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shirley Griffin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The F.A.S.P. Committee 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 organisation's 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 organisation's loans, which were reduced by €164,871 to €208,571 with only one loan now remaining for the Manor Building.

The committee ensured that the organisation fulfilled the terms required by funder Service Level Agreements. Budgets were prepared for all projects and approved for use by the committee in the February 2022 meetings. These were strictly monitored on a monthly and quarterly basis to ensure they were in line with funding. The F.A.S.P. Committee also oversaw the financial audit for 2022 on behalf of the Board and liaised directly with the Finance Officer and the Auditor through the Chairperson of the Committee.

One of the main priority items on the FASP Committee agenda for 2022 was insurance which cost €84,914.28 compared to 2021 cost of €103,371.04. The committee discussed the costs and renewal information in full. Insurance costs continue to be extremely high and can fluctuates year on year which poses an increasing burden on project budgets. The FASP Committee are committed each year to bringing down this cost where possible.

Other important issues dealt with by the committee throughout 2022 were; Staff salary reviews for all funder groups (commitment made to review this annually were funding allows), mileage rate review and claim form updated to ensure increased rates applied for staff and an organisation salary scale review was conducted. This involved the amalgamation of old and current CDYDB scales to incorporate all scales currently in use and bring them together on one overall WSCYS Salary Scale.

Additional funding was secured in 2022 for the new UBU Cluain Meala & Dungarvan West Waterford, €240k. IYJS Expansion of services funding was received for BALL, CYDP, DAY, PACT, SWAY and TYRE. Additional funding amounted to €617k. Capital grants was secured for new windows in the SHY & Dungarvan, New Patio in Northern Suburbs and Millennium Buildings.

Overall the work of the F.A.S.P. Committee was very effective as the organisation left the year in a very healthy financial position. All of the organisations financial compliance requirements were met and the organisation adhered to the highest standard of operation at all times. The skills and expertise of this Committee are second to none and clearly the organisation is in very safe hands in this regard.

H.R. Committee

The H.R. Committee has four Board members and is also attended by the C.E.O. This committee has gained considerable experience and brings significant skills to support the management of the organisation's staff structures. The committee met 6 times during the year with an 80% attendance rate. This volunteers contributed 18 hours of their personal time to this committee over the year. Chaired by Seamus Mc Grath, membership included Pat Walsh, Andrea Bourke and Mick Nevin.

NAME	24TH JAN	21ST FEB	3RD MAY	26TH SEPT	24TH OCT	21ST NOV
Seamus Mc Grath	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Mick Nevin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pat Walsh	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Andrea Bourke	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Christina Fogarty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The Committee provided input into the organisations priority of building and sustaining a stable staff team. To this end the committee contributed to staff recruitment, including participating in interview panels; reviewing of staff exit interviews; the handling of difficult H.R. issues; assistance with the management of rationalisation where necessary; the wellbeing of staff and WSTCYS E.A.P.; hearing of special applications from staff such as Education Assistance or Leave of Absence; and monitoring of staff health and safety in the continued Covid-19 climate. The Committee reviewed the organisations Staff Support & Supervision Policy, W.S.T.C.Y.S. Staff Handbook and W.S.T.C.Y.S. Policy on Dignity & Respect. The H.R. Committee highlighted the need for additional management resources in terms of management posts and this was referred to the board in the final quarter to be progressed for 2023.

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee was made up of four directors during the year including Dylan Roche (Chair), Rhiannon Kavanagh, Pat Walsh and Karen Doyle. The C.E.O. attended at each meeting. The committee met 6 times during the year with an attendance rate of 90% and a total of 21 hours of personal time contributed by voluntary board members.

NAME	26TH JAN	23RD FEB	4TH MAY	28TH SEPT	26TH OCT	30TH NOV
Pat Walsh	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Rhiannon Kavanagh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dylan Roche	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Karen Doyle	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Christina Fogarty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

This Committee continued its work of reviewing W.S.T.C.Y.S. and ensuring compliance with the Charities Governance Code as an ongoing exercise. This is important as there is always room for improvement in the organisations operational and governance processes.

Some of the major areas of work that the Governance Committee oversaw in 2022 were: Board succession planning and recruitment; Board effectiveness – skills audit & review; WSTCYS Compliance & oversight – Charities Regulator, Lobbying Register & CRO; and the A.G.M.

The Governance Committee oversaw the organisations handling of a potential data breach and communication with the Data Commissioner during the year. Learning was identified and an improvement plan was implemented to ensure protection of data going forward. The Committee also commenced the process of developing the organisations communications strategy which is seeking to improve how we communicate with our target audiences.

Child Protection & Safeguarding Committee

This Committee was set up in 2021 and brings the Board and Senior Management together to oversee, develop and promote the organisations approach, practice and requirements in the area of safeguarding. The committee met three times during the year with an 83% attendance rate. Andrea Bourke represented the Board on this Committee.

NAME	15TH FEB	28TH SEPT	19TH OCT
Andrea Bourke	✗	✗	✓
Dorothea Keating	✓	✓	✗
Margaret Flanagan	✓	✓	✓
Patricia Mc Bride	✓	✓	✓
Michelle Kelly	✓	✓	✓
Christina Fogarty	✓	✓	✓

This Committee was responsible for bringing everything concerning child protection, welfare and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults together in one place. Data was gathered for the first time in 2021 which was reviewed for the committee and this will be available to paint a clear picture of the organisations activities and contribution in this area going forward. 2022 data shows that 39 contact were made by staff with the organisations £ Designated Liaison Persons; 11 notifications were made to Tusla; 19 reports were furnished by WSTCYS staff to Child Protection Conferences. Additionally, 39 staff and volunteers received Child Protection & Safeguarding Training and 112 Garda Vetting submissions were made, of which, 73 were completed. The Committee reviewed the data and analysed the contributing factors for issues such as the gap between the vetting requests submitted and those completed to gain insight and learning etc.

The Child Protection & Safeguarding Committee reviewed the organisations Child Safeguarding Statement which must be undertaken every 24 months. This was reviewed by Tusla and improvements made so that it is now fully compliant with Children First. The Committee also developed the organisations “W.S.T.C.Y.S. Framework for Managing Cases where a Young Person presents with Harmful Sexual Behaviour or a Service User presents with Sexual Offending Risks” which was approved by the board in November. Guidance was also prepared on engaging young people through social media, which provides important clarity for staff. Work also commenced on the organisations Code of Behaviour for Young People, which is expected to be concluded in early 2023.

The organisation's 3 D.L.P.'s met with the Board to discuss the D.L.P. Team operations on behalf of the organisation. This was a very positive meeting and allowed scope for more detailed discussion on how matters are managed, recorded and reported on behalf of W.S.T.C.Y.S. The meeting gave the Board a deeper appreciation of the careful and detailed work undertaken by the staff and the D.L.P.'s.



Quality & Safety Committee

The Quality Health & Safety Committee met 8 times during the year with an attendance rate of 98% and a total of 43 hours of work contributed. This committee was mainly made up of management and towards the end of the year 3 staff were included in the membership. Enya Lee took up representation of the Board on this committee in October as the board felt that it was important to have the link in place between the committee and the board.

NAME	22ND FEB	29TH MAR	26TH APR	16TH MAY	20TH JUN	12TH SEPT	25TH OCT	22ND NOV
Margaret Flanagan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michelle Kelly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patricia Mc Bride	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Martin Hayes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gail Sheridan	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓
Catriona Ryan	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓
Catherine Smith	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓
Enya Lee	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✗	✓	✓

The focus of this committee was to bring together all of the quality standards applied to the different sectors in the organisation and to build impetus on achieving progress in areas of improvement identified. Quality standards included were: the National Quality Standards Framework (NQS) for youth projects; National Quality Standards Framework for Volunteer Led Youth Groups (NQSFLYG); Safer Better Healthcare as applied to W.S.T.C.Y.S. community drugs services; and the National Youth Justice Projects evaluation.

In addition to the quality standards, this committee spearheaded the organisations Health & Safety programme and provided a focal point for all matters concerning health and safety, including the organisations training programme in this area. Tremendous progress was made on restoring all systems, standards and operations that had been overshadowed by the actions required to manage health and safety during the Covid-19 restrictions.

W.S.T.C.Y.S. Staff

As always, the Board of W.S.T.C.Y.S. recognises the quality and calibre of the staff that serve the organisation and see the staff team as the organisation's greatest asset. Their dedication and commitment is exemplified every day in their sustained delivery of careful work with vulnerable people. This was never more apparent than it was during the Covid-19 pandemic, when our staff and management demonstrated dedication and committed at every level in innovating and delivering essential services to the most vulnerable. The organisation's team of 70 full-time staff, 22 part-time staff and with the support of 20 Community Employment staff, delivered high quality, meaningful and relevant programmes and services to communities throughout the region during 2022. The central focus of all of the work undertaken was on young people, adult service users, volunteers, and communities.

In 2022, W.S.T.C.Y.S. lost 12 staff members, which was very challenging at all levels. Niamh Kinsella left the Frontline Project; Josephine O' Connor, left the Clonmel Youth Diversion Project; Audra Cotter left the Clonmel C.B.D.I.; Majella Keating left the PACT Project; Siobhan Grimes & Jenny Ryan who both moved on from Making Connections Waterford & Tipperary. This first group of staff served the organisation for 94 years collectively, and the Board of W.S.T.C.Y.S. is extremely grateful for their long service and dedication. Resignations were also received in 2022 from Eoin Dalton who left the SWAY Project after 7 years; Jackie Myler who left the Frontline Project after serving 5 years in various posts; Ovidiu Matiu, Ruth Mc Evoy and Tereza Skopova who served with the Intercultural Health Project; Shanice Hickey left the Clonmel UBU; Carrie Roberts who left the Farronshoneen Centre Project; Dara Arrigan who left the Edge Project Family Support Post. In addition, Maureen Walsh took the opportunity to retire during the year after 10 years with the Suir Valley C.B.D.I. We

are very fortunate that Maureen has since taken up maternity cover at Co. Waterford C.B.D.I. East. While the loss of workforce was particularly hard to bear during the initial stages of the Covid-19 recovery, the organisation was fortunate to recruit the following replacement staff: Gail Sheridan took up the post at Suir Valley C.B.D.I.; Emma Curran joined the SWAY Project; Dave Power joined the PACT Project; Joanna Corcoran joined the Frontline Project; Marty Clare joined the Clonmel Youth Diversion Project; Mark Hickey joined Clonmel UBU; Dylan Ryan who joined Ballybeg CYP; Nina Harse joined the Farronshoneen Youth Centre Project; Alex Petrovics, Caroline Falconer, Deirdre Morrin and Zaneta Danielova joined the Intercultural Health Project; Fiona Dougliss joined the Clonmel C.B.D.I.

In addition to all of the above recruitment, W.S.T.C.Y.S. was fortunate to receive funding for the following new posts: Sarah Murphy with the LGBT+ Health Project; Kim O' Mahoney and Niamh Farrell with Dungarvan West UBU; Roseanne Magee joined the Millennium Youth Project; Emmet Power with the TYRE Project; Evelyn Corcoran with the SWAY Project; Gavin O' Neill with the PACT Project; Frances Stafford and Raul Mizan with the Intercultural Health Project; Donna Bonelli and Sam Ryan who joined the UBU Cluain Meala.

The Board extends a warm welcome to all our new staff, wishes them well in their efforts working with young people, service users and volunteers in a community context, and hopes that they will be happy in their challenging roles.

Finally, in relation to staff, there was some internal movement including – Marian Smiles moved from Ballybeg to the North Suburbs CYP; Tracy O' Grady moved from Dungarvan CYP to the SHY Project and Maria O' Leary moved from the North Suburbs CYP to the Frontline Project. Additionally, four staff took maternity leave during the year and the Board congratulates them on their new arrivals. The Board thanks those who undertook maternity cover in this time, Dylan Ryan, Glen Hawe, Emma Curran and Maureen Walsh.

The Board is committed to looking after our staff team. While there has been a loss of experienced staff, the Board and Management are confident of harnessing the skills and experience of incoming staff, of building on the competence of existing staff and of sustaining a stable team going forward.



Programmes and Services

W.S.T.C.Y.S. delivered our work in 2022 through an integrated services delivery model combining Community Youth Projects, Volunteer Led Youth Clubs, Youth Justice Work, Community Based Drugs Initiatives and Drugs Outreach Projects, Intercultural Health Hub, Education Projects – L.T.I.'s and through partnering with the XLC Project, and through special services – Youth Information and Woodstown Residential & Activities Centre. The overall reach in the year was 10,500 individuals, many of whom availed of multiple points of contact. The graphic below shows the services operated in 2022.

W.S.T.C.Y.S. Service Provision



Youth Work Ireland

W.S.T.C.Y.S. participated as an active member in Youth Work Ireland's structures during 2022. The Regional Directors Meeting was held on 8 occasions; the Child Protection & Safeguarding Working Group met on 2 occasions; Youth Justice meetings and briefings were held on 5 occasions and WSTCYS C.E.O. joined the Regional Directors Steering group which met in December. One majorly significant area of work that the Member Youth Services have been involved in is influencing the development of the Youth Justice Projects Funding Model. This is a significant development for the sector and it is very important that we bring the influence of the collective to bear on any possible outcome in the best interest of the sector.

WSTCYS Club Development Sector also engaged extensively with Youth Work Ireland National Office and with other Member Youth Services through its participation on the National Club Development Network. WSTCYS contributed to the content of the Club Activity Packs disseminated by YWI, participated in the Volunteer Training Review Subgroup and contributed to the design and delivery of YWI's National YouthWave event. One of the WSTCYS Club Development Officers facilitated a circus skills workshop for young people on the day.

**YOUTH WORK IRELAND HAS CONTINUED TO PROVIDE
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A COLLECTIVE VOICE,
STRENGTHENING THE INFLUENCE OF ALL MEMBER YOUTH
SERVICES. NEVER WAS IT MORE IMPORTANT THAT YOUTH
SERVICES WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT YOUNG
PEOPLES' NEEDS ARE BEING SEEN AND HEARD AT A
NATIONAL LEVEL.**



Statement of Strategy 2020 - 2024

The organisations Statement of Strategy 2020 - 2024 continued to guide the direction and priorities of WSTCYS throughout 2022. Some of the main achievements under the company's strategic goals included:

Goal 1: Unity & Identity: There was never a more acute need to build unity and identity than there was in 2022 following the crushing impact of the pandemic. This was a very challenging chapter. Parallel with reconnecting with young people and service users, were the strenuous efforts made to reconnect and rebuild relationships between colleagues at sector level as well as cross sectoral and at whole organisation levels. Much focus was placed on team building at centre team level and working jointly to deliver programmes at a critical time. This required a tremendous commitment from staff and volunteers to pull together and to share resources, and has led to a deep appreciation and valuing of relationships and in-person work.

Goal 2: Looking after the core of our work: Much of the focus of delivering this goal was placed on developing and delivering new services according to our own community based model of work, which sometimes demanding a high level of assertion in conversations with funders. In particular, employing youth work principles and practice to deliver youth employability, European and LGBT+ services were key to the success of these initiatives. In 2022, additional funding was secured to deliver two new UBU projects, to supplement existing UBU projects and to trial the delivery of new posts under Youth Justice

Goal 3: Stability & Sustainability: Ensuring the sustainability of our staff and volunteers by investing further in capacity building at all levels. This goal remained challenging in 2022 as the pandemic receded. The turnover of staff and volunteers was significant and caused many difficulties in the delivery of our community based responses as new opportunities opened up in many other areas. A lot of experience was lost but an influx of new staff has brought new life and energy to the service. The organisation invested in advocating for and improving staff terms and conditions, in volunteer recruitment and development and in commencing the process of extending the management team.

Goal 4: Building participation and influence: Increasing participation and influence from within the organisation's membership and increasing engagement of those who are currently on the outside. The organisation continued to enhance the participation of marginalised groups including LGBTI+, young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) and people from new communities. Additionally, European mobility opportunities were successfully delivered with young people, staff and volunteers. The focus during 2022 has been on doubling down on contact with young people and service users who are less visible and hard to reach and who have been impacted by social anxiety as a fall-out from the pandemic.

Goal 5: Prioritising Wellbeing: Fostering the theme of well-being as a whole organisation in programme design, service delivery and working environment. This theme has provided a whole organisation focus on raising trauma awareness and on becoming more trauma informed. More work will be undertaken on this area in the next three years. A continued emphasis has been placed on developing a culture of camaraderie and mutual support and on encouraging work-life balance. Access to the organisations new EAP has increased and this is contributing to wellbeing of staff as they deliver often complex and difficult work.

