



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Limerick Youth Service

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
ABOUT LIMERICK YOUTH SERVICE	6
INCLUSIVE & INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICE	8
YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT	9
YOUR SPACE YOUR PLACE	11
TRAVELLER YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH	15
GARDA YOUTH DIVERSION PROJECT	16
CRISES RESPONSE	16
BEWELL MENTAL HEALTH	17
YOUTHSPACES	18
YOUTH PARTICIPATION	19
COMHAIRLE NA NOG	20
INTERNATIONAL YOUTHWORX	20
SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS	21
VOLUNTEER LED YOUTHWORX	22
YOUTH INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION	22
YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVING THEIR POTENTIAL	23
TRAINING & EMPLOYABILITY	24
COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTRE	24
ABILITY	27
ENABLING OUR STRATEGY	28
STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT	28
EVIDENCE & DATA COLLECTION	28
MANAGEMENT	28
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS	30
	31
THE FUTURE	32
FURTHER INFORMATION	33



FOREWORD

We are living in unprecedented times and over the 12 months we have faced challenges of an unparalleled nature.

On the 12th March 2020, the Government of Ireland announced that schools, childcare facilities and colleges were to close. The immediate implications for Limerick Youth Service was the closure of all buildings to the public and the transfer of Limerick Youth Service activities and services to an online or remote form of delivery. This unprecedented event required a fundamental change to our work and the adaption of a range of alternative models of working. Staff were working from home where possible and using a range of digital platforms to maintain contact with young people. There was a shift to virtual meetings and limited face to face contact using social distancing guidelines.

As we progressed through 2020 the guidelines changed and we adapted and developed our services to address the new reality we were facing. On a practical level, Limerick Youth Service developed our own Covid 19 response plans including media campaigns in relation to HSE guidelines, information updates on social media platforms and maintaining buildings and phone lines open to the public. We undertook a broad planning and risk assessment process to ensure both staff and young people would be safe in returning to onsite and face to face delivery.

We also significantly developed our online and digital capabilities which involved upgrading our IT hardware and software infrastructure and developing methods of engaging young people using digital methodologies. Staff and young people had access to a range of up-skilling opportunities in relation to these new methodologies. Funding to upgrade our capacity in the area of IT was sourced from a range of sources in 2020.

Since the onset of the pandemic in Ireland in March 2020, we have continued to prioritise those young people most at risk and continued to operate face to face work in crises situations. We utilised outdoor options where available and feasible and innovative methodologies such as detached and street work.

We also offered a range of additional much needed interventions to our service users and their families including food and meat packs, activity packs and essential care and clothing packs. Funding to support this crises work was sourced from corporate donors.

Chairperson
Audrey Fehily

CEO
Fiona O Grady

‘Connecting with young people and supporting them to reach their full potential’





ABOUT LIMERICK YOUTH SERVICE

LYS was founded in 1973 as a provider of youth work, education, training and employability programmes and youth friendly spaces to young people aged 10 to 25 in Limerick City & County. LYS is a registered charity and a member of Youth Work Ireland. LYS is governed by a Voluntary Board which is responsible for the overall governance of the Organisation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Inclusive & Integrated Youth Service

To further develop and promote safe, integrated and inclusive youth services for young people in Limerick City & County

Youth Participation

To ensure that young people are actively involved and have real influence and voice in decision-making on matters affecting their lives, both directly and indirectly

Supporting Volunteers

To attract, support and sustain active volunteers so they may positively contribute to improving the lives of young people, and to strengthen communities and civil society

Young People achieving their potential

To empower and facilitate young people to develop personally, economically and socially to meet their needs and realise their full potential

Enabling our Strategy

To build a strong organisation that is open to learning, responsive to change and committed to its ongoing development

INCLUSIVE & INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICE





INCLUSIVE & INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICE

TO FURTHER DEVELOP AND PROMOTE SAFE, INTEGRATED AND INCLUSIVE YOUTH SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
IN LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY

LYS delivers an integrated youth work model that ensures young people can be involved in one or more areas of youth work according to their interest and need at a particular time

Limerick Youth Service's youth work programmes, services and activities are designed to improve confidence, communication, planning and problem-solving skills among young people. The following youth work was delivered in 2020 using both remote and direct face to face delivery.

- Integrated models emerged in response to the multiple needs of many young people and the failure of fragmented service delivery
- Integrated services can improve outcomes and service quality
- Integrated models can promote the effective use of resource
- Integrated service models have the potential to deliver economic benefits
- The YWI Integrated Youth Service Model is aligned with best practice on integrated working
- Young people describe positive outcomes and value their engagement with the Youth Service
- Youth Service staff and external partners support the integrated model

YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

The aim of the Youth and Family Support Project is to improve the life chances of young people by enhancing their personal and social skills in partnership with their family and community. The LYS Youth & Family Support project seeks to work predominantly with the more vulnerable young people and families in Limerick City, with outreach service to County Limerick in respect of the Meitheal process.

The project worked with **84** young people in total over the 12 month period. The gender breakdown of the project was 63% female 37% male.

