



DÚN LAOGHAIRE - RATHDOWN
SPORTS
PARTNERSHIP
— SPORT IRELAND —

NEWSLETTER

For an Active Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

The
DLR Sports Partnership
Winter Edition
Newsletter
is here!



*Ciaran Casey joins the
DLR Sports Partnership Team*

*Communications Course
a big hit with Sports Clubs*

*DLR Elf Dash
2025*

INFORMATION

EDUCATION

IMPLEMENTATION



7



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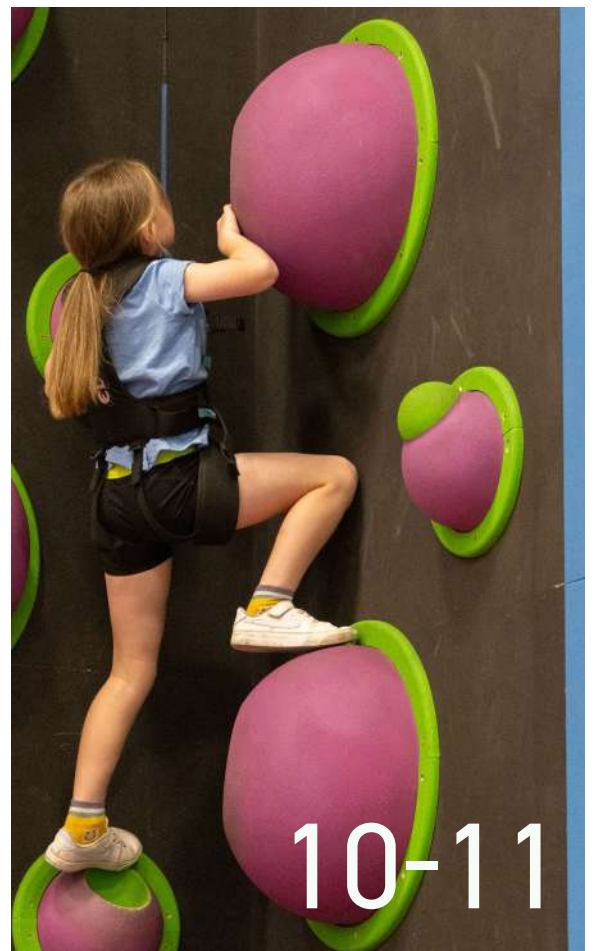
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Support DLR Sports Partnership



Proud to support local sport? Download the DLR Sports Partnership logo and add it to your website. It's a simple way to show you're part of a community that champions inclusion, activity, and opportunity for all.

DÚN LAOGHAIRE- RATHDOWN SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Sports Partnership was set up in 2008. DLR Sports Partnership works closely with the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's Sports Development Office and other key partners to promote participation, inclusion and coordination in sport at a local level.

All those statutory bodies, organisations and groups operating in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown with a responsibility for or interest in sports development are invited to participate in the Local Sports Partnership.

This includes the involvement of the Local Authority, Education & Training Board, HSE, third level sector, sports clubs, schools and local voluntary/community organisations.

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Meet DLR Sports Partnership's new ESF+ Social Innovation in Sport Officer

Ciaran Casey

"I am really looking forward to getting started, helping to support very particular marginalised groups who in the past have found it difficult to access sport or haven't had the confidence to be involved in physical activity.

I will be looking at innovative and creative approaches in how to reach them with the support of our current partners and new ones that I hope will come on board, please reach out to me if you would like further information".

ccasey@dlrcoco.ie



Ciaran is from Dublin originally, but grew up most of his life in Gorey, Co. Wexford. He has always had a strong interest in sport, community wellbeing and social inclusion.

He studied a BB in Sports Management in SETU and a MSc in Sports Psychology at the University of Stirling.

This gave him a solid understanding of sport and community program development. In terms of work in the sporting area he has previously worked for the Wicklow Sports Partnership as well as in high performance sport with the Irish Institute of Sport and the Malaysian Institute of Sport in athlete development.

All these roles have strengthened his belief that sport is one of the most effective tools for empowerment, resilience, and meaningful social change.

Ciaran's aim is to design and deliver projects that genuinely strengthen communities and remove barriers to participation. The aim is to build life skills, social connection, and resilience, particularly for groups who have historically been under-represented in sport. He will also explore new and creative approaches to community sport, helping partners test and scale effective models.

Ultimately, he wants this work to leave a lasting and measurable impact—improving wellbeing, expanding opportunities, and supporting individuals and communities across Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown to thrive through sport.

We wish Ciaran every success in his new role and are sure he'll be a great addition to the team!

Communication Course for Sports Club Volunteers a big hit with Sports Clubs in DLR



"I just wanted to say a big thank you for the excellent Communications for Sports Clubs training course. I really enjoyed it and found your insights very practical and inspiring".