Funders, Partners and Interagency Work

W.S.T.C.Y.S. collaborated with a wide variety of partners at local, regional and national level in order to deliver appropriate services and supports and to maximise outcomes for young people, their families and communities. Our main funders in 2022 included: The Health Service Executive, The South East Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force, The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Justice, Waterford Wexford E.T.B., Tipperary E.T.B., Waterford County Council, Leargas, B.T.E.I., and The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Without the financial support of these agencies, the work would not have been possible.

As part of its commitment to achieving the best outcomes for young people, their families and communities, W.S.T.C.Y.S. engaged considerable and with tremendous commitment in working with interagency partners and through various forums. In 2022 these included: Waterford and Tipperary Children and Young Peoples Service Committees; Waterford City & County Council LCDC/LAG/PPN & LCDC SICAP Oversight Committee; Tipperary County Council; BRILL; Ucasadh; Le Cheile; Citywide National Drugs Network; SECH LGBT+ Health Steering Group; and Youth Work Ireland. W.S.T.C.Y.S. recognises that no one organisation or agency can deliver everything on its own and therefore appropriately is committed to interagency and partnership working.

Premises and Facilities

Maintenance and development of premises and facilities were a priority as usual for the organisation during 2022. Every centre received attention and indeed more is needed in all of them as they provide very busy focal points in communities with a high volume of footfall on a daily basis. Health and safety, particularly in relation to Covid-19 continued to be a high priority in the management of our buildings throughout the year. It is safe to say that with the commitment of staff, management, volunteers and young people and service users, the centres remained as safe as possible in 2022.

W.S.T.C.Y.S. is committed to operating our premises as efficiently as possible to ensure that our carbon footprint is as reduced as possible. All of our utilities were monitored and reported to achieve an Eco-Cert indicating our responsible and efficient management of utilities etc. Once again, this required the commitment of all stakeholders to maintain limits and controls on usage at all times. In the last quarter of 2022 it became apparent that utility costs were about to hike. This is of major concern to all for the foreseeable future as budgets and cost centres are very tightly set and there is little scope or flexibility in cost centres.

As always, it is very important that WSTCYS is ready to exploit capital funding opportunities whenever they arise to support our work with young people by improving the premises and facilities we offer as an organisation. Capital grants were secured from D.C.E.D.I.Y. through Waterford & Wexford E.T.B. which were utilised to replace the windows and front doors in both the SHY Centre and Dungarvan Youth Centre. These have made a tremendous difference to both centres. A second grant was utilised for patios at both the Millennium Youth Centre and the North Suburbs Community House. The Board is very thankful to WWETB and DCEDIY for their support.

Every effort will be made to benefit from these funds going forward. Additionally, the Board recognises its responsibility to protect the resources of the organisation as a charity and will continue to implement safeguards where needed in the coming year.





CLUB DEVELOPMENT

The Club Development sector of WSTCYS aims to support people within communities to establish and facilitate voluntary led clubs to meet the needs of young people in their area. In 2022 this sector was supported by two part-time Club Development Officers and a manager with responsibility for Club Development and a dedicated team of local volunteers.

After a very difficult and devastating couple of years for the Club Development Sector, 2022 saw the last of the Covid-19 restrictions lifted and the chance to return to pre pandemic practises. Clubs could finally open their doors fully again and whilst this was a necessary and welcome relief, it was also challenging in other ways as the sector had to essentially 'begin again'. 2022 focused on laying the foundations so that the sector could grow and develop into the future. A lot of work undertaken by the Club Development Officers consisted of pre development work, outreach and recruitment and supporting long term volunteers to re-establish clubs. It was testament to the dedication and commitment of our long term volunteers that seven clubs reopened after such a long hiatus. This came with challenges as whilst the leaders were willing to re-open clubs, the cohort of young people engaging had changed as those who participated pre covid had aged out of the club, therefore new young people needed to be recruited.

Activity & Development Overview

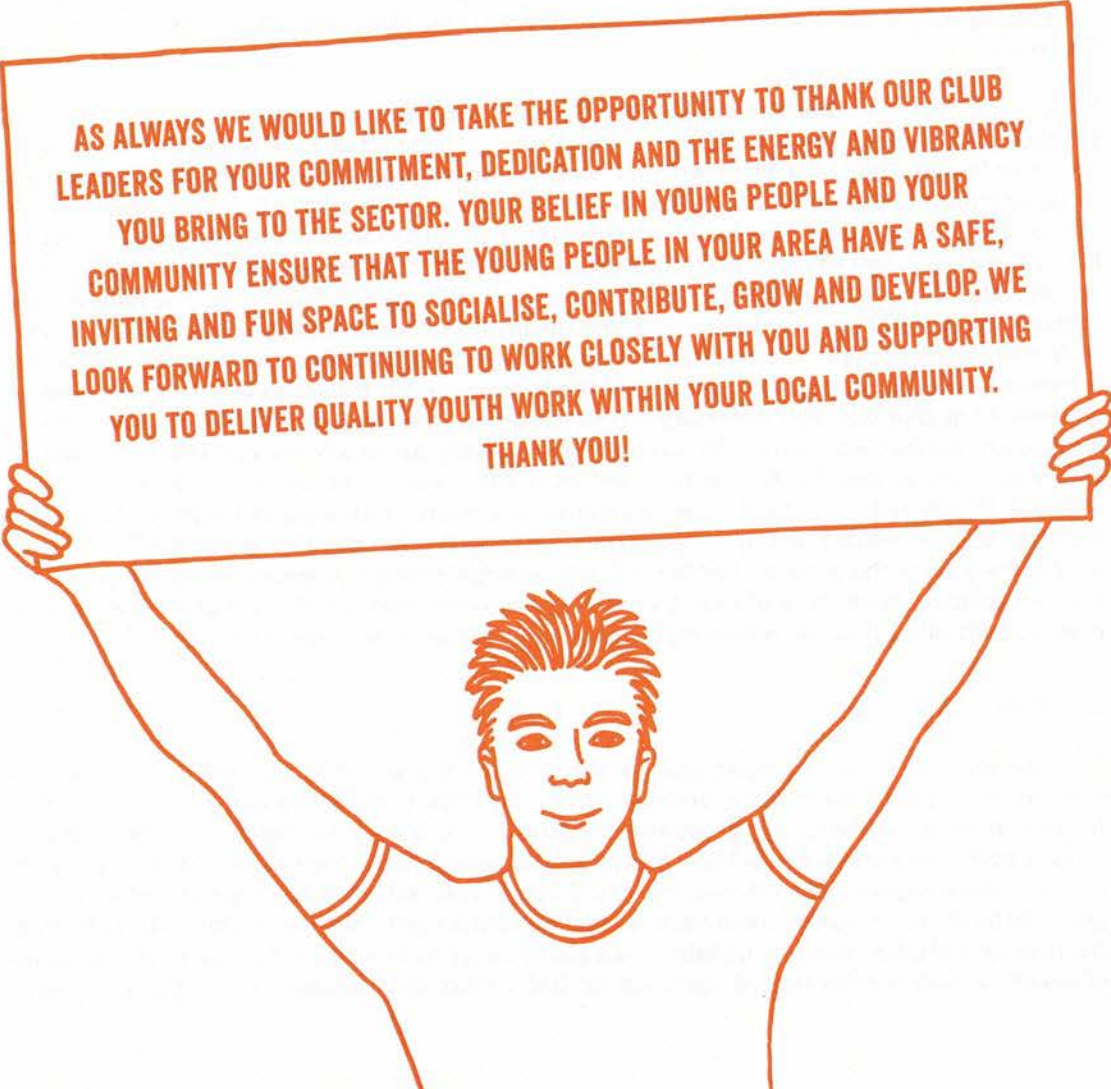
- 203 young people attended 11 WSTCYS Clubs in 2022 and were supported by 72 local volunteer leaders.
- 4 new clubs were established in 2022 and 7 clubs reopened.
- Volunteer recruitment accounted for the majority of the work in 2022. The aim of this recruitment was to source volunteer leaders for new clubs in identified areas and also for existing clubs who wished to reopen but who had seen a decrease in leaders during the Covid 19 restrictions.
- Recruitment consisted of social media campaigns by utilising local community social media platforms, local media campaigns both print and radio, on the ground outreach through the distribution of posters in key areas of targeted communities (shops, community halls, sports clubs, community notice boards etc., linking with key community members, local schools, street work and the taking part in a Volunteer Recruitment Drive in SETU Waterford Campus.
- 53 potential volunteer leaders were processed in 2022. This entailed the dissemination of and support in completing; volunteer application forms and Garda vetting applications and the hosting of informal meetings/interviews. Of these 53 potential volunteers, 18 leaders are now actively facilitating youth clubs.
- Throughout the year, 18 volunteers completed Leader Induction training and 32 leaders completed Child Protection Awareness Training.
- The Club Welcome Pack was redesigned and updated. The pack contains all the information and documentation that any WSTCYS Club needs to operate. This is disseminated to all clubs once leaders have completed their training.
- One of the Club Development Officers attended a 7-day training course in Finland as part of the Erasmus+ program which focused on 'Social Games'. The main goal of the training course was to presents participants with different types of games which they can use as a tool in their youth work practice. 27 Youth Work Practitioners from across Europe attended.
- Clubs were supported in devising and submitting various funding & grant applications and insurance forms. All eligible clubs applied for and received the Local Youth Club Grant. WWETB transitioned to an online system for the LYCG Scheme. Club Development Officers attended training on the new system and provided extra support to clubs who needed assistance in using the new process.
- WSTCYS Club Development Sector once again engaged extensively with Youth Work Ireland National Office and with other Member Youth Services through its participation on the National Club Development Network. WSTYCS contributed to the content of the Club Activity Packs disseminated by YWI, participated in the Volunteer Training Review Subgroup and contributed to the design and delivery of YWI's National YouthWave event. One of the WSTCYS Club Development Officers facilitated a circus skills workshop for young people on the day.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The reopening of Clubs and the establishment and success of new clubs.
- The continued dedication, commitment and involvement of Club Leaders and in particular the resilience of the long term volunteers who stayed committed to meeting the needs of young people and who worked tirelessly to reopen their clubs when it was appropriate to do so.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- The recruitment of volunteers has proven very difficult in 2022. It has been challenging in a number of ways; sourcing willing volunteers, recruiting more than one volunteer in a community and retaining volunteers once the process starts. The volunteer recruitment process is an onerous and laborious for Club Development Officers and this year only 34% of people who started this process completed it. Reasons for not wishing to volunteer anymore included: the commitment was more than they had anticipated, a change in personal circumstances (educational, employment or family commitments), lack of consistent availability and lack of understanding of the role.



AS ALWAYS WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO THANK OUR CLUB LEADERS FOR YOUR COMMITMENT, DEDICATION AND THE ENERGY AND VIBRANCY YOU BRING TO THE SECTOR. YOUR BELIEF IN YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUR COMMUNITY ENSURE THAT THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR AREA HAVE A SAFE, INVITING AND FUN SPACE TO SOCIALISE, CONTRIBUTE, GROW AND DEVELOP. WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO WORK CLOSELY WITH YOU AND SUPPORTING YOU TO DELIVER QUALITY YOUTH WORK WITHIN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.

THANK YOU!

COMMUNITY YOUTH PROJECTS

The 15 Community Youth Projects managed to engage and include 1392 young people throughout 2022 with the support of 87 dedicated local volunteers.

2022 welcomed two new Community Youth Projects into the sector which increased the sector's capacity to engage and support young people experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation in meaningful and developmental Youth Work groups and programmes across Waterford & South Tipperary. There was an increase in young people and volunteer involvement this year which saw just over 300 additional young people included and 47 new volunteers across the sector. The significant increase in volunteer numbers demonstrates the progression routes for young volunteers being supported to take on leadership roles within their communities.

2022 Overview

January brought a difficult start to the year for the Sector as there was a very significant increase in Covid-19 infections. This greatly impacted day to day service delivery in a very practical way for the first real time since the pandemic began. There were significant numbers of staff out with Covid-19 as well as young people and volunteers. This impacted the usual routine which marks the beginning of each new year in every Community Youth Project. The ordinary tasks of consent form distribution & completion and planning was greatly impaired which impacted the re-engagement of young people. The return to projects was slow and it was really difficult to build momentum. This difficulty continued for the first half of the year. It changed slightly with the Easter Programme which allowed scope for young people to travel outside of their own county for the first time in over 2.5 years. It also hailed the welcome return of residential opportunities in Woodstown which gave some young people a restful, fun-filled break away from home, out in nature and beside the sea. This was a marked relief from the restricted movements in place with severe limited access to nature as most young people and projects are located in heavily urbanised areas across Waterford & South Tipperary.

Once again, June saw a sharp increase in Covid-19 infections which impacted the consistency across the projects. However, July & August saw further easing of restrictions and thankfully the return to the more "traditional" Summer Programme which afforded projects opportunities to expand and increase group numbers and return to more collaborative ways of working. The energy generated by this solidified relationships, hugely increased staff energy and morale and saw laughter, lightness and fun return in abundance to the centres the projects are located in. September facilitated the return to "ordinary" group sizes which was welcomed by some but difficult for others. The deterioration in some young people's mental well-being and the impact of social isolation became more evident with some young people reluctant to return to "larger" group sizes. However, the momentum harnessed with the Summer Programme laid the foundations for the reconnecting, re-engagement and rebuilding that was very necessary across the sector. The Autumn & Winter months fostered a return to "normal" with all restrictions lifted and a gentle but steady and consistent engagement with young people possible for the first time in nearly 3 years. December saw another increase in Covid-19 infections as well as other respiratory infections which impacted staff availability and impacted service delivery on the run up to the Christmas Programme. This was a real challenge for staff as they enjoy this time of year but it is also a crucial support to young people for whom this is a particularly difficult time of year. Overall it was another learning year, full of innovation, crisis management with a focus on rebuilding and strengthening projects across the sector.

Staff & Sector

This was another very challenging year for the staff and the sector as they tried to navigate the changing yet ongoing requirements and restrictions due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. In the first half of the year in particular the smaller group size alongside the complexity of need placed a heavy burden on staff both paid and voluntary. There was an acknowledgment of a shift in focus from Youth Work to more Youth Support Work during the past 2.5 years and staff worked diligently yet slowly and gently to facilitate a return to more Youth Work focussed programmes. Refocussing also highlighted the huge lack of other services available to support young people who were dealing with high levels of anxiety as well as other mental health issues. Staff continued to advocate for additional supports

where appropriate. In tandem with supporting the young people and volunteers WSTCYS tried to put some more effective support measures in place for paid staff during the year. This included the WSTCYS Staff Self-care and Well-being Calendar of Events which comprised different workshops around identified interests such as Intuitive Eating, Mindfulness, Food for Mood as well as more active events such as Walk & Talk in Tramore and Cahir and Hiking in Mahon Falls. It also included the launch of the WSTCYS Book Club which met bi-monthly and had 2 in person events (Breakfast & Lunch).

The ongoing issue of staff recruitment and retention was a huge challenge this year. With over 15 recruitment campaigns taking place across the sector resulting in some projects having to be re-advertised more than twice. It was notable there was a particular difficulty in recruiting in the South Tipperary area for new posts with the new Cluain Meala UBU. Due to the staff turnover it meant that in 2022 there was 13 new staff to the sector with less than 6 months experience in the post. This impacted the development of the sector as there was nearly one new person if not more at the start of each sectoral meeting. However, the sector was able to meet in person for the first time in nearly 2.5 years in March in Cahir. The meeting focussed on reconnecting, re-establishing trust and reviewing people's collective experience of working during the last few years. The discussion was in-depth, heartfelt, insightful and clearly captured the impact of the Pandemic experienced by young people, volunteers, communities and staff. It was also acknowledged the dip in energy and motivation levels amongst staff but the meeting gave a great boost to energy and staff morale with a renewed optimism for the coming months.

The footfall of support was heavy across the sector in terms of practice development due to the high levels of relatively new staff in key posts and projects. Additional training and support opportunities were identified and delivered with and to staff over the year. These included;

- 2 Practice Development Days in Woodstown RAC
- 4 Restorative Practice Training Days
- First Aid Responders Training
- Fire Safety Training
- 10 Sectoral Meetings
- Practice Development Meetings (project-level, ongoing on needs basis)

Despite the significant changeover within the sector the excellent peer support structure remained and provided great support especially to the newer staff during the year. The staff also began the task of reviewing the sectoral meeting structure with a view to ensuring its relevance and effectiveness given the huge developments across the sector going forward.