The following types of interventions and supports were provided:

- 5 Meitheals closed during this period, one remaining active and 2 external supported by LYS
- Individual support provided to young people
- Parent support group
- Groupwork support in areas such as social skills, mental health, wellbeing and healthy relationships.
- Activity programmes in areas such as carpentry, makeup and beauty, cookery, music, arts performance, health and fitness



Investing in Children

In January 2020, young people involved in LYS Youth & Family Support Project were acknowledged in a fantastic event in King John's Castle for their involvement in the development of 'Commissioning: The Tusla Way'. This project initiated in 2019 and involved partners working together on a series of youth consultations around Commissioning and young people's interpretation of what this means. The subsequent animation that was created explained Tusla's process of Commissioning in a youth friendly way that was developed entirely by the young people and facilitated by Aladdin Studios. This process was hugely beneficial for the young people who engaged at the consultation stage but also for the young person who was engaged throughout the development of the resource and end product. At the event in King John's Castle, LYS and the other partners received the Investing in Children's Award.

CASE STUDY - LIZ

Liz was referred to the Youth & Family Support Service at age 17. At the time Liz was struggling with her mental health and had been accessing CAMHS on a regular basis from aged 14 due to diagnosed depression. Liz was very isolated with no peer friendships and had dropped out of school having been involved in a lot of conflict with other students. Liz has had some very negative life experiences and poor relationships with others however Liz had an exceptionally strong family unit. Liz was a very bright and articulate young person and was able to verbalise her needs very well.

The Youth & Family Support Project initiated a Meitheal¹ in order to put a wraparound plan in place and to empower her to have a say in matters affecting her life. Liz engaged extremely well with the process and had good ownership over her action plan. 3 Meitheal meetings were facilitated in total, one using zoom. Liz engaged in individual work on a weekly basis and also in weekly group sessions with other teenagers her age completing the Mind Out Programme which aims to give teenagers time and space to identify the things that impact on their mental health and to explore how they deal with these issues in their lives. As part of the Meitheal the service also referred Liz to additional supports that Liz can link with after turning 18 such as LYS BeWell Team and Ability project.

This young person was supported to transition from CAMHS to the Adult Mental health services upon reaching 18. Liz is currently engaged with LYS BeWell Team and the Ability project and is being supported in terms of her mental health needs but also in relation to employability and her social and emotional support.

Liz has a keen interest in photography and was supported to access Limerick College of Further Education to pursue a career in photography. Some of her photographs have been used by Virgin Media News, The Limerick Leader and Limerick Youth Service Social Media. Liz maintains good links with the project still and checks in with us on a regular basis.

¹ Meitheal is a National Practice Model to ensure that the needs and strengths of children and their families are effectively identified and understood and responded to in a timely way so that children and families get the help and support needed to improve children's outcomes and realise their rights



The mission of the UBU Your Place Your Space scheme is to provide out-of-school supports to young people in their local communities to enable them to overcome adverse circumstances and achieve their full potential by improving their personal and social development outcomes.

Limerick Youth delivered 6 UBU projects in 2020.

- East Limerick UBU
- Rathkeale/Askeaton UBU
- Kings Island UBU
- Garryowen Together UBU
- City Suburbs UBU
- Lava Javas Youth Project

East Limerick UBU is based in Castleconnell, Co Limerick. As a consequence of Covid 19, youth provision in 2020 was delivered from the base and online and used locations in the wider community as appropriate to the needs and locations of the young people involved. There are pockets of deprivation within the area, including a 'Very Disadvantaged' area in Cappamore. There are poor transport links in the area and rural isolation can be an issue.

East Limerick UBU worked with 51 young people in 2020. Highlights of the year included;

- Certified Kayaking Programme (Summer Provision)
- Creative Arts Programme
- Primary to Secondary Transition Programme to schools throughout East Limerick.



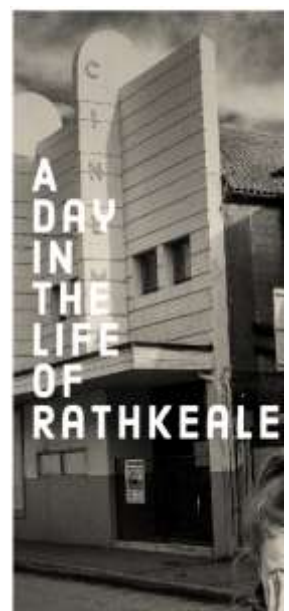
Bord Oideachais & Ollúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board





Rathkeale & Askeaton UBU . Rathkeale is largely a disadvantaged area and is a designated RAPID town. Rathkeale's distinctive ethnicity is represented by its long association with the Irish Traveller community who constitute a significant, albeit partly transient, proportion of the town's population. The main location for provision of support under this project is Rathkeale with some detached/outreach to Askeaton. In 2020 Rathkeale & Askeaton worked with 88 young people. Highlights of 2020 include;

- Collaborations with LCETB Creative Partnership – 'A Day in the Life of Rathkeale' Photography Project (funded by LCETB Creative Partnership and 'Shake it Up' NYCI Artist in Residence Programme (match funding from LCETB Creative Partnership).
- Expansion of service activity to Askeaton.
- Adaptations made to services during Covid-19. Staff upskilled and adapted services to maintain contact with the target groups.





Kings Island & Watergate UBU

The main objective of this UBU is to promote the personal development, communication, positive relationships and physical and mental well-being of young people.

In 2020, the project expanded service delivery from 4 days to 6 days a week and increased the range of methodologies used to address a greater range of needs, this included Detached Youth Work, Zoom Drop In Calls and Active Life Outdoor Sessions.

Due to the restrictions that were in place through most of 2020, Kings Island UBU used detached youth work as the primary methodology to engage young people as it allowed the project to engage with the local community and develop relationships with new young people. This in turn led to new groups being formed including a Teen Girls, Pre-teen boys and Watergate groups.

With the ease of some restrictions in the summer the project was able to organise kayaking on the river Shannon, supporting young people's personal development and improving water safety skills. A handball programme operated twice a week and led to young people co-organising a tournament at the end of the summer.

