

Western Traveller & Intercultural Development

Community Resource & Youth Service Provider

Annual Report 2022

Traveller Pride Week in Tuam, County Galway

The TraveUer Pride Summer programmes were held in Tuam, County Galway during the month of July, and saw in excess of over 100 young people in 10-14 years and 15-18 years' plus age groups.

Events varied from arts and crafts to murals, with our residential arts tutor Martina Passman.

There were games galore, such as a soccer labz and field hockey, a game which has become very popular, with qualified coaches working with the teams.

The young people were also introduced to planting vegetables, something which was a new experience for many.

The actual Traveller Pride event itself was held on the 21st July and was well attended, with our focus this year being on the progression and the achievements of our young people who were presented with certificates and gifts.

We had speakers from the HSE, GRETB, and Garda Rosin Moloughlin made a presentation to young people for their video production of unknowns. 17 young people were involved in this GRETB funded production, in association with the Tom Dowling young Irish filmmakers.

A total of 12 young people took part in the Music Generation Galway promotional video; this was the first time that parents had the opportunity to see and enjoy the activities their young people were involved in, with each one being delighted with the outcome. Garda Rosin also presented our music participants with a certificate and gift.

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Introduction

Western Traveller and Intercultural Development (WTID) were finally able to start to get back to normal in 2022, although we as an organisation are very aware of the fact COVID-19 hasn't gone away and we continue to be careful and evaluate working practices, while containing with our mission to help all in the community of Tuam, with both the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 and the everyday problems and difficulty faced by the Traveller Community in Tuam and its surrounding area.

The following report sets out the many ways in which all members of staff worked in an integrated way on many projects and initiatives to help assist and facilitate the people of Tuam and the surrounding area. As always, a notable characteristic of WTID is a teamwork approach.

All members of the staff work in a combined way on many projects and initiatives, some of which may be additional to their direct roles. This team approach adds value to the work of a small organisation where different 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 continuing of funding and a partnership approach to work.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank in this report all the help we received from both our volunteers, CE Scheme and TUS workers, without their time and help Western Traveller would not be able to run as many programmes and activities throughout the year.

Caroline Connor
Chairperson

Primary Health Care



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 (CHW's) on a part time basis.

Health Promotion

The main focus of the PHC programme work continues to be health promotion and signposting to relevant service and agencies around health screening, support and intervention. The work of the PHC team in 2022 also involved outreach work related to cervical check, breast check, mental health, diabetes and cardiovascular health, to name but a few.

COVID-19

The PHC team has continue on with its excellent work of 2020/21 helping all members of the community on behalf of WTID regarding COVID-19 and other health matters.

Traveller Midwifery and Gynea Group

The Traveller Midwifery and Gynea Group continued to meet over 2022. The purpose of this group is the continuous building or links, share resources and information to improve the health outcomes for Traveller mothers and their babies using the Maternity service at UHG.

Creative women's group

A creative women's group started in February 2022, it is run by two of the CHW's and takes place in Harmony Hall every Thursday evening 7pm – 9pm. The CHW's started off by teaching the women how to use the sewing machines and how to knit and crochet. The group has proved to be a great success and will continue on in 2023.

