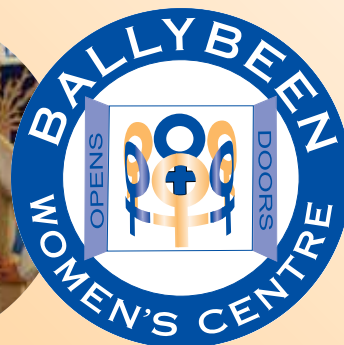


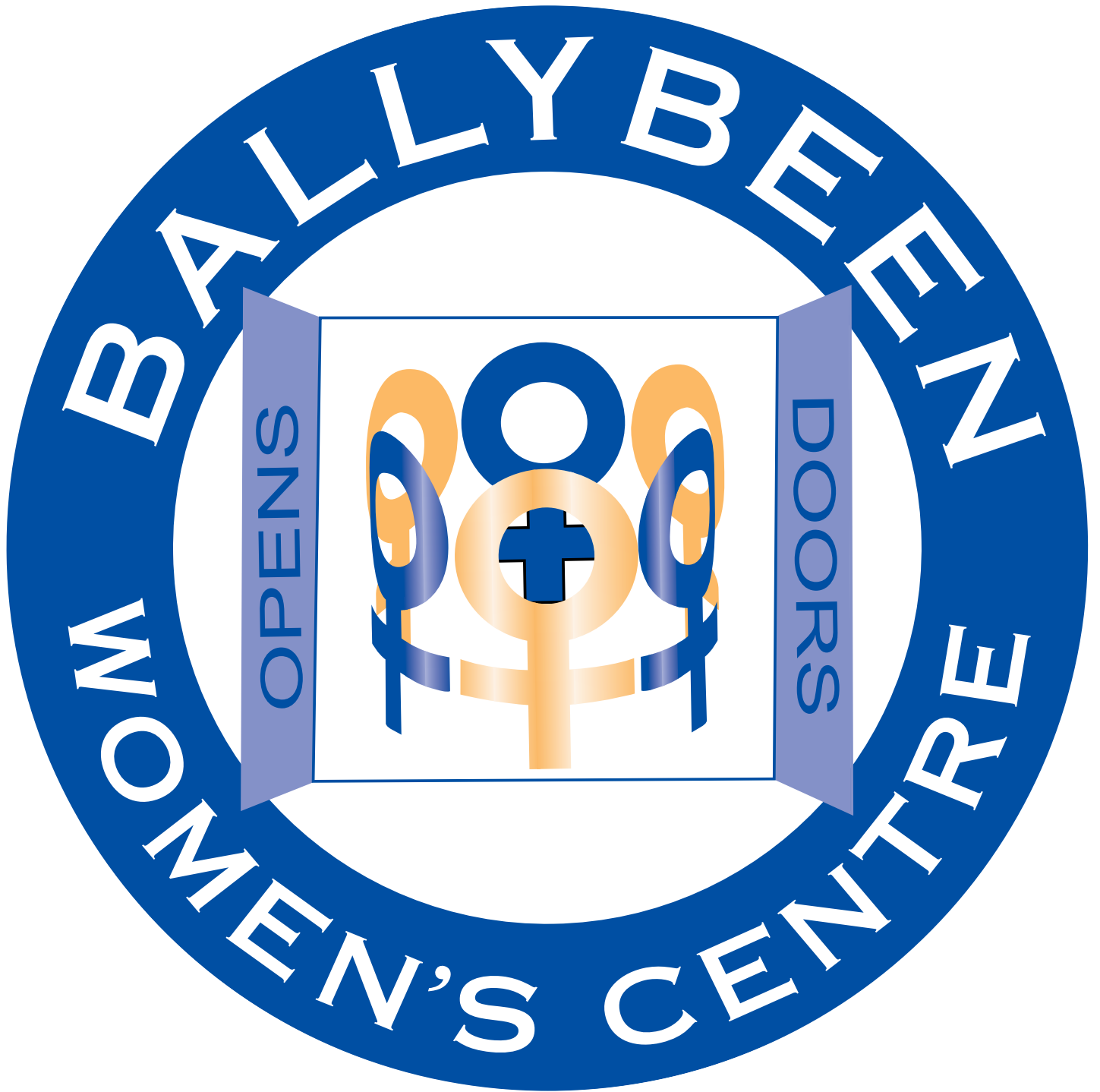


Ballybeen Women's Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015





BALLYBEEN WOMEN'S CENTRE

Ballybeen Women's Centre is an integrated service provider committed to enabling women, young people and children to realise their potential and fulfill their aspirations through the promotion of health, personal and socio-economic development.