104 young people engaged with the service.

The City Suburbs UBU

project provides youth work support to young people in 5 target groups aged 10 to 24 in the general suburbs of Limerick Metropolitan areas. The city suburbs include the suburbs to the South of Limerick City in addition to part of Ballynanty, Castletroy Rhebogue, and City Centre.

Due to covid 19 youth workers embraced digital and detached youth work methodologies. Programmes delivered included outdoor programmes, sports, and fitness, craft activities, summer programme (outdoors) walks to the park/UL picnics / treasure trails, Halloween programme. Key achievements for 2020 included;

1. Detached work was developed in new areas of the City Centre, Queen of Peace and Ballycummin.
2. Increased levels of one -to -one work.
3. Expanding youth work provision in Queen of Peace Parish
4. Increased after-school provision for Rhebogue and Corbally.
5. Light up Northside Art Exhibition.



CASE STUDY – SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN DIRECT PROVISION

Young people living in direct provision experienced additional challenges staying safe during Covid 19 with some families self-isolating in small living spaces within a centre.

Through weekly family check-ins by Youth Workers, parents and young people were expressing feeling of isolation, anxiety, family tensions, separation from friends and feelings of exclusion.

In response to these emerging needs, it was agreed that the delivery of summer youth work for young people in direct provision would focus on outdoor education activities that would connect young people with their peers, support them in making new friendships, improve mental health and provide opportunities for socialisation.

The value of outdoor education and the role of the environment in a young person's wellbeing is very important. 10 young people from the Diversity & Youth Project and the East Limerick UBU participated in a 3 day Kayaking programme based in Castleconnell Co. Limerick.

The programme provided certification, fostered a sense of achievement, developed new skills as well as providing a space where young people are encouraged into mixing with their Irish peers. This process challenged both groups initially, but friendships developed and perceptions changed.

Overall the project was delivered using strong youthwork methodologies and created a positive environment and opportunity for young people to meet and share their experiences. Young peoples, physical, mental and social health was enhanced and new friendship and relationships fostered through group team work.

In 2020, **Lava Javas Youth Project** provided

dedicated weekly opportunities and youth spaces where young people have a sense of belonging and inclusion while also maintaining online weekly connectivity through zoom during Covid restrictions.

Lava Javas UBU project registered 93 Young people in 2020 with a strong focus on young people accessing services through the city centre. Target groups of the project include LGBT+, travelers and migrant young people.

Key activities and programmes from 2020 included: youth pride festival, youth committee group, IYMA's group, outdoor activity group, youth café group, 3 migrant groups (Griffen group, Knocklisheen and DAY group) LGBT+ youth group meetings, clondrinagh park traveller health and fitness groups and clonlong young women's group.

Young people engaged in one to ones sessions, online outreach/ detached work, young volunteer meetings & check in, mentoring with migrant group art workshops, photography workshops, integrated 3 Day Kayaking programme and Art programme, mental health outdoor activity programme





Garryowen UBU

aims to provide young people in Garryowen with a safe space where they can socialise safely and take part in recreational and educational activities with their peers. The project supports young people who are at risk of leaving school or who require support and advocacy to access further education, training and work opportunities by facilitating programmes, one to one coaching and detached work after school hours.

54 young people registered with the project in 2020. Key Highlights of the project include

Men's horse care project - a specialised programme aimed at engaging hard to reach young men who have a keen interest in horses. This programme enabled the young men to learn new skills relating to horses such as Veterinary care, hoof care, correct horse-riding form and horse grooming.

Four-day Dance Project with choreography by Dance Limerick

Creative Youth Partnership Residency Grant Scheme was a platform for young people to work with artists Sandra Sheehan and Stephen Lappin photographer to develop a shared artistic approach within the community. This residency is led by the young people interests and needs reflecting the voice of the young people at all stages.

Traveller Youth Mental Health Project

involved the creation, support and capacity building of a Traveller Youth Advisory Group (TYAG) across 5 hubs in Mid - west region and the development of a suite of bespoke communication, information and capacity building measures.

The Youth advisory group consists of 6 key young people aged 18-25 who were active in ensuring that the voice of travellers was heard in the project.

The project engaged 88 young Travellers aged 14 – 25 across 8 locations in Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary in a series of consultations in relation to mental health issues. In 2021 a series of resources will be produced by the group.

Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs)

work with young people who have a moderate risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour and criminality. The Aim of the GYDP is to:

- Involve young people in suitable activities to facilitate personal development, encourage civic responsibility and improve their long-term employability prospects
- Divert young people from becoming involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour
- In achieving the above, the project will seek to support and improve local Garda, community relations and enhance the quality of life in communities

The project can be accessed by young people referred by An Garda Síochána and young people identified as being at risk of becoming involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour

In 2020, 83 young people engaged with Limerick Youth Service GYDP project.

15 Families received a Family Support service

Covid 19 exasperated issues for young people over 2020 peer relations and personality and behaviour was a presenting need for young people due to young people expressing experiencing levels of frustration and boredom due to spending extended unstructured time at home. Leisure and Recreation was a presenting need for a high number of young people due to restricted recreational activities available to young people during covid-19.

Crises

Response

Since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, LYS has continued to offer services and supports to young people both on site and on a remote basis in line with Government guidelines. Funding secured from Basis Point in 2020 has enabled us to go that step further and reach out to offer additional much needed interventions to our service users and their families during these challenging times. This has included over 270 food hampers, 175 activity packs, and 82 essential care & clothing packs.



