## Community Package – Engaging Older Members of the club and wider community



Club	Ballinderreen GAA
County	Galway
Location	Ballinderreen, South Galway
Rural/ Urban	Rural
Codes	Hurling and Camogie
Membership (2016)	481

Case study- Ballinderreen Feels Good: Social Initiative

# <u>Plan</u>

Supporting Document: GAA Healthy Club Statement

The first step was to set up a **Healthy Club project team who** carried out a **community wide survey** to ascertain what areas of health the club and community would like to focus on. Engaging older members of the club and community was one of the major themes that emerged from the survey. The main target audience included: non - playing members, older members of the community and those who may be experiencing isolation. The idea behind the **Ballinderreen Feels Good Social Initiative was inclusivity**. They wanted to bridge the gap between the older and younger generations in the community. The community centre which is next to the club (and owned by the club) and the walking track were the perfect venues to utilise for this initiative.

### **Partners**

#### Within the club:

- Club Executive
- Club members
- Underage coaches
  - Members of the Health Club Project group each member took the lead on certain initiatives as part of the Ballinderreen Feels Good Social Initiative – see list below.

### Outside the club:

The team were very successful in identifying local services and partners to team up with to deliver Ballinderreen Feels Good Social Initiative.

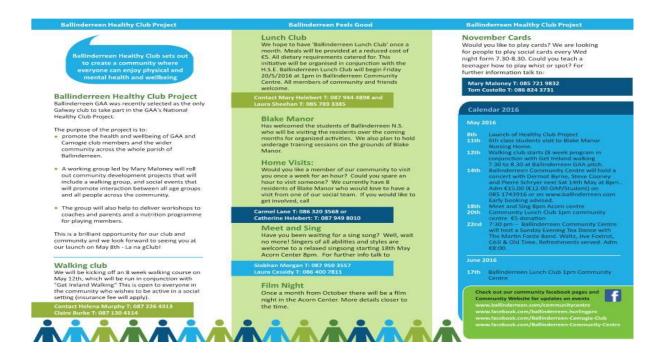
- Community centre
- Local nursing home, Blake Manor
- Brothers of Charity
- Senior Citizens Committee
- Members of local community
- Public health nurse
- Get Ireland Walking
- Parish Council- Acorn Centre
- Ballinderreen National School
- COPE Galway
- HSE
- Galway Health & Wellbeing Committee (chair.hwc.galway@gaa.ie)
- Gardai

## **Activity**

As part of the Ballinderreen Feels Good Social Initiative the club coordinated a range of activities including:

- Monthly lunch club
- Nursing home visits in partnership with the national school
- Movie nights
- Card night "Out of the Pub- Into the Club"
- Meet and Sing
- Walking group
- Home safety talks
- Bingo

Promoting the initiative and spreading the word around the parish was an important step. The club developed an information leaflet with a calendar of events for distribution. The club used Lá na gClubanna to launch the initiative.



The lunch club is held in the local community centre but as it does not have the facilities to cook food the club have linked up with COPE Galway who provide and distribute all the meals, while catering for all dietary requirements. This comes at a cost of €6 for a two course meal. Individuals who attend are charged €5 for their meal and the club supplements the rest.

### The Club

The community centre has **won an award for social inclusion**. This award demonstrates the work that has been done to get people involved in the community. These are people who could easily feel "left out" in their community, but now they are involved in the community and it has led many of them to also become involved in the GAA club, either actively or as supporters.

The club and community score highly in community award schemes for disabled access and for involving ethnic groups, disadvantaged groups, disabled groups, and groups of all ages including the elderly in community projects and activities.

### **Club Benefits:**

Increase in club members

New volunteers linked to the club

Better engagement with fund raising

As word spread about the lunch club many people from the community approached the Healthy Club Project Team and volunteered to help out. During the school holidays a number of girls from the local secondary school give a helping hand, bridging that age gap between the older generations of the community and the younger.

The Ballinderreen Feels Good Social Initiative has given people a purpose, comradery and independence.

## **Quotes from participants:**

"Very nice, very nice staff serving us, it is nice to get out and about for a couple of hours"

"Friendly lunch & very good food"

"Its good, it gives me a change to get out and meet local people"

"I like to feel useful and drive two of my neighbours down'

"I like to meet and chat with friends"

