



Youth Work Ireland
North Connaught

Annual Report
2022

Youth Work Ireland North Connaught

Chairperson's Foreword

Our 2022 report is presented as a summary of the collective contributions of a range of stakeholders, who within the framework of our strategic objectives, endeavour to provide evidenced, informed practice services to our many and varied users.

I thank most sincerely our dedicated staff team, Pat Forde CEO, and my fellow Board members for your support throughout the year.

To our funders - Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth, Department of Justice, Department of Social Protection, HSE, MSLETB and all others who assisted during the year.

To our volunteers, who facilitate youth club provision and services - thank you most sincerely.

North Connaught Youth & Community Services will continue to rise to the challenges and opportunities presented, always cognisant of our mission in responding to the needs of young people and communities in the North Connaught area.



Donall O'Scolai
Chairperson

Community Employment Project 2022

We started 2022 off with 37 participants on our community employment scheme. In 2022 colleges began to resume online and classroom-based courses which allowed staff to upskill and move on to full time employment which resulted in a steady turn over of staff on the CE scheme.

All staff on our Community Employment scheme are fully up to date with mandatory training such as First Aid, Manual Handling and Fire Safety. We are seeing an increase in staff wanting to partake in Admin and Healthcare courses. A new training centre GSW solutions has opened in Sligo town which has benefited us greatly as it is easy access for CE staff to do training. They also run a wide range of courses.

Getting new CE participants continued to be a major challenge in 2022, and we ended the year with 33 participants on the CE scheme with 5 new starts due to commence in January 2023.

We will continue to try and keep our numbers steady in 2023 and continue to help our participants upskill and secure full-time employment.

North Connaught Youth & Community Services CLG
Income and Expenditure Account
For the financial year ended 31st December 2022

	Note	2022 €	2021 €
Income	3	1,398,220	1,303,100
Expenditure		(1,380,661)	(1,281,273)
Surplus for the financial year	4	<u>17,559</u>	<u>21,827</u>

YAPSL Update 2022

North Connaught Youth & Community Services CLG

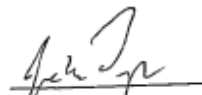
Balance Sheet As at 31st December 2022

	Note	€	2022 €	€	2021 €
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	6	103,550	103,550	102,917	102,917
Current assets					
Debtors	7	70,223		20,373	
Cash at bank		817,787		634,405	
		<u>887,990</u>		<u>654,778</u>	
Creditors: due within one year	8	<u>(201,123)</u>		<u>(185,866)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>486,867</u>		<u>468,992</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>590,417</u>		<u>571,809</u>
Deferred income	9		<u>(84,476)</u>		<u>(83,427)</u>
Net assets			<u><u>505,941</u></u>		<u><u>488,382</u></u>
Capital and reserves					
Contingency reserve	10		135,998		135,998
Income and expenditure account	11		369,943		352,384
			<u><u>505,941</u></u>		<u><u>488,382</u></u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Small Companies' Regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors on and signed on behalf of the board by:


Director


Director

Projects were informed on 15th February 2022 by the Department of Justice that a national rebrand of the Garda Youth Diversion Projects had taken place. Projects are now referred to as Youth Diversion Projects.

The project facilitated iScoil students from March 2022 in collaboration with MSLETB and Sligo School Completion Programme. "iScoil is a non-profit online learning service that offers young people a pathway to learning, accreditation and progression. We also facilitated a 3rd Year Social Care Practice Student from Sligo Institute of Technology for placement between January and May.

YAPSL continue to deliver FEAD Aid & school packs to support families engaging with us, 58 school packs were delivered and over 300 food bags. Staff sit on various committees to keep up to date with developments in other services and to facilitate meaningful interagency working, committees include SMILY, CFSN and CYPSC. We participate in Meitheal, Care Plan Review and Child Protection meetings where relevant. Staff also engage in cluster meetings with our sister Youth Diversion Projects in Ballina and Castlebar.

Across the year we have engaged in programmes of activities during school holidays. We also started an annual intercounty football competition with our sister projects in Mayo. John Kent Sports sponsored a Sligo v Mayo Perpetual cup for the competition. Sligo hold the cup this year.

Preventative work:

- Orienteering event for 6th Class students in several schools on a range of topics to facilitate transition to secondary schools in collaboration with An Garda Síochána.
- We received a grant from the Irish Youth Foundation to run Twilight Football for 12-16 year olds. Members of An Garda

Síochána coached the football in a voluntary capacity and we had two Sligo Rovers' players present medals on the final night, which participants really enjoyed.

