

Western Traveller & Intercultural Development

Community Resource & Youth Service Provider



Annual Report 2016



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Introduction

Western Traveller and Intercultural Development (WTID) has had a busy year once again in 2016. WTID is now the largest community-based, community development organisation in Tuam and it is increasingly being recognised as such.

WTID has noticed that the numbers of people accessing the organisation for assistance and support has significantly increased in 2016. Also, staff can see that community members from all walks of life and background, be it Traveller, Settled or Non-Nationals are using the services which are provided at WTID.

WTID works from a community development approach using the core principles of empowerment, participation, collective action, equality and social justice. These are fundamental to the ethos of the Organisation. A notable characteristic of WTID is a teamwork approach.

All members of the staff team work in an integrated way on many projects and initiatives, some of which may be additional to their direct roles. This team approach to the work adds value to the work of a small Organisation where difference skills are maximised for the benefit of the community. WTID maintains a focus on the needs of the community as its primary motivation for action. The Organisation has developed and cultivated a range of mutually beneficial relationships with a variety of service providers that has ensured the leverage of funding and partnership approaches to work.

This Annual Report sets out the key achievements of the organisation in 2016.

Major Events of 2016

Governance

A major part of the work completed in WTID during 2016 was a completed Governance Document making sure that the organisation was compliant with the new Charity Regulations and any other new legislation introduced by the government. WTID met and agreed that in 2017 we would look at implementing the Public-Sector Duty legislation throughout the organisation and promoting the same in other forums that Travellers are involved in.

Public Participation Network (PPN)

PPN is a new framework for public engagement and participation, it was developed within each local authority area. So, all individuals may access local government through the existing arrangements regarding their issues.

WTID has representation on this committee and keep the community informed of developments throughout the county. The PPN is a great vehicle for information for community groups throughout the county.

Traveller Pride week

WTID took part in Traveller Pride week this year. The project celebrated many events these included, a concert by the music project for parents, a Men's soccer Tournament where 7 teams competed, the tournament was held in Roscommon. Trophies and medals were presented to the winning team. A health screenings clinic was held on the day for all men who wanted to avail.



Some Participants is the Men's Soccer Tournament

Parkmore Allotments

The allotment project is going from strength to strength. The Polytunnel is in use and will be a huge resource to all the people that use the allotments. Development work continue at this project.



Traveller Friendly Services Training and Intercultural Training

The Community Development Worker and the Primary Health Care Coordinator worked with Tusla to deliver training to 19 Education Welfare Officers from the region. Training was also delivered to 13 foster care parents exploring Traveller culture and identity.



Traveller Interagency Group

In 2016 after an absence of approximately 12 months the County Galway Traveller Interagency Group (TIG) re-established itself. This came about after a national conference was held where the Minister Aodhan O Riordan called for the re-establishment of interagency groups in each county. County Galway Interagency Group (TIG) had come to the end of its 4-year Strategic Plan and this announcement by the minister gave new impetus on starting to develop a new plan for the county. WTID along with Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) and Galway Council will be to the fore in ensuring that Traveller issues are identified and addressed by the TIG and looks forward to working with all agencies. WTID applied for funding under the interagency fund to carry out the Primary Health Care review.

Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) - Tuam

This project is a proposed innovative combination, in a structured way of delivering social enterprise in the Tuam area. The project proposes to bring together the existing experience, expertise, and capacity within Equal Ireland, the Tuam Chamber of Commerce, and WTID to produce locally generated business plans for a range of projects for the Tuam area. These plans have been submitted to Galway Council for consideration.

Residents Associations

WTID works with many Resident Associations in Tuam town. During 2016 it was instrumental in working with the Galway County Council and the Gilmartin Road residents on the future development of the houses and road. WTID continue to work with the Parkmore Residents Committee on maintaining the community house and communal areas within the estate.



Some of the Gilmartin Road residents and Fr Shane O'Sullivan

National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy. {NTRIS}

Staff and management from WTID attended several public consultations in relation to devising the new National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS). A member of WTID staff sits on the national monitoring committee for this project.

Student placement

WTID provided placement for several Students in 2016. The students came from Tuam Community Training Centre, Youth Reach, NUIG and GMIT.

