

Omagh Youth & Community Trustees' Report

April 1st 2023 – March 31st 2024

The Station Centre is built on the site of Omagh Railway Station which served all of Omagh's citizens and was an important link to the outside world of opportunity and challenge. Symbolically, Omagh Youth and Community Trust sees all those who enter the building as being on a journey of personal development and realisation. They are not asked where they come from but the aspiration is that all those who seek help reach a destination of self-worth and self-realisation which will be positive for themselves and for society locally.

The activities of all groups (outlined in bold headings below) have availed of The Station Centre facilities this year and are in conformity with the stated aims of the constitution as italicised below and address the following themes- education, physical and mental health, community and social issues and sport which spans all ages from youth to mature adulthood.

The objectives and purposes of Omagh Youth and Community Trust are *to provide facilities for the benefit of the community of Omagh, regardless of religion, politics, age, sex, race or creed, for the purpose of advancing and improving intercommunity relations in social, personal, sporting, commercial, industrial and all other aspects of community development and to engage in cross-community projects to enhance and provide both educational and social understanding as between different groups identified under all of the above and to incorporate all such groups within the community.*

Omagh Boys & Girls Club

Omagh Youth and Community Trust at The Station Centre facilitates the work of Omagh Boys and Girls Club which is the only full time voluntary youth organisation in the Fermanagh Omagh District Council region. Affiliated to the Education Authority for purposes of bona fide registration as a voluntary youth organisation, Omagh Boys and Girls Club has been delivering youth programmes to young people for seventy two years, having been founded in 1952. The membership this year was 398.

Priority programme themes of work are prepared taking into account governance, research data and local authorised research into the needs of young people and the community social and economic profile. These thematic areas the Education Authority has identified are Learning and Achieving; Participation; Living in Safety and Stability; Health and Wellbeing; Inclusion, Diversity, Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations; Participation Structures; Environmental Climate.

During this year the EA Youth Service carried out three moderation visits to make an assessment on the standard of delivery of the different aspects of the themes of work and governance. The overall assessment recorded by the Education Authority Youth Officers on each of these visits was, an 'outstanding' classification.

The beneficial outcomes of these youth work programmes for young people have been particularly effective. Having the opportunity also to participate in the wide variety of sports options (through the participation theme activities) was so vital for young people's mental and physical well-being. There is a mountain of evidence showing the benefits that sport and physical activity can have for young people's physical and mental health. Research by the Youth Sport Trust found that two thirds of school children said being active helped them learn, while three quarters of teachers said it improved pupils' academic progress.

Other outcomes identified for young people have been a development of their thinking, life and work skills. A safe space in our youth club environment is provided for their active involvement in activities, where they feel valued and their achievements are recognized. There is an enhancement in their personal capabilities, particularly greater awareness and development of leadership skills, confidence and self-esteem and a development of positive inter-peer relationships. This personal, social and educational development has resulted in young people taking responsibility, becoming engaged in active citizenship projects which promote volunteerism, inter-community and inter-generational relations and greater understanding of others' lives whilst their awareness of threats to them through drugs and alcohol awareness courses has informed them of risk-taking behaviour. With such adult guidance and leadership these young people are on a continuing journey through participation in the range of programmes available to acquire the key transferable skills, so essential in the adolescent transition to adulthood and the world of work e.g. problem solving, creativity, using one's own initiative, taking responsibility, perseverance, working as part of team, showing empathy and communication with others. These authenticated skills are recorded by young people and are used as evidence of their achievements when making application for part time and for full-time posts in addition to using as testimonials for university applications.

Beyond our Education Authority Youth Service youth work specification programmes our club reaches out to promote cross community interaction among young people in the wider community through the facilitation of an inter primary schools tournament for all local primary schools in the local area involving up to 100 young people. This programme has been in operation for the past 10 years. Omagh Boys and Girls Club is a vital hub for the young people of Omagh to form relationships and to transform relationships through organised activities from its foundation as a voluntary youth club seventy-two years ago.

Rainbow Community Playgroup

Rainbow Community Playgroup facilities enable the playschool education of children from 2 ½ - 4 years of age. These children are given a stimulating environment to develop their learning and social skills. This provides important preparation to help the children adapt to the demands of starting school at five. It also benefits the parents by way of easing the pressure of trying to cope with the world of paid work or unpaid work at home. This social and educational environment benefits the children by way of coming together from their different religious and ethnic backgrounds to share a common goal of learning. Research shows that when different groups come together to share a common goal, prejudice is reduced. This is a very important building block for creating a fair and just society. The Rainbow Playgroup was founded by Omagh Boys & Girls Club in 1985 and has grown in strength over those years.