LYS Be Well Project is for young people (14 to 25yrs) from across Limerick City & County who are in need of support for mental health & well-being.

The project provides:

- Counselling (2 full time/1 part time IACP accredited Psychotherapists)
- Family support and advice
- Group based initiatives
- Youth engagement
- Education and awareness

76 referrals were made to the service in 2020 and 1237 counselling sessions offered to young people with an 83% attendance at sessions. In addition young people benefited from the support of a Youth Mental Health Worker including

- 104 individual sessions
- 11 young people completed WRAP training
- BEWELL mental health talks
- 19 young people engaged in senior and junior YAP on initiatives such as
- Breaking the silence, MY STORY, Limerick Mental Health Week and online wellness day (workshops included yoga, mindfulness and fitness)



1237
Counselling
Sessions
offered

81%- UNDER 18
19%- OVER 18



YOUTH SPACES

Limerick Youth Service's supports and services are delivered within dedicated, safe, accessible and youth friendly spaces across Limerick City and County including:-

- Limerick Youth Service Headquarters, Lower Glentworth Street, Limerick
- Community Training Centre, Lower Glentworth Street, Limerick
- The Factory, Southside Youth Space, Galvone Business Park, Limerick
- Northside Youthspace, Ballynanty, Limerick
- Rathkeale Youth Space, Abbey Court, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick
- Kings Island Youthspace, Nicholas Street, Limerick.
- East Limerick Youth Project, Castleconnell, Co. Limerick

Working in partnership with local communities, Limerick Youth Service also facilitates youth clubs and programmes in community venues and facilities across Limerick City and County including provision in more isolated rural communities. Limerick Youth Service has continued to develop our buildings and facilities in 2020, including investment in Glentworth Street, Rathkeale youth space and the development of a new youthhub in Castleconnell.

The Factory Southside Youth Space

The Factory SYS is a multi-purpose meeting and sports facility providing low cost facilities on the Southside of Limerick to children, young people, community groups, sports clubs etc. The facility also provides a base for targeted youth work and family support programmes and an integrated Hub for youth work provision. In 2020 the facility was mainly accessed by young people from disadvantaged and marginalised groups including migrant communities, Travellers, adults and young people with learning difficulties Young people at risk for social exclusion, young offenders.

The delivery of services and accessibility of facilities from the Factory was majorly impacted by Covid 19 in 2020. Despite this, 7146 individuals accessed the premises in 2020. The majority were from Limerick city and immediate surroundings. 5972 were under 18 years old of which 3977 were male and 1995 female.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION



Comhairle na nÓg

Comhairle na nÓg are 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.. There were 30 Young People on the Limerick Comhairle, coming from both the City and the County. Significant link work with LCCC, LCETB as well as strong level of national engagement was completed in 2020.

The 2020 Comhairle AGM was held online (via ZOOM) with 61 Young People in attendance. Key achievements in 2020 include

1. World Health Organisation (WHO) Award for young people's work with LCCC, Healthy Limerick, and the HSE on the 'Not Around Us,' an initiative to denormalise smoking in public spaces.
2. National involvement with Comhairle National Showcase and consulted on/by Environmental Protection Agency, TASC, Eco-Unesco and locally by University of Limerick and CYPSC. Local involvement on steering committees/working groups with: Healthy Limerick, LCETB, Local Creative Youth Partnership and LCNN Steering Committee.
3. Working with Be Well on our Mental Health theme for 2020: Summer Camp for Young People experiencing or at risk of Homelessness, and an online Wellness Event as the 2 key projects/programmes.



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

Limerick Youth Service continues to engage in international youth work (Erasmus+ Programme) with young people, staff and volunteers taking part in a variety of programmes.

2 Staff presented at international conference focused on inclusivity in local youth work representing LYS on a European scale.

7 Staff have been leading a working group internally to promote Erasmus+ opportunities within LYS. These staff have also attended Leargas workshops with a focus on the accreditation process for the organisation.

1 Staff member attended online international conference under the topic of inclusivity in youth work.

An application for funding was submitted for Youth O vision online music competition for 2021 with partners from Finland & Italy under the creative partnerships project.

Staff keeping in touch with strong partnerships built across Europe, building upon these to ensure future projects.

Currently LYS is preparing our accreditation application to secure Erasmus+ funding over the next three years.

SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS



VOLUNTEER LED YOUTH WORK

Youth Clubs

As part of the Limerick Youth Service clubs network, young people participate in a variety of activities and programmes including inter-club activities and visits, Regional Youth Discoes x4 attended by 1500 annually, Youth Factor Variety Show attended by 600 in UCH Limerick and various youth games events.

Youth clubs are supported by over 350 volunteers, parents and students and traditionally have a voluntary committee who run the weekly programme of activities, apply for grants and support the young people engage at local level in their community and to network regionally and nationally. Junior Leader training is provide to support voice of for young people in clubs and enhance their agency.

In the past year the following youth clubs were supported : Castleconnell Youth Club, DSL (Down Syndrome Limerick) Youth Club, Kilfinane Fun Club, Granagh Youth Club, SOS Congolese Youth Club, Ballynanty Youth Club, Kildimo Youth Club, Castletroy Youth Club, Newcastle West Youth Club, Abbeyfeale Youth Club, Askeaton Ballysteen Youth Club, St Senan's Youth Club, Doon Youth Club, Limerick Connection, Killeedy Youth club, Clonlara Youth Club, Rathkeale Youth Space, Domain Youth Club, St. John's Youth Club (Garryowen), Ballingarry Youth Club & Fedamore youth Club.