Strategic Plan

Management and Staff began the process of producing a 3-year Strategic Plan for the organisation near the end of 2016. This work will continue for 2017 with a view to having the plan finalised by the second quarter.

Tús

Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people. The work opportunities are to benefit the community and are provided by community and voluntary organisations in both urban and rural areas.

WTID provide work for many participants on Tús Schemes. The organisation applies to Galway Rural Development (GRD) annually for workers to help with various community projects. GRD have always been very accommodating in providing the organisation with workers.

Friends of Cluin Mhuire

Friends of Cluin Mhuire are an aftercare support and advice group for people in recovery from addiction. WTID have worked with management from Cluin Mhuire to establish a space for people from Tuam and the surrounding areas who have gone through their rehab system and who need a place to meet both as a social outlet and possible to attend further training.

Senior Citizen Christmas Party 2016

It was decided this year the Tuam Senior Citizen Christmas Party, organised by the WTID, would be done differently, instead of the normal Christmas diner then music held at the Centre for Education and Development, Brú Bhríde, Churchview, WTID took the senior citizen on December 15th, 2016 to Knock for the day. A coach left Tuam at 10:30am where it arrived in Knock giving people the change to do a bit of shopping before going to mass in the Old Church. After mass, the coach then took them to the Knock House Knock for Christmas lunch followed by music provided by Tuam & District Mental Health Association. A feedback sheet was given to all and they agreed that this change of format was a good idea and that they would be happy to continue with it in the coming years This year was the 20th Tuam

Senior Citizen Party organised by WTID. This event could not have happened without the good will of the businesses of Tuam and the many volunteers that helped with fundraising efforts.

WTID would like to most sincerely thank O' Tooles Supervalu and Murphy's Centra for permitting us to fundraise at their premises, all the volunteers that helped out and sold cards of tickets to support the event, the public that purchased tickets, JFC, St Jarlath's Credit Union, AIB and Bank of Ireland who donated to the event, and the business people of Tuam who donated spot prize and there was many thank you.

This event would not have happened without the hard work and commitment of the staff of WTID who put in so many extra volunteer hours to ensure the event went well.



In the restaurant at the Knock House Hotel



In the bar enjoying the music

Congratulations to winners of our raffle

1st Prize: Hamper went to – Maureen Parsons

2nd Prize: A bottle of Brandy went to – Riana O'Dwyer

3rd Prize: A Bottle of Whiskey went – Bridie Connolly

Well Done!

West of Ireland Traveller History Project

The 'West of Ireland Traveller History Project' was officially launched by Minister of State, Mr. David Stanton in October 2016 at the National Museum of Ireland-Country Life. This exciting new project will focus on the unique identity of the Traveller Community and the importance of the community recording its own folklore, history, traditions, language culture and customs.

The aim of the 'Traveller History Project' is to see collectors' interview members of the Traveller community in Mayo, Roscommon, Tuam and Galway about their memories and experiences of life in both traditional and contemporary Ireland. An archive of material will be created and an exhibition will be developed in partnership with the National Museum of Ireland.

The Traveller History Project, Mayo Travellers Support Group, Roscommon Leader Partnership, Western Travellers Intercultural Development, Tuam



From L to R, Rosa Meehan (Curator National Museum of Ireland – Country Life) Mary Collin (MTSG), Geraldine McDonnell (National Traveller History Project), Caroline Canny (WTIDC), Kathleen Ward (WTIDC), David Stanton Minister of State for Equity, Immigration & Integration, Martin Collins (Co-Director of Pavee Point)

Health



Primary Healthcare Quilt

Health as an area of work is one of the most significant for WTID. The overall aim of WTID's Primary Healthcare Programme (PHC) is to improve the health status and quality of life for Travellers in Tuam and its environs by identifying the community's specific health requirements and the necessary health service provision. WTID implements one of the most successful PHC Programmes in the country and currently employs seven Community Health Workers (CHWs) on a part time basis. The work in 2016 was influenced by the findings of the All Ireland Traveller Health Study 2010. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for this year focused on cardiovascular health and mental health.



