

Physical Activity – Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others Package



Case Study- Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others (G4M+O)

Club	Melvin Gaels GAA
County	Leitrim
Location	Kinlough, covering areas of Glenade, Tullaghan, Rossinver.
Rural/ Urban	Rural
Codes	Football
Membership (2016)	575

Plan

Supporting Documents:

- [GAA Physical Activity Guidelines \[INSERT LINK\]](#)

- **Healthy Club Statement [INSERT LINK]**

Melvin Gaels Gaelic4Mothers and Others was formed in June 2011 and was the first club in Co. Leitrim to run this programme, since then other clubs in the county have followed suit. The G4M+O initiative was first introduced by the Ladies Gaelic Football Association in 2009. This is a recreational and innovative programme for women who have never played football before or who have not played in a very long time. The ethos is fun, fun, fun!! It is non- competitive and all inclusive. The focus is on providing a supportive environment where women can interact socially, as well as exercise.

Partners

Within the Club

- *Parents*
- G4M&O Committee
- Club Bord na nÓg Committee

Outside the Club

- LGFA
- Schools
- Leitrim GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee (chair.hwc.leitrim@gaa.ie)

Activity

The women who participate are aged between 18 years and 53 years but there is no upper age limit. The majority of women currently fall into the 40-50 age category. Melvin Gaels currently have 25 women registered to play. They are free to drop in or out at their leisure depending on work and family commitments. They train 50 weeks of the year taking a break at Christmas only.

Melvin Gaels hosted the first ever LeitrimGaelic4 Mothers and Others blitz in 2015 and have run this event again in 2016 and 2017. As a result, they have forged links with other parts of the county and made firm friendships. They have organised a number of Mixed Blitzes within the club as fundraisers but also as a means to encourage cohesivity within the club.

The club participate in the provincial and national blitzes organized by the LGFA. However, they have also been very proactive in introducing this wonderful initiative further afield. They travelled to New

York in 2014, London in 2015, Glasgow in 2016 and Brussels in 2017. These destinations didn't have a G4M+O programme in situ when they visited so the club provided them with their first introduction to the game. It is important to note that the club have organised these trips entirely themselves by identifying a part of the world they would like to visit and then set about establishing links with the LGFA in those areas.

The Club

The ripple effect of this initiative has been significant. The Club Bord na nÓg Committee in 2017 was comprised entirely of Gaelic4M+O members which led to the introduction of the Gaelic4 Girls programme which introduces girls to Gaelic Football. Over 50 girls benefited from this programme in 2017 and subsequently, an U-16 girls club was established in Melvin Gaels in 2018. The programme has encouraged women to become involved in club affairs in a more meaningful way. It has also provided children and mothers with a common shared interest which ensures that during football season there is no shortage of banter around the dinner table where post-match analysis takes precedence.

From the formation of Gaelic4M+O in 2011 the club have grown into an integrated, mutually supportive, community focused group of women who have developed a passion for Gaelic Football. The Gaelic 4Mothers and Others Coordinator says

"The positive energy which emanates from this group is a joy to behold".

Quotes from Participants:

"Gaelic 4 mothers & others, endless laughter with friends that keeps you fit for life"

"A great way to keep fit with a lot of laughs"

"The gaelic4mothers and others is the best thing I have done in a long time. We have great craic and the opportunity to travel to places that I would never have been"