STAFF

DIRECTOR

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING CO-ORDINATOR

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OUTREACH AND SUPPORT WORKER / EMPOWERMENT WORKER

Anne Walker (until 30/09/14)

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Linda Chambers

EARLY YEARS TEAM

Shirley-Anne Thompson

Jenny Glass

Kelly Kincaid

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Stacey Osborne

Leslie-Anne McKeown

Symone Hooley

Lynsey Kelly

Sandra Boyles

14/15 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIRPERSON

Margaret Taylor

TREASURER

Jean Cross

SECRETARY

Eileen Linder

MEMBERS

Florence Gray

Aimee McCune

Anne Kirkpatrick

Hazel McClean

Beryl Harvey

Eilish Kelly

Director's Report



As we come to the end of another year I am delighted to present our annual report for 2014-15.

This year saw an increased demand on all our services. Over 100 children accessed our childcare programmes on a daily basis and we supported over 60 families through our family support programme, 140 women participated in education and training programmes and a staggering 548 young people benefited from our Peer Education project. I think the numbers speak for themselves when I say that we have had another very successful and busy year.

However with success comes challenge not just in terms of funding but this year in particular has highlighted the fact

that the Centre really is no longer fit for purpose. Due to the increased demand on all of our services we are finding it increasingly difficult to operate in our current building – we simply don't have enough room. This year we have struggled to accommodate the large numbers accessing the centre and really have been bursting at the seams.

As a result, over the past few months we have been working towards developing a long term strategy for the Centre with a number of key goals – one of which is the construction of a new larger building that could accommodate both the growing demand for our services and also create capacity for future sustainability of the organisation. This is a key area of work that we will continue to progress over the next year.



Through our European work women from the community have met a diverse range of wonderful individuals from many different countries and through travel and dialogue have had the opportunity to experience firsthand others culture and traditions.

This year also saw the conclusion of the More Women into Politics European programme. Women from all over Northern Ireland were given the opportunity to meet other like minded women from throughout Europe and gain both knowledge and insight into the challenges and rewards of being a woman in politics.

We are fortunate to have had the support of many individuals and organisations over the past year which has enabled us to continue to develop and deliver quality services in all areas. There is no doubt that there are challenging times ahead but



our commitment to quality and our passion for the work we do will ensure that we remain focused on tackling the key issues and continue to grow and progress over the next year.

In September we bid a fond farewell to Anne Walker, one of our founding members and esteemed colleagues. Anne has been committed to Ballybeen Women's Centre from the day it opened its doors back in 1984 and has played a vital role in its development since. She volunteered for many years before taking up the post of Outreach and Support Worker in 2001. Over the years Anne has supported and encouraged many women from the local community to take their first step back into education and training, she has represented the Centre on many working groups, ensuring the voices of local women are heard at all levels. For most of her life Anne has been a strong advocate for women's rights and equality and I have no doubt will continue to be so in the future.

On behalf of everyone at the Centre I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her contribution over the past 30 years and wish her a very happy retirement.

Finally, I would like to thank our dedicated staff team who have worked tirelessly throughout the year, the management committee for their support and direction, the volunteers who give of their time and all of our funders who continue to believe in the value of our work.

Tanya Hughes
Director



Childcare

At Ballybeen Women's Centre we aim to provide a caring and stimulating environment that nurtures children's growth and development.

Through a diverse range of programmes we provide children with the underpinning knowledge and skills to grow and develop in the six areas of learning; Mathematical, the Arts, Physical, Language and Literacy, The World around Us and Personal Social and Emotional Development.

This year we operated at full capacity with waiting lists in all facilities.

We currently provide the following services:

- Creche for the under 5's (2 sessions Morning & Afternoon)
- Pre-school Playgroup
- Toddler Group
- Afterschool Club

Family Support programmes

In all our childcare facilities we recognise the importance of involving parents/carers in their child's development and as such make every effort to build relationships with them. We ensure that parents/carers are kept informed regarding their child's progress and development through regular meetings and face to face contact. We also produce regular newsletters highlighting key events and programme information.

Staff frequently review the childcare facilities to see how best they can meet the required needs of individual children and their families within the community.