"The way the course was presented, the generosity of time given and how you professionally with an ever-present smile willingly engaged with the participants was superb. My observation was that you both constantly held attention and inspired all of us who participated".



"Many thanks, Declan and Anna, for a terrific course! Thanks for being so open and generous with your knowledge and wisdom. Thanks for the photos and video, Declan, they're super!".

The DLR Sports Partnership Communications Programme 2025 was a comprehensive digital marketing and communications training initiative designed by AER Marketing and DLR Sports Partnership to empower local sports clubs with the skills, tools and resources needed to strengthen their online presence and attract new members, volunteers and funding.

Delivered over five sessions across a 3-4 week period in October and November 2025, the programme supported 20 participating clubs. The five key training sessions covered communications strategy, branding and messaging, graphic design, social media management, website development / search (Google / ChatGPT etc), and a practical rollout workshop. Sessions were delivered through a combination of in-person teaching, online workshops, pre-recorded content and a hands-on final workshop consolidating all learning. A secure online portal hosted all recordings and resources, enabling long-term sustainability of club communications activity.

This project is financed through Sport Ireland's Dormant Account Funding and supported by dlr County Council.





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Louise Callan is our Officer on the ground for schools and is our lead for Her Moves and Women in Sport.

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Daily Mile Final Mile Event with Try Track & Field - A Fun in the Sun Day!

We couldn't have asked for better weather for our Daily Mile Athletics Event in Kilbogget Park on Wednesday, 22nd October.

Over the course of the morning, 14 local primary schools and around 1,400 students joined us for a fun-filled morning of activity!

Schools arrived in waves, and each group got stuck into a lively warm-up before trying out a taster of the hugely popular Try Track & Field Programme that we run in partnership with Athletics Ireland.

It was then onto the track for two laps to mark the end of their 4-Week Daily mile challenge.

It was fantastic to see so many smiling faces and hear the cheers as the children crossed the line.

A huge thank you to Athletics Ireland, dlr County Council, the schools, and the teachers who made the day possible!



Our new Playground Marking Stencils and Wall Targets are designed to make being active fun and easy! Co-funded by the HSE, these colourful markings help promote children's enjoyment of physical activity during P.E., lunchtime, and other break times throughout the school day.

The markings use lines, shapes, and patterns painted on the school grounds to encourage play, movement, and social interaction. They include activities like Movement through Mathematics, Activity Circuits, Hopscotch, and a Maze, making them suitable for children of all ages. It's all about creating spaces where kids can play, have fun, and stay active together.

Borrow our stencil equipment today for your Primary School! Scan the QR Code to book.





DLR ELF DASH 2025



Are you one of the 600 people taking part in the fun active event for all the family and all abilities?

If so, here's what you should know about the Dash on Sunday 7th of December in Cabinteely Park. Run, walk or roll your way through our Winter Wonderland!

The DLR Sports Partnership & dlr County Council are excited for families and friends to don their festive attire and participate in a fun-filled 2K Dash! This festive initiative is our special way of expressing gratitude for your unwavering support and enthusiasm throughout the year.

This event itself is fully inclusive, suitable for all ages, abilities and fitness levels. The run will take you through Cabinteely Park with some festive fun along the way! Look out for Elves along the way!

When: Sunday 7th of December

Where: Cabinteely Park

Registration: 4:15PM

Warm up: 4:40PM

ELF Dash Run: 5:00PM

THIS EVENT IS NOW SOLD OUT!



SportAbility Updates with Gwen



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Gwen O'Looney is the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer for DLR Sports Partnership. She is the point of contact for all of our inclusive programmes, events and information.
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LSP's Unstoppable Together on SportAbility Day

On 6th September 2025, Sport Ireland's Indoor Arena came alive as over 500 participants including families, people with disabilities, coaches, and volunteers gathered to explore the world of inclusive sports.

The event, running from 11am to 3pm, was a vibrant showcase of activities, demonstrations, and information stands, all designed to promote sport for all ages and abilities.

Organised in collaboration with Active Cities and 5 Local Sports Partnerships -DLR Sports Partnership, Active South Dublin, Wicklow Local Sports Partnership, Fingal Local Sports Partnership, and Dublin City Sports & Wellbeing Partnership the day featured "come and try" sessions led by National Governing Bodies such as Vision Sport Ireland, Special Olympics, Tennis Ireland, Swim Ireland, Golf Ireland, Basketball Ireland, Rowing Ireland, Orienteering, Badminton Ireland, GAA, Cricket Ireland, Hockey Ireland, Triathlon Ireland, and many more.

Parents shared their excitement at the variety of sports available and the joy their children experienced, with many eager to continue these activities in their communities. The atmosphere was electric, fuelled by DJ Gordo's beats, and complemented by thoughtful accessibility features like a sensory hour (11 am–12 pm) where the music stopped and the lights were turned down and a quiet room.