In 2020 the main focus of the work was providing;

- Ongoing support and information to over 20 clubs and groups across Limerick City and County and supporting volunteers via ZOOM cluster meetings, safeguarding workshops, grant application workshops and covid 19 information workshops.
- Staff also supported junior leader groups and young volunteers in their youth club role and student placements in LYS. With students in mind we streamlined a process of induction week and provided student review days for continuing professional development
- Specific activities included a covid return for clubs programme and presentation for covid officers in clubs, covid training, safeguarding training Junior leadership, Resilience training, Finance workshops, one world week workshops and regional cluster meetings.

Youth Information and Communications

Limerick Youth Service's Youth Information and Communication service provides general and specialist information services to young people and those who work with them on issues such as career guidance, minority rights, accommodation, travel, access to education and literacy support.

- In 2020, 4,435 contacts were recorded through the LYS information service.
- There was 2016 contacts via the national digital chat service

Social Media is a key component of LYS communication in 2020. In 2020 there were 36,413 visits to the LYS website. 45 editions of LYS newsletter which is circulated via email, social media and through print media.

Limerick Youth Service's Twitter accounts received an average of 469,500 impressions views and our Facebook pages received approximately 450,000 views in 2019.

YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVING THEIR POTENTIAL



TRAINING & EMPLOYABILITY

COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTRE



The Community Training Centre (CTC) offers a variety of educational, employability and training opportunities to young people aged between 16 and 21 years of age. We cater for 100 young people on site with up to 30 young people on a linked work experience programme at any one time. On January 1st 2020 there were 88 learners registered in the CTC and throughout 2020 an additional 42 young people joined our centre. In 2020 39 young people moved on from the CTC, with 28 of those individuals completing their course and/or time in the CTC. Throughout the year and in the midst of Covid-19 we continued to focus on providing education and training opportunities for early school leavers between the age of 16 and 21 through the following programmes:

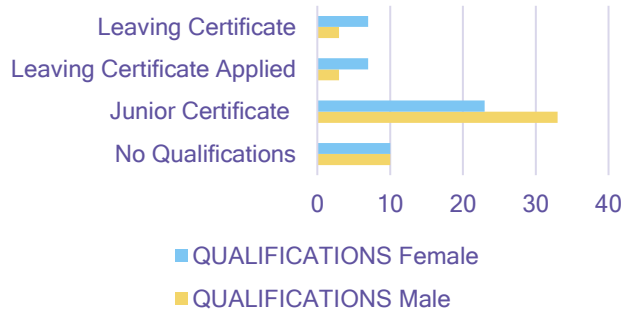
- QQI Level 3 Employability Skills -
- QQI Level 4 Pathway to Employment Award
- QQI Level 4 Retail Skills Award
- FDQ Diploma in Professional Bakery Skills
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- ESOL Course

Personal and interpersonal skills, communication skills and team working are an integral part of all of the above courses and are in essence the key areas of focus when a young person joins the CTC

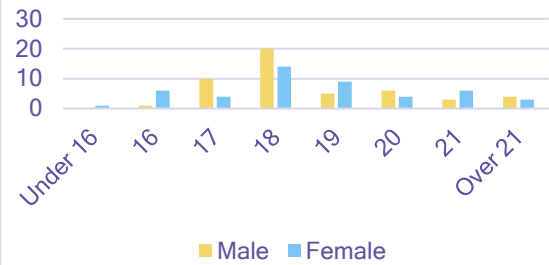


On 31st December 2020 there were 96 young people registered in the centre and the following tables illustrate a profile of those young people.

Qualifications on Entry to CTC



Age Profile of CTC Learners 2020





CASE STUDY – MARK

Mark joined the CTC as a spirited, funny, engaging young person with a number of additional needs and difficult personal circumstances. He attended the CTC for over two years and from the beginning, he said that when he was finished his course with Limerick Youth Service, he wanted to do other courses or get a job. He did not want to end up on the dole as he had a young daughter and a partner and wanted to be able to move in together and build a life for themselves and their little girl.

In the early days, he found it very hard to complete a full week without missing some time. He seemed to have a lot of difficulty in waking up early enough to be on time. This even led to one of his tutors buying him an alarm clock!. He was the class clown and required significant input, support and guidance from tutors, he did however manage to complete all the work given to him. His behavior was very challenging within the Community Training Centre and he presented ongoing difficulties for his tutors. At times it was uncertain whether he would complete the course and achieve even minor components towards a major award.

With his own perseverance and that of the staff and a lot of patience and conversations about losing his place on the course, he finally left LYS with enough modules completed to achieve his QQI level 3 Employability Skills Major Award.

He is now in full time employment and is very happy working. He hasn't been late or missed a single day and even does overtime at the weekends and as he said, if he wasn't behaving, not only would he not have been kept on, but they wouldn't offer him so much overtime.

During his time with LYS, he progressed from being a challenging young person with a lot of adversity in his life to being a happy and responsible young man who has kept his promise to himself and has not ended up on the dole. He and his partner are saving for a deposit on a place of their own and for Mark, the future truly look bright.

ABILITY CASE STUDY

John overcame mental health difficulties, emerged from homelessness and secured employment through support of the Ability project

“John” was referred to the Ability project through the LYS family support programme. John had a past relationship with the LYS and with a Youth Worker. At the time the referral was made, John had been homeless for 2 years and struggled with daily activities due to a history of panic attacks. John identified being homeless as the biggest barrier to his progression and without a stable environment he was unable to manage his mental health. These circumstances left him unable to engage in education, training or employment.