Key Strategic Developments

- March Around Ireland – step challenge continued this year with a collective agreement from young people involved in all the projects across the sector to donate all monies raised to the emerging (at that time) Ukrainian Humanitarian Aid Crisis.
- The Cahir CYP completed their evidence folders for the NQSF which were submitted successfully to TETB.
- WWETB & TETB – All projects completed and submitted all the UBU Reports and Plans and participated in the PPRM's throughout the year with the relevant Youth Officer. Overall the meetings went very well and afforded the project staff opportunity to highlight achievements and identify gaps and challenges as well as areas for development. In Waterford, the meetings were less frequent due to Youth Officer leave and recruitment process to hire an interim ETBYO. An informal meeting was subsequently held with the interim WWETBYO and Head of Adult Education with WWETB with responsibility for Youth Work provisions which allowed projects to highlight gaps and advocate for additional resources.
- An open call for submissions for 2 new greenfield sites, one in West Waterford and one in Clonmel were made by DCEDIY through WWETB and TETB. WSTCYS made submissions for both sites and were successful in securing two new UBU Projects. The submission process was detailed and the feedback was extremely positive on both. Additional applications had to be drafted for each project alongside a detailed set-up cost application. A recruitment process was initiated and a successful outcome obtained for West Waterford with the new project starting in September. It took to year-end to secure staff for the Cluain Meala project in South Tipperary.

- WWETB sought Expressions of Interests in relation to the latest round of Resilience and Effectiveness Grants. WSTCYS applied on behalf of the North Suburbs and Millennium CYP's for patio's and for the Dungarvan & Shy CYP's in relation to new windows and doors. All 4 applications were successful.
- After an initially unsuccessful recruitment campaign the new second worker post was filled with Farran Park CYP in September. This was a very significant and exciting development which allowed the project to expand service provision.

WSTCYS participated on the Youth Work Ireland Counselling Sub-Group to learn from federation members from their experience of delivering counselling services to young people within a Youth Work setting. This work is very important as the Board of WSTCYS is hoping to establish a counselling service for young people in the future.

Representatives from the North Suburbs and Management of WSTCYS met with Representatives from Waterford County Council and the Community Safety Partnership of WCC to look at ongoing issues in relation to high levels of anti-social behaviour in the North Suburbs. Ultimately it is hoped the services on offer from WSTCYS in that community could be expanded further but it is absolutely necessary to secure additional/new premises as the Community House severely limits what's possible now as well as being far away from the recent housing expansion in the community. Accessing the Community Youth Project remains challenging due to the location and the safety issues present in the community.



HIGHLIGHTS

- **Axis CYP** – Having the full-time worker in situ for the entire year allowed scope for the expansion and development of service delivery on offer within the project. The first full Summer Programme in 3 years was a fantastic achievement for all involved and incorporated lots of opportunity for young people to get outside their urban neighbourhood and to travel and spend time having fun in nature.
- **Ballybeg CYP** - A key highlight was the highly active and fun Summer Programme which was made possible by the support of volunteers and CE staff within the project. The laughter and fun was contagious and brought much needed lightness back into the project.
- **Cahir CYP** – The project participants embraced the return to the “old normal” due to the restrictions being lifted. This was welcomed by young people as they welcomed the return of some of their friends who had not engaged during lockdown.
- **Clonmel CYP** – The biggest highlight of 2022 was the full lifting of restrictions which enabled the project to have a full and fantastic Summer. The young people were so delighted to be able to mix with their friends and travel to other counties for fun activities.
- **ChillOUT** – The biggest ever Youth Pride in the South East’s history was organised and delivered by ChillOUT Waterford alongside Dungarvan & Clonmel ChillOUT’s. It was a momentous occasion which saw over 150 young people from the LGBTQI+ Community plus their allies join in celebration.
- **Dungarvan CYP** – The ongoing support provided by the project to vulnerable young adults was a highlight this year. In addition, the inclusion of Ukrainian Refugees in the Easter Programme also went very well and was a great learning opportunity for all involved.
- **Farronshoneen Centre Project** – The return of the traditional Summer Programme and working in collaboration with Farran Park CYP was a huge highlight in the projects year. The young people relished their opportunities to mix with other young people and to be in bigger groups again. The recommencement of the Friday Teen Hangout was welcomed by all involved and provided a safe and informal space for young people to spend time together on Friday nights.
- **Farronshoneen CYP** - A highlight from the year would be the return to larger groups and the inter-project collaboration made possible by the easing of restrictions. Securing funding for the second worker post and filling it allowed the project to expand its scope.
- **Frontline** – Re-establishment of Educational Group Work sessions in alternative educational facilities greatly raised the projects profile which led to an increase in referrals. The significant outreach which staff undertook on behalf of the project also led to an increase in referrals and a rebuilding of the project after the drop in numbers due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- **Inner City CYP** - The comprehensive Summer Programme with larger group post-lockdown benefitted young people’s social & emotional development and provided an effective response to social isolation experienced during the previous two years.
- **Manor CYP** – One of the highlights was the viewing party the project held with participants to watch the Nationwide episode which showcased the valuable work the project is involved in with young migrants. Also the Cultural Exhibition in collaboration with the Inner City CYP and the Intercultural Health Hub celebrated young people’s cultures from seven different countries and was a very positive experience for all involved.
- **Millennium CYP** – Young people re-engaging and new young people joining the project was the highlight of the year. The new part-time post also ensured the work of the project was on a more secure footing.
- **North Suburbs CYP** – The new part-time worker helped secure service delivery when they started at the start of the year. This enabled successful outreach to take place and raise the project profile in the ever expanding community.
- **Shy CYP** – The return to larger group size allowed for a great Summer Programme for all involved. The lifting of restrictions also allowed for increased fundraising opportunities and the project held two successful events, one a Bingo Night and the other a Carol Singing Service which raised much needed funds for the project.

ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- Staff recruitment and retention remained a key challenge across the sector. While this issue is evident across the wider Community & Voluntary Sector nationally it did place a strain on service delivery and consistency within WSTCYS. The amount of time and resources that go into each recruitment campaign is significant and at times throughout 2022 we ran campaigns that did not result in a successful outcome leading to re-advertising of various posts. Overall though at the year end, the sector was on a much firmer footing with all posts filled and project staff settling in nicely into projects.
- The cost of living crisis led to an increase in poverty experienced by a much wider base of young people and communities than the service would be used to normally. This placed another strain on the already under-resourced project budgets and the opportunities to fundraise became more challenging overall as the public's disposable income reduced due to rising utility and food costs to mention just a few.
- Even though overall a lot of young people were delighted with the lifting of restrictions and the return to pre-lockdown group formations. For some young people this became increasingly challenging. There was a huge increase in young people experiencing quite severe forms of anxiety exacerbated by the social isolation they experienced during lockdown and tighter restrictions within project settings. This also highlighted the shift in programme emphasis to Youth Support Work which was needed for over 2.5 years but now required a thoughtful and considerate facilitated return to more Youth Work focussed groups & programmes. It also highlighted the lack of adequate mental health supports for young people across the counties and in particular to those in more rural communities.
- Even though volunteer figures did increase in 2022 there is still an overall shortage of adult volunteers available to support the work of the projects in different communities. Also as mentioned above given some groups are smaller, more volunteers are needed to support good practice across the service. Also, volunteer availability is of particular concern earlier in the day which has proved even more difficult to secure volunteers for.

EVEN THOUGH 2022 WAS ANOTHER CHALLENGING YEAR FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITIES TRYING TO COME OUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE CYP'S CONTINUED TO PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN COMMUNITY LIFE. THEY DID SO BY SUPPORTING VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE WHERE THEY WERE AT, LISTENING TO THEIR CONCERNS & FEARS, BUILDING ON THEIR STRENGTHS AND UTILISING THEIR RESILIENCE TO BRING LIFE BACK INTO OUR YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRES. THEY HELD THE ONES WHO WERE FEELING FRAGILE, THEY LEANED INTO THE HOPE OF COVID-19 FINALLY TAKING ITS LEAVE AND HELD BELIEF IN THE POTENTIAL OF WHAT MAY LIE AHEAD. AND THEY DID SO AS MARK SMITH SAID, WITH FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.




YOUTH JUSTICE PROJECTS

In 2022, the seven Youth Justice Projects (YJPs) of WSTCYS worked with a total of 236 young people aged 12 to 18 years across the Project catchment areas in Waterford City, County and part of south Tipperary who were already engaged in and/or at risk of becoming involved in offending and anti-social behaviour in the community. This total number reached was just 10 more than the figure of 226 participants in 2021, reflecting the gradual and often challenging re-building of the Projects' referral and engagement levels almost 3 years into the pandemic. Staff demonstrated tenacity, resilience and creativity in addressing the specific challenges for their catchment area as they came to light over the year. Despite "bumps in the road", our YJPs reached an average of 34 young people per Project over the year (up 2 on 2021) with a range, minimum to maximum, of 25 to 43 young people. There were 177 young men (up 11 on 2021) and 59 young women (down 1 on 2021) engaged during the year. In a familiar trend, the highest proportion of participants (140) were in the 15-17 age range, reflecting the well documented peak age for youth offending in general. 83 young people aged 11-14 were involved, 26 more than in 2021 and a positive indicator of earlier identification and engagement of young people in need of a youth justice response. 13 young people in the 18-21 age range were involved, 11 fewer than in 2021.

An overview of participant data from the 7 Project Annual Reports shows that there were 52 new participants in total who began their engagement in our YJPs in 2022, an average of just over 7 individuals per Project. Of the 236 young people reached, 154 remained involved at the year end. Planned disengagements represented 67% of those whose involvement came to an end in 2022 which is a positive indicator, evidencing that in 2 out of 3 cases, young people successfully completed their planned interventions with the YJP. The Unplanned Disengagement of the remaining third does not mean that no meaningful work was completed with them in the year; rather that the Project's intended interventions with them had not been fully achieved at the time their involvement ceased. 3 of the 7 Projects had no unplanned disengagements at all and the highest number was 12, in a Project where every effort was made to reach/re-engage participants who ultimately proved too hard to reach. Participant data is kept under continuous review in YJPs as part of a wider ongoing evaluation of the reach and effectiveness of Projects in meeting their annual targets and evidencing both successes and challenges over the year. Despite some difficulties impacting optimum operation, including low referral levels in some areas, sporadic or non-engagement by young people and staffing issues, our YJPs succeeded in reaching and, in most cases, exceeding the targets set in the Annual Plans for 2022.

Despite staff change during the year, the Family Support Worker in the EDGE YJP [based in Carrick-on-Suir with outreach to the CYD in Clonmel], supported 26 parents/guardians of young people attached to these YJPs, a reduction of 5 on 2021 figures. In a typical pattern for this work, 24 of the service users were women and 2 were men. **Progress was made in terms of engaging hard to reach parents and related developmental work.** The needs of some families attached to the Projects were complex and the level of work in providing or facilitating a wrap-around response proved considerable in many cases. This included an increased level of crisis intervention which should not come as a surprise, as the pandemic served to compound and deepen the adversity faced by some young people and their families.

Activity and Development Overview 2022: There were a number of changes in the Youth Justice staff team over the year. Eoin Dalton (SWAY), Josephine O' Connor (CYD) and Majella Keating (PACT) left the organisation. The Family Support role in the EDGE/CYD saw 2 staff changes in the year; Dara Arrigan, who had worked in the pilot since its inception, finished up in her role and her successor Fiona Dougliss left the position to take up a different internal opportunity. We thank all departing staff for their contribution to WSTCYS and wish them every success in the future. Staff turnover is always a challenge and the contribution of temporary/sessional staff while recruitment was underway helped to keep things going. The extra effort of existing staff to "hold the fort" was greatly appreciated while we worked to fill the gaps in personnel. Arising from these vacancies, Dave Power came on board in the PACT Project as did Emma Curran in the SWAY and Marty Clare in the CYD. Gavin O' Neill joined the team as the first colleague employed under the expansion of services funding granted in the summer and took up the role as Youth Justice Worker under Boundary Extension funding with the PACT YJP. In a year when recruitment proved very challenging across the board, we were delighted that 3 additional Job Offers were made and accepted by the year end; Emmet Power for TYRE (Boundary Extension), Evelyn Corcoran for new Family Support role in Waterford City, based with the SWAY and Roisin Kennedy for Family Support in EDGE/CYD (commencement date for these new colleagues was set for 11th January 2023). We look forward to the positive energy of change that new staff will bring with them next year and to welcoming them into our Sectoral Team. There were 12 volunteers involved in 2022 (3 males and 9 females). This is a notable drop of 10



from 2021 levels (when the pandemic was at a much more problematic stage and direct work was highly restricted). The loss of volunteers during the “re-building” phase warrants further analysis to understand why volunteers have left and how we can revitalise our community response in our Youth Justice sector. Even where continuity of service is not always compromised when there is a staff team in place, we know that the involvement of local people as volunteers goes beyond simply covering points of contact and unlocks a richness of insight and expertise, connections, pro-social modelling, caring about and positive regard for young people and sustainability of our work. As the saying goes, “it takes a village to raise a child” and volunteers are at the heart of our village.

Writing retrospectively about 2022, it now seems almost incredible that the first quarter of the year saw young people and staff navigating the considerable post-Christmas disruption of the Omicron wave and the resulting “ups and downs” in staff cover, attendance for points of contact and in-person work more generally. Staff worked on re-engaging young people, exploring capacity for and strategies around new referrals and re-building interventions with individuals and groups. The second week of February brought with it a significant relaxation of the restrictions under which the service had been operating for almost 2 years. Most notable here for YJ Workers was the removal of social distancing requirements and the reintroduction of scope to use staff vehicles for work purposes. Moving into the second quarter of the year, the focus was on consolidating progress made in Q1 with the positive opportunity for increased contact that came with the Easter Programme. With most programmes of work now possible through our normal methods, YJPs were finally in a position to offer a variety of interventions to young people on a consistent basis, including 1:1 work, Developmental Group Work, Special Interest Programmes, Education and Employment supports, Drop-In opportunities and more robust multi-agency Casework as restrictions eased and allied services got back to work “in person”.

In the familiar rhythm of the summer months, YJPs focused in the June to August period on winding down term-time interventions and transitioning into the annual Summer Programme. This always involves high contact with young people and opportunities for learning through new experiences and activities, many of which take place out-of-Centre. There was a buzz of anticipation this year in particular; both young people and staff were excited to get back to (almost) normal. September marks what, for youth workers, has the sense of beginning a new year in the work as Summer Programmes come to an end and new routines, opportunities and challenges arise for young people. For our YJPs, this involved focusing on supporting young people with Education/Employment Risks to navigate the return to school or transition to other training courses. There was a need to adjust contact times, reorganise Project schedules and carefully consider how best to form new groups and develop other interventions with insights into needs, risks and strengths that emerged during the Summer Programme. Staff were acutely aware of the ways in which the pandemic had severely disrupted transitions for young people, many of whose progression at key life stages is challenging even without the “lost years” of schooling, courses, second chance options and so on. Strengthening transitions required extra professional effort in 2022 and of course, young people had to “dig deep” in many cases to overcome the impact of the pandemic on their future plans, confidence, mental health and motivation. An added challenge for the YJP Team every September is the early October deadline for Annual Plans for the following year – a considerable piece of work which requires significant stakeholder consultation, analysis and detailed Logic Modelling. Working together, this critical task was discharged to a high standard across the board and the deadline was fulfilled. Young people and staff could settle into a new schedule of work for the closing quarter of the year, looking forward to the opportunities for additional contact and enjoyable seasonal experiences that characterise the Halloween Mid-Term and the run-up to Christmas. 2022 was certainly not without its challenges as the pandemic lingered on and staff changes had to be navigated in several Projects. Together we successfully delivered our Youth Justice response and, as a sector, embodied the resilience which is itself a key outcome we seek to achieve with young people in each and every YJP.

The Sectoral Team Meetings over the year constituted, as always, an important component of WSTCYS’ infrastructure for practice and relationship development, information sharing, fostering mutual connection and camaraderie and enabling peer support. Meetings typically lasted 3 hours with additional time planned for on some occasions. To our delight, only the first of the 7 meetings held in 2022 had to be conducted on Zoom. We could finally see each other in person again in March at the lovely new premises of the TYRE Project in Tramore. After such a long time apart, staff were very happy to be together again in real life and there was time to catch up informally at the Centre before taking a walk on the beach and enjoying lunch together. In a parallel theme to that of the direct work, a focus was maintained throughout the year on staff re-connecting with each other and welcoming new colleagues, through our normal Check-In Rounds, informal conversation at refreshment breaks, walks in the People’s Park and Tra na mBo in Bonmahon and “breaking bread” in different venues. Depending on our sectoral priorities at any given time, meetings were designed to create space also for reflection, discussion or updates, including around such themes as challenges in practice, Hopes,

Fears and Expectations as staff teams change and engaging with the requirements of the national YJP Evaluation process being rolled out by Research Matters. The WhatsApp group established in 2020 remained in place over the year as an additional communication platform with the YJ team. As the team continues to expand into 2023, our Sectoral Team meetings will be a valuable space which we will adapt in accordance with emerging development needs under change.