Some lovely work made by the Women's group in Brú Bhríde

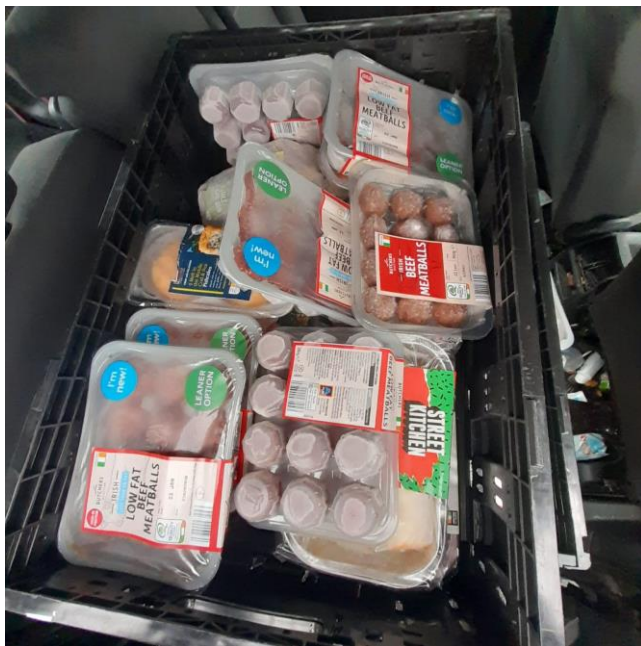




Food Cloud

It 2022 Western Traveller began working with Tesco, Aldi and Lidl, collecting and redistribute surplus food each week to families most in need in our community. At this time of raising prices this has been a great help to those families.

The CHW's collect the food and sort it in to bags and either deliver it or the families come to Harmony Hall to collect it.



Youth Work



Bru Bhríde

Western Traveller Intercultural Development

Working with Travellers and Connecting Communities

The youth project currently employs 1 staff member with 2 part time Ce workers 8 hours a week, plus 2 Tus workers. The project organised and were involved with, the following Projects in 2022:

- Music generation program
- Film program with young Irish film Makers
- Acting program with John Connor, the mall Tuam
- Easter Arts program
- Youth Club
- Tuesday club
- Wednesday club
- Summer program\Traveller pride week
- Saturday group

Mental Health Art Competition

Some of the participants of the youth groups took part in the mental health art competition and were very successful. Finishing 1st, 2nd and 3rd. They each won one for all voucher.



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Music project

The Music Generation program operates every Wednesday, at the Music room Harmony Hall, Brú Bhríde.

We have 12 young people from the age of 11 to 18 years involved in the successful program.

The group did a carol service and sing song on the 14th of Dec. this was to help build confidence within the group.

Film production with the young Irish film makers

This group consisted of 18 young people who met over 6 Saturdays from 11-4 pm.

The age group consisted of 11-18 years of age.

The young people with a 16-year-old Dean ward wrote a new script, which was called Unknown. They developed a horror film, which was shown during Traveller Pride week.

Acting and Drama workshop: with Actor John Connor.

This program was organised in August, we had 12 young people involved in the project. The young people were introduced to drama, song and improvisation. The drama and acting workshops were recorded, and a film production will be screened in Dublin Early next year.



Some workshops that took place in the mall Tuam.



Easter arts program

This program was organised during the easter break. We ran 4 sessions of various arts activities, such as card making, window painting, and screeding on Cards.

Thanks to Martina Passman, and the young people, this was a successful program.



Youth club activities

The youth club members met on a Monday evening from 4-30 to 7. Many of those young people have embraced the arts.

This is improving skills and helps young people to distress.

The in-house arts worker Martin is an inspiration to the young people.

The young people have been involved in focus groups, quizzes, Games and chilling out.

Sports are still important, and we organised some events.

Members of this group went to the Cinema during the week prior to Xmas.

Tuesday Club

This club meet on Tuesdays, activities vary from arts to outdoor games.

The group consists of 10 members and enjoy the activities such as cooking, murals, and the Arts.

The young people usually attend from 3-15 to 5 -30. This gives the 10-year-old time to get home from school.

The age is from 10-14 years. Food is prepped and provided to this group.

The Wednesday club.

This club from 3-5 on Wednesdays, the numbers were usually 10 plus. AGE 10-13 YEARS OF AGE.

ACTIVITIES:

Games

Circus skills,

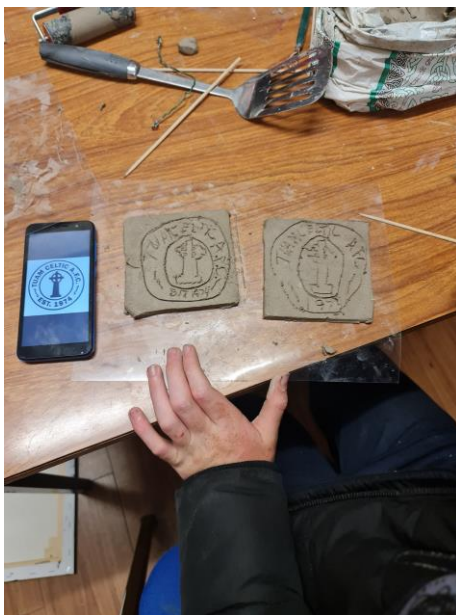
Singing

Music

Arts.