In the early stages, the Ability project mentor engaged with John on a daily basis and worked with John on practical transferable skills such as coping with daily stressors and communicating with professionals. The Ability team supported John by advocating on his behalf in relation to housing issues and engaging with relevant agencies and local TDs on behalf of John. The Ability team also organized specialised trauma specific mental health support. John forged a strong relationship with the project and this was the key factor in the change process. The Ability team helped John to recognise that not having a job was affecting his chances of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) being successful. The Ability youth mentor sourced a course that John could do completely online and supported John to complete it. Through this process, John increased his skillset and confidence.

The Ability team also supported John in CV writing, applying for roles and interview skills and eventually securing part time employment. This allowed John to recognise that he could cope in a workplace environment.

As a result of collaboration with Employability Limerick, an opportunity emerged to attend a job shadow day with a local employer (Northern Trust). The youth mentor organised for the young person to attend their online event, this provided the opportunity to meet with Northern Trust management and partake in a mock interview.

Northern Trust asked the young person to come back for an official interview for their 2 year internship programme, which resulted in a successful outcome.

Furthermore, the young person managed to secure a HAP property because of their employment status and are no longer homeless.

Key learning from this case study is that great things can be achieved by taking small steps and using youth work methodologies to engage young people and build relationships provides a foundation for the provision of a wraparound suite of services.

ABILITY



The Ability Programme aims to empower and facilitate young people (15-24yrs) with disabilities to develop personally, economically and socially to meet their needs and realise their full potential. Ability Participants must live in Limerick City or surrounds and have a diagnosis of a disability.

In 2020 **14** young people joined the Ability programme where they were mentored, coached and supported into education, training and or employment by our Youth Mentors. To date the Ability Programme has supported 38 young people, **32** of which actively engaged and received support from the programme throughout 2020.

ENABLING OUR STRATEGY





STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

STRUCTURE

Limerick Youth Service was founded in 1973 and is registered as a Scheme of Incorporation by the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests in Ireland, under Section 2 of the Charities Act 1973. The Scheme and Constitution were revised in 2011 and approved and sealed by the Commissioners for Charitable donations and Bequests for Ireland in December 2011.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

Limerick Youth Service is governed by members of the Board who are appointed for a term of three years and may serve no more than two terms of three years. The Board members are volunteers and are its Trustees for the purposes of Charity Law.

The Catholic and Church of Ireland Bishops (Patrons) each nominate two representatives to the Board of Limerick Youth Service. Other Board members are identified based on skills deficit as per annual Board skills audit document. At least four members of the Board shall be actively engaged in organisations relevant to the workings of Limerick Youth Service. A particular body/agency may be invited to nominate a Board member and that member must not act as a representative of that group in acting as a Board member. A Board pack is updated annually and circulated to all Board members. All Board members participate in induction.

The Board meet a minimum of six times per year and met six times in 2020. At the end of 2020, the Board of Limerick Youth Service appointed a new Chairperson, Audrey Fehilly, and began a process of recruiting a number of new Board Members to fill posts arising from retirements.

The Board of Limerick Youth Service are not remunerated for their services to the organisation, however, in some instances nominal travel costs are paid.

LYS Board Members 2021

Ms	Audrey	Healy
Fr	Seamus	Enright
Ms	Karen	Long Eacrett
Ms	Karen	O Connor
Dr	Patrick	Buckley
Ms	Laura	Scanlan
Ms	Aoife	Walsh
Inspector	Ollie	Kennedy
Ms	Mairead	Holland
Mr	Michael	Howes
Ms.	Eileen	Hoffler

Sub Committees

The Board has established a number of sub committees including Audit, Governance and Risk, Community Training Centre and Human Resources in addition to time bound specified purpose working groups which advise on specific projects.

Audit, Governance and Risk Sub Committee

The role of the Audit, Governance and Risk Sub Committee is to monitor and control the audit and risk management systems of Limerick Youth Service including planning the annual audit, reviewing the annual financial statements, reviewing the quarterly management accounts, reviewing the risk register and driving good governance practice and policy.

In 2019, the Audit, Governance and Risk Sub Committee continued to work on a number of areas including reviewing and restating of the Governance Code and ongoing development of the risk policy.

Membership

Ms	Audrey	Healy	Board Member
Fr	Seamus	Enright	Board Member
Ms	Karen	O Connor	Board Member

Community Training Centre Sub Committee

The Community Training Centre's Sub Committee's principal objective is to assist the Board of Limerick Youth Service in the provision of training, education and employment related services for young people in a friendly and informal manner.

Membership

Ms.	Mary	English	Sub Committee Member CTC
Ms.	Kathryn	Clancy	General Manager
Ms.	Fiona	O'Grady	CEO
Ms.	Bernadette	Daly	Board Member
Ms.	Irene	Glimore	Probation Services
Mr.	Maurice	Walsh	Youth Work Manager

Human Resources Sub Committee

The Human Resources Sub Committee was established in 2018 and its principal objective is to assist the Board and the CEO to fulfil their functions by providing timely advice and guidance on areas within its remit.

Membership

Ms.	Audrey	Healy	Board Member
Fr.	Seamus	Enright	Board Member
Ms.	Sinead	Clohessy	Board Member
Ms.	Bernadette	Daly	Board Member

GOVERNANCE CODE

Accountability and transparency are essential to the work of Limerick Youth Service. Limerick Youth Service is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and completes all reporting as required.

2020 is the first year that charities were expected to comply with the Code and 2021 will be the first year that charities will report on their compliance with the Code.