- We carried out a Halloween Safety programme with An Garda Síochána in several primary schools in the county. These events were successful in terms of engagement and relationship building with An Garda Síochána.

YAPSL hosted a visit from Minister of State at the Department of Justice and Equality James Brown in July 2022. He met with parents and young people engaging with the project. We delivered a presentation to the Joint Policing Committee on the project and the work being done, which was received well by the committee.

Twilight Football



Perpetual Cup

Over the summer months, YIC staff partnered with NCYI on the STEAM in Youth Work Project. YIC staff worked with a group of 10 young people to promote the engagement and eco-awareness of youth in their local community. As part of the STEAM initiative, young people visited the Organic Centre in Rossinver, Co. Leitrim to learn about biodiversity within their locality. They also planted pollinator friendly seeds in a designated area in the MCR and worked with a local artist to create pollinator inspired installations to go alongside the newly planted seeds.

Through the Creative Youth Grant Scheme, YIC staff were able to work with a local artist to provide 5 digital artistry workshops to young people in our Social Group between October-December. Through this scheme the creative and digital artistry skills of young people were developed and digital art software, Apple pencils and digital art books were purchased for our use in our Centre.

Youth Information Hubs, have been set up in Sligo Youthreach and Sligo Community Centre monthly, delivering information on topics that are relevant to young people e.g. CAO, SUSI, Accommodation Rights & Entitlements, Apprenticeships, etc.

In November YIC staff launched a pilot 6-week girls health program called 'Pizzas & Periods', aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness of young females aged 15-18yrs on their bodies and health.

Sligo YIC updated and maintained the Sligo Leitrim Directory of Services website, reaching 18102 users.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's and Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim ETB.

secondary schools and Youth Reach, was part of a youth education awareness programme for transition Year students. Students took part in a number of sessions addressing different issues such as road safety, single acts of violence, fitness & active lifestyle, mental health & cyber safety throughout the year. The quiz was based on materials such as the Road Safety Manual, Driver Theory Test, introduction to Comhairle na nÓg and the 'Use Your Brain, Not Your Fist' video.

Sligo Youth Information Centre

Annual Report 2022

Sligo YIC staff members continued to work on the National Youth Information Online Chat Service throughout 2022 providing real time guidance and information to young people on the topics that most affect them. Mid Term, Easter, Summer & Halloween workshops were delivered on Teen Babysitting Training, Canva, Self-Care through Positive Visualization, CV & Interview Prep, Budgeting for College.

The Teen Chat, Listening, Advice & Support Service for young people experiencing difficulties in their lives around such issues as Bullying, Family Conflict, Sexuality, Problems at School, Friendship/Relationship issues supported young people was delivered to 42 young people in Sligo and Leitrim. Positive Relationships & Sexual Health workshops were delivered to 230 students from Post Primary Schools in Sligo.

LGBTQ+ Awareness training was delivered to 63 Senior Cycle Students in Leitrim.

Internet Safety & Online Bullying and Apprenticeships workshops were delivered to Trainees in Sligo Community Training Centre and Sligo Youthreach.

YAPSL Orienteering



YAPSL Summer Activities



Cooking



Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg HIGHLIGHTS 2022

The 2022 committee was made up of 13 young people aged between 13-18yrs from a variety of locations across Leitrim. Following on from 2021, the theme of 'Outdoor Recreational spaces for Young People' continued into 2022. In addition, the topic of 'Mental Health' was also voted on as one of the most significant issues that affected young people from the last AGM. The Comhairle group worked on both these topics in 2022.

The group presented their feedback and suggestions relating to their 'Outdoor Space for Young People' proposal, to Leitrim County Council in Carrick-on-Shannon in February. They put forward their ideas on the locations that could most benefit from an outdoor space for youth and key factors for the outdoor space such as seating, lighting, bins, and shelter from the weather so it can be used all year round. They also worked with MPACT – an organization which supports young people whose families are affected by addiction - to devise a more youth friendly approach to engaging young people with their service.

Dail na nÓg took place in the Convention Centre in Dublin in March. Five members and the coordinator from the Leitrim Comhairle group travelled up on the day. It was a really enjoyable and valuable day out, with it being the first national in-person event since Covid-19. On the day, Comhairle members from each county represented their Comhairle group and participated in activities, discussions and listening to key speakers on issues that affect young people across Ireland.