Back row: Bridget Ward (CHW), Maddie Brammer (Cleveland Nursing Student), Melissa Cameron (Cleveland Nursing Student), Mag Ward (CHW), Caroline Canny (Health Coordinator), Kathleen Ward (CHW) and Mary Ward (CHW).

Front Row: Bridie Ward (CHW), Sally Sweeny (CHW) and Nora Ward (CHW).

Health Promotion

The mainstay of the PHC Programmes work continues to be health promotion, and signposting to relevant service/agencies, be it for health screening, support or intervention. Outreach work in 2016 was conducted about Cervical Check; Breast Check; Census 2016; Child Development and Immunisation; Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme; Healthy Heart; Mental Health Awareness, Asthma and wellness in pregnancy, to name but a few.



Asthma Refresher Training delivered by the Asthma Society of Ireland

Traveller History Project

An exciting new project the 'West of Ireland –Traveller History Project' was launched in October. It is a partnership between the National Museum of Ireland –Country Life, WTID, MTSG, RIDC and GTM and its focus will be on the unique identity of the Traveller Community and the importance of the community recording its own folklore, history, traditions, language, culture and customs.

The aim of the Traveller History Project is to see collectors' interview members of the Traveller community in Tuam, Mayo, Roscommon and Galway about their memories and experiences of life in both traditional and contemporary Ireland. An archive of material will be created and an exhibition will be developed in partnership with museum



UCD Folklore Collection Fieldtrip



Kathleen Ward- Traveller History Project Launch at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life



Learning how to use the video camera at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life

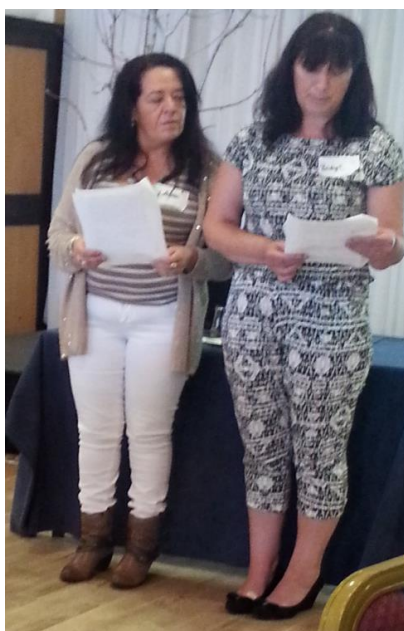
Traveller Health Unit (THU) 20-year Celebration

WTID has been a member of the Traveller Health Unit (THU) from the beginning. The unit celebrated 20 years in existence in 2016 by inviting all Traveller projects and representatives from the HSE who have worked with the THU over the years. The celebration and lunch was held in the Ard Ri Hotel on the 18th July 2016 Tuam where a café style workshop was held to identify new areas of work.

It was a very positive event reviewing all the achievements of the THU to date and provided a forum to discuss challenges that need to be overcome with regards to the health status of Travellers.



THU members: THU Celebration Event



Kathleen Ward and Bridget Ward: THU Celebration

Touchstone

Touchstone ran for 2 hours over an 8-week period in WTID. The course was free and it was a partnership between WTID, GRD, Galway Roscommon Education Training Board (GRETB) and NUIG. It was aimed at older people living in Tuam and its hinterlands. Course content included key issues for an ageing society and how these affect older adults; how to bring about improvement and change for older people; opportunities available for older people who wish to be actively involved in community life; getting started with research; and planning and managing practical projects. 22 people were registered on the course



Participants receiving their certificate from Touchstone

Traveller Midwifery and Gynae Working Group

The Traveller Midwifery and Gynae Group continued to meet over 2016. The purpose of the group is to build links, share resources and information to improve the health outcomes for Traveller mothers and their babies using the Maternity Services at UHG.

Traveller Speech and Language Working Group

The Traveller Speech and Language Working Group continued to meet twice yearly to review and plan Speech and language needs of Traveller Children. This is a designated Speech and Language service for Travellers which is based in Tuam and is in regular contact with WTID and the Tuam Community Childcare service. The aim of this group is to improve the attendance of Traveller children at the initial Speech and Language assessment appointment and to ensure that children with a wide range of communication difficulties receive proper Speech and Language diagnosis & therapy.