Limerick Youth Service has been working to ensure compliance with the code since the Charity Regulatory Authority launched the code in 2018. In order to achieve this, we have systematically worked through the principles of the code recording the actions that we have taken to meet each standard of the Code; and referencing the evidence that backs this up.

In 2020 specific actions in relation to governance included work on the development of a code of ethics and behaviour for staff and volunteers, child safeguarding, board skills audit, declaration of interests, conflicts of interest and board recruitment, policy developments in relation to Covid 19, equality & diversity, leave, counselling, digital youth work and updating financial controls, apportionment and risk register.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Limerick Youth Service has a comprehensive strategic plan, developed in consultation with young people, volunteers, staff and other key stakeholders. This plan provides the framework for the development of operational plans across the organisation and is reviewed on an ongoing basis. The current strategic plan covers the time period 2018-2021 and we will commence the development of our new plan to cover the period 2022 – 2025 in 2021.



RISK

Limerick Youth Service holds risk management as a core tenet in its strategic outlook and central to effective governance. Risk is an everyday part of the organisation's activities and managing it effectively is essential to provide an effective service and safeguard funds and assets. Risks can affect staff, volunteers, service users, liability to others, property etc.

In order to effectively manage risk, Limerick Youth Service identifies risk, assesses the likelihood/probability of the risk and identifies the consequences or impact of an occurrence. Limerick Youth Service monitors identified risks on an ongoing basis and manage risks through tolerating low level risks, managing and containing certain risks to acceptable levels and transferring identified risks to third parties through insurance or terminating certain activities where risks are unacceptably high.

CHILDREN FIRST

Limerick Youth Service is committed to safeguarding young people by ensuring that the entity is compliant with the Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance 2017. All our staff and volunteers undertake an application process, including Garda vetting and cannot start employment/volunteering before their vetting is complete. All staff and volunteers participate in a 4 hour Child Safeguarding Awareness programme (NYCI). On completion of this programme, each participant receives a certificate which is valid for 4 years. In 2020, the Child Protection team delivered 5 sessions of Child Safeguarding Training, 4 of which occurred between January and March 10th and one in October adhering to all guidelines. 64 people participated in Child Safeguarding Training in 2020. Participants included staff, students and youth club volunteers. In 2020 55 people were Garda vetted. This represents 20% of those normally vetted.

EVIDENCE & DATA COLLECTION

LYS has continued to strengthen our evidence-informed and outcomes based programme planning in-line with organisational and national objectives and policy. We have worked on prioritising clear links between objectives, inputs, outputs & outcomes and implemented and developed data collection applications. This in turn has generated data on the numbers and socio-economic profile of young people accessing LYS services & supports and youth work operational activities

In order to evidence our work we have implemented the evidence-based Outcomes Star tool for use with the Youth Mental Health project, Youth and Family Support Service and the GYDP teams in addition to YP Core and the YLS.

Specific work was also completed in 2020 in relation to the documentation of Case Studies.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Board delegates the day to day management of Limerick Youth Service to the CEO and Management Team who are as follows:-

CEO	Fiona O Grady
CTC General Manager	Kathryn Clancy
Youth Work Manager	Maurice Walsh
Finance Manager	Bernadette Behan
Human Resources Manager	Sinead Noonan

STAFFING

In 2020 Limerick Youth Service employed an average of 109 staff and up to March 2020 worked with 400 volunteers engaged in various aspects of its work with 10 – 25 year olds throughout Limerick City and County. After the declaration of the pandemic, the numbers of Volunteers engaged in Volunteer led youthwork declined significantly as a number of youth projects were closed.

WORK EXPERIENCE/JOB PLACEMENT

Limerick Youth Service provides placement opportunities for 3rd level students every term, January and September. In 2020, Limerick Youth Service facilitated placements for 15 students from Limerick Institute of Technology, University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College and from Karel de Grote Hogeschool in Belgium. In addition, Limerick Youth Service facilitated 7 second level placements.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

Limerick Youth Service is also an active supporter of the Community Employment (CE) Scheme and Job Initiative (JI) Scheme with members participating in further training and education programmes.

Staff on these programmes provide support across all functions of Limerick Youth Service in the areas of administration, housekeeping, maintenance, caretaking and youth work.

In 2020, 23 participants took part in Community Employment and 6 participants continued to take part in the Job Initiative Scheme. In 2020, CE and JI participants undertook training in relation to child protection, manual handling, Covid Induction and Food Safety, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Working at Heights, MEWP Scissors Boom Lift & Harness Safety, Cwell Programme and Youth & Community work.

STAFF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Limerick Youth Service has a team of highly qualified and dedicated people with a broad range of skills that work together in the delivery of youth work and educational programmes for young people.

Limerick Youth Service has committed significant resources to the training and up skilling of staff and volunteers in safeguarding training, Garda vetting, Covid induction, resilience, personal development, health and safety, risk assessment, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and behaviour management.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

In 2020, LYS continued to contribute to local, regional and national policy development through active participation in a number of inter-agency policy and decision making structures, including:

- Youth Work Ireland
- Local Community Development Committee
- Limerick Sports Partnership
- Irish Association of Community Training Organisations
- LCETB Youthwork Sub Committee
- Regional Drugs Task Force
- Connecting for Life Mid West Steering Group
- Limerick Integration Working Group
- Limerick Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) (Research Sub-Group)

In addition we participate on a range of collaborative partnerships and networks including;

- JAG (Jigsaw Advisory Committee)
- SIG (Youth Mental Health Service Integration Committee)
- Limerick Mental Health Week Committee
- Area Forum for mental health
- Garryowen CDP board
- Children & Youth Fora
- Rathkeale Youth Network
- Local Link Board
- Local committees and events structures

Smart CityxChange (*Positive City ExChange*) is a smart city project, which has been granted funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme in the call for 'Smart cities and communities.' The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) is the host and leads the +CityxChange consortium together with the Lighthouse Cities Trondheim Kommune and Limerick City and County Council. LYS is one of the test sites for this initiative.