Governance and oversight structures, compliance routines and reporting timeframes to the Funds Administration Unit were largely consistent with 2021. Work was completed to deadline on a substantial suite of quarterly and annual reporting, ESF Returns, Participant Verification Checks, Non-Financial (Participant) Data, Annual Performance Reports and Annual Plans. The combined efforts of staff in frontline, finance and management roles alongside the ongoing input from key stakeholders at Project Committee level meant that the organisation continued to meet operational requirements. The compliance workload is considerable and we should anticipate an uptick in this as Site Visits by various bodies in the ESF+ cascade resume over time after a pandemic hiatus. Good working relationships continued nationally with the Funds Administration Unit, the Youth Crime Policy section of the Department of Justice, the Best Practice Development Team and the Youth Justice Sub-Group of Youth Work Ireland.





HIGHLIGHTS IN 2022:

TYRE YJP;

In Q1 of 2022, the TYRE Project relocated its premises to Riverstown Business Park, sharing a space with the East County Waterford Community Based Drugs Initiative. The new premises was named "Seapoint Youth and Community Centre". This shared space has proven to be a very valuable resource to the community, offering an integrated service to those in need and creating an enhanced wrap-around response for young people and their families. Both Projects have collaborated over 2022 in group work with young people, information stands in the community and an Open Day. Although young people were apprehensive about moving from Pond Road to Seapoint Youth and Community Centre, the new space has proven to be a big success in their eyes.

CYD YJP;

We completed a Dail visit with a Traveller girls group to meet the first Traveller in either house of representatives - Senator Eileen Flynn. This involved a tour by Senator Flynn, sitting in on a Dail debate and discussion and lunch with the Senator.

EDGE YJP;

3 young people have successfully and meaningfully engaged in the Social Studies PLC in Waterford College of Further Education, with plans to continue onto 3rd level. In terms of the Family Support strand, advocacy work enabled some young people to access services/educational places which may not have happened otherwise.

BALL YJP;

Of the 32 young people engaged in 2022, 29 remained in or returned to education, training or employment (3 young men engaged in training after 3-4 years of absence from the education system).

DAY YJP;

The Project held a late evening soccer league in Q4. 7 young men aged 15+ played along with different local Gardaí each week. It was something the older participants could look forward to on the dark evenings in November. A new kit was sponsored and boots and equipment sourced.

SWAY YJP;

New workers held the Project well through a re-building phase and connected with current participants, engaging them in many successful programmes throughout the year. This included a very enjoyable Summer Programme and seasonal interventions. In addition to this, the Project received funding for a Family Support Worker which is very welcome and needed in order to provide a wraparound support service for the young people and families engaged with the SWAY.

PACT YJP;

Young people participated in a Youth Exchange. During the first leg, 14 Finnish young people came to Ireland and stayed in Woodstown. A detailed programme was designed and all young people enjoyed the experience. For the second leg, 10 young people got the opportunity to travel to Finland and experience the Finnish culture. The young people got on very well with each other and made friendships for life. It was an experience of a lifetime and one we will never forget.

CHALLENGES IN 2022:

TYRE YJP;

Lack of awareness of the service and unwillingness to engage from some new referrals and families. Due to Covid-19, the Project had to work remotely with the young people. A number of participants disengaged and the Project did not receive as many referrals as would have been expected in normal circumstances. Significant effort was invested in outreach and promotional activities in 2022 to address these challenges.

CYD YJP;

The use of vapes by Project participants in 2022 showed a marked increase from previous years. Because vapes are less conspicuous than cigarettes, the young people would be vaping on buses and in the Centre (sticking their head in their jacket and taking a few drags). As a consequence, staff spent a lot of time addressing this issue and some young people seemed happier not to come into the Centre than come in and not vape. There is also a concern that some of the vapes can hold drugs in them.

EDGE YJP;

Due to staff changes and the levels of crisis experienced by some of the families, the Family Support aspect of the YJP has been challenging in 2022.

BALL YJP;

Challenging attitudes and norms within the community where criminality is a way of life and condoned by family members.

DAY YJP;

Given that the DAY Project has a high number of young Travellers in the project, supporting them through presenting issues while being respectful and mindful of their experiences and culture can be a challenge. Such issues include mental health, gender roles in society, education and literacy levels and animal welfare.

SWAY YJP;

The Project remained in a re-building phase in 2022 and continued to experience the difficulties and fall-out of Covid-19, including a notable level of participant disengagement. Staff turnover in 2022 compounded this already difficult phase.

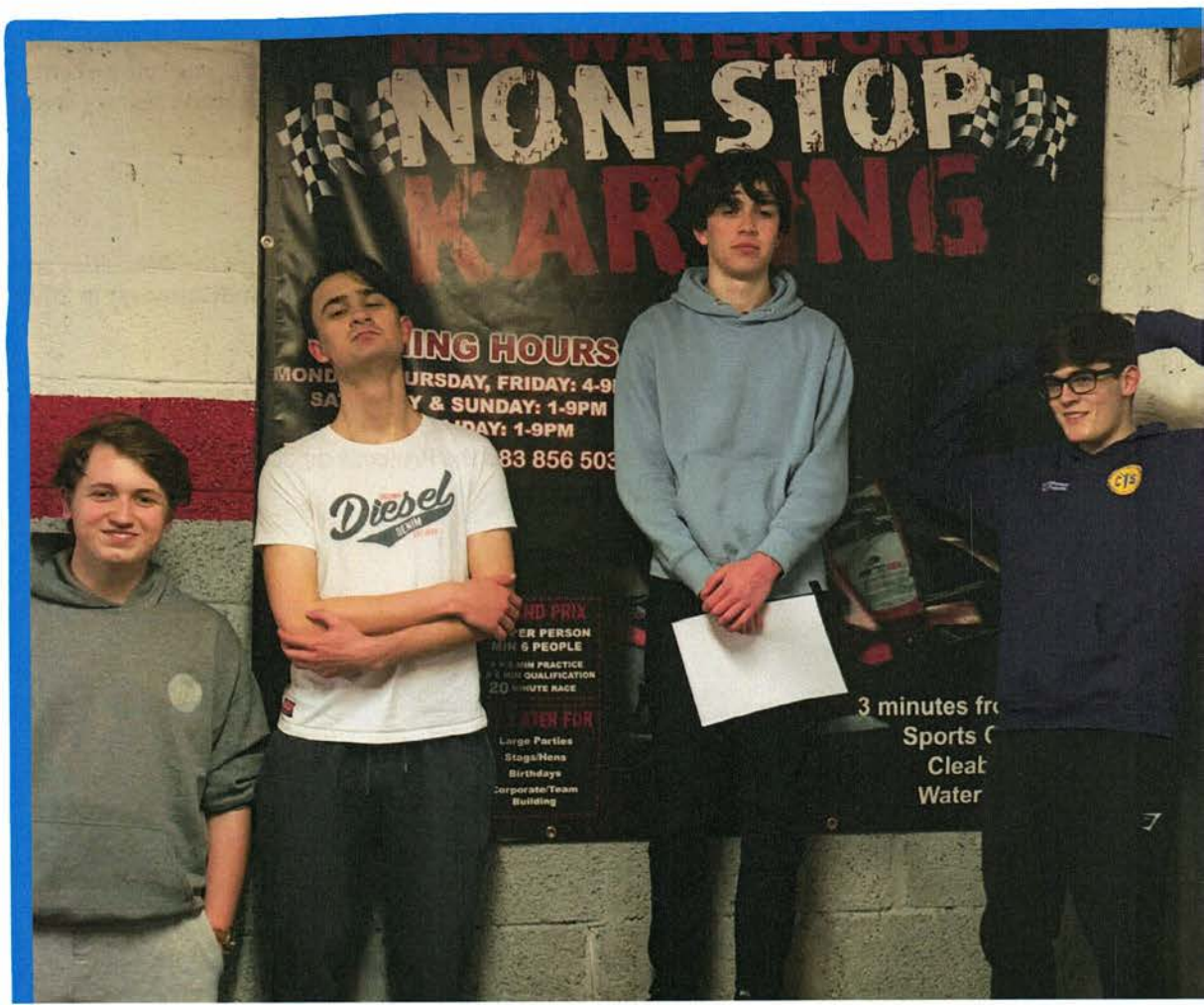
PACT YJP;

Staff change and the recruitment gap adversely impacted the Project's capacity.



Key Sectoral Developments in 2022:

- Sectoral participation in the roll-out of the national evaluation of YJPs by Research Matters (Focus Groups, engagement with stakeholder Survey process, selection of EDGE Project as 1 of 8 sites nationally for more detailed involvement in the evaluation and follow-up discussion at Sectoral Team meeting).
- It was confirmed by the Department of Justice that the Projects would no longer be referred to as Garda Youth Diversion Projects. The Garda element was dropped, leaving just the YJP descriptor going forward in line with the Youth Justice Strategy. This development is linked in part with the expansion of the Projects nationally into Early Intervention work with children under the age of criminal responsibility.
- Contributed to completion of survey by Tusla on their level of involvement with YJPs, which emerged from the cross-departmental expectations within the Youth Justice Strategy around how agencies can improve their engagement with the YJP target group.
- A hugely significant development for our Youth Justice Sector in 2022 was the approval and confirmation of funding to expand our YJP response across WSTCYS' region. ALL Expressions of Interest submitted in July 2021 were successful in attracting the full amount of funding requested which will enable WSTCYS to deliver a range of new and/or extended responses under the new Youth Justice Strategy 2021 – 2027. This entails the employment of 6 new full-time staff to join existing teams; 2 to deliver Early Intervention Work with children aged 8 – 11 years, 3 to work on Boundary Extension of existing catchment areas and 1 additional Family Support Worker. 1 of these posts was filled by year end with recruitment in progress for others.
- Strong attendance by our YJ team at the YJP National Conference held in Croke Park on 9.11.22; 12 out of 16 staff attended with the Sector Lead.
- Early Intervention Working Group established internally between Sector Lead and staff of BALL and DAY Projects, where the 2 new Early Intervention roles will be working, to explore and develop our approach to beginning work with 8-11 year-old children with identified needs and behaviours which place them at risk of future offending.



YOUTH INFORMATION SERVICE

2022 was the European Year of Youth which was celebrated across all the Youth Information Centres in Waterford, Dungarvan & Clonmel. Youth Information supports young people aged 12-24 years of age to identify opportunities in the areas of Employment, Education and Training. Youth Information Centres dealt with 4,752 queries throughout 2022. 64% of young people that accessed the service were over 18 years of age.

Youth Information continues to offer an online out of hours' service through the National Youth Information Chat service. The service runs Monday – Friday from 4-8pm with Youth Information workers across Ireland. This service is a National collaborative project between Youth Work Ireland, Crosscare, YMCA & Spunout. Waterford YIC chatted with 147 young people throughout their shifts in 2022 with Education, Social Protection & Life in General being the top three subjects that young people sought information on.

Youth Information is a multiplier for the Eurodesk network which connects services across Europe. This is an area for development across the services and in 2022 Youth Information was awarded the Quality Label through Erasmus+. This award allows us to support young people to Volunteer through the European Solidarity Program in different projects throughout Europe and to host Volunteers of our own in the future. The program is open to young people aged 18-30 years of age and a great opportunity we can offer to young people that we work with across Waterford & South Tipperary. As part of European Year of Youth two events were organised by Youth Information to highlight the European Opportunities that were available to young people. The first event held in May 2022 was attended by 120 young people in City Hall. Grace O'Sullivan, MEP for the South East of Ireland, spoke about the climate justice work she carried out as young person and how it shaped her future. We also heard from WSTCYS members from Chillout, Farronshoneen and Waterford Comhairle as they presented at the event.

The second event was held in The Theatre Royal in December with 350 young people in attendance. This was a collaborative event with Europe Direct & SLI Waterford. Young people from Waterford Comhairle and PACT Youth Diversion Project spoke about their experience in European and Climate Action Projects. Both events were youth led and attendees loved hearing from their peers on their own experiences.

Waterford, Dungarvan & Clonmel YIC worked alongside the Targeted Youth Employability Program TYEIS to develop CVs, Increase IT Skills and develop their ability to identify and apply for a range of employment and training opportunities.

Clonmel Youth Information, in conjunction with the local Community Gardaí, held a Halloween workshop with young people highlighting the importance of personal safety and Halloween. Dungarvan Youth Information held their popular Apprenticeship workshop in collaboration with WWETB.

CHALLENGES

Youth Information continues to adapt and deliver a comprehensive and supportive service to the young people we work with. This at times can be difficult with the limited resources in the regional service. Identifying young people that are not linked with services is proving difficult.

HIGHLIGHTS

The time to move campaign spoke with 350 young people in the month of October. The road show met with young people in schools, training centres and alternative education. Letting young people know that they could take part in these Volunteer opportunities, travel and gain valuable experience free of charge was a high point.

WOODSTOWN RESIDENTIAL AND ACTIVITY CENTRE

Woodstown Residential and Activity Centre (WRAC) provides a safe and secure environment of natural beauty, located on Woodstown Strand, which helps young people achieve a range of personal and social developmental outcomes through the methodologies of residential group work. The unique opportunities afforded by this special type of youth work have led WRAC to have a special place in the hearts and minds of young people within WSTCYS, and within the wider Waterford and South Tipperary communities.

It was lovely to reopen fully, and to welcome back young people! We had a very busy time in 2022 with over 900 people staying at Woodstown, all of them seeking rest and relaxation after a difficult few years, but also needing to mix and socialise again. Woodstown provided a safe, secure space where people could just 'flop', start to heal themselves, and simply be with other people again.

The Woodstown team (including 3 volunteers, 2 CE workers, and 2 Youth Workers) ran the 'Pathways Youth Employability Programme', supporting 31 hard-to-reach young people to build their confidence, develop friendships, and (re)connect with the worlds of work, education and training. The Programme ran for 15 months starting in January 2022, and over 70% of the participants are now (by early 2023) engaged in meaningful work or training.



Young people from the PATHWAYS Youth Employability Programme Youth Exchange with Finland at Woodstown

Woodstown was also the hub of activity for European Youth Work within WSTCYS. Over 250 young people and Youth Workers participated in a total of 16 Youth Exchanges and Youth Worker trainings, many of them held at Woodstown, but also in such far flung places as Finland, Spain and the Czech Republic. In helping to develop a framework for European activities within WSTCYS, Woodstown has given young people the space to dream, to adventure, to make friends, to learn, and to just have some fun!



Young people developing perspective



Young people from Finland, Cyprus, Armenia and Ireland at Koli National Park, Central Finland, August 2022

The main challenge for Woodstown in 2022 was attempting to raise funding for the Pathways Programme to continue in 2023, but this led to a growing realisation that we were running up against a brick wall. No matter that the need is immense and growing, we were unable to secure long-term funding. WSTCYS stepped into the breach again, and provided resources that have enabled the Programme to continue until the end of March 2023.

The main highlight for Woodstown in 2022 was the increasing number of young people who have taken risks and made friends across cultural and physical boundaries. We've had people from so many different countries (from Afghanistan to Armenia, and from Syria to Senegal, and most countries in between), who've joined together and been present with each other, and this has created so much laughter and happiness and joy. The intermingling of cultures has broken so many boundaries, and provided huge opportunities for young people to realise that, actually, we're all pretty much the same.



Learning how to make 'Living Statues' at Woodstown during the 'Caring through Sharing' Training Course

PATHWAYS YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

Young people from across Waterford city and county participated in the Pathways Youth Employability Programme, (funded by the DCEDIY through the TYESI Initiative, as well as by Leargas and WSTCYS) which took place at various locations, including Woodstown, the Manor and Dungarvan. Using youth work methodologies as the core element of the overall Programme, two youth workers supported young people who weren't in work, education or training to develop relationships and friendships, and to build their confidence and core skills, thus enabling participants to realise that there are pathways towards a brighter future.