Young Enterprise through Loreto

Young Enterprise Northern Ireland recognises that the world in which our young people will live and work is ever-changing and they continually develop their programme offering to ensure that young people who attend from Loreto acquire the skills they will need to become enterprising, creative and commercially aware. These skills are the very foundations of our future economy, and the Northern Ireland Executive has acknowledged the value of enterprise education as part of its economic strategy through the implementation of the revised curriculum.

and enjoying such sensory experiences in a secure and welcoming local environment.

Local Schools - Loreto Grammar School / Cumann na Bunscoil / CBS / St Conor's PS / Holy Family PS

These local schools use the facilities for indoor sports activities and interschools tournaments for soccer, gaelic football, hurling, netball and badminton. The spacious social area and dance/arts room accommodates the more reflective pastoral programmes and young enterprise seminars for the post primary schools. The Station Centre venue is an ideal central location to host events which involves other schools travelling from beyond the Omagh area and particularly for local schools having easy access to such a suitable premises in the town. All these activities are beneficial for young people's physical and emotional wellbeing and educational development.

Breastfeeding Group

Co-ordinated by the Western Health & Social Care Trust - this weekly group meet up on a Tuesday morning where Trust staff facilitate support for young mothers in the Social Area every Tuesday 10.00am-11.30am.

Baby yoga/Baby massage

Through the auspices of the Nourish and Nurture health organisation local mothers are taught techniques beneficial to the nurturing of their babies.

Unislim

The Unislim story began forty-seven years ago in a small parish hall room back in 1972 to today having over 300 classes, in towns in every corner of the country. Making things happen is what they do. At Unislim, members find the helping hand they need.

Food is just one piece of the puzzle. Taking care of nutrition, mind and fitness are the pillars of everything Unislim does. Nutritious food feeds the brain and revitalises the body. They all work in tandem.

Slimming World

The general public appreciate the easy town access to this facility which informs them of the benefits of dieting, healthy eating and exercise.

Slimming World is the most advanced slimming organisation in the UK. It was founded by Margaret Miles-Bramwell in 1969 and who remains the driving force behind the company to this day. With the experience of a lifetime's weight problem, it is her enthusiasm and unique vision that has made the company so successful.

There are now over 16,000 groups held weekly on a nationwide basis via a network of more than 4,500 Slimming World trained consultants. They welcome 900,000 members to their groups weekly.

Zumba

Zumba is a fitness programme that involves cardio and Latin-inspired dance. It was founded by Colombian dancer and choreographer Beto Pérez in 2001, and by 2012, it called itself the largest international branded fitness programme in the world. Local people attend the Zumba class on a Tuesday night here using the social area which enhances the atmospheric and energetic spirit of Zumba.

Elections

The Station Centre was used by the Electoral Office as a polling station owing to its central location and easy access for many senior citizens.

Women's Aid

Women's Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic abuse and providing services for women and children. The Women's Aid movement in Northern Ireland began in 1975 and is made up of eight local Women's Aid groups and Women's Aid Federation. Each Women's Aid group offers a range of specialist services to women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. They are all members of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. Women's Aid exists to challenge attitudes, structures and systems which perpetuate domestic abuse. They seek through their work to enable women, children and young people to live free from violence and abuse.

Three Rivers Community Choir

This cross-community choir of adults from the local area meet weekly to practice for performances they give throughout the year for charitable purposes. This is a popular musical experience for participants enabling them to socialise and share their love of song to entertain whilst raising funds to help benefit others.

This new Community Choir is the brainchild of Brendan McCarthy who had the vision to create a Cross Community Choir from individuals living in Omagh and its hinterlands.

Omagh Gateway Club

This club is organised entirely by volunteers who co-ordinate a weekly programme of activities throughout the year for adults with learning and physical disabilities. Omagh Gateway Club promotes the social inclusion of people with a learning disability in their local area, ensure they have equality of opportunity in accessing social and leisure opportunities in the right environment with the right support. The Gateway Club aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the abilities of people with a learning disability, their problems and needs and those of their family, dependents and carers in order to assist their integration into society.

Five Star Learning Disability Group

5 Star Group is a safe social outlet for over 25's with a learning disability from Omagh and the surrounding area.

Sperrin Arts Society

A local group of artists of mature age meet monthly to give creative expression to their love for painting and which is positive for their health and well-being.