Crèche

The Crèche is registered for 12 children ranging in age from 3 months to 5 years. Provision of the facility is a key incentive for women to participate in the organisations education and training programmes. One of the crèche's extremely popular features with the children is the outside play area. The staff members are warm friendly and welcome all prospective

parents to come and look around the crèche and invite them to stay with their child until they have settled them into their new surroundings. The Staff provide safe, nurturing home from home care, where babies and toddlers can investigate and make new discoveries. The parents receive daily information regarding their child's personal and developmental progress.

Toddler Group

The Toddler group provides a wide range of programmed activities to meet the needs of the age and stage of the 16 children attending. Every child is supported by a key worker and parents/carers are regularly kept up-to-date on their child's progress.

The high quality interactive programmes are very much guided by the children's interests and developmental needs.

Pre- school

The pre-school offers a curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets all the requirements and standards set out in the Minimum Standards for Children under age 12. We try to ensure that every child feels happy and secure and our belief





of meeting individual needs in a small class is highly evident in our Pre-School. The programme is based on learning through play which ensures an appropriate emphasis on fun. Over the school year we stimulated, challenged and instilled vital basic life skills to all the children in our care.

The end of year graduation service was another great success with all 16 children and over 100 family members attending. The day commenced with each child having their photograph taken professionally - fully dressed in their gowns and hats. All families received a copy of the photograph as a reminder of their special day.

During the service children's achievements were recognised individually and each was presented with a Graduation Certificate as well as their 321 Dental Health Gold Award. The event ended with a digital presentation of their year in preschool.



It was an emotional morning with parent/carers and key workers becoming very emotional during the children's special farewell song, written by one of our own childcare staff.

Afterschool Club

The register of 32 childcare places was filled to capacity, with a waiting list in operation. The atmosphere in the club this year was incredible with children enjoying a wide range of stimulating and exciting activities.

Summer Programme

We held another fun packed successful summer programme and were delighted to be able to offer more childcare places than the previous year. One of the events that the children really enjoyed and actively participated in was "Gathering Drum" which included a collection of different sounds, looks and sizes of drums from around the world.

Visitors to the childcare facilities this year included:

- Northern Ireland Fire Service - Fire Safety Awareness
- Debutots – Introducing the world of stories
- Community Police – Personal Safety
- Gathering Drum - Different sounds and sizes of drums from around the world.
- Dentist – 321-Dental Health Awareness
- Dog Warden/Reinforcement Officer - Looking after pets
- Environmental Health Officer – Recycling
- Zoo –Out reach service
- Hullabaloo Children's Interactive Theatre – Cultural programme

Family Support

This year we provided family support to 100 children and their families – providing them with information, support and signposting them onto other agencies. Our Family Information Service is a dedicated and confidential service which offers guidance on all aspects of childcare and related services to parents/carers with babies and children.

The Family Support Officer has good working relationships





with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies and promptly responds to families needs. This includes our Home visiting service which enables parents/carers to feel more relaxed, comfortable and secure in their own surroundings, allowing strong and trusting relationships to develop.

Staff Training and Development

BWC is committed to ongoing staff training and development and over the past twelve months early years staff undertook the following:

- First Aid- pediatric
- Designated officer
- Keeping safe
- Level 3 Diploma (3 staff members)
- Behaviour management
- Suicide Awareness Training
- Cluster Group

We continued to work with the Early Years Organisation and Belfast Health Social Care Trust to review all areas of the childcare services on offer in an effort to ensure that the highest standards are maintained within all our facilities.



Education and Training



The academic year started in September 2014 with 10 new PCs being installed just in time for the new education courses starting with grants received from the Santander Foundation and the Lloyds foundation. The installation of the new PCs within the Centre provides and will continue to provide a valuable resource within our community. As well as allowing the Centre to offer range of ICT courses to the community from basic ICT skills up to Level 2 IT User Skills, young people from our Peer Education Project are able to access online resources for job search, course work and research purposes, staff use the IT suite for administrative duties and participants on non IT courses are able to access up to date IT facilities for course work and research.

2015 has seen the final year of 2 major Education and Training Programmes. The first, our Skills to Employment Project, was a 4 year project funded through the European Social Fund and the Department of Employment and Learning. It aimed to enhance the employability of individuals and groups through the delivery of skills based education and training courses in ICT, beauty therapies, First Aid, Food Safety, personal development and job search. Between March 2011 and April 2015 131 participants enrolled on courses and on average, 85% completed them and gained accreditation over the 4 years.