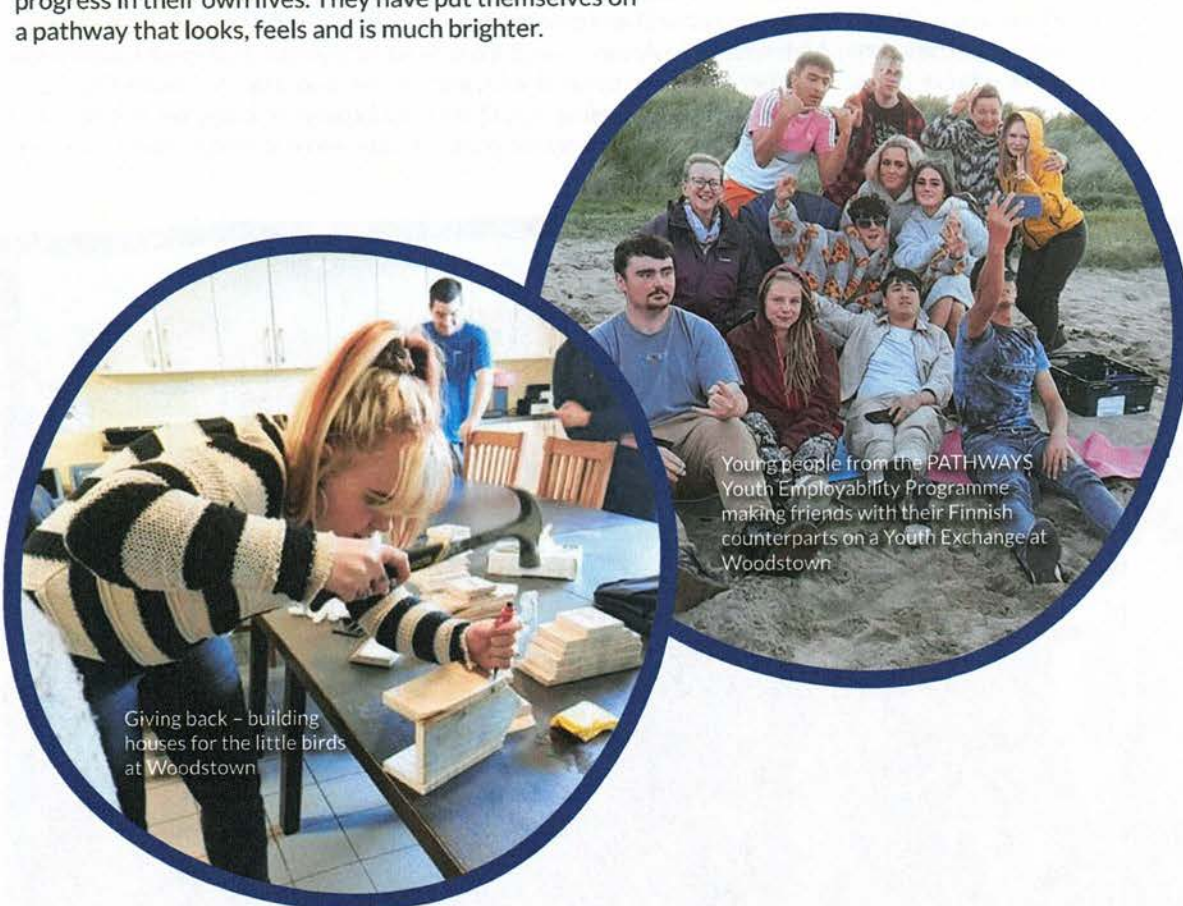
31 young people took part in a mix of small and large group work, as well as one-to-one work with the youth workers. The process worked on voluntary participation and started where the young people were at. The group slowly became a team, learning from and looking after each other. The Programme focused on improving the core social skills, such as communication, relationships, emotional intelligence and problem solving. The participants learned about their strengths and types of intelligence, uncovered their values and personalities, all before setting realistic and achievable goals for themselves.

Through developing an extensive network of support that included the Community Youth and Youth Diversion Projects, the Youth Information Centres, WWETB Training Centres, Waterford College of Further Education and the South Eastern Technological University, young people were able to see what was available to them and to sample the possibilities that are out there.

Participants planted trees in Tipperary, met the students at the Waterford Training Centre, saw the horticultural work at Kildalton Agricultural College, and gained certificates in ICDL (Irish Computer Driving Licence), First Aid, Manual Handling, Skills Summary and Erasmus+ Youth Pass.

The young people also travelled to Finland and Cyprus on Youth Exchanges, and hosted groups of young people from Cyprus, Armenia and Finland back home at Woodstown, where we all learned the power of friendship and dancing!

At the start of 2023, over 70% of the participants are currently in employment, education or training, and they have used the space and time provided through Pathways, to take decisions and make progress in their own lives. They have put themselves on a pathway that looks, feels and is much brighter.



Giving back – building houses for the little birds at Woodstown

Young people from the PATHWAYS Youth Employability Programme making friends with their Finnish counterparts on a Youth Exchange at Woodstown

CHILLOUT

Our sustained and continuous direct youth work with LGBTI+ young people, their supporters and allies now consists of five weekly groups. In Waterford City we run a 10-13's group, ChillOUT minis, a 14-17's group, ChillOUT Sundays and an 18-24's group ChillOUT plus. Our West Waterford group in the Dungarvan Community Youth Project and our South Tipperary group in the Clonmel Community Youth Project also continue to go from strength to strength. Groups meet weekly and take part in seasonal and additional programmes as needs emerge. As an organisation we engage with about 65 LGBTI+ young people on a weekly basis, over 200 individual LGBTI+ young people annually and hundreds through our outreach to organisations and schools.

The strength of the community involvement with ChillOUT remained strong in 2022, while finding, supporting and maintaining a team of community volunteers is an ongoing challenge it is the dedication and commitment of the volunteer team that keeps the doors of our LGBTI+ groups open particularly on weekends. We were supported by eight incredible local volunteers and three students on placement in 2022.

In collaboration with the Trans Equality Network Ireland, we sit on the steering group of Trans Waterford which met three times in 2023.

ChillOUT Reach, WSTCYS was successful in securing funding for a short term community development project that took over a seven-month duration in the first half of 2022. The project conducted and delivered a needs analysis of 18-24-year-old LGBTI+ people through a community consultation and stakeholder engagement, it researched the needs of the LGBTI+ community in the target area through desk research, community consultation and stakeholder engagement. The project initiated, lead, developed and evaluated a significant outreach project across the target area to meet the aims of the project, this included twenty outreach visits to existing services and organisations, leading on from each visit where relationships developed and there was interest from the group the project delivered training and supported the group to visibly show their support of the LGBTI+ community. The project built a database of existing inclusive services and organisations and those seeking support to work towards being safe spaces. We ran two rural pride celebration events in Cahir and Kilmacthomas, promoted the project throughout its duration on social and traditional media and evaluated and identified recommendations for further action in the area. The project co-designed and distributed widely LGBTI+ info, information about services and groups available to people and branded visual materials for services and locations to display to show they are safe and inclusive spaces for the LGBTI+ community. The project also piloted two new community responses with LGBTI+ adults aged 18 to 24 years in two key geographic and community based locations across the target area by drawing and building on the experience of the organisation in delivering this work in Waterford City.

"We See You" LGBTI+ Visibility project was funded from Dormant Accounts funding from the Waterford City & County Council in 2022. Through this project, we researched, identified and created a database of existing community infrastructure and general practitioners. Connected with existing community infrastructure, identified and promoted those who are inclusive and welcoming of the LGBTI+ community. We collated and provided resource packs to identified services & spaces which included information on sign posting to staff training and support with policy development, information on local services, key reading material for staff development and physical materials to display openly in premises to signal their support. We researched, identified and collected information resources to provide at information and public events, hosted an open information stall in county wide existing community infrastructure location and directly supported the local community with visibility materials at a local vigil. In addition, we were able to support the videography for the return of the Pride march in person in Waterford in June 2022, this record builds the recording of Waterford's LGBTI+ communities social history.

Pride of the Déise & Youth Committee - In June, for the Pride if the Déise festival our Manor Street Youth & Community Centre became a hub for young people organising, facilitating events and celebrating LGBTI+ Pride. We hosted an organisation wide Pre Parade Breakfast with 50 attendees who also marched in the pride parade and the 12 strong youth committee hosted a whole day youth centre take over for separate age groups on the Sunday, there were over 150 young people in attendance on the day for the "Gayrea51" alien themed pride parties and it was a testament to the hard work of the youth committee over many months to bring their dream to life in person for the first time.

Waterford City, Clonmel and Dungarvan groups travelled together to Dublin Pride for the first time ever in 2023. Following a very early start and almost trains, planes and automobiles we landed in Youth Work Irelands headquarters for the pride breakfast and alongside all the other National LGBTI+ youth groups we proudly carried the Waterford and Tipperary flags through the streets of Dublin to a chorus of celebration and cheering. It was an incredible day for all our members, staff and volunteers after a long time of isolation. We were very proud to cheer on 1 young person who spoke on stage at the Dublin Pride post march event in Merrion square, Dublin. Their speech went out to thousands of people and put the voices and experiences of LGBTI+ young people on the National Stage.

The ChillOUT marquee headed off to Clonmel Community Pride in August where we had an info stand and celebrated with the team in Clonmel for their local festivities, ChillOUT Clonmel members were front and centre of the first ever Pride March there.

6 Young people took part in BelongTo's "Our Social Media" Campaign photoshoot and media training in Dublin.

1 young person represented ChillOUT at The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation (IGLYO) Annual members conference in Brussels, before departing they consulted with members to bring their thoughts and opinions to the meeting.

Through 2022, we engaged with BelongTo's new Safe and Supportive Services pilot, gave feedback to researchers, made recommendations and worked on our own organisations self-assessment and evidence gathering.

In April, 26 young people from ChillOUT wrote script for and recorded their "See Us Now" Awareness raising Video project over a wet and windy residential weekend, the group looks forward to launching this video in 2023.

In 2022 we were delighted to deliver a project which had been delayed due to covid, the research development and facilitation of two online trainings to Family Support Staff. This training aimed to equip and build the capacity of family support staff in existing services to meet the needs of the families of LGBTI+ young people. 22 staff from 18 different organisations took part. This project was funded through the LGBTI+ Youth Strategy to deliver on the action to build capacity of professionals who work with LGBTI+ young people. This training joins the "Listen Up" booklet and the "See Us Now" video as the third project and resource we have delivered under this action.

The Mind & Body of Action - Ireland x Croatia Youth Exchange, 29th Oct – 5th Nov

In a spooky Halloween week, LGBT+ young people from ChillOUT LGBTI+ Youth Group packed their bags and headed off to Croatia to meet with their partners Queer Sport Split and CKM Dubrovnik for an action packed week of discovering a new place, meeting new people, sharing new experiences and making sense of old ones. Beginning in Split in the North of the country we were lucky to meet with Petar from Queer Sport Split, Split Pride and the LGBT Centar in Split which has an incredible location within the palace walls in central Split. There we divided our time between the LGBT centar and outdoor workshops exploring what it means to be active in our communities, how we look after ourselves in struggles and what it means to be a visibly queer person in Ireland and in Croatia.

After reflection and learning in Split we boarded a bus which took us to Dubrovnik, a new city in the South and a new context. Here we met our friends Mia and Božo from CKM Dubrovnik who organised EXPO22. EXPO22 was a collective of higher education institutions and services for young people including Euro Desk and the European Union. The Mind and Body of Action project hosted the INCLUSION corner of the Euro Zone at the EXPO22 and we were visited by approximately 4000 secondary school students and their teachers over two days. We shared information about our project here and built a rainbow wall of support with attendees answering the question "How can we make Croatia a more equal place for the LGBT+ community".

Stand Up Week 2022

Stand Up week which is a partnership campaign week in Irish Secondary Schools between the Department of Education and BelongTo who are a national organisation supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland. Stand Up Awareness Week is a time for post-primary schools, youth services, and Youth Reach in Ireland to join us and take a stand against homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

We work closely with schools in our area throughout the year in lots of ways including delivering teacher training, delivering workshops and supporting school and student initiatives. In 2022 we were delighted to be asked to come to Ardscoil Na Mara, St Angela's Ursuline, St Paul's Community College, Abbey Community College and Newtown School.

We delivered 11 LGBT+ Awareness workshops and saw approximately 369 students to support young people with the information and space to ask key questions that they can use to make their schools safe and happy places for LGBT+ students and that any bullying behaviour will be challenge and reported. We have now delivered this workshop to every single student in Ardscoil Na Mara. We were delighted to raise the flag with St Pauls newly established Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA) group and look forward to seeing them again soon. We saw the 1st-3rd year groups and 4th-6th years for great chats in St Angela's including a focus on how we use our power and how we feel powerful.

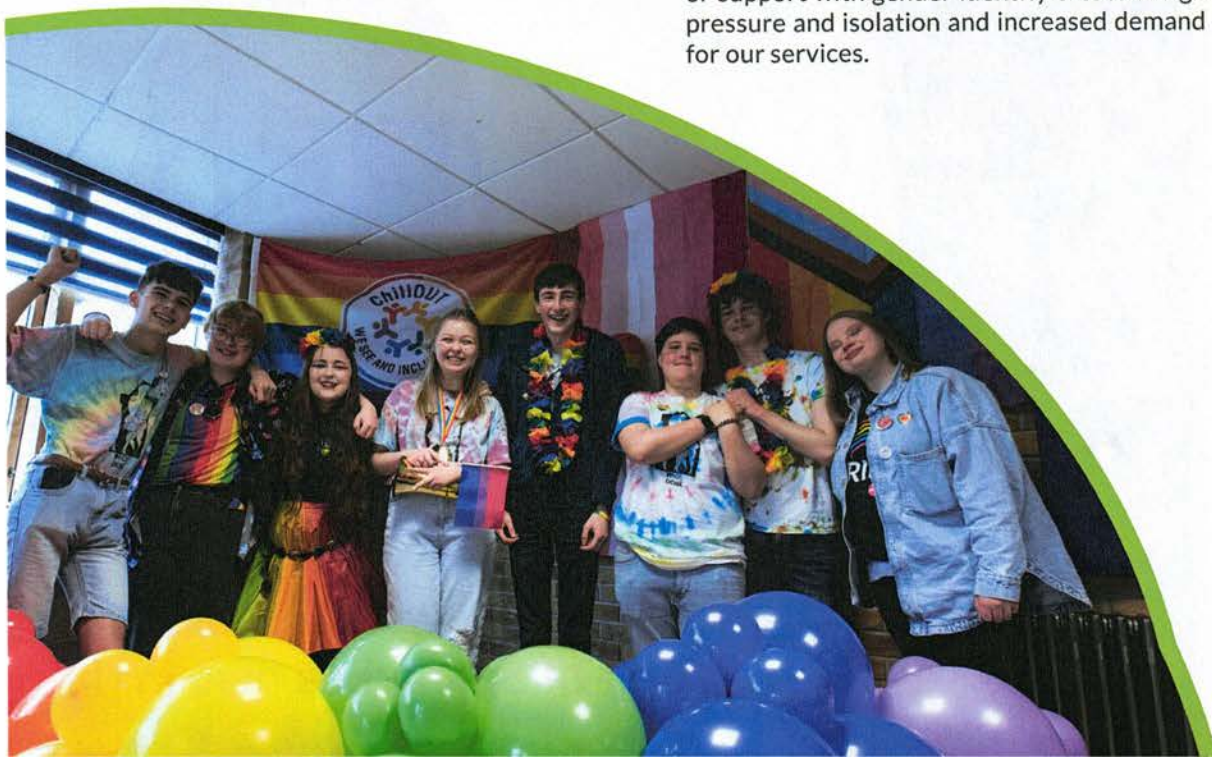
Towards the end of 2023 new Parents Support Programme was funded and established in collaboration with Tusla family support champions, family support networks and the Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre. This work aims to fill the gap in specific supports experienced by parents of LGBTI+ young people.

HIGHLIGHTS

Young people running the biggest in person Pride event the South East has ever seen was a huge boost to the groups and a recognition of the trust and interest LGBTI+ young people have in participating in our service. 2022 also provided the first opportunities for all our ChillOUT groups to meet and attend Dublin Pride together.

ISSUES / CHALLENGES

Increasing negative experiences of Homophobia, Transphobia and discrimination faced by the LGBTI+ community Nationally has a detrimental effect on LGBTI+ young people's wellbeing. This shows up in our work in young people being afraid to come out, familial rejection and worrying about being visibly queer in public. For Transgender young people under the age of 18 and their families the ongoing absence of any healthcare service or support with gender identity created huge pressure and isolation and increased demand for our services.