Student Placements

During 2016 PHC facilitated placements for two Nursing Students from Cleveland Ohio USA in partnership with NUIG; one Mental Health Nursing Student from NUIG and an exploratory visit for 12 Nursing Students from Fairfield University USA. PHC staff also delivered a 10-week Special Study Modules: The Health of the Traveller Community to 10 first year Medical Students attending NUIG.

Information Sessions

PHC staff attended information sessions in 2016 from the Marie Keating Foundation; Aware, Advancing Recovery Ireland in Mental Health; ADHD, Travellers in Prison Initiative, National Cancer Screening Service and the Asthma Society of Ireland.

RTE Documentary

On May 31st 2016 a documentary called Keeping Ireland Alive: The Health Service was produced and filmed over a 24-hour period by RTE. PHC was one of the locations chosen to film at. A film crew followed three CHWs to experience their Outreach Work at a family home in Parkmore Estate discussing Asthma care with a mother and her 8-year-old boy.



Preparations with the RTE film crew

Community Education Programme

Small Changes Big Difference is an important culturally appropriate programme which has been developed aims to begin to address, in particular diabetes and cardiovascular disease for members of the Traveller community. Small Changes can help people to reduce their health risks and make a big difference to their quality of life. The programme was developed in partnership with the Traveller community through many of the Primary Health Care Programmes across the country. PHC Tuam and PHC GTM drafted the Healthy Eating module. It was launched in July in Limerick and it received an Irish Healthcare Awards 2016 Commendation under the Best Patient Lifestyle Education Project section.



Small Changes Big Difference: Launch July



Bridie Ward (CHW), Sally Sweeney (CHW) and Caroline Canny (Health Coordinator)

Men's Shed

Near the end of 2016 saw the development of a men's shed in WTID. This need was highlighted by a number of men who were on a Back to Education Initiative at WTIDC in the past. They felt their needed an outlet to work in and socialise in. A workshop in WTIDC has been prepared and will be launched in mid 2017.



Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task force (WRDATF)

WTIDC sits on the WRDATF, the staff member of WTID and all the Traveller projects informed of training, upcoming events and new initiatives. A 3-year Strategic Plan commenced to be development in 2016 and WTID along with other regional Traveller groups were involved in this process.

Shared Rearing and Foster Care

WTIDC currently participates on the Shared Rearing Steering Group with Traveller projects from the region and Tusla and is prioritising the issue of Traveller children in care in an effort to improve outcomes for Travellers. The Western regional Traveller Health Network{WRTHN} have developed a regional forum to look specifically at the issue of Traveller children in care in our region and what we would hope to achieve through work with Tusla (The Child and Family agency).

Primary Health Care Review

A steering group has been set up from reps throughout the region to look at a review of Primary Health care and the Health teams throughout the region. Terms of reference have been agreed for this piece of work. The first step of the review that involves consulting with the CHW's has been completed and questions and researchers have been identified in relation to the second part of the review which consist of visiting and interview families on the impact that the Primary Health Care project has had on their lives.

Whole Health Team approach

WTIDC, GTM, MSTG and RIDC worked in collaboration to develop a document that would show the Whole Health Team Approach taken by Travellers projects in the region when tackling the issues faced by the Traveller Community. Researcher Ann Irwin facilitated the group to compile the document.

The concept of a Whole Team Approach working from a community development perspective is key to working with the Traveller Community on health and wellbeing. It is one that has a rationale in research and policy relating to Traveller health. It one that provides for effectiveness and efficiencies in tackling what are still significant inequalities in the health of the Traveller community.

Combination of health and community development skills allow for a focus on direct service delivery, representation and policy development.

The Western Regional Traveller Health Network

The Western Regional Traveller Health Network (WRTHN) was established in 2004.

The WRTHN facilitates the participation of the member projects at local, regional and national level to ensure that Traveller issues are represented. The WRTHN also facilitates innovative and partnership ways of working that significantly value for money, effectiveness and efficiencies.