Food is prepped and provided to this group.







Summer program/ Traveller pride week.

The summer program commenced in July\August 22; it was weeks of fun filled activities.

The groups were involved in outings, and trips.

Games and outdoor activities, from soccer, to grass hockey, to sports days.

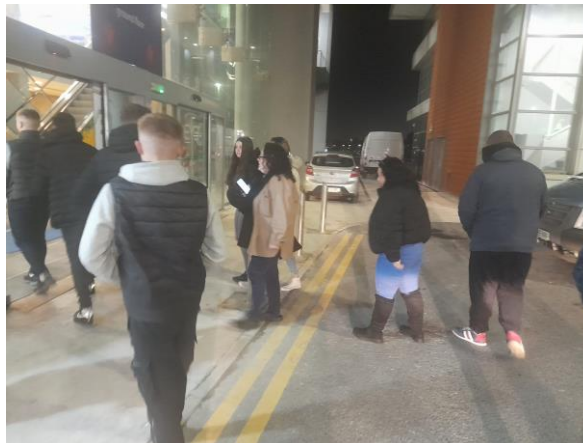
Mural designs with Martina Passman, at the community house and green area Parkmore.

We linked in some members with John Connor in his acting and drama workshops at the mall Tuam, in early august.



Club activities for Christmas

The youth groups were involved in Various Christmas activities, made cards and wreath for Christmas, Christmas logs and Christmas window scenes. Some members of the youth group did the escape room with N.U.I.G. and a trip to the cinema was arranged for youth club members who have been attending the youth club regularly.



STAR Tuam



The NTRIS Tuam pilot project is a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Justice and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. This pilot project is one of many initiatives that has developed from the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (NTRIS) 2017 - 2021. The overarching objective of the project is to improve the attendance, participation and retention of Traveller children and young people in the Tuam area. The Tuam pilot project is made up of four staff members. Bridget Ward and Martin Ward are Education Workers, Erin Conway is a Home School Community Liaison Coordinator and Deirdre Swords is an Educational Welfare Officer. The pilot has 3 key goals. The pilot team are currently consulting with key stakeholders around these 3 goals and this survey forms part of that consultation.

Supporting Travellers and Roma

The Pilot has 3 Overarching Goals that in turn direct the team

Goal 1

Students – To improve the learning experience and outcomes for Traveller and Roma students in schools in the pilot areas.

Goal 2

Parents and Guardians – To improve parental/guardian engagement with the school community and foster an appreciation of the value of education among Traveller and Roma communities.

Goal 3

Schools – To improve attendance, participation and retention with the aim of improving the educational outcomes of Traveller and Roma Students.

Castlehacket Walks

Over the year, the STAR team went on many beautiful walks to Castlehacket, Ashford Castle, and around our local park and town. We used Barry and the community bus to get to our localities. Many of our young people had never been to Castlehacket before despite its popularity and being less than ten minutes from here. Everyone enjoyed the walks and said that they would be sure to be back and recommend it to their friends and families.





Fitness in the woods

This project was funded by Galway Sports Partnership. This was a four-week project that took place in the Woods in Mountbellew. For the four weeks, the group travelled by the community bus to the woods. The project was facilitated by local GAA star Michael Meehan. The group were at first very guarded, however over time they began to settle into the group in a positive manner and individual characters started to come out of their shell, becoming more comfortable in our company, each other's, and in the outdoor environment in general. Overall outcomes of this project have been:

1. Attendance: We had 1 boy in the group who had not returned to school at all prior to this project. However, this project saw his attendance significantly improve and he ended up completing his first full week in school in many years. This project occurred first thing on a Monday morning which is usually a very bad time for attendance, but the programme was an incentive for them to get up and go to school which set them on the right path for the week.
2. Social well-being: Two of this groups' parents had reported that their boys rarely leave their bedrooms and do not mix with others. This project saw these two boys attending nearly every day. Now they have also begun to link in with other projects in STAR and Egan house which is excellent.
3. Physical exercise: The group got to engage in physical activity for one hour each week through a variety of fun and competitive games and activities in a positive safe environment where they were made feel wanted and welcomed, which does not always happen with young Traveller males in sports clubs and teams.