WATERFORD COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Comhairle na nÓg are the child and youth councils in the 31 local authorities of the country which give children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies through participation and consultation.

Comhairle na nÓg is for young people under the age of 18 years of age. As young people they have no voting mechanism to have their voice heard. Comhairle allows them to have a voice on services, policies and issues that affect them in their local area.

27 young people formed the Comhairle group for 2022 representing schools and youth groups from across the county. Young people from all over the county worked on the Topic of 'Relationship and Sexual Education' that was voted on at the AGM in 2021.

The group participated in the YES -Sexual Health training program devised by Youth Work Ireland. Young people from schools across the county were surveyed on their thoughts on the main issues and concerns in how RSE is taught in schools. At the 2022 AGM, which was held in The Park Hotel, Dungarvan in October, 105 young people from across the county completed consultation and asked their views and opinion on RSE in Schools and the Community. The group decided to continue to work on the topic of Relationship & Sexual Education in Schools and the Community for 2023. The consultation process will inform the group on where to develop the topic further.



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Meeting of Seanad na nÓg in the S

The Neighbourwood Project took place in March 2022 where young people, Volunteer and the local community planted 2500 Native trees. In July 2022 Comhairle members invited local councillors to visit the site in Carraiganore and present a Call to Action to Waterford city and county council to commit to providing land for future Native Tree Trails for a further five years. Members of Comhairle presented their Native Tree Trail project at the YOUR Europe Youth Event, Environmental, Have your Say Youth Event and & Waterford PPN AGM.

Comhairle attended a number of National Events including Dail na nÓg, Leargas European Year of Youth Youthfest and member consultations. Comhairle members were consulted on local and national issues including the Waterford Local Safety Plan and National Drug use among people. Waterford Comhairle held representation on the Irish Secondary School Union ISSU & European Youth Assembly.



HIGHLIGHTS

This year marks 100 of the Seanad in Ireland and our chairperson represented Waterford in Seanad na nÓg. Etse chaired the second half of the day and added her name to the history books of Ireland.

CHALLENGES

Increasing representation from young people from diverse and seldom heard communities. There is a gender imbalance within the group and increased involvement from young males is needed to get a balanced viewpoint on local and national issues for young people



EUROPEAN YOUTH WORK

The European Youth Work element of WSTCYS's work is growing at a significant rate as it seeks to add value to the core work of Youth Projects in Waterford and Tipperary. The international trips provide opportunities for young people to spread their wings and broaden their horizons, to build their confidence and to make new friends from other countries, and to see parts of the world that they could only dream about.

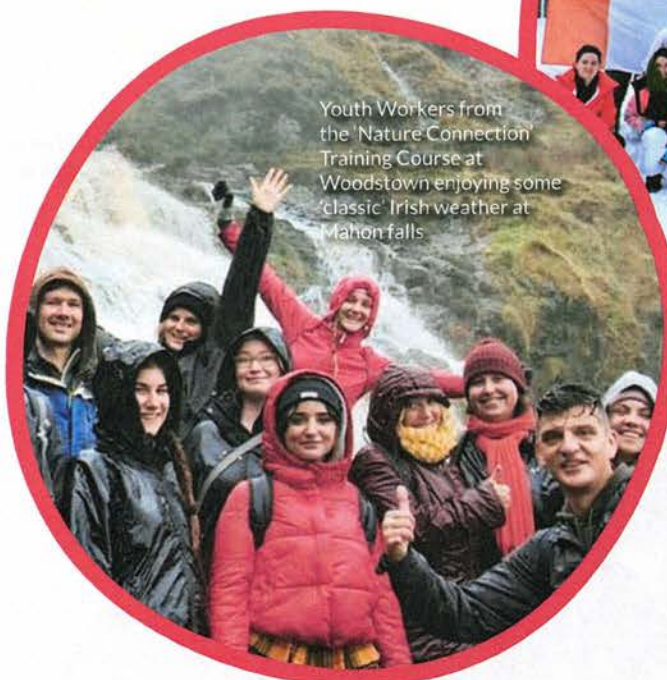
As the world opened up again in early 2022, WSTCYS provided the platform for young people to connect and engage with the wider world, and to discover new strengths through developing an understanding of their European identity.

Over 220 young people from all across Europe participated in Youth Exchanges run by WSTCYS. In addition, we partnered with other Youth Work organisations to provide training opportunities for 38 staff members from several countries to improve their skills and learn from each other about how Youth Work takes place all across the continent.

During 2022, WSTCYS focused on increasing its collaborative work with key partner organisations, and we completed the Be Environmental! Strategic Partnership Project with colleagues from Spain, Finland and Armenia. In addition to these countries, we worked with partner organisations from other countries such as Romania, Cyprus, Croatia, Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, and the Czech Republic.

Growing out from its hub at Woodstown, various WSTCYS Projects participated in European Youth Work activities - the PACT Youth Justice Project, ChillOut and the Pathways Youth Employability Programme have all held Youth Exchanges with partner organisations in different European countries during the year. The Youth Information Centre has started to create an offering for young people through the development of the Discover EU Inclusion Programme, and WSTCYS has also recently become a European Voluntary Service sending organisation.

As 2023 progresses, the opportunities are available for those who are ready to take them. The options are there, and the outcomes for young people are powerful.



Youth Workers from the 'Nature Connection' Training Course at Woodstown enjoying some 'classic' Irish weather at Mahon falls



Young people reconnecting again in Finland in February 2022 after the long winter.

WSTCYS/LE CHEILE MENTORING PROJECT

Le Chéile Mentoring continues to work in partnership with WSTCYS in providing a volunteer mentoring service to both young people and parents known to WSTCYS. Le Chéile Mentoring works by recruiting, training and supporting a team of volunteers in the South East, covering Waterford and Tipperary. We offer both young person and parent mentoring. The aim of the mentoring is for young people or parents to meet their mentors once per week, identify goals they wish to pursue and we look at how we can support them achieving their set goals. Building a strong core mentoring relationship is the basis which we build from in achieving our outcomes. Le Chéile staff use The Outcomes Star to identify a baseline and goals to work on with the mentees.

Outputs for 2022



The young people being mentored were supported in a variety of ways with issues e.g. engaging in education and training, choices and behaviours, positive use of time, trying new things and using local venues and activities within their own communities.

Parents were supported by mentors in areas of health, mental health, issues within their families, budgeting and making time for themselves.

HIGHLIGHTS

Mentees engaged well and worked with their mentors towards identified goals.

Some stand-out outcomes for our mentees included:

- Young person who had dropped out of mainstream education was supported and has now returned to a new mainstream school and is doing very well.
- Young person supported in breaking away from negative peer group and work towards obtaining Junior Cert.
- Parent supported with daughter's school refusal and other family issues around criminality; also supported with taking time out for herself and meeting with mentor.
- Parent supported accessing Employability Skills service to work towards getting employment to help with her financial situation.
- National Volunteer Conference in June 2022 which took place in person; key note speaker James Leonard

CHALLENGES

In 2022, the service was still being delivered against a backdrop of Covid restrictions in the first half of the year. In the second half, with Covid restrictions being lifted, this generally had positive impacts. However, there were still some negatives such as: Some young people found it difficult to return to school due to anxiety and this caused stress and strain on the young people and their parents. Other families experienced an increase in criminal behaviour with their children, which they had some reprieve from in previous 2 years. All mentees were supported in facing the challenges that they were experiencing.

L.G.B.T.+ HEALTH PROJECT

The LGBT+ Health Project was a new project that started in 2022 with the employment in April of LGBT+ Health Worker Sarah Murphy. The project's key aims are to:

- Support and improve the health outcomes of the LGBT+ Community in Waterford and south Tipperary
- Coordinate and deliver the South East Community Healthcare LGBT+ Awareness Training Model in order to enhance knowledge and understanding of the needs of LGBT+ Service Users
- Act as a key point of contact for training for health service providers around LGBT+ information
- Work collaboratively with internal projects and allied services engaged with the LGBT+ community in WSTCYS' region

The project provides a safe space for LGBT+ adults in the community to come and meet peers and support each other through developmental group work. There is now a support group that takes place every Monday evening from 6pm to 8pm. The project offers training to HSE staff, service providers and any organisation looking to build their LGBT+ awareness and best practice around the visibility, inclusion and participation of LGBT+ people. The training aims to enhance the development of a welcoming and supportive environment to both employees and service users who identify as LGBT+. There is no fee to take part in the training. The project also offers one to one support, information, referral and signposting to other services.

Quantitative Information:

197

PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE SECH LGBT+ AWARENESS TRAINING THAT THE PROJECT DELIVERED – THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS WERE HOSPITAL STAFF AND SETU STUDENTS

10

PEOPLE ENGAGED ON A ONE TO ONE BASIS

20

PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH THE SUPPORT GROUP



Pride preparations underway:

HIGHLIGHTS

- The LGBT+ Adult group forming and building relationships with the participants
- Pride in Waterford 2022; Seeing the community come out in colours for support and celebration
- Being part of the leader team with ChillOUT LGBT+ Youth Project, leading the young people to Pride Dublin and seeing how important and life changing it was for them
- Establishing the project's presence and service provision with a range of stakeholders in the community, voluntary and statutory sector

CHALLENGES:

- Pause in meetings of the inter-agency Steering Group, leaving a gap in direction and support in relation to issues and barriers being faced on the ground
- No access to sexual health screening service in Waterford
- A lack of mental health services
- PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) i.e. medicine to prevent exposure to HIV, unavailable in Waterford. The closest availability is Dublin or Cork.
- A lack of support services in general for LGBT+ people, in particular Trans people
- No response from local GPs despite developing and hand-delivering packs and information on what the project offers and information on the LGB Awareness Training



COMMUNITY BASED DRUG INITIATIVES

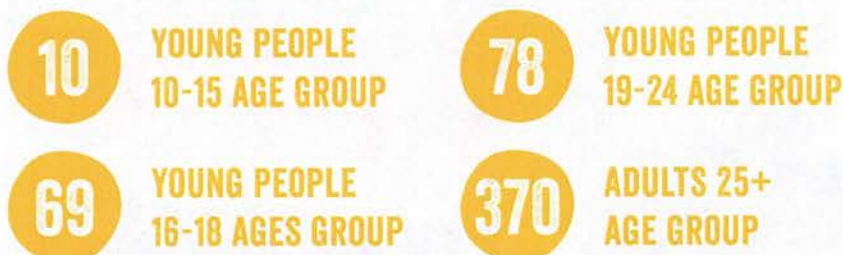
The W.S.T.C.Y.S. Manages (7) community based drug project in the areas of Waterford City, Co. Waterford and South Tipperary. The objective of CBDI's is to support individuals, families and communities to overcome issues related to substance misuse use through provision of information and education referral, group and individual supports. The CBDI's work has an agreed logic model with 13 actions listed and work with people from 13 years old and upwards. Increasingly over the last number of years the individual aspect of the work has increased. Specifically, the individual aspect of the work is to provide needs based key working to service users who require it in line with the approved NDRIC protocols which have an accompanying list of 28 SOP's (standard operational procedures) listed and the new Initial and Comprehensive Assessments and Case Management. Each Project has one staff member and a team of local community volunteers. The projects are community based services working within a community development model.

A number of staff changes within the Drug Projects took place during 2022:

- Two new workers started in their roles in January 2022, **Gail Sheridan** started at the Suir Valley CBDI in January 2022, replacing **Maureen Walsh** who retired from the Suir Valley CBDI in January 2022 and **Laura Carey** as the part-time drugs worker at the Waterford CBDI.
- **Maureen Walsh** returned to take up the post as drug worker at the Co. Waterford CBDI -East from mid-April 2022 to cover maternity leave.
- **Audra Cotter** Clonmel CBDI left her position at the end of June 2022, and the position was not filled until the start of January 2023. We wish Audra Cotter the best in her new post and thank her for her service.
- **Fiona Douglas** took up her position at Clonmel C.B.D.I. at the start of January 2023.

Sectorial Statistics for 2022:

Total of **527 service users** were engaged with CBDI's in 2022:



- In total 4624 appointments were made for service users during the period Jan- Dec 2022, with 3054 actually attended, this is an attendance rate of 66 %, on par with the previous year's figure. There were 739 less appointments made in 2022 as compared with the same period in 2021. With 896 fewer appointments attended in the 12 months of 2022, as compared with the same period in 2021, however there were 75 more service users than the same report period of 2021. The many changes of staff within projects, and the continued impact of COVID at various times throughout 2022 both on staff and service users, have all played a part in the above statistics.
- A total of 903 group hours were attended by service users in 2022, which was down by 16% from 2021.

Volunteer Involvement: 13 volunteers supported the work of the CBDI's during 2022, facilitating family support groups and recovery groups, etc. Projects continued to engage with volunteers through regular check in's and some appreciation events during 2022, however the impact of Covid has been very difficult in retaining volunteers.

Overview of Activities and Developments: Needless to say that Covid-19 continued throughout 2022, impacting on service provision and service users at various stages during the year. The CBDI's continued as best as possible in the provision of services as per the agreed Logic Model, and the following is an overview of the work of CBDI's during 2022:

- A total of 903 group hours were attended by service users in 2022, which was down by 16% with 2021.
- Re-introduction of weekly auricular acupuncture clinics in a number of projects was greatly welcomed by service users.
- Weekly SMART recovery group continued at the Manor Centre, facilitated by workers from both the Cityside CBDI and Southside CBDI.
- Weekly Family Support groups from a number of CBDI Projects continued when possible throughout 2022, with a number of new members attending.
- All CBDI Projects ran Drug Awareness /Education sessions within their local communities, to schools, training workshops, Diversion Projects, etc.
- Professional Education: 3 workshops were carried out with professionals in the city. These were delivered in partnership by Cityside CBDI and Waterford City CBDI projects.
- Projects worked in collaboration with other agencies/service to support service users attending our services, these included: HSE Substance Misuse Services, Tusla, Primary Care Service, DOP at University Hospital Waterford, Homeless Hub Services, CAMHS, Probation Services, TREO, etc.
- Waterford CBDI worker represented the sector on the Waterford SPE for housing, community, libraries & culture, advocating on behalf of service users attending our services.
- Annual re-assessments in Auricular Acupuncture for staff & Volunteers were not completed in 2022, due to the on-going Covid restrictions. Arrangements were made within some projects to undertake this assessment via submissions of videos of practice being undertaken using the new agreed protocols ("in camera") and forward them onto NADA trainers. This allowed a number of projects to deliver auricular acupuncture during 2022. All staff and volunteers were re-assessed in person in mid-January 2023.
- Continued support was given to staff throughout 2022 by: Monthly Peer Support Meetings, Monthly external supervision, Monthly Case Management meetings.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Cityside CBDI in association with a number of the other projects organised a family support respite in Woodstown, attended by concerned persons from various groups in the city. Mindful origami, yoga, reiki and acupuncture were offered. A remembrance service was carried out by the participants, and it was agreed that this would become a recurring yearly programme for the project.
- Southside and Cityside CBDI's jointly ran the programme "Food for Mood" which was run over 20 sessions in 2022.
- Cityside CBDI continued its collaboration with SERFSN with members of Cityside FSG attended a respite break to Ballyvaloo Retreat Centre in Wexford and a number of the family members of CBDI's Family Support Groups attended the SERFSN conference in New Ross, as well as various workshops.
- Waterford CBDI successfully delivered a number of Drug Awareness workshops in the SETU Campus during 2022.
- Co. Waterford CBDI East, facilitated the updating of the Drugs Policy with the Board of Management of Ardscoil na Mara in Tramore during 2022.
- Suir Valley re-established the Family Support Group and successfully increased the number attending during 2022.
- Open day held by both the Co. Waterford CBDI East and TYRE project in Tramore to mark the move to new premises at the Sea Point Youth and Community Centre, Unit 5 Sea point Industrial estate Riverstown Tramore.
- The Southside CBDI worker delivered both CRA (Community Reinforcement Approach) to 9 staff members and Reiki Training to 6 staff and volunteers during 2022.