WRTHN are:

- Galway Traveller Movement (GTM)
- Mayo Traveller Support Group (MSTG)
- Roscommon Integrated Development Company (RIDC)
- Western Traveller Intercultural and Development (WTIDC)

The projects share a set of underpinning principles, which are belief in a:

- A partnership approach between the minority Traveller community and the majority settled community
 - That Travellers must be represented at all levels of the organisations inclusion in at decision-making level
 - The importance of acknowledging the social determinates of health and working within this framework
 - A commitment to the achievement of full equality for Travellers
 - Human rights and a belief that Traveller rights re human rights
- Community development, including collective action, empowerment, and participation, as the approach that is most appropriate to the work being undertaken

Youth



Youth Work Library

2016 was a challenging year for the youth project, there was a gap in which there were no CE workers, so this did have some effect on the delivery of services to young people. Two youth Leaders came on board in December 2016 and we are excited to be planning the year ahead.

We should acknowledge the role of the volunteers who worked away discretely and helped maintain most programs.

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF)

NQSF is a support and development tool for the youth work sector. It provides organisations with an opportunity to articulate, through a common language, their youth work practice.

Year one of the second cycle of the NQSF has been completed successfully for the Youth Service and will continue to be used as a support and developmental tool for the youth service. This involves quarterly meetings with the GRETB Youth Officer Michael Kelly and the Youth Service in Brú Bhríde who carefully monitor and assess the work of the Youth Project covering the 5 Core principles and the 10 Standards of Youth Work.

Youth Education Initiative

Initial meetings have been held with the principal and staff of both St Jarlath's and McHale College secondary schools in Tuam to discuss a pilot project to support young people in secondary school. A group of young people 14 years and over from the Collages will attend the youth service to participate in a complimentary, mentoring programme from Jan to June; 2017. Dessie Keggan who is the school liaison contact person involved.

Cant is cool workshop

Senior Youth Worker delivered 2 very success Cant workshops on Traveller Cant to 15 Teenagers. The workshops provided information on Cant and the young people were introduced to the basics of the Language. This was incorporated to the young people's summer program. The workshops were a great success. Young Traveller learnt about different words and meanings used by their parents and grandparents and some of the young people still use them today.



A successful summer programme was rolled out in June\July to young people in the Parkmore area of Tuam.

There was the launch of Memories of Times Past Booklet, which was a showcase of Traveller artefacts and showing a recording of a tin smith at work in the 1950's. The artefacts and recording created discussion when it they were showed to the younger people in attendance, particularly how skillful the art of tin smith was.

The Summer camp was a huge success with the number of participants attending rising to over 70. The list of innovative and fun packed activities provided to young people was endless, they took part in sports, soccer, cookery, etc., this program took place at the Tuam Community Childcare Centre, Parkmore, Tuam. The Young Rangers sports camp took place on the green area Parkmore.

Arts and crafts at the Community House at Parkmore Estate proved to be a great success also.

On the last day, all took part in the games, and enjoyed the hotdogs and refreshments. The finals of the soccer competition took place. The Senior Youth Work Manager with the leaders presented the winners and runner up team with medals.

Medals presentation and refreshments including BBQ food were provided to all involved on the last evening.



Music Project

The Music Project takes place four times a week and currently has 30 members, a Project Coordinator and Music Tutor. The children put on a music concert for the parents and families during July. It was really rewarding to watch the children blossom through music and singing with skills they had developed over the year.

St Christopher's Youth Club

The club is open in February to May, 15 members attended regularly. We couldn't open the club in September due to a lack of Volunteers and no CE workers to operate programs. We are glad to say we now have 3 workers on the CE scheme who started in December 2016, so we can engage with the teenage group in the new Year.

Afterschool's Programme, Parkmore

There are 3 youth leaders assigned to a programme of Afterschool's activities which takes place 3 afternoons a week. The activities are provided for the young people attending aged 8 – 12 yrs., this includes astro turf soccer, outdoor games, and art and cultural programmes.

Tuam Boxing and Leisure Club

Currently WTID has two clubs operating out of the boxing gym as well as Krava Mega, a martial arts club.

The St Christopher's B.C had 30 members, many of the participants attended the County and Connaught finals. Physical and mental wellbeing is a key component in the training regime. The young people involved enjoy the activities, and the opportunities to compete, or just train. The club has a dedicated crew of volunteers.