Overall, Michael Meehan was very impressed with this group. He really enjoyed the craic that was had during the sessions, and he said he would love to do something with them again in the future.





Wilderness Programme

The group were at first very guarded, however over time they began to settle into the group in a really positive manner and individual characters started to come out of their shell, becoming more comfortable in our company, each other's, and in the outdoor environment in general. Overall outcomes of this project have been:

Attendance has been good with young people returning weekly. This is always a positive as teens can so easily drop out. There have been also some new young people join, which demonstrates the interest and feedback they give each other.

Engagement - the young people have really engaged. We could see this each week. They are eager to try the activities, to learn the skills and to get involved in a very positive manner.

Fun and enjoyment - the group all reported how much they enjoy the weekly sessions and report how the sessions have flown by.

Learning - the young people are engaging and therefore learning in a very experiential way. I feel they are also grown in confidence because of this learning and the progress they have made. With each task mastered, they get a boost in self-confidence.

Sense of confidence within nature - week on week they have grown more confident in the outdoor environment. The girls are getting more stuck in, less worried about the mud, dirt, insects or showing themselves up. This really came through in week 4 when I could see them collecting wood for the fire challenge and getting their hands dirty.







Horse riding

The group were at first extremely nervous, anxious and apprehensive about horse riding. Getting up onto the horse itself was a huge challenge for a lot of the students due to nerves. However, after some time, they quickly eased and began to love horse riding. Some outcomes from this project that we have noticed are:

1. **Self-confidence:** Learning this new skill developed confidence and self-esteem. Horse riding is not easy and not everyone can do it, however all the girls stayed on their horses and overcame their anxieties, this is huge in promoting confidence and self-esteem.
2. **Mental health benefits:** A lot of our young people struggle with anxiety and their mental health. Horse therapy is proven to promote positive psychological feelings. New experiences are very important for young people and this was one.
3. **Physical health:** A lot of our young people, live quite sedentary lifestyles with little physical exercise. Horse riding is physically demanding, and the group engaged in this activity for one hour a week.
4. **Socialization:** It was fabulous watching the groups relationships build with each other by pushing themselves out of their comfort zones together. The group got to socialize with each other, their horses, their riding instructors, and the STAR team in a very positive environment where they were made to feel appreciated, welcomed and were constantly given praise and encouragement. In addition, it was wonderful to watch the group bond over this positive activity, it was particularly noticeable listening to them having positive chats on the bus home about their lessons.
5. Overall, this project was hugely positive. Sometimes it can be hard to find something that our young people really want to do, especially the girls. But horse riding was it. They are all now constantly begging to know when they can go horse riding again which shows the impact that it had.







STAR Summer Programmes

Our summer was a huge success with high numbers at all of our projects.

These projects included an art club, games club, beauty on a budget, swim club, Traveller pride week. During the Traveller pride week we presented our awardees of the Bursary with their prizes.







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Christmas markets

To celebrate the end of the year and great participation of our young people in the STAR project this year. Just before the Christmas School Holidays the STAR team went on two trips to the Christmas markets with students. The first group got Simon Mullins bus into bowling, the arcade and Supermacs, and then into the markets. The second group got Burkes bus into the markets with a meal in Supermacs. Both groups went on the big wheel and the carousels. Both evenings were fabulous and exciting evenings out. Despite the cold everyone was in great Christmas spirits





Mentoring

Mentoring occurs daily in the STAR project. This includes individuals, family, small group and large group mentoring. In mentoring, we try and have a positive impact on the school day of our students. We do this through positive activities that we know will benefit them and that they are interested in. This includes, games, arts and crafts, walks, photography, and just having the chats. We check in on how their days are going and seeing what areas they need help with. There is also lots of hot chocolates drank!





Tuam Community Childcare Centre



Tuam Community Childcare Centre 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 promotes 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 enables children to be happy, confident, and independent and to have positive and productive experiences during their time with the service.

