



2020 Annual Report

Offaly Traveller Movement



**Offaly Traveller Movement
Community
Health
Worker Lily
talks about
getting**

**COVID-19
VACCINE**



Message from the Chairperson

I am delighted to present the Offaly Traveller Movement's Annual Report for 2020. Once again, it has been a very busy and demanding year. Throughout this report you will read a lot more detail about the work of OTM, the services and programmes we delivered and the interactions between the staff and the Traveller community in Offaly. Despite the many challenges, obstacles and constraints we faced, we have continued to work towards our mission: to empower Travellers and build partnerships with the wider community and services and to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers, both locally and nationally.

I welcome our new staff members who joined the OTM team; Patrick Daly Finance Manager, Sharon Mellsop LTI Coordinator, Pauric Brazil LTI Assistant Coordinator, Caroline McDonagh Community Health Worker and Patrick McDonagh who also joined the Primary Healthcare Team for a short period. I wish you all the best.

2020 was a difficult year for everyone, a year like no other. We faced huge challenges but as a team we demonstrated how we can work together, adapt our practices and continue to advocate and support our Traveller community in Offaly.

Throughout the year, Offaly Traveller Movement continued to address and seek solutions to the many challenges and issues that Travellers face in their daily lives, at local and national level. Notwithstanding the ongoing challenges, staff worked tirelessly on a range of projects consistent with our strategic plan 2015-2020 and achieved much success in terms of interventions, progress and outcomes. In 2020 we introduced two new initiatives, we opened our Community Men's Shed and secured funding to set up the first Traveller specific Local Training Initiative in Co. Offaly.

Over 50,000 interventions were recorded by staff, which demonstrates the huge commitment and success of the team despite the obstacles and challenges we faced as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. The pandemic highlighted even more the many challenges for Travellers with an increase in referrals to our services and programmes.

On behalf of the Board, I want to acknowledge the significant work of our loyal staff team, who are highly skilled and dedicated to their work. Their ability to step up and respond during such a difficult year is admirable. I would also like to sincerely thank our voluntary board of management for their continued dedication, time and effort in collectively directing the organisation's businesses, ensuring high standards of governance, transparency and accountability. Thank you all for your continuous support as we look forward to the year ahead.

Lilly Ward, Chairperson



Offaly Traveller Movement



In Loving Memory Of
Davy Ward Kilcruttin
Tullamore. 5/3/20.
Always Remembered.
Rest In Peace.



In loving memory of Tom McInerney
who passed away on April 12th 2020



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Introduction

“Irish Travellers have been part of Irish society for centuries and have a value system, language, customs and traditions which make them an identifiable group both to themselves and others. Their distinct lifestyle and culture, based on a nomadic tradition, sets them apart from the general population.”

Offaly Traveller Movement (OTM) evolved from Tullamore Traveller Movement Ltd, established in 1991 and officially launched in June 1995 as a grassroots response to the needs of Travellers living in Tullamore and the surrounding area. We are a Traveller led community development organisation working to achieve full equality and social justice for our Traveller community in partnership with the wider community. OTM offers programmes and services in health promotion, mental health, accommodation, youth and education to advance the health and welfare of Travellers and to encourage active participation in society. We provide opportunities for Travellers to develop their skills and knowledge whilst working in partnership to build the community's and service providers capacity to meet the needs of and improve outcomes for Travellers. We support Travellers to reach their full potential and develop initiatives to tackle poverty, social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination and contribute to the development of local and national policy for positive outcomes in the lives of Travellers. It is well documented that Travellers experience high levels of discrimination in Irish society, which has catastrophic effects on their daily lives. The work of Offaly Traveller Movement encompasses an absolute anti-discrimination ethos.

We are deeply committed to challenging discriminatory attitudes and practices of individuals, institutions and society which is necessary to bring about change for Travellers.

Our Vision

OTM's vision is full equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly.

Our Mission

OTM's mission is to empower Travellers, and to work as a partnership between Travellers and settled people to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly

Our Principles

The principles that underpin the work of Offaly Traveller Movement focus on equality and social justice. We are deeply committed to human rights using a community development approach. This encompasses empowerment, participation, partnership and challenging discrimination.

Strategic Plan

The following areas form the basis of both the previous and current Strategic Plan, a number of OTM studies are used as well as policy statements relating to Traveller health & wellbeing.

Key areas of work

Cultural and ethnic identity

Health and Mental Health

Accommodation

Education & youth

Enterprise and work

The OTM Annual report provides a snapshot of our work throughout the year, and highlights some key work carried out by our various departments in 2020.

For more information about Offaly Traveller Movement, please visit our website on www.otm.ie

Facebook ;<https://www.facebook.com/OffalyTravellerMovement/>

Twitter: [ww.https://twitter.com/OTMCLG](https://twitter.com/OTMCLG)



Traveller Accommodation

Strategic priority 1.1: To achieve culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers in County Offaly

Offaly Traveller Movement employ two accommodation workers, Sorcha Lewis and Sarah O'Brien on a part time basis. Late 2020 saw the departure of accommodation worker Sarah O'Brien, who worked with OTM for many years and contributed significantly to our work in the time she served. As in previous years, the team worked with a high volume of referrals for support and for advocacy. It has been well documented the Traveller community are one of the most disadvantaged communities in the country, and have a long and complex history with the state when it comes to accommodation and discrimination.