Cedar Foundation – Parent Support Group

Parent Support Group – Cedar delivers a range of services that enable people with disabilities to get the most out of life and to be fully included in their communities. These services are centred around the individual needs of each person and are delivered throughout Northern Ireland. The vision is an inclusive society for all. Their mission is to support individuals and families with disability, autism and brain injury to live the life they choose.

Little Mess Tyrone

The Little Sensory Co is an exciting, multi-sensory experience for children, comprising of Little Glow, Little Massage, Little Yoga, Little Mess and Little Nature. Owner and Director Roxanne is a mum of two who aims to provide the very best sensory experiences for little ones.

Messy Play - There's nothing better than watching young ones having gloriously splatty, squelchy, squishy, messy fun. That's just one of the many reasons why parents find Little Mess events so much fun. Parents have shared that they love to watch their little ones crawl off into a new adventure, even if they are often a little shy elsewhere. It's all about exploring the touch and feel of their world

Colmcille Club

This local senior citizens club availed of the Station Centre facilities to host their fortnightly programme of activities.

Christmas Party Lunch for Senior Citizens

The young people from Omagh Boys & Girls Club in conjunction with Omagh Youth and Community Trustees co-ordinated a Christmas party lunch for seventy-five senior citizens. Pupils from the local secondary schools provided the musical entertainment in a memorable day of intergenerational activity.

West Tyrone Feis

The Station Centre was full of colour from art work entries representing all the local schools. The centre was a hub for all these creative pieces over the period of a month during which time the West Tyrone judges were busy making their classification decision.

Youth Justice

The Youth Justice Services directorate delivers a cohesive and integrated approach for young people, their families, communities and victims via five area teams spread across the province, and each team provides a full range of Agency services within their region.

Core NI

This organisation promotes healthy active lifestyles and sporting performance for people of all ages and abilities offering a number of fantastic programmes to encourage as many people as possible to become more active, have fun and ultimately develop life-changing habits to improve health and well-being. Positive experiences of fun physical activity and overall well-being help guide children towards lifelong healthy active lifestyles. Core NI believes each child should progress at their own ability and, therefore, everyone is able to participate in a CORE Kid's class. During each class they also include kids' yoga, guided meditation and gratitude practices. Research shows that children can gain enormous benefits from practising yoga and meditation from an early age such as improved flexibility, increased body awareness, enhanced core strength, improved concentration, better coordination, calmness and relaxation.

Indoor Soccer Groups

Adult men, 18-60, participate in weekly soccer keep fit activity. These men do not participate in local IFA affiliated teams. They are casual users for regular weekly exercise which is positive for their physical and emotional well-being.

Omagh Thunder Basketball Club

Omagh Thunder is the only basketball club in the Omagh region to provide this opportunity to play competitive senior basketball, holding their own in the premier league of Basketball N.I. and it currently operates two junior teams also. . The Station Centre is the home of basketball in Omagh. Omagh Thunder is transparently cross-community and its membership reflects many newcomers from the different ethnic communities.

Omagh Ladies Netball

This local ladies netball club use the Sports Hall facilities to practice and hold games.

Basketball Filipino Community

The Station Centre has become home to a vibrant Filipino community in Omagh for their social and recreational activity of basketball and volleyball with up to thirty strong in attendance every Saturday. Their National Independence day this year was attended by up to 400 of their community, making the Station Centre a wonderful spectacle of International culture.

Dance Revelation

This local group of teenagers offer a range of styled classes from hip hop, commercial, lyrical music theatre and freestyle. The aim is to give children, a fun learning experience while gaining confidence and new friendships. They have competed in this genre of dance at a competitive level and have travelled to participate and compete at national and international level, picking up national titles and in a particular dance category scooping a world title award which was held in Blackpool.

Tyrone U-20 Team

As part of their training preparation towards winning this year's 2024 title the Tyrone U20 team attended strength and conditioning classes in the Station Centre.

McDonald's Sixes

A unique inter-primary schools competition featuring all the primary schools in Omagh, with up to 100 pupils, boys and girls competing for the "World Cup" of indoor soccer as it were. With beautiful winners and runners-up trophies, a large winners plaque, trophies for best male player and best female player of the tournament, best goalkeeper, best goal scored and an All Star award for the most effective teamwork player from each of the schools. This is the eleventh year of this most popular sports event for the local schools where the emphasis is on respect for each other and for the rules and laws of the game.