Our second project was the Live and Learn project. Ballybeen Women's Centre is part of the Women's Centres Regional Partnership (along with 13 other women's organisations from across Northern Ireland) which gained 5 year funding

through the Big Lottery's Live and Learn Programme. We have completed year 5 and the education and training courses delivered through this project have aimed to increase women's confidence and self esteem, enhance their employability, increase essential skills and support their children's education and family life. Over the 5 years we have enrolled over 350 women on a wide variety of education and training courses within the Centre and many have progressed onto further courses.

2014-2015 has been another exceptional year in terms of enrolments with over 140 women enrolling in courses and a 95% completion rate with many gaining nationally recognised qualifications in the following courses:

Steps to Employment Project

- Image Confident
- BABTAC Gel Nails
- BABTAC Facials, Skincare & Make-Up Application
- OCR ITQ L2
- Food Safety L2

Live and Learn Project

- Essential ICT Skills
- Essential English Skills
- Essential Maths Skills

- Let's Talk
- Body Mind Soul
- Living Life to the Full
- Active Women
- Chair Yoga

- People's History
- Family History
- Gardening Workshops
- Seasonal Crafts

- Baby Massage and Baby Movers
- Baby Massage/Massage Movers

European Projects



Grundtvig Learning Partnership - "Rhythms of the Year"

2014 to 2015 has been the second and final year of our Grundtvig Learning partnership Rhythms of the Year with partner organisations in Turkey, Italy, Czech Republic and Greece. 40 women from the Centre have taken part activities during this project over the past 2 years which examined inter-cultural identity through creative skills within partner countries and 16 women have had the opportunity to participate in transnational mobility visits to Greece, Italy, Czech Republic and Turkey learning new creative arts and about each other's cultural traditions. Women involved in the project from the Centre also organised creative arts workshops and hosted our partners when they came in February 2015. This project has been a very successful one on many levels from the friendships formed between all participants from the partner countries, the learning of new creative skills and the sharing of these to the respect and mutual understanding of each others' cultures that has been promoted as a result.

Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme - "More Women in European Politics – More Women in 2014"

Key Objectives

- To support partners from 13 Member States to undertake campaigns which seek to increase the numbers of women candidates and numbers of women voting in the European Parliament and other elections
- To support partners in developing and delivering a capacity building programme for 'would be' women candidates
- To facilitate an exchange of experience in respect of good practice in getting more women into politics
- To facilitate transfer of good practice and voluntary actions

Target Groups

- Women under 45
- Political Parties
- Gender Equality organisations



This year saw the conclusion of a very successful project that aimed to support more women into politics. The project provided numerous opportunities for women to enhance their knowledge, skills and experience of politics at a local, regional and European level by participating in capacity building training programmes in both in Northern Ireland and in Brussels, attending European conferences and study visits and meeting with elected representatives including MEP's from throughout Europe.

Diane Dodds MEP, a key advocate for the project, also met with women in Brussels and Belfast to share her experience of working in Europe and also provide an insight into what it is to be a woman in politics.

Culture and Diversity



This year 88 women, 44 young people and 100 children participated in a diverse range of programmes and activities aimed at promoting culture, diversity and good relations.

The following activities were delivered:

Children's Programmes & Activities:

Children participated in 10 culture and diversity workshops and an 8 week Cultural Arts Programme

Young People's Programmes & Activities:

- 12 week Active Citizenship Programme & Residential
- 8 week "Our Heritage" Programme culture and diversity training programme, enabling them to train other young people

Women's Programmes & Activities:

- 10 week "Then and Us" Course
- 10 week Active Citizenship Programme
- 4 Cross Community Workshops
- Study visit to Collins Baracks in Dublin

Cross Border Projects:

Women and Politics

20 women from Ballybeen and Cavan participated in a Cross Border "Women and Politics" Project that included visits to Stormont and the Dial

All of the activities and programmes delivered during the project contributed to:



- Increased mutual understanding through increased knowledge, understanding and acceptance of different cultures and traditions.
- Increased knowledge and understanding of politics, policy and practice on local, regional, national and European levels.
- Increased knowledge and understanding of concepts such as gender mainstreaming and equality issues
- Increased self-confidence of participants
- Consolidation of cross border and cross community networks
- Promoted active citizenship and capacity building within communities
- Challenged sectarian and racist attitudes thus dispelling myths about others culture and traditions

Samhain 2014

In September and October 2014 10 women from the Centre took part a cross community and cross border project Samhain 2014 which explored the themes of death, dying and loss through music, storytelling and photography. It was organised through the Ulster Museum and National Museum of Ireland. They spent a number of days photographing ancient archaeological sites in Northern Ireland using the most up to date digital photography skills. Other groups from Mayo and Dublin used music and creative writing to reflect the themes of Samhain. The project culminated in an event in the National Museum in Dublin showcasing all the groups work.