The event not only celebrated participation but also fostered meaningful conversations among National Governing Bodies and clubs about advancing disability sport and inclusion in Ireland. Thanks to the overwhelming success and all those who contributed, SportAbility Day 2026 is already in the works!



SportAbility Forum Going From Strength To Strength

Since its formation in January 2024, the DLR SportAbility Forum has gone from strength to strength, bringing together key stakeholders in disability sport to network, share ideas, and shape the future of inclusive sport in the county.

The Forum regularly invites guest speakers to its meetings and works collaboratively to develop new initiatives each year that promote inclusion. One of its early successes was the creation of a Disability Sports Events Calendar, a one-stop shop where local clubs and groups can advertise upcoming events, making it easier for the community to stay informed and get involved.

More recently, the Forum has been working on an exciting Sensory Bag Project. These bags, designed to be kept at the sidelines of activities, provide tools to help children and adults with sensory needs self-regulate. Currently, several bags are being produced, and 10 clubs and services across the county have been selected to take part in a pilot trial.

To find out more about the Sensory Bag Project
E-mail GOLOONEY@DLRCOCO.IE





Angela is our Active Cities Officer, working with partners across DLR and Dublin to deliver innovative projects and events, helping communities become more active!
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#BeActive Night Shines at Explorium!

Active Cities Dublin was proud to host its flagship #BeActive Night event at Explorium, Ireland's Sport and Science Centre, as part of European Week of Sport.

The evening was a vibrant celebration of fun, activity, discovery and play, welcoming over 400 attendees from across the community.

This all-inclusive event catered to all ages, including families, individuals and community groups, offering a unique opportunity to explore the world of sport and science in an engaging and accessible way. Highlights of the night included the Sports Science Area, Climbing Walls, and the immersive VR/AR Rooms, which captivated participants and encouraged active exploration.

Thanks to Explorium for hosting the event and to our valued partners who helped make the evening a resounding success. These collaborations are vital in creating opportunities for people to engage in physical activity in fun and innovative ways.

For many, this was a first-time visit to Explorium, and the "come and try" format allowed attendees to experience the facility in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

#BeActive Night was a flagship event for Active Cities Dublin, aligning with the ethos of European Week of Sport, to promote sport and physical activity for everyone, regardless of age, background or fitness level.





Active Cities Presented to Oireachtas Members

The Active Cities initiative was presented to members of the Oireachtas, aiming to raise awareness of the programme both locally and nationally. The presentation highlighted a variety of local initiatives such as the Parks & Trails Challenge and SportAbility Day, which promote inclusive, accessible opportunities for physical activity across Dublin.

National projects like BoxUp were also showcased, demonstrating how Active Cities are working to break down barriers to participation and tackle anti-social behaviour through creative, community-based solutions. These efforts reflect a shared commitment to making physical activity a part of everyday life for everyone. Engaging with policymakers is a key step in building long-term support for inclusive, sustainable programmes that benefit individuals and communities alike.





The Journey to Launch!

"Setting up the club taught us more than we bargained for! We became overnight experts in treasury management, social media, policy-making, and venue hunting. The work was more involved than we'd imagined, but here's what made all the difference: the incredible support from DLR Sports Partnership, especially Louise Callan and Volleyball Ireland.



They walked alongside us every step of the way, answering questions, offering guidance, and genuinely investing in our success. What seemed complicated became achievable because we never walked alone".

CLUB FOCUS

Every Newsletter edition we focus on highlighting great work done by many local sports clubs and organisations. This edition we look at South Dublin Volleyball Club.

South Dublin Volleyball Club: Where Women Come Together to Play, Connect, and Just Be...

What started as a single month of training organized by Volleyball Ireland and DLR Sports Partnership in May 2025 has blossomed into something special.

Women showed up, played, laughed, and realized they'd found something they didn't want to let go of a space to disconnect from daily demands, enjoy movement, and connect with others who simply wanted to have fun.

That sparkle of connection was all it took. By October 2025, South Dublin Volleyball Club officially opened its doors.



Facebook



Instagram



The Fab Four

Four women drive this club forward:

Teresa, our coach, brings lifetime volleyball experience to create an empowering environment.

Marie, our secretary and children's officer, sees the club as community care in action while modeling giving back for her children.

Rita, treasurer and communications officer, is passionate about helping women discover volleyball as adults.

Irina, our chairperson, cherishes human connection and envisions a space where women can simply be—no roles, no responsibilities, just presence.

