



Youth Conference 2023 Summary Report

On Tuesday the 17th of October, over 100 young people gathered at the Tullamore Court Hotel for Offaly Comhairle na nÓg's Youth Conference. This summary report shares some of the key outcomes of the event!

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg is our local youth council and members are aged 12 to 17. The council's purpose is to give young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies.

A huge thank you to the Offaly Comhairle na nÓg Members, Offaly Local Development Company and Offaly County Council for running the event. A special thanks to all attendees.

The Youth Conference was an opportunity to gather the opinions of young people from Offaly and vote on which topic Offaly Comhairle na nÓg should focus on, in 2024.



97 participants took part in our online vote.

Mental Health was voted as the topic of focus for 2024.

Youth Voices. Local Issues.



Special Guests

Cathaoirleach Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick and **Offaly County Council Chief Executive** Anna Marie Delaney spoke to the room about the value of youth involvement in local decision-making.



Offaly Comhairle na nÓg's impact 2023

Members presented on their work in 2023. They explained how they focused on the topic of disability and successfully led a Disability Awareness Raising Campaign which included:

- Collaborating with Offaly Disability Equality Network
- The design and dissemination of bookmarks throughout Offaly Libraries
- Recording of a podcast
- Design and delivery of disability awareness raising workshops in secondary schools

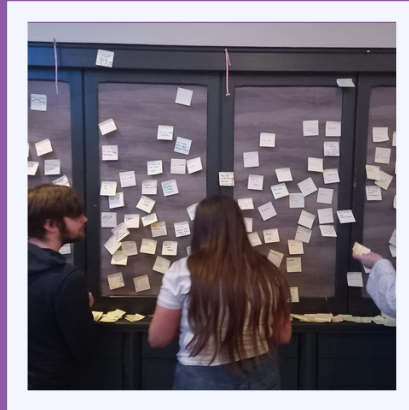
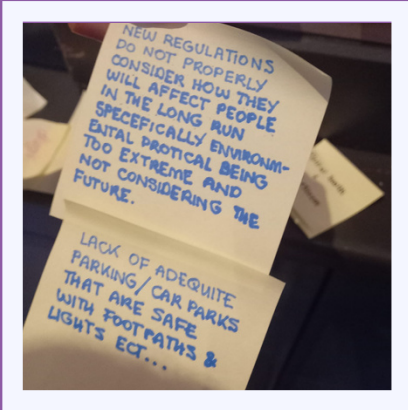
Members also took part in local and national consultations such as:

- The National Rural Youth Assembly
- The UN Child Summit
- Secretariat for the Assistance of Regions in Transition

To name just a few!

The group has been very busy and their impact far reaching.

Workshops



Young people from across the county, aged 12 to 17, including students from Offaly's secondary schools, Tullamore Community Training Centre and St Mary's Youth Centre were in attendance and participated in the workshops.

Open Space Workshop

What are the main issues for young people in Offaly?

Using post it notes, participant's answers were categorised into 5 key themes:

1.Mental Health

2.Youth Spaces

3.Transport

4.Peer Pressure

5.Discrimination

World Café Workshop

Young people were invited to share their opinion on a theme, from the Open Space workshop. The young people were given three questions to tackle their given topic:

1. What does this topic mean to you?
2. How does this topic effect young people?
3. What change would you like to see on this topic?



Participants sat at tables with large placemats that contained the three questions for the World Café discussion and young people could write/draw their thoughts. The purpose of this workshop was to figure out how Offaly Comhairle na nÓg can move forward with topics and to share the findings with Offaly County Council and other relevant organisations and services.

Gary, a graphic recorder, was present on the day, to capture the ideas, opinions and solutions that the young people shared on the day. The following pages depict the event's activities and workshop's outcomes. The final page shows how we can move forward with our 2024 topic: **Mental Health.**

Youth Consultation Agenda

OFFALY'S YOUTH CONFERENCE 2023

Workshop 1:

Main issues Facing
Young People in Offaly

Comhairle na nÓg

Learn about Progress
Your Opinion Matters
Express Your Interest
Become a
Member

What we do



Help Young People to Influence Services + Policies

Ensure Young Voices remain at the Heart of Rural Development

SHARE YOUR VOICE!



DANCE OFF!!!



ICEBREAKERS

one thing we would never guess about you??



What have we done so far

We Raised Awareness and Engagement with Disability Issues!



We Started a Podcast

World Café



Discrimination

Sexism

Equality

Racism

Mental Health



Main Issues



Peer Pressure
Substance abuse

Youth Spaces



Pheew Pheew



Ha Ha Ha

Public Transport



Youth Consultation Agenda

OFFALY'S YOUTH CONFERENCE 2023

Workshop 2:

Solutions to the Issues

MENTAL HEALTH

Diagnosis and Support



Learn Coping Mechanisms



Breathing Exercises
Positive Affirmations
Physical Activities

Raise Awareness about Self Care



Young Voices heard by Politicians



DISCRIMINATION

Encouragement



Women's Sports



L.G.B.T.Q+



Equality

Undoing Gender Stereotypes



PEER PRESSURE

BE CONFIDENT TO SAY NO

Campaign For Change



Help Those In Need



Support in School
- Life Skills
- Education
- Workshops

YOUTH SPACES

More Transport Options



Spaces Where They're Needed

Increased Accessibility and Inclusive Activities



A Safe Space to Meet New People



More Funding



TRANSPORT

Timetables to Reflect School Schedule



Safe Easy Access



Affordable Fares



Update Rail Network



Improved Hygiene

Cast Your Vote!!



Youth Consultation Agenda

OFFALY'S YOUTH CONFERENCE 2023

TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS

TAKE CARE
OF YOUR
MENTAL
HEALTH

ACCEPT WHO YOU ARE

ASK FOR HELP

KEEP IN TOUCH

KEEP ACTIVE

And
Support
Each Other

Let's
Create a
Safe Space



What happens next?

New Members

Over 50 young people filled in expression of interest forms for joining Offaly Comhairle na nÓg. The coordinator will invite them to join our next meeting, in November.

Chosen Topic: Mental Health

Comhairle members will consider the findings of the World Café Discussions. This will inform how they debate, research & consult further on the topic of Mental Health. The group will strive towards influencing real change in Offaly by creating a work plan for 2024.

Would you like to join Offaly Comhairle na nÓg?

Do you need the opinion of young people in Offaly?

Are you working on a policy/service that affects young people?

Contact:

Hazel Daly

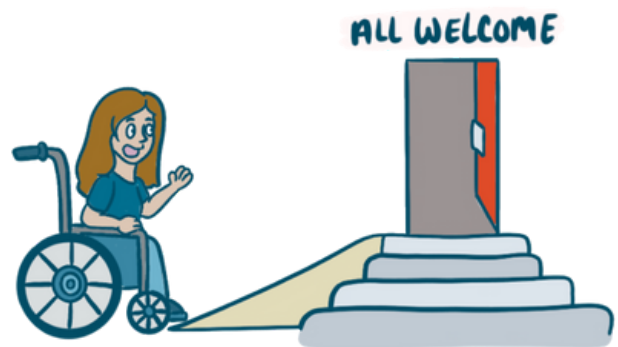
Co-ordinator

Offaly Comhairle na nÓg

Offaly Local Development Company

087 700 2521

hdaly@offalyldc.ie



[Check out our website by clicking on this link](#)