Leitrim Comhairle na nÓg, alongside the Leitrim Community Policing Unit and Healthy Leitrim delivered a Youth Education Quiz in the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon in May. The quiz, involving all Leitrim

Halloween



Price Hoodies



Steam Project



Youth Action Castlebar - Review 2022

Youth Action Castlebar Youth Diversion Project had another very successful year in 2022. We welcomed a new Youth Justice Worker to the Castlebar office in January. Chloe Timlin has quickly become an integral part of the Youth Work Ireland North Connaught team and is making a positive difference in all of the young people's lives whom she works with on a daily basis. We have continued to build on our strong relationship with the community police unit in Castlebar and have organised a number of very successful joint initiatives with them again this year such as the Cycle Safe and Bike Maintenance programme for our new Ukrainian community here in Castlebar. We were very sad to say goodbye to our wonderful JLO Mick Fahy who retired this year. Mick actually helped set up this project back in 2008 and was instrumental in it becoming such a well-supported community driven project over the last 15 years or so.

One of our favourite summer events took us back to Lough Key Forrest Park again this year with all of the Youth Diversion Projects attending accompanied by their JLO's to further strengthen the relationships between our young people and an Garda Síochána. We have had a number of positive interventions run throughout the year and piloted a very successful Music Therapy programme for the first time. Also, Youth Action Castlebar is now an official blended learning centre for iScoil along with our Ballina Project. We currently have a very successful student about to finish his QQI level 3 studies all of which have been completed here with the support of Youth Action Staff in partnership with Davitt College Secondary School and the Education Welfare Officer. One young person engaging with the project was awarded with both the Mayo Division and National Garda Youth Special Achievement Awards for overcoming difficult circumstances. Jamie has made a new life for himself in Mayo after moving to Castlebar to live with his wonderful foster parents. They connected with Youth Action Castlebar and we were delighted to support Jamie in a few areas such as returning to education and sport,

Youth Action Ballina 2022 Report

Throughout 2022 there were some personnel changes within the project, Micheál who had been with the project since 2017 left to travel for a period but we were fortunate enough that he was replaced by Pádraig O Hora. Pádraig has an abundance of experience of working with young people through his role in Western Care, his involvement with the FLO, Inclusion for all community, working with Mayo Mental Health and the As I Am, Irelands National Autism Charity, and plays for Mayo Senior Gaelic team. He brings to the project plenty of enthusiasm and energy and has settled in well with all young people and their families.

We also had a change in our committee, Joe Doherty, Superintendent, who was the chairperson for over ten years retired this year. Joe was a great advocate of the project and has been involved in several activities, trips, hikes and tournaments throughout the years. He was always eager to lend a hand and promote the project on every level over his time as Chairperson and will be sadly missed. Gary Walsh has been appointed as the new superintendent and the new Chairperson on the project committee. Gary had previous dealings with the project in his previous role as inspector. He is eager to be involved in everything the project is doing and to promote the project on every level. We look forward to continuing our work with Gary and involving him in many of our excursions in the future.

We were involved in a number of positive programs and activities with our young people. One of the main activities we really focused on was kayaking and we were able to introduce the sport to a large number of young people. We did both river and lake kayaking and three of our young people completed their level one kayaking skills. Along with this both members of staff completed their level two skills in kayaking and are due to complete their instructor training in the coming months.

growing up LGBTQ+ in rural Ireland.

The group attended a Teenage Disco hosted by Longford Youth Service and attended by other LGBTQ+ groups from Mullingar, Drogheda, Longford and Athlone.

Referrals to Smily LGBTQ+ Youth Project have been received from:

- ◆ CAMHS
- ◆ Social Work
- ◆ Tubbercurry/Mohill and Ballymote Family Centres
- ◆ Home Youth Liaison Service
- ◆ Sligo National Learning Network
- ◆ Leitrim Youthreach
- ◆ Leitrim UBU
- ◆ Foroige NYP – Leitrim
- ◆ HSE Disability Services

Ombudsman for Children



Smily LGBTQ+ Youth Project 2022

Two groups meet in Sligo weekly with one-to-one sessions delivered in Sligo and Leitrim. Issue specific topics are discussed weekly, as identified by the group. We also have fun activities and attend outdoor activities during Mid-Term Breaks and Summer Holidays.