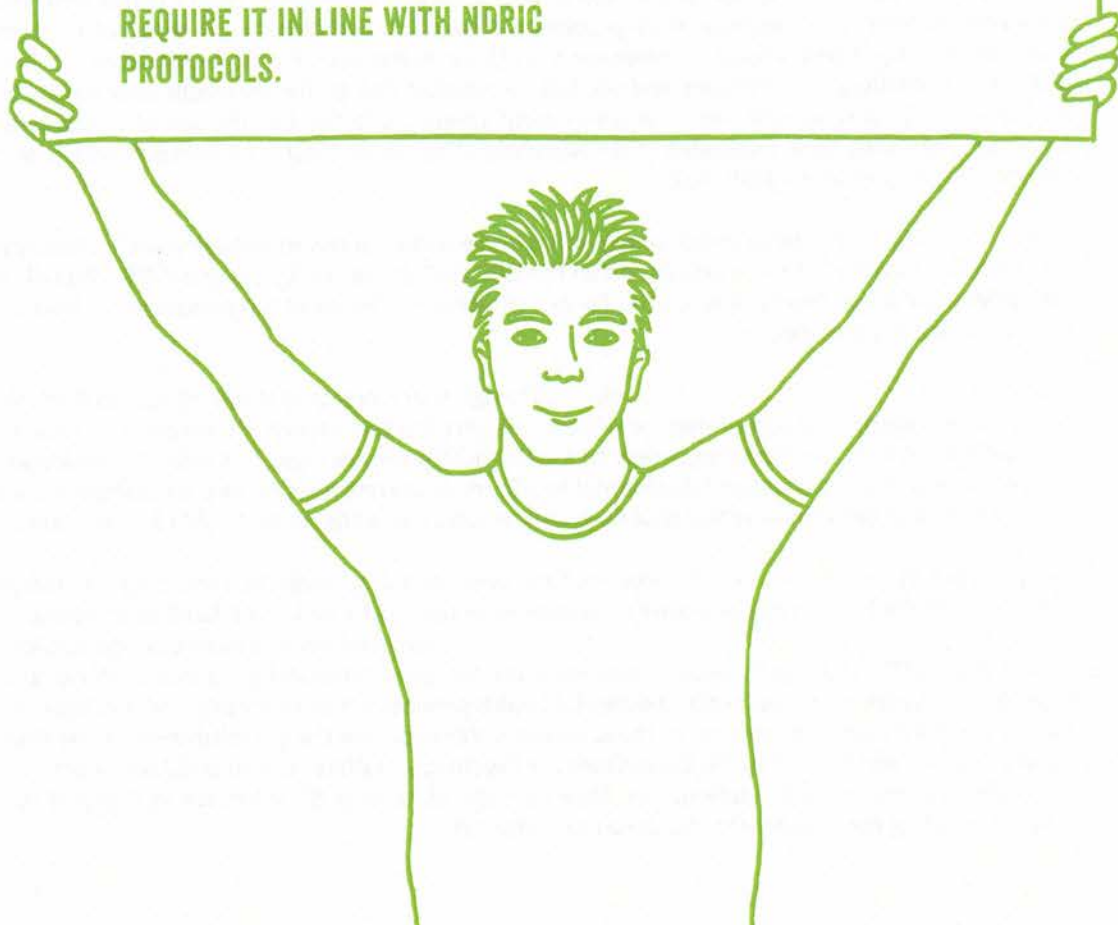
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2022:

- **Alcohol related issues** have remained the most common reason for individuals presenting to many of the drug projects. Challenges faced by communities which contribute to this include, loneliness and isolation; long familial history of dependence; high tolerance of alcohol misuse within communities combined with a lack of recognition of the harms; low costs and accessibility of alcohol; and alcohol is often associated with poly drug use but is often not seen as a drug itself. Projects have welcomed the government's actions towards minimum pricing of alcohol (MUP).
- Increased presentations for **cocaine use** were the second most common reason for accessing the service in 2022. This trend continued from 2021 when cocaine took a prominent place in the local substance misuse scene, affecting populations that traditionally would have a limited contact with addiction services. This reinforces the anecdotal evidence from 2019/2020 of a rise in availability and use of cocaine. Individuals and families are experiencing personal, health, financial and legal difficulties as a result of cocaine use however there appears to be an acceptance of cocaine use which permeates throughout all communities. A new report by the Health Research Board stated that the number of young people entering treatment for Cocaine use soared 171% between 2011 and 2019, and this is now apparent in communities.
- **Heroin use remains steady** throughout the community in 2022, although a small number of the projects saw a decrease in presentations for support.
- **Changes in individual drug use:** Over the past number of years' new substances have been introduced into the local culture – Xanax Sticks 2018, Liquid Benzo's 2019, Ksalol and Fake Benzo's 2020, NPS (novel psychoactive substances like synthetic cannabinoids) – and these results in having to constantly develop new responses to new challenges as they arise. Harm reduction education has been a pivotal action for a number of our projects throughout 2022 and it is a challenge for project workers to source and gather up to date research on these new and less traditional substances. Cannabis products such as edible jellies, lollypops and vape products are used by young people across projects. The normalization of cannabis is a significant issue and with the result that there is a higher tolerance of problematic cannabis use among families and communities which can impact on early help-seeking. Often this is intergenerational which adds to the normalization and this has had a significant impact on young people who have developed drug debts and are being intimidated into criminal activity as part payment of such debts. Additionally, the purity of THC content observed as a trend across the EU continues to pose a concern for the increased number of presentations of problematic cannabis use disorder. A trend of concern that has been identified among the younger population is the use of THC e-cigarettes – this is a significant challenge for families and schools to monitor due to the inconspicuous nature of e-cigarettes. The project welcomes the government's measure to regulate the sale of e-cigarettes to minors, including their packaging and advertising (The Public Health (Tobacco Products and Nicotine Inhaling Products) Bill, 2022).
- **LGBTQ+** population has been under-represented in the cohort of clients engaging with substance misuse services in the area. It is proposed that the CBDI's /Outreach Projects and WSTCYS LGBTQ+ Health Worker will collaborate in 2023 to further establish the needs of this population in relation to substance misuse responses.
- **Dual diagnosis presentations remain high**, although there are outpatient clinics, individuals often require support to access them and there are very limited options for people who require an inpatient service. The reduced access to mental health services due to Covid19 restrictions and limitations on outpatient and day mental health services continues to have a negative impact on the families of individuals with a dual diagnosis beyond the lifting of the Covid19 restrictions.
- The increase in **domestic violence** reports have been noted by projects, reflecting a national trend. The limited resources available to people who use drugs and their families in terms of **counselling services and residential treatment services** puts increased pressure on the services provided by WSTCYS Drug Projects. However, there are good relationships between Waterford City CBDI's /Outreach project with the mental health services which helps provide continuity of care when individuals are referred to these services. We welcome the establishment of the Peer Family Support Service within the Department of Psychiatry in Waterford in 2022 and is actively maintaining good working relationships. However, the closure of St. Michael's in Clonmel has made supporting service users in that area more difficult.

DRUG OUTREACH PROJECTS

W.S.T.C.Y.S. manages two Community Based Drug Outreach projects that cover the areas of Waterford City, Co. Waterford and South Tipperary. The overall aim of the Outreach projects is to provide services and responses for people 13 years and upward who are involved in high-risk substance misuse and are experiencing social exclusion because of their substance misuse and socio-economic background. The service also aims to minimize the harm that people can do to themselves through uninformed substance use and to encourage/support them to begin to address the issues presenting in their lives. The outreach projects have 4 Logic Model actions:

1. THE PROVISION OF BRIEF INTERVENTIONS WHICH SUPPORTS CLIENT MOTIVATION, BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE, AND ENGAGEMENT WITH RELEVANT SERVICES, ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF SERVICE USERS TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE SERVICE PROVISION.
2. THE PROVISION OF A NEEDS BASED KEY WORKING AND CASE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE TO SERVICE USERS WHO REQUIRE IT IN LINE WITH NDRIC PROTOCOLS.
3. TO SUPPORT A NEEDLE SYRINGE PROGRAMME AND METHADONE CLINICS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HSE OR OTHER PROVIDERS AS REQUIRED.
4. TO REDUCE DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED HARM FOR THOSE USING OR AT RISK OF HARM THROUGH PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE USER CAPACITIES.



Sectorial Statistics:

Total of 139 service users were engaged with Outreach Projects in 2022:



Overview of Activities and Developments:

- Staff attended regular shared care meetings with service users and relevant other working partners, as well as undertaking key working, care planning, advocacy.
- Both staff continued providing support to service users at the methadone clinics during 2022.
- Staff attended the Substance Misuse Team meetings during 2022 to facilitate the co-ordination of services for substance misuse clients in the County Waterford area in particular, however fewer meetings took place in 2022 due to staffing issues at Substance Misuse Service.
- Staff completed all mandatory training as required by the HSE Social Inclusion.
- The Tipperary Outreach staff member continued to act as the Liaison Representative for our drug projects on the Regional S.O.P.'s representation group under the auspices of the HSE Cho 5.
- Both staff continued to be actively involved in: Monthly Peer Support Meetings, Monthly external supervision, Case Management meetings, and line management meetings.

Issues/Concerns in 2022:

- Challenging behaviour and homelessness: Open (and aggressive) drug dealing, drug taking and violence has been reported as a regular occurrence in many areas during day time hours throughout 2022, causing problem for locals. An increase in aggressive presentation, particularly in the methadone clinic that one project attends has been witnessed throughout the year. In respect to homelessness, it has become nearly impossible to access emergency accommodation for service users, in many areas.
- Crack Cocaine use: This has increased in Clonmel in particular throughout 2022, which has contributed significantly to the anti-social behaviour witnessed in Clonmel town centre.
- Difficulty in accessing residential treatment for service users: The outreach project has had no direct access to adult Aiseiri places in the past few years. In addition to this, drug workers are now no longer required to do the bulk of preparatory work with their clients pre entry to Aiseiri. Clients who have engaged significantly with community drug services and are seen to be prepared for residential, now have to be sent back through the SMS/HSE to work up 10-12 sessions extra to access Aiseiri. This has blocked the option for some service users entirely and has frustrated others, as per feedback from service users. It also unnecessarily requires service users to re-tell their life stories, potentially re-traumatising young vulnerable individuals.
- Mental health issues/Lack of broader support services: Issues with accessing, in particular, residential treatment and mental health services have been exacerbated in 2022 and will continue to pose challenges into 2023.

- Homelessness: continues to be an issue for service users, 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. There continues to be no emergency accommodation available to people in the County Waterford or South Tipperary areas.
- The constant barrage of negative and anxiety inducing news for the past 2 years has affected the community at large, with financial concerns continually being emphasised and looming heavily this year. These issues, coupled with high rates of substance use (often poly substance use) and the lack of access to mental health supports has placed pressure on the outreach service and, more importantly the service users. The outreach project had several clients who were actively engaged with mental health services, who could not get an appointment to be seen for months. The project has frequently referred to C-SAW, however they have been short staffed and inundated with service users also and not all referrals are appropriate. Whilst the project gives out helpline numbers etc., this feels like an inadequate response to someone that is actively seeking support in a time of difficulty and sometimes, crisis.
- Increased drug related intimidation.
- Child Protection issues: continued to be an issue with a number of service users, with a number of service users requiring a lot of work and shared care responses with TUSLA.
- Fake Benzodiazepines: Particularly Kasols and Tranex were available in large quantities via internet purchases, with a number of service users hospitalised following their use.
- To re-establish consistent face to face support with the project participants in 2022. Many have adjusted to seeing very few people, thus reinvigorating the client group will be a challenge in the coming year 2023.

Highlights:

- The two services continue to receive a high number of referrals from those who have heard about the service from previous service users.
- A number of service users have successfully completed residential treatment programmes support by our Outreach Projects.
- Positive working relationship with local St. Vincent De Paul conferences enabling service users to gain much needed assistance.
- Waterford Outreach and Co. Waterford CDBI West moved to new office space at Friary Street, Dungarvan in December, which will facilitate easier access for service users.
- Cocaine Anonymous meetings started in Dungarvan with many service users attending.



INTERCULTURAL HEALTH HUB

There are a number of different strands to the work at the Intercultural Health Hub:

- Health Support Project at the Reception and Orientation Centre (ROC) in Dungarvan, focusing on refugees with designated status
- Health Outreach supports to the I.P.A.S. Accommodation Centres in Waterford City, Waterford County, Carrick-on-Suir and County Wexford.
- Supports to members of the Roma Community in Waterford and County.
- A Community Health worker was also employed to outreach to Refugees, Protection Applicants and Roma communities.

Funded by the H.S.E., the Intercultural Health Hub aims to improve the health outcomes and experiences of Protection Applicants, Refugees and Roma, by advocating and supporting access to health care systems in Ireland. The Intercultural Health Hub is a partnership between HSE Social Inclusion South East Community Healthcare and WSTCYS.

This project underwent major changes to its operation environment during 2022, encompassing a number of staff changes and enhancements.

The services of the Intercultural Health Hub are now delivered through the following staff:

- Supervisor up until March 2022, when Ovidiu Matiut left the position.
- Intercultural Health Advocates (IPAS Centres and the Clonea ROC); full time posts.
- Part time Intercultural Health Advocate (Clonea ROC)
- Roma Health Staff – one full-time since Dec 2022 and one part-time position.
- Roma Health Team Lead which was a new position since May 2022.
- Refugee and Protection Applicant Health Team Lead new position since May 2022.
- Psychologist full time for 3 months.
- Intercultural Health Project Worker under the Genio Funding which only commenced on December 12th 2022.
- Part time Volunteer Development Worker which only commenced on December 12th 2022.

The Intercultural Health Project wishes to thank the following staff that left our service during 2022 and thank them for their service: Ovidiu Matiut; Ruth McEvoy; and Tereza Skopova.

We welcome new staff members: **Alex Petrovics; Caroline Falconer; Francis Stafford; Raul Mizsan; and Kate Brennan.**

Staff at the Intercultural Health Hub during 2022



Sectorial Statistics:

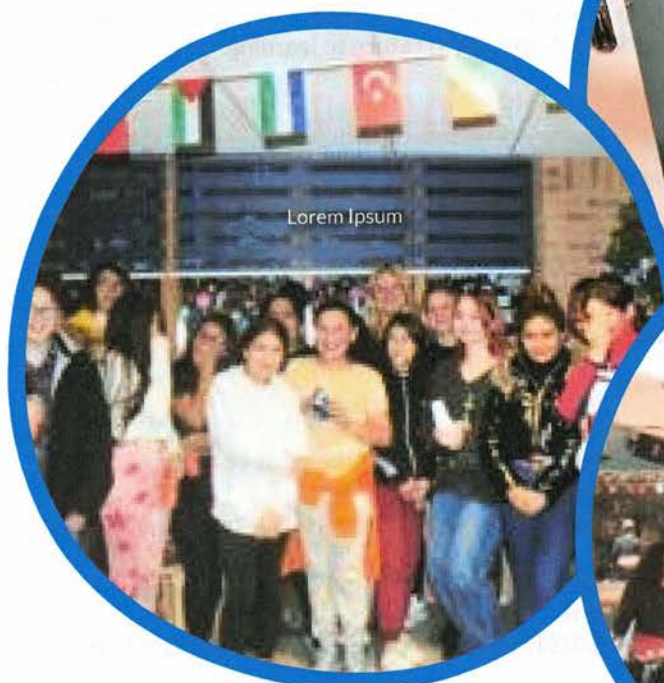
Total of 9,723 interventions were recorded by the Intercultural Health Hub with service users in 2022, which represented an increase on the previous year.

AREAS OF WORK /INTERVENTIONS	PROTECTION APPLICANTS	REFUGEES	ROMA
Health Interventions (Medical Cards, GP/Hospital and Dental Appointments, X-ray, vaccination etc.)	1,234	1,065	175
Social Protection interventions (PPSN appointments, travel refund)	484		152
Housing support (Rent Allowance and HAP applications)	111		140
Access to Education (information and referrals)	221	5	21
Other services (Translating letters, Embassy, Revenue etc.)	392	8	145
Correspondences with Service Users/Vaccination Roll-outs/PA Regularization Scheme	2,951	214	172
Linking with Service Providers: • ROC Specific • Protection Applicants • Roma • Community Health Worker	1,973	125	137 1
TOTAL	7,366	1,417	943

Overview of Activities and Developments in 2022

- Over 2022 a good and trusting relationship was established by our project with the Slovak and Czech Roma Community. Intercultural Health Hub is supporting approx. 700 members of the Roma Community (Slovak, Romanian, and Czech) were supported to access health information, health services and other social services that have a direct impact on health.
- Health supports including supporting access to health services and health information were also provided to Refugees living in the ROC Dungarvan and to Protection Applicants living in Accommodation Centres in the region throughout 2022.
- Promoted the uptake of national screening programmes and COVID-19 vaccinations through the delivery of key messages to Service users in the Roma, Refugee and Protection Applicant population.
- Worked in partnership with the National Immunisation Office to update Children's Immunisation Calendar in Romanian, Czech and Slovak language.
- Worked in partnership to support Roma work at National Level with other statutory and voluntary organisation across Ireland through Roma National Network.
- Production of health information via social media platforms of the yearly Flu vaccine.
- Our Intercultural team demonstrated great flexibility in supporting residents in Accommodation Centres, including a new centre in Waterford City Centre.
- Delivered health orientation information to all new Refugees family arriving at ROC

- Zumba group for International Protection Applicants has been ongoing and attended very well.
- Intercultural Health Hub in collaboration with HSE Social Inclusion South East delivered period products to Roma women in county Waterford as part of a national Period Poverty & Dignity pilot project.