Description of Service

Tuam Community Childcare Centre is based in Parkmore Estate, Tuam, Galway H54V663. and caters for children between the ages of 1 year to 15 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday from 9a.m. to 6.30 p.m. daily.

Inspected by

The service is affiliated with Galway City and County Childcare Committee and is a member of Early Childhood Ireland. Tuam Community Childcare Centre is inspected by Tusla, Pobal, (DES (Department of Education and Skills)) Department of Education and Skills, the (HSE) Health and Safety Authority

Educational Methods

Tuam Community Childcare Centre follows the guidelines from the Department of Education, for the Inclusion of children through the Aistear/Siolta practices Guide (2015). Aistear, the National Curriculum Framework (2009). Siolta, the National Quality Framework (2006).

The Early Childhood Curriculum Aistear Framework. Theme: Identity and Belonging.

What is identity and Belonging? The theme of Identity and Belonging is about children developing a positive sense of who they are, and feeling that they are valued and respected as part of a family and community. As Educators promote identity and Belonging in the childcare setting by getting to know families and Welcome each family and child into our setting.



Support Services Include

- Early Intervention Team
- Better Start Aims
- Speech & Language Therapist
- Psychologist
- Public Health Nurse
- TUSLA Family Support Workers
- Pre-School Liaison worker

Tuam Community Childcare would also work closely with Trinity Primary for the Transition of all children to the National School.

Facilities

- Purpose-built Childcare Centre
- Open 5 days a week. Monday – Friday
- ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) Scheme – 38 weeks
- CCSP Scheme – 46 weeks
- (NCS) National Childcare Scheme
- Secure entrance
- Outdoor play areas
- Full-time/part-time/sessional service
- 5 Fully equipped Pre-school rooms
- 5 Rooms for Afterschool
- Bus collection and drop off service for children attending both morning and afterschool
- Own Allotments

Staff

All Staff are Garda Vetted and are qualified in (Level 6) Early Childhood Education, two staff are qualified as LINC Inclusion Coordinators and two staff members are currently in year 3 BA early childhood education and care at Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Galway. Four staff have SNA (Special Needs Assistance) (level 6) qualifications, Staff are trained in First Aid Response, Fire Safety, Children First, Manual Handling. Kitchen staff are trained in Food Safety and Hygiene.

Objectives

Tuam Community Childcare Centre aims to promote the values of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion for all children attending the setting. By providing a safe and secure environment for the children and families to feel that they are included in the setting. By having policies and procedures to follow and working in partnership with children, parents, and families for the holistic development of all children. TCCC recognizes and values that all children are unique and will develop and learn at their own rate. TCCC believes in working in partnership with outside agencies that may be involved with children and families for the best outcomes for all children in our setting.

Mission Statement and Ethos

We at Tuam Community Childcare Centre are committed to providing excellent standards of care for the holistic development of each child. By providing a warm, friendly, safe, and caring environment, we aspire to challenge and stimulate children to develop to their full potential through play, learning, interactions, and experiences that are age and stage appropriate.

Afterschool's Programme

We cater for children between the ages of 4.5 years to 15 years. The service operates from Monday to Friday, from 1.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. we collect children by Bus at Trinity Primary School, Tuam. @ 1:30pm and 2:30pm. Children are dropped home at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm. Homework is supervision they will get a nutritious dinner and have fully supervised access to the outdoor play areas. Our Afterschool rooms have a variety of games and activities for the children. Children from other schools are welcome, however transport must be arranged by the parents. All children must be collected by 6:30 pm

Staff

Louise and Sandra are currently in year 3 BA early childhood education and care at Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Galway.

Project & Topics in 2022

Throughout the year, we have focused on teaching and involving the children in the stories we read to them. In a storyboard, we read a story to the children, such as "THE THREE LITTLE BIGS" and the children listen to the story and learn about the story. As a follow-up, we have a theme about the "Three Little Pigs" where the children use their skills to learn to build; the materials that are needed to build houses and learn about the animals in the story, where they live in the story how to care for them.

The summary of the story of the three little pigs.

"The Three Little Pigs" is a story about three pigs who build their houses of different materials. A Big Bad Wolf blows down the first two pigs' houses which are made of straw and sticks respectively but are unable to destroy the third pig's house which is made of bricks.