Tuam Community Childcare Centre

The service is community based and is currently owned and managed by WTID. The Management Committee of WTID is responsible for the overall operation of the childcare service, ensuring that the service operates in a manner that is compliant with statutory regulations and with the ethos of the childcare service and WTID.

Tuam Community Childcare Centre provides an enriching and challenging educational environment, where each child is encouraged to grow to his or her fullest potential academically, socially and emotionally. We strive to provide a welcoming, calm and caring environment where children can play and learn at their own pace, making discoveries and choices for themselves along the way. Our aim is to provide a childcare programme, which promotes optimal development for each child, supports parents, upholds best practices of early childhood care and education and promote collaborations that help all children realise their potential.

To achieve this WTID works in partnership with parents, staff and children, by providing a secure learning environment, which enable children to be happy, confident and independent and to have positive and productive experiences during their time with the service.

Description of Service

The service is in Parkmore Estate, Tuam, and caters for children between the ages of 1 year to 12 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

The service is affiliated to the Galway City and County Childcare Committee, is a member of Early Childhood Ireland and is also notified to the Health Service Executive and inspected by them. The service follows the principles of Siolta and Aistear.

Support services include the Early Intervention Team, Speech & Language Therapist, Psychologist, Public Health Nurse, Family Support Workers and the Pre-School Liaison worker. I would also work closely with the Presentation Primary School and the Mercy Primary School in meeting with their Home School Liaison Teachers regarding enrolling children who are eligible to attend primary schools.

Facilities:

- Purpose built Childcare Centre.
- Open 5 days a week.
- ECCE Scheme – 38 weeks.
- CCS Scheme – 46 weeks.
- Secure entrance.
- Outdoor play areas with hard and soft surfaces.
- Full-time/part-time/sessional service.
- Spacious rooms.
- Fully equipped Pre-school rooms.

Afterschool care.

Bus collection and drop off service for children attending both morning and afternoon programmes.
Own Allotments and access to Tuam Community Allotments.

Objectives

To provide a safe, secure, stimulating environment, which can embrace all children and values their race, language, gender, age, disability, culture, class and religion.

To value all children as individuals and appreciate their uniqueness.

To value parents and carers as the primary educators of the child.

To ensure that all staff receives appropriate training and maintain high levels of practice.

To develop practice that values the wider community as a means of adding to the richness of programmes.

Mission statement

Tuam Community Childcare Centre is committed to valuing and respecting all children in the service. The mission being to provide a safe, child-centered environment that promotes the development of each child. Tuam Community Childcare Centre working with parents and the local community ensuring quality, affordable childcare in response to the needs of the parents in the community



Afterschool's Programme

The Afterschool's Programme caters for children between the ages of 5 years to 12 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday, from 2.40 p.m. to 6 p.m. A pickup service from all primary schools in Tuam town is provided on a daily basis with a drop home service between 5pm and 6pm.

The service provides supervised homework and planned activities to encourage and develop self-esteem, sociability, friendship and co-operation with others.

Various programs take place both within and outside of the center on a weekly basis with all afterschool children. We ensure that children are continuously trying out new activities such as soccer, gymnastics, boxing, kickboxing, baking and art.

Afterschool's Culture Project

A very successful Afterschool Programme was delivered weekly by three PHC staff at Parkmore Community Childcare Service. The programme focused on engaging children between the ages of 7-12 years old to celebrate culture and explore healthy lifestyle behaviours in an enjoyable manner. The group participated in making St. Philomena Cords and why members of the Traveller community wear them; making St. Bridget's Crosses; cards for various events and healthy foods, brushing your teeth and fun physical activities.



Pumpkins for Halloween

Preschoolers Environmental Project

Three CHWs delivered an 8-week Environmental Project with preschool children attending Parkmore Childcare Service. This activity based project encouraged the children to think about where they live, their environment and how to mind it. They collected different leaves and partook in leaf rubbing, planted seeds in recycled milk cartons, painted wildlife onto stones, explored the job of worms, were shown the importance of recycling and build an insect hotel and birdfeeders.