Some of the topics discussed were:

- Homophobia and hate crimes and the reasoning behind them
- Bullying at School
- Mental Health concerns and where to go to get support
- Trans Health

Smily LGBTQ+ Youth Project hosted two days of Trans Awareness workshops in Sligo and Leitrim, facilitated by the Educations and Family Support Worker from TENI (Trans Equality Network Ireland) to Youth Workers, Teachers, Social Care Workers, Social Workers, etc.

Smily young people gave an interview to GCN (Gay Community News) on *'How LGBTQ+ young people can be supported and what going to Dublin Pride means to them'*. This article was published in their June edition. The young people also gave a telephone interview on Dublin South Community Radio Station on *'What it is like to grow up in rural Ireland being LGBTQ+'*. This interview was aired during Pride week in June. Smily LGBTQ+ Youth Group attended Dublin Pride, which for some young people was the highlight of their year, for some this was their first Pride Celebration. Smily young people took part in a STEAM Project, learning the importance of Bees to the Planet, culminating with a visit to the Organic Centre in Co. Leitrim, where they got an opportunity to plant seeds, take them home with them and watch them grow.

Smily LGBTQ+ Project hosted the Ombudsman for Children in September, the young people share with him their experiences of

We also completed a number of horse-riding lessons with various young people who really enjoyed the activity. They found it very challenging as many of them were afraid to get started but through the coaching and support they completed the activity and came back for further sessions.

In 2021, YAB received funding from *Fisheries Ireland* through their "Angling for All" scheme. We had run several programs in 2021 and we continued on with these in 2022. There is a very strong interest amongst the local youths of the town in fishing and the river Moy is a fantastic local amenity which is right on our doorstep. This is also a great activity which the young people enjoy and can engage in on their own time as well.

We have a large number of young people who started swimming lessons, sponsored by Swim Ireland, with us in 2022, unfortunately due to a change in timetable in school they were unable to complete the full set but we are planning to complete them in 2023.

Throughout the year we had several football tournaments, along with our regular football which due to covid we had to move outside for a while but we still managed to engage a number of young people.

We did a number of sports outings with the young people including; Surfing, Paddle boarding, Golf, Fishing, Hiking, and we did a few trips to Lough Key to do Zip Lining, and other sport-based outings.

Ballinamore Youth Action Project

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Ballinamore Youth Action Project (BYAP) was set up in November 2022.

It has had a good response in its first two months since its advertisement and launch of its social media page. The project has opened up new opportunities for the Ballinamore and surrounding areas. Three referrals in the first month of the project opening shows the need of this project in Ballinamore, Drumshanbo and Mohill areas.

It has already had positive feedback from parents and young people who have been involved with the youth development officer from BYAP. Creating positive connections with external organizations and individuals has been a big part for this new project to expand and flourish. Referrals are not only coming from parents but from the school liaison officer as of the beginning of the new year. It is hoped these connections and relationships will expand in the coming year to support BYAP's progression.

BYAP has also had the opportunity to attend events such as the Comharile na nÓg AGM in Carrick on Shannon which allowed the youth development officer to connect with young people, teachers and other youth organizations and council members in Leitrim.

We look forward to the expansion and progression of BYAP throughout 2023 with its new premises in Ballinamore town and the projects official launch.

Leitrim UBU continued its work with 7 Volunteer Youth Clubs and Cafés throughout the county. Helping with programme planning, grant applications, summer camps, delivering child protection training and processing Garda Vetting. Training new volunteers and supporting volunteers.

We also took part in the following activities :

- * Rap & Dance Workshops
- * History of Graffiti and graffiti workshops with one of Ireland's best Graffiti Artists.
- * Foroige Drug & Alcohol Education Programme
- * Soccer & Healthy Lifestyle Programme
- * Seachtain na Gaeilge Event
- * Youth space for Ukrainian young people
- * Music project for Ukrainian young people
- * Paddleboarding & Kayaking
- * Online space for young people during study & exams
- * Island survival and adventure programme
- * Cross Boarder Weekend, Go Create Project
- * Photography - Our Life Project
- * Needle Felt Picture Workshops
- * Peddle Art Workshops
- * Crochet Workshops
- * FEAD Programme
- * Nature Programme
- * One to Ones with various young people

Leitrim UBU Project Update 2022

In April 2022 Mary Taylor who had been our Youth Development Co-ordinator for many years retired and was replaced by our then Youth Development Worker Fiona Taylor, who in turn was replaced by our new recruit Liam Meates. We wish Mary many happy years of retirement and welcome Liam to the Leitrim UBU team.