For Educators and parents, There are a number of amazing benefits it can bring to children: comfort and reassurance, confidence and security, relaxation, happiness, and fun. Taking the time and paying full attention to a child when reading a story tells them that they are important. By doing so, they improve their self-esteem, vocabulary, and imagination, as well as their sleep quality

Polytunnel

This year we got our poly-tunnel recovered and ready for the little green finger of our children.

The educational benefits of polytunnels.

Having a poly-tunnel in preschool can help children to learn more about gardening.

Polytunnels can help to grow their own fruits and vegetables.

Learning everything there is to know about growing your own food. This is a great life skill, helping them to become more sustainable adults. Learning more about growing plants also helps to boost their science education. Children who help to grow plants also learn more about responsibility and taking care of something. They can see how food is grown and what it takes to look after the environment while keeping gardening fun for children.



Outdoor play ground

This Year we have been so lucky to get our outdoor Play Ground all done up.

Playing in an outdoor environment has huge benefits for young children's learning and development. It is great for young children's physical development and, while playing outside, children learn how to get on with each other and manage their feelings. Children also tend to develop a more positive attitude to learning when they are outdoors. They are usually more active, absorbed, and involved, and they see a purpose in what they are doing. 'The chance to connect with the natural world; first-hand experiences of life and growth; endless opportunities for creativity and imagination; improved fitness and physical development – the countless benefits of outdoor play have a real positive impact on children's lives.'

How Can Parents support children's enjoyment, learning, and development by understanding the benefits that outdoor play has for children, sometimes it is risky, sometimes messy, and sometimes it is wet or cold. Parents can provide children with the right clothing so they can be very involved in their outdoor play. Being outside in all weathers and in every season gives children the chance to experience ice and snow, sunshine and wind, the changing colour of the leaves in autumn, and the appearance of green shoots in spring. Sometimes parents do not like their children going outside to play because they do not want them to get dirty. Children love getting dirty and wet and the benefits of outdoor play are greater than any dirty child



Agency collaboration

Western Traveller perceive collaboration as a key component of Community Development and this approach was one of the main approaches taken in the work of the organisation during such a difficult year. “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”.

Throughout the year Western Traveller ensured there was an up-to-date list of local organisations that support work with Travellers and the project. Western Traveller continued to work with relevant agencies throughout this time. Such agencies as:

- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB)
- Galway Rural Development Company Ltd (GRD)
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA)
- TUSLA (Child and Family Agency)
- Youthreach
- Dept. of Social Protection
- Galway City & Childcare Committee
- Galway County Council
- Public Participation Network (PPN)

Representation was made at other agency teleconferences:

- Traveller Health Unit
- Tusla
- Galway Co Council and Family Support Network,
- GRD
- Local Schools
- County Childcare.

Throughout the year Western Traveller engaged with Traveller families who were homeless, experienced addiction issues, living in overcrowded conditions and or living on poorly serviced halting sites and deal with issues with the relevant services such as Galway County Council.

Worked with the Galway County Council on behalf of Families who had no access/ shared access to water, sanitation or electricity.

Work with families on the Halting Site and the Galway County Council to ensure safe clean hot running water to enable regular hand-washing was available.



Our Funders

We would like to thank all our funders and volunteers with out whom this project would not be as successful as it is.

Main Funders

HSE



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Galway Childcare Committee
Coiste Cúram Leanaí na Gaillimhe



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth

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Organisations & Clubs based in our premises

Citizen Information Services (Downstairs in the main building)	Tuesday – Friday	11am – 4pm
Seetec Employment Services (Upstairs in the main building)	Monday – Friday	9am – 5pm
Narcotics Anonymous (Upstairs in the main building)	Monday and Friday	8pm – 9pm
Alcoholics Anonymous (Harmony Hall)	Mon/Wed/Fri	1pm – 2pm
The Women’s Shed Cairde Mná (Harmony Hall)	Tuesday	7pm -9pm
Gamblers Anonymous (Upstairs in the main building)	Wednesday	8pm – 9pm

Simon Community

Parkmore Community House

Parkmore

Clients would be met on an appointment basis.

Anyone seeking an appointment should contact the following number: 0909631634.



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