Health Promotion and Education

Health Promotion and Education is a priority area of work and the centre addresses the health needs of women and young people through the delivery of a range of programmes and services.

Womens Health

Health Events & Programmes

WISPA – Active Women Programme

10 women completed a 20 week physical activity programme facilitated through WISPA.

Building Community Pharmacy Project

As part of our funding through the Building Community Pharmacy Project we delivered two twelve week Women's Health programmes in partnership with a pharmacist from Boots Chemist. 18 women completed these programmes which covered a wide variety of health topics including allergies, mental health and anxiety/depression, stroke/heart disease and dementia awareness. Feedback from the programme was very positive and we would hope to continue with this work in the future.

A number of other health related programmes have also been delivered including:

Let's Talk

8 women completed a Let's Talk Programme which helped parents learn how to discuss sensitive topics such as relationships and sexual health with their children.

Chair Yoga

7 women attended a Chair Yoga classes which ran weekly in the centre.

Baby Massage and Baby Movers Class

This year the Womens Centre ran both Baby Massage and Baby Movers Class with 23 mothers and babies taking part.



Living Life to the Full Programme

8 women took part in a Living Life to the Full Programme which is a life skills programme using a Cognitive Behavioural Approach. This programme was facilitated by Aware Defeat Depression.

Community Bereavement Training

12 people from the local community attended Community Bereavement Training facilitated by Cruse Bereavement.

Family Health

Promoting health amongst the whole family is a key priority of our health promotion and education work here in the centre. This year we worked alongside a number of health professionals to facilitate family health events here within the community these events including dental health, healthy eating and lifestyles.

We also worked closely with our childcare department to ensure the provision of healthy breaks, snacks and exercise in all child care facilities.



Peer Education Project



The Peer Education Project delivers high quality health, social and personal development programmes that support young people to realise their full potential. As ever our Peer Educators have been busy in the development and delivery of training for young people and this year has been a challenging and exciting year for the Project. Overall 181 young people participated in peer led programmes with a further 367 young people engaged through detached work on the streets and the drop in service.

This year the project also ran an Easter Scheme which was attended by 20 young people and included a range of trips and activities over a week long period.

The Pre Pubescent Programme for P7's continues to be a success with 30 P7's completing the programme and 28 of these going on to take part in a summer programme. The summer programme gave the young people the opportunity to participate in trips and activities and build relationships with staff and volunteers. We are all looking forward to welcoming these young people back to the Project in the evenings next year.

At the project we always make time for fun and adventure with a variety of organised trips and activities. This year we had trips

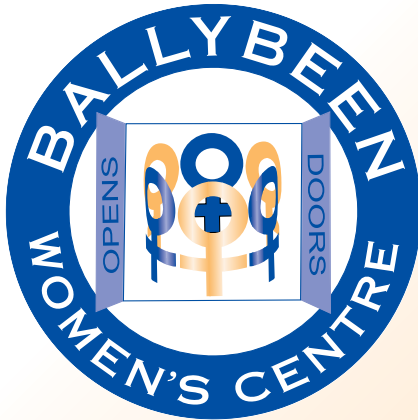
to the cinema, swimming, as well as a range of activities and events within the centre. The end of year BBQ at Crawfordsburn was well attended by over 50 young people who had a great time unwinding beside the sea!

Our end of year residential this year saw 17 young people and staff travelling to Alton Towers. We were delighted to have the opportunity to offer this trip to young people which also included a visit to Old Trafford Football Stadium.

The success of the PEP is largely down to the Peer Educators who have worked tirelessly over the years. I am delighted to say that their hard work and dedication was recognised this year at the Mayor's Awards for Volunteering. As a project we could not exist without our Peer Educators so I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all those who have dedicated an enormous amount of their own personal time to both training and working face to face with young people.



Funders



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