Leitrim UBU Project had an exciting last year with the young people participating in many new workshops.

The areas that we covered and number of participants:

- Ballinamore – 16 Young People
- Drumshanbo – 30 Young People
- Manorhamilton – 22 Young people

Through all these projects/workshops we have worked with the following agencies:

- ◆ Leitrim County Council,
- ◆ Leitrim Development Company,
- ◆ Leitrim Sports Partnership,
- ◆ Creative Leitrim,
- ◆ MSLETB Local Creative Youth Partnership,
- ◆ Northern Ireland Youth Forum,
- ◆ Ballinamore Community Council,
- ◆ Ballinamore Community School,
- ◆ Tusla,
- ◆ Creative Crafts Ireland,
- ◆ Mohill Family Resource Centre,
- ◆ Leitrim County Childcare Committee,
- ◆ Foroige,
- ◆ Northwest Drug Taskforce.

North Mayo UBU Project Highlights 2022

We built on the first Light It Up Winter Magic project from 2021 and created another visual art piece for 2022. All of the art work was created by 130 young people from the Ballina area. The core group of young people were from the North Mayo UBU project. While our collaborative partners were from Down Syndrome Mayo, Involve Youth Project Ballina, Little Blue Heroes, St Dymphna's together with students from St Mary's, the Cairde group from NYP and An Garda Siochana school art competition. The production ran every evening over the Christmas period in the Ballina Mineral Water Company Building. It was a wonderful display of artwork and stop motion created by our young people and was a great addition to the Christmas lights in Ballina.

Another highlight from the North Mayo UBU Project is during the summer we began a hiking group with an older girls group we worked with on the project. The girls said they wanted to eventually build up to climbing Croagh Patrick as they had not climbed it before. We did a few smaller hikes with the group before we tackled Croagh Patrick. The young people got to the top of Croagh Patrick and were delighted with their achievements.

Groups

Target group 1 (15-17 years old)

- ◆ Monday girls (6 young people)
- ◆ Junior lads (8 young people)
- ◆ Creative art group (7 young people)
- ◆ iScoil (3 young people)
- ◆ Kayaking (8 young people)
- ◆ Horse-riding 7 young people)

Target group 2 (10-14 years old)

- ◆ Relationship building Culleens NS (18 young people)
- ◆ Scoil íosa Transition group (10 young people)
- ◆ STEAM (10 young people)
- ◆ Junior girls group (5 young people)

Target group 3 (18-24 years old)

- ◆ Older lads football (30 young people)

Throughout the course of 2022 the North Mayo UBU Youth Project supported a lot of young people on a one-to-one basis and also provided crisis support to some young people and families. We also were involved in a number of foodbank deliveries and school pack deliveries to families of young people that we work with.

As well as our weekly groups through the year we had a number of large events such as

- Spray painting days, in partnership with Mayo Community Art Squad (3 days, no of young people engaged 26)
- Ireland -v- Ukraine match in partnership with local Community Guards and Mayo North East (35 young people engaged) on 8th June 2022.
- Outdoor education days ran in partnership with Venture Out (2 days of activities, 16 young people engaged)
- Orienteering days with national schools, in partnership with School Completion and local Community Guards (6 sessions, 173 young people engaged).
- Light it up Winter Magic, in partnership with Down Syndrome Mayo, Involve Youth Project Ballina, Little Blue Heroes, St Dymphna's School together with students from St Mary's Secondary School, the Cairde Group from NYP and An Garda Síochána School Art competition, on 16th December 2022.
- Welcoming Ukrainian young people and families 20th April 2022.

- Inclusive football match during Ballina Salmon festival in partnership with the Rio Ferdinand Foundation 11th July 2022.
- Twilight football sessions ran in partnership with the Rio Ferdinand Foundation and local community guards (38 young people took part over 7 sessions).

The project covers a large geographic area and works with a large number of young people from different areas including Ballina town centre, Foxord Road, Killala Road, Crossmolina Road, Bonniclon, Ardnaree, Killala, and Crossmolina.

Trainings and workshops workers attended during 2022.

- Circus skills
- Street art
- Mindout training
- Decider skills training
- Film making training