Insect Hotel



Proud boys with their Insect Hotel

Pre-school Graduation Ceremony

The pre-school graduation was held on Monday 22nd June 2016 in the service with 22 children moving on to primary school.

Christmas Shoe Box Appeal – Team Hope

The Childcare Service facilitated the collection of Christmas Shoe Boxes during November. This is the fourth year that the Childcare Service has been involved with this project. Parents and children in the service gave great support to this and the childcare service donated to the appeal, we feel this is a very worthy cause year on year, teaching the children that “the best gift of all is the gift of giving”.

Pre-school Services Training

Four Childcare workers attended Occupational First Aid training throughout the year. All on completion received a certificate.

Aistear & Siolta

The Aistear & Siolta curriculum is followed and practiced on a daily basis within our morning service. This curriculum is very innovative and impressive, with children benefiting from its contents continuously. This year has brought along advanced supports for the Aistear & Siolta programme, with an early years specialist working closely with our childcare management and workers to develop and implement quality development goals and actions, prioritizing the needs and interests of children within the service. This has been a huge success to date and we look forward to continuing and improving our work within this programme in the future.

ECCE Expansion

Thanks to a major expansion of the free preschool scheme known as the ECCE introduced in September 2016, children have been able to access free preschool places. All children reaching three years of age are now entitled to a free preschool place. Previously children were entitled to one free year. Eligible children will now be able access the expanded ECCE Programme across two (and in some cases three) school years. In previous years, eligible children were only permitted to access the ECCE Programme from the September of that preschool year; two further eligibility entry points have been added, in January and April, to facilitate additional access.

An outreach programme took place in July 2016, to promote such a major milestone for children eligible for this programme. This outreach programme was a very effective tool to meet, inform and advise families within Tuam town and its surrounding areas on all their individual possibilities of availing of this programme. We feel this approach was very effective thus leading to our service applying for a capital grant to expand the infrastructure of our service to meet the demands in registrations for September 2016. On notification of being successful in our application, we were delighted and works were carried out throughout August to facilitate this expansion. The capital grant has provided us with the opportunity to improve and grow our service, exceeding our goals for 2016.

Traveller Tracing



Traveller Tracing started in March 2014, and is now into its Third year. During the past year, it was involved in some events, Traveller Pride Week, where it had a display for family trees, photography and craftwork.



Pockets that would have been wore by Traveller women

Mary Morartiy took along pots and pans with were made by her father who was a Tinsmith to the West of Ireland –Traveller History Project' in October. It is a partnership between the National Museum of Ireland –Country Life, WTID, MTSG, RIDC and GTM.



A Tinsmith at work



Mary at the Museum

Traveller Tracing Invited Museum of Ireland –Country Life to come to Brú Bhríde on the 8th December 2016 to show a film of a Tinsmith for the Tuam area making pots, which they had in their archives. Among the audience were several his children and grandchildren

During the coming year Traveller Tracing hopes to continue its work, and to produce a booklet showing the history of one family from the 1800's to present day.

We feel that this project is very important from both a historical and social aspect.

The Following Organisation are based in our premises: -

Citizen Information Services	Tuesday – Friday	11am – 4pm
Seetec Employment Services	Tuesday – Friday	9am – 5pm
Narcotics Anonymous	Monday and Friday	8pm – 9pm
Alcoholics Anonymous	Mon/Wed/Fri	12:15pm – 2:30pm
Al-Anon	Thursday	7:30pm – 9:30pm
Being Well Group	Monday – Saturday Sunday	9:15am – 10:30pm 6pm – 7pm
Krava Mega Kick Boxing Club	Monday	4:30pm – 6:30pm
St Christopher’s Boxing Club (Runs from Oct – May)	Tuesday – Monday Friday Sunday	4pm -7pm 7:15pm -9:30pm 12 noon – 3pm
St John’s Boxing Club (Runs all year)	Monday and Thursday Saturday	7pm - 9pm 5pm – 7pm
Banjo & Mandolin (School term times)	Thursday	4pm – 8pm
Guitar & music lessons (Harmony Hall) (School term times)	Monday – Friday	4pm – 7pm



Registered Company No: 267495

Charitable Registration No. 20026431