HIGHLIGHTS IN YOUR PROJECTS WORK DURING 2022:

- Our service supported 8 Accommodation Centres covering three counties in the Southeast.
- Intercultural Health Hub has established strategic alliances with: the HSE National Social Inclusion Office, Pavee Point, Waterford and Wexford County Councils and Waterford Area Partnership, with the aim to support Roma work at local, regional and national level.
- Roma young people engaged in a cultural event in collaboration with WSTCYS youth workers.
- Intercultural Health Hub staff started a Wellness Wednesday every fortnight to promote health and wellbeing among the team to better support their work.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES CARRIED FORWARD INTO 2023:

- Czech and Slovak Roma communities' numbers are increasing in Waterford and this is putting pressure on accommodation and responding to the needs of this community given the increase in population in a short period of time - the number of persons from this community engaging with the Intercultural Health Hub trebled in 2022
- HSE free interpretation service not being used by GP's.

MAKING CONNECTIONS WATERFORD & TIPPERARY

Making Connections Waterford & Tipperary provide a QQI Level 3 Major Award in 'Employability Skills' to individuals who have experienced substance/alcohol misuse, homelessness or substance related mental health difficulties. It is a flexible, part-time training programme that works on individual learning needs in small groups or on a 1:1 basis.

2022 was a very challenging year particularly in terms of numbers and with the lifting of Covid 19 restrictions, some of the very hard to reach participants are yet to return to learning.

Quantitative information

- 31 engaged with the programme (16 female, 15 male)
- 3 progressed into employment
- 1 obtained volunteer work
- 5 went onto to further education/training
- 7 continued with Making Connections
- 6 ceased engaging - due to addiction, mental/physical health or unknown reasons.
- 1 service user bereaved
- 1 Major Award achieved
- 13 minor awards were achieved
- 1 has completed 3 x Level 4 modules and is hoping to achieve a major award at Level 4 in August. She has been accepted onto the Level 5 beauty therapy course in WCFE
- 1 learner had completed full level 3 award and was just commencing a level 4 module when he sadly passed in December
- 1 learner successfully completed 2 x level 3 modules but had to move out of the county
- 1 learner started Level 3 but left shortly afterwards
- 2 learners have achieved Level 3 certification (2021) and are now on the 2nd and 3rd level 4 modules.
- 1 learner completed 1 level 3 module, gained part time employment and is currently completing a level 3 Computer Skills module
- 2 learners successfully completed level 3 Culinary Operations module. Currently are not active but may return to the program

Overview of Activities and Developments:

- Making Connections South Tipperary saw an increase in numbers progressing to further education or training this year, with 8% progressing in 2021 and 19% progressing this year.
- The programme continued to outreach every Thursday to Carrick-On-Suir. This outreach programme saw an increase in engagement levels in 2022.
- New desktop computers and a new Clevertouch Interactive Whiteboard were purchased for learners in our outreach centre in Carrick-On-Suir, in November 2022. Funding was successfully obtained from the Tipperary ETB REACH Fund initiative. This has helped to improve the digital skills and accessibility issues for learners on the programme here.
- Making Connections Waterford added the Driver Theory Preparation program to their list of training modules and 2 participants availed of this opportunity.



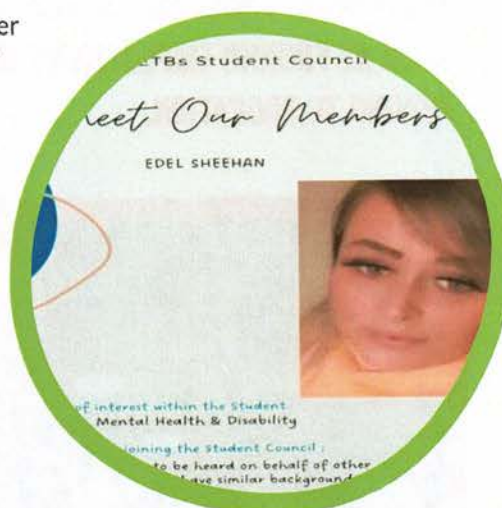
- The programme achieved high marks in the External Authentication process and in the Tipperary ETB Quality Assurance review process. It was noted that the quality of work produced by the learners was very evident and that 'the standards are well achieved and each learners' work is authentic and shows progression of their learning journey'.
- Both L.T.I.'s successfully ran a combination of small classes and had a number of 1:1 classes also. This worked well in catering for the needs of all learners. The programme had a continual intake of learners and therefore the number of groups changed throughout the year.

Issues and Challenges:

- Our profile of learner often face difficulties in their everyday life. Addiction, relapse, homelessness, poor mental health, crime and many more factors impact their ability to engage in education and training. As a result, attendance can be an issue at times for learners.
- As education models move towards more integration of digital technologies and blended learning; this can be challenging for learners due to issues with device availability, internet access and digital skills. However, we are building learners' digital literacy skills within the programme through the use of in class laptops and e-learning software such as Microsoft Teams and OneNote applications. Here, class notes and activities are readily available for all learners online and are accessed during class time for those with accessibility issues.
- The biggest challenge faced in Waterford are low learner numbers and the prospect of the project being discontinued. At present there are only 8 learners engaged and this needs to be increased to 10+ if the L.T.I. is to continue.
- Some facilities although open since Covid 19 restrictions were lifted e.g. Brook House, are not operating at full capacity so referrals are not being passed on.

Highlights

- A learner on the Tipperary programme became a member of the Tipperary ETB Student Council in November 2022. This learner is now representing the Making Connections programme and the Local Training Initiative programmes in South Tipperary. This was an excellent achievement.
- Making Connections South Tipperary took part in a 'Community Catch Up' event in October 2022 in the WSTCYS Carrick-On-Suir Youth Centre building. This was done in collaboration with Suir Valley CDBI, Family Support Services and The Edge Project programme; all based in our Carrick-On-Suir centre. The event made 'The Nationalist' newspaper and was a great success.



Staffing

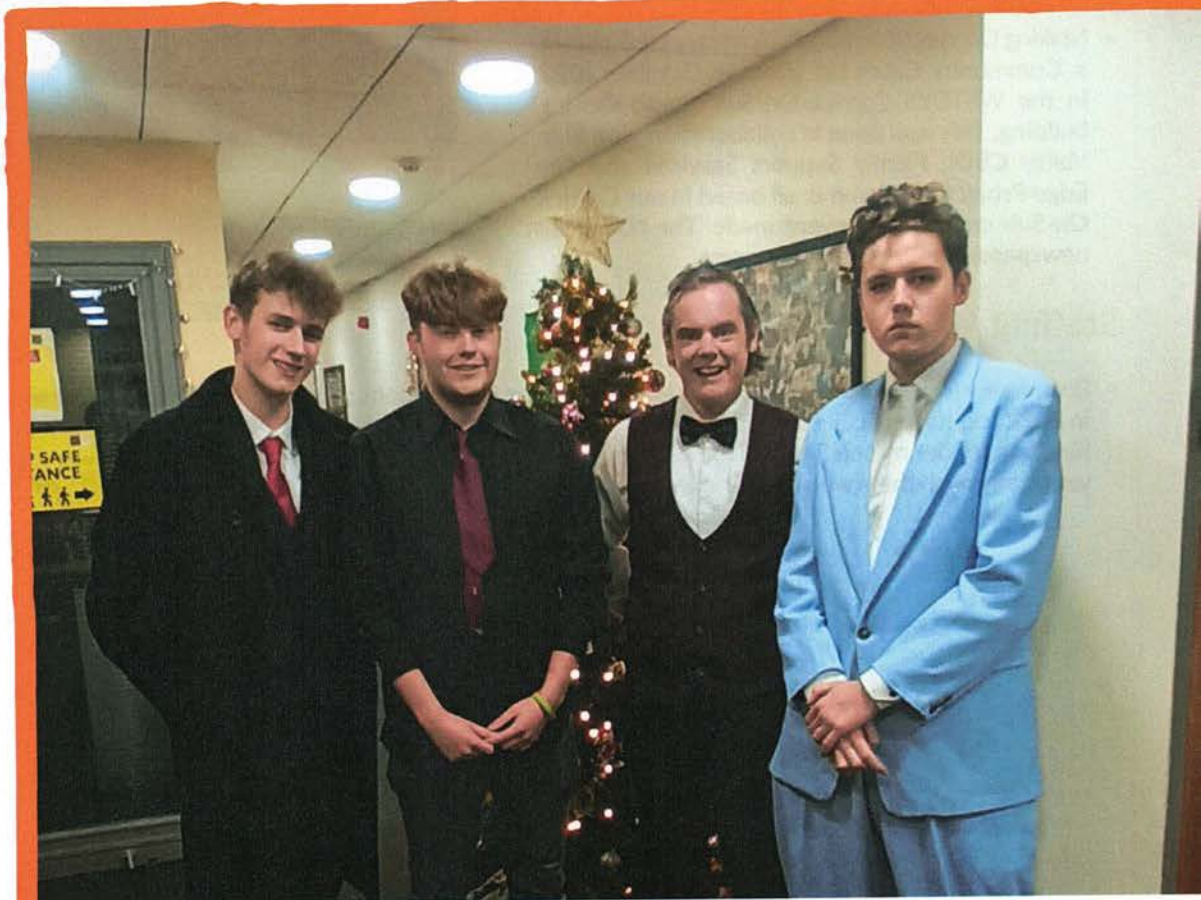
- Both Jenny Ryan and Siobhan Grimes left the Making Connections programme in South Tipperary in 2022 and Karen Scully and Cathy Burns became the new Programme Co-ordinators. We would like to thank Jenny and Siobhan for all their hard work and dedication to the programme over the years; and wish them well in their new roles.

SAOR (SPECIAL COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME)

SOAR 12 (Special Community Employment Programme) 08/03/2022 to 05/03/2023. This programme targets individual's in recovery from substance misuse in WSTCYS areas. In the months prior to the pandemic, WSTCYS met with the DEASP and agree that the organisation will no longer be the host for this special C.E. scheme. The role of WSTCYS with this project has since in effect been redefined to a holding organisation operating solely to facilitate the participants and continue with their schedule of payments. The support needs of the participants are being met by the original referring agency who nominated them to the scheme.

THE SAOR PROGRAMME HAS BEEN IN THIS STATE OF UNCERTAINTY FOR SOME TIME, AND WE CONTINUE TO HOST THIS PROGRAMME AS A COURTESY AND CONVENIENCE PRIMARILY TO THE PARTICIPANTS, BUT ALSO TO THE EFFICACY OF THE DEASP. DESPITE ITS BEST EFFORTS, ANOTHER SUITABLE SPONSORING BODY HAS NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED AND SO THE SCHEME WILL WIND UP IN MARCH 2023. TO THIS END, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHER PAYMENTS AS DIRECTED BY THE DEASP.

THIS NUMBER ON THE SCHEME HAS REDUCED TO 5 PARTICIPANTS, AND PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT BE REPLACED AS THEY MOVE ON FOR VARIOUS REASONS SUCH AS FINDING EMPLOYMENT, MOVING TO LONE PARENT'S ALLOWANCE OR MOVING TO EDUCATION.



W.S.T.C.Y.S. COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SCHEME

2022 saw the Manor Community Employment Scheme continue to work hand in glove with the mainstream staff in facilities throughout the Youth Service. As representative of the CE schemes across the nation, recruitment continues to be a dominant theme for the scheme, and although well above the national average, we are not alone in having unfilled places on the scheme. Notwithstanding, the scheme continued to be held in esteem by the DSP throughout 2022, being named Compliant following their annual audit.

The continued development of the European Youth Work delivered through Erasmus, turned Woodstown into a destination beachside location in recent times with a renown well heard of across Europe. This is in no small part due to CE support, stepping in to manage the upkeep and cleanliness of the built environment. CE also provided an auxiliary person to assist with the Youth Employability Programme as well as providing much valued support when some unsuspecting young people were shepherded above the snow line on one of the mountain excursions.

Dungarvan Youth Centre is steeped in a well-documented marriage between regular staff and CE personnel. This was very much evident in 2022, CE personnel staffed the YIC and were to the fore with the Homework Club and the Youth Project. Notably one CE participant progressed into fulltime work within the project.

Maintenance and Caretaking is a department that drew from CE resources throughout 2022 with operatives taking care of buildings in John's Park, Dungarvan, Farranshoneen, as well as the Manor, not forgetting the operatives that assist in the day to day maintenance travails that keep the WSTCYS ship afloat. It should be noted that during the summer months, from mid spring to early winter, a considerable portion of the maintenance team's efforts go the grass cutting, tree trimming and bush clipping. The maintenance operatives repeatedly contributed high levels of flexibility, as they often had their hours and duties dictated by the flow of service users, and the unceasing onslaught of grass growth. The Manor, like all the centres has peaks and troughs of traffic in line with the youth work calendar and other service users, while Woodstown follows steady week end usage pattern that is punctuated around a manic flurry of summer visitors that need to be facilitated.

In Lisduggan, CE support continued with workers in the Ball project and The Family Support Network. Another noteworthy progression came from the FSN, with the CE operative moving into regular employment as a Youth Worker with the Employability project.

In the continued cycle of life, CE bore witness to the occurrence of two major rites of passage, when during 2022, two CE operatives moved into retirement, while two others shared the happy tidings of giving birth to bonny babies.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2023

WATERFORD AND SOUTH TIPPERARY COMMUNITY YOUTH SERVICE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 December 2022

		Unrestricted Funds 2022	Restricted Funds 2022	Total 2022	Total 2021
	Notes	€	€	€	€
Income					
Generated funds:					
Donations and legacies	4	1,450	12,006	13,456	24,192
Income from Investments	5				1
Income from charitable activities	6		4,915,847	4,915,847	4,279,356
Other income	8	793,195		793,195	677,429
Total Income and endowments		794,645	4,927,853	5,722,498	4,980,978
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	9		5,040,878	5,040,878	4,308,596
Other expenditure	9	566,344		566,344	454,725
Total expenditure		566,344	5,040,878	5,607,222	4,763,321
Net Income/(expenditure) before gain(loss) on disposal of fixed assets		228,301	(113,025)	115,276	217,657
Gain(loss) on disposal of fixed assets					
Net Income/(expenditure) for the year		228,301	(113,025)	115,276	217,657
Transfer between funds	13	(125,464)	125,464		
Net movement In funds		102,837	12,439	115,276	217,657
Reconciliation of funds					
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2022	21	2,084,011	14,614	2,098,625	1,880,968
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2022	21	2,186,848	27,053	2,213,901	2,098,625

**All Income and expenditure relate to continuing operations.
There are no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the
statement of financial activities.**

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 December 2022

WATERFORD AND SOUTH TIPPERARY COMMUNITY YOUTH SERVICE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

		2022	2021
	Notes	€	€
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	15	5,326,448	5,450,556
Current Assets			
Debtors	16	15,043	3,483
Cash and cash equivalents		1,087,260	1,147,547
		1,102,303	1,151,030
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	(713,609)	(802,555)
Net Current Assets (Liabilities)		388,694	348,475
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		5,715,142	5,799,031
Creditors			
Amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(147,170)	(275,695)
Grants receivable	26	(3,354,071)	(3,424,711)
Net Assets/(Liabilities)		2,213,901	2,098,625
Funds			
Restricted funds		27,053	14,614
General fund (unrestricted)		2,186,848	2,084,011
Total funds	21	2,213,901	2,098,625

**Approved by the board and authorised for issue on 11 May 2023
and signed on its behalf by:**



Dr. Sheila O' Donohoe



Sean O' Callaghan

FUNDERS & PARTNERS

We collaborate with a wide range of partners, funders and other agencies in our day to day work. Without their financial support and practical assistance, we would be unable to function. We are hugely grateful to them all and appreciate the enormous contribution they make.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Michumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection



National
Social
Inclusion
Office



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Phort Láirge
Waterford
City & County Council



National
Lottery



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