Corporate Partners

In 2020 LYS also received support from the following corporate partners including;

- GECAS
- Roche's Foods
- Basispoint





THE FUTURE

Looking forward to 2021, there is a number of opportunities and challenges which will present themselves;

The Covid 19 pandemic is having a huge impact on people's lives and on the lives of families and communities. We know from feedback from young people that the Covid 19 pandemic presented a broad range of challenges to their economic, physical and mental well-being. The closure of school and youth work provision as well as reduced availability of statutory services has meant that some young people are experiencing increased anxiety, isolation and loneliness. A lack of social contact and the lack of structure and routine did not help young people function and ultimately had a negative impact both physically and emotionally

Despite these fears, Limerick Youth Service continued to provide our services throughout the Covid 19 crisis and we have developed innovative means and methodologies of engaging with young people using online and digital platforms. In addition, we have focused on ensuring that young people in crises continued to be supported and to receive a face to face service.

We also continue to link with our funders and work together throughout this crisis to respond to changing needs and circumstances. The Covid 19 Pandemic will require an adjustment to budgets and staffing in 2021 and may require restructuring or realignment of some programmes or activities.

Volunteer Youth Clubs have been inactive for most of 2020 due to Covid 19 and clubs will require considerable support in 2021 in order to reopen. The continued difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteers, particularly in urban areas will challenge us in the delivery of volunteer led youth work. Limerick Youth Service is engaging on a National level on the strategy for reconfiguration of clubs after Covid 19.

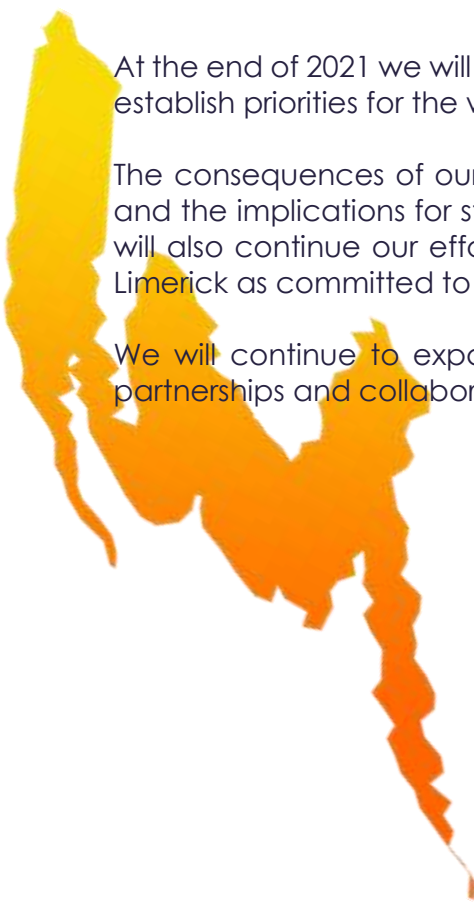
The difficulty in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff continues to be a challenge. Competition for staff from the statutory sector places us in a position where staff are being enticed to permanent pensionable posts within that sector.

We are hopeful that the roll-out of the vaccination programme will allow us to re-open our services to larger groups of young people and revisit some of the activities and programmes on pause during Covid 19 such as residentials, large group events and international youth exchanges.

Limerick Youth Service plans to continue with our core activities of providing youth work supports, services and programmes, delivering education, training and employability initiatives and supporting the development of safe and accessible youth spaces. We will continue to look for funding opportunities to deliver on the 5 key themes of our work.

Particular focus of our work in 2021 will be work on our Erasmus + accreditation and the development of a plan for international youth work for the coming three years.

The Ability programme is due to end in June 2021, thankfully this programme has been extended for an additional 2 months with a commitment to a follow on programme being rolled out in 2021. Submission of a proposal for this project will be a priority in 2021



At the end of 2021 we will work on the review and development of our next Strategic plan and establish priorities for the work going forward.

The consequences of our exit from the management of the Factory Southside Youth space and the implications for staff and service delivery will require significant attention in 2021. We will also continue our efforts to advocate for services for young people on the Southside of Limerick as committed to by Limerick City & County Council

We will continue to expand links with private enterprise and look to develop appropriate partnerships and collaborations with corporate and community partners.



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



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



Bord Oideachais & Oikuna
LIMERICK & AN CHLÁIR
Education & Training Board



Limerick
CITY & COUNTY
COUNCIL



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



government supporting communities



city of dublin youth service board

CDYSB
comhairle
le léis óige



Irish Youth Justice Service
Seirbhís na hÍdweirí na nOigheann le hArd an Áraim Oig



ciste na
gcuntas diomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills



Limerick
Comhairle na nÓg
Young Voices. Local Issues.



Ag fáil le daoine óga
and their abilities to learn
and grow to their full
potential by giving people
with disabilities
reaches their potential



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your Future
European Social Fund



Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



The European
Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development
Europe investing in
rural areas



Ballyhoura
Development
Limited



An tAidilbh Oideachais Limerick agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

FURTHER INFORMATION

LIMERICK YOUTH SERVICE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2020 CAN BE FOUND AT

<https://limerickyouthservice.com/resources-publications>

LIMERICK YOUTH SERVICE

www.limerickyouthservice.com