We welcome women 18+ of all levels to our Thursday 7pm sessions at **Stepaside ETSS (D18 VEA0)**. After the new year, we'll extend invitations to young women 16+. Whether you're seeking social connection, mental health support, skill-building, or simply fun without pressure or competition, you belong here. Entry is €10. Find us on Facebook and Instagram, scan the QR code to book your place or email us: southdublinvolleyballclub@gmail.com. Come as you are. Play, laugh, stretch, learn. We're saving a spot for you!



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Kevina Malone is the Programmes Manager and oversees all programme development and is a point of contact for the wider team.
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What a Year of Tea, Tunes & Timeless Style

As 2025 draws to a close, we're still buzzing from all the dancing, laughter, and copious amounts of tea. From March to November, we hosted six Tea Dances that brought dance, music, and a sprinkle of vintage glamour to our community.

We kicked things off early in March with two in the Sallynoggin Inn, followed by two more at the Taylor's Three Rock.

Just when you thought we couldn't top that, we went outdoors for two Vintage-Themed Tea Dances, celebrating Marlay 50 and Coastival in true retro style.

The George Hunter Band kept our feet moving, Arthur & Paul serenaded us, and we rounded off the year with the incredible Garda Band.

Of course, it wasn't just about the music.

We had prizes for the best-dressed vintage attire, and the competition was fierce, our community knows how to rock a feathered hat and attitude. Over the year, 1,100 participants joined the fun, fuelled by 900 litres of tea and coffee, 1,500 sandwiches, and an impressive 3,000 slices of bread.

Here's to more dancing, more laughter, and maybe even more sandwiches in 2026.



Forever Fit in Ballybrack, Loughlinstown & Ballyogan

Back in February, we started off our strength programme with two evening classes at Ballybrack Project Centre, led by Conor Dowling. The response was very positive. As demand grew, we added two lunchtime classes in Loughlinstown Rooms, and before long, another class in Ballyogan joined the mix. Today, we have over 100 people regularly attending these sessions.

Why strength training matters:

Using kettlebells and other resistance tools, these classes help build muscle, improve balance, and boost bone health. Stronger muscles mean better posture, fewer falls, and more confidence in everyday activities. It's not just about fitness; it's about independence and vitality. The energy and the sense of community make every class something to look forward to. Interested in joining? Keep an eye out for new class announcements and come experience the benefits for yourself! Contact Kevina for more information.

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A Look Back at 2025

As 2025 draws to a close, we are proud to reflect on a year of progress, partnership, and participation across Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Our mission remains clear: to make sport and physical activity accessible, inclusive, and enjoyable for everyone in our community. Thanks to the dedication of clubs, schools, volunteers, and partners, we've achieved significant milestones this year.

The engine of the Sports Partnership is of course our staff who work hard all year round to develop and provide participation opportunities that involve everyone, are fun and engage local communities.

A big thank you to Gwen, Louise, Declan, Emmet, Angela, and Kevina for your dedication and passion and we welcome Ciaran, our new ESF+ Officer to the team.

Growing Participation

Thousands of people engaged in our programmes designed to encourage active lifestyles. From European Week of Sport and community participation initiatives to informal activities and social sports, we've worked hard to provide opportunities for all ages and abilities. In addition, our ongoing work in communicating what opportunities are available and rolling our Active Cities project is continuing to develop a culture of physical activity being the norm across the County.

Sports Inclusion

Our Sports Inclusion Disability Programme continued to expand, offering tailored activities and training to ensure that people of all abilities can enjoy sport.

This year saw new partnerships with local organisations to deliver inclusive events and workshops.



Women in Sport

We delivered targeted programmes to increase female participation, including taster sessions and introductory programmes for beginners. These initiatives have helped create welcoming spaces for women to get active and stay involved.



Youth Engagement

Schools across the county embraced a range of activities supported by the Partnership. These programmes are helping young people develop lifelong habits of physical activity while building confidence and social connections.



Volunteer & Coach Development

Behind every successful club are dedicated coaches and volunteers.

In 2025, we provided training and resources to support these vital roles, ensuring quality experiences for these volunteers and strengthening the local sporting network.



Community Events

From our BeActive event in Explorium to The Daily Mile in Kilbogget and SportAbility Day in the Sports Campus, our events brought people together, fostering a sense of belonging and wellbeing through sport.



Looking Ahead to 2026

Thank you to everyone who played a part in this year's success - participants, volunteers, clubs, schools, and partners.

I would like to sincerely thank the Board of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Sports Partnership, Sport Ireland and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council for their ongoing investment and support of our work.

Together, we are building a more active county. The coming year promises even more opportunities to grow participation and break down barriers to involvement. Our goal is simple: to make sport a cornerstone of community life across Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Shane



Why not follow us on our channels below to see what we have in store for 2026? Simply scan one of the QR codes below to begin your journey with Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown Sports Partnership.



Website



Facebook



Instagram



LinkedIn



X/Twitter



You Tube



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