2020 proved to be one of the most challenging years in term of the national housing crisis and the lack of Traveller specific accommodation and this was even further compounded by the pandemic for Travellers here in Offaly. The difficult circumstances and conditions being experienced in terms of accommodation presented additional barriers and challenges pre covid, and in this regard the pandemic has had a significant negative impact. Since the start of the Covid restrictions, OTM Accommodation team have worked in conjunction with Offaly County Council and the H.S.E to identify those most at risk within our Covid response team in OTM. Given the fact that some members of the Traveller Community have lived in overcrowded camps/sites, and houses, this made them increasingly vulnerable to contracting Covid 19. Many Travellers were unable to social distance as a result of overcrowding and proper sanitation and hand washing facilities were often substandard.

Travellers faced disproportionate levels of Covid 19 in comparison to settled counterparts. A government circular to all Local Authorities on March 18th 2020, on measures to reduce the spread of Covid highlighted that difficulties experienced by people had intensified. This was particularly evident for the accommodation team in OTM, who saw first-hand the experiences of Travellers in Offaly. No one suffered more than those who were homeless and the Traveller community with particular reference to the risk of infection, particularly those living on sites with limited facilities. The circular outlined the extra measures needed including measures to increase access to water and facilitating self-isolation. Measures to improve difficulty of self-isolation in overcrowded conditions faced by Travellers who are living in camps without services and on the side of the road and in housing estates.

The ability of Travellers to observe social distancing in overcrowded households was often impaired as his was unavoidable for many families. Evictions were prohibited during the emergency period.

The accommodation team worked with the rest of the OTM team to mitigate and reduce the impact of COVID 19 on the community.

Throughout the duration pandemic the focus has been primarily on health. The difficulties for Travellers as a result of the pandemic were exceptional given the fact that significant difficulties existed for accommodation pre Covid. The impact of which will be seen for a long time to come. In 2020, the introduction of a fresh drinking water supply to an unofficial camp at the onset of the pandemic was bittersweet. For over twenty years OTM, and those living on the site had campaigned on humanitarian grounds for a supply of drinking water but were met with local objections throughout this two decade period.

General

The OTM accommodation team worked collectively with a vast number of referrals and continued to advocate for Travellers in Offaly. Furthermore, the team liaised daily, submitting reports and data to local, regional and national organisations and attended meetings with the Irish Traveller Movement Accommodation Working Group.

The Department OF Housing, Local Government and Heritage provided funded to local authorities in order to implement measures within Traveller specific accommodation to alleviate, where possible, The increased risk and spread of Covid-19. has been further highlighted, and the housing difficulties experienced by people have been intensified, by Covid.



Traveller Primary Health Care programme (PHCP)

Strategic priority 2.1: To increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

The Primary Health Care Programme (PHCP) began in Tullamore in 1999 and following a comprehensive training period, the programme became fully operational in 2003. It is a well-established partnership initiative between OTM and the HSE. The PHCP is a health promotion programme based on a community development peer led model and promotes ownership and participation by Travellers in matters affecting the health and wellbeing of their own community. The programme employs 7 Peer Community Health Workers (CHWs). The Peer Community Health Workers can provide health promotion information in a culturally sensitive way to Travellers living in Co. Offaly. Since 2003 the PHCP has provided for the effective roll-out of Traveller health programmes such as: dental care, asthma, diabetes, healthy eating, mental health, cancer, smoking cessation, anti-natal & post-natal, child development and child safety awareness programme.

2020 was an unusual working year for the CHWs. In early 2020 The CHWs participated in Facilitation skills training alongside staff from the three other Midlands Traveller Organisations. In February they received their Certificates for completing a money management community education programme (MABS). They also worked with the Mental Health Coordinator to set up craft classes in Tullamore and Birr. The normal programme of work was interrupted and the final weeks of all planned activities was postponed.

On March 12th, following a public announcement by an Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, all PHCP staff were directed to work from home. This was a significant change for the CHWs who are used to regularly visiting local families and carrying out health promotion work in Traveller homes. Work continued over the phone for most of the year with outreach and work from the office only taken place in accordance with shifting and evolving HSE and Government guidelines.

The community health workers continued to contact Traveller families by phone and social media and to deliver culturally appropriate information across a wide selection of topics such as cancer screening, antenatal care, mental health, dental care, child safety, healthy eating, healthy heart, asthma and diabetes. While COVID 19 quickly became an organisational priority in 2020, the CHWs also delivered health promotion information and supported Travellers with wider health concerns, as normal. During this year the CHWs delivered 9,922 health promotion initiatives.

Between March and December, the HSE and Government issued a substantial volume of new health messages and directives. This led to an increased volume of work and a new duty of care for the CHWs who worked to ensure that families had access to up-to-date advice and information. The CHWs delivered information on social distancing, hand washing, signs & symptoms, cocooning, attendance at funerals, swabbing, as well as information on a wide range of local, regional and national support services.

The CHWs also delivered COVID 19 health messages on how to download the COVID 19 tracker, messages on restrictions on travel to and from the UK, self-isolating/cocooning/staying at home, watching elders and those with long term health conditions, taking medications and having enough medication, keeping all clinic and GP appointments during COVID19, presenting to A&E if required and the framework for living with COVID-19.

In total the CHWs delivered a whopping 15,698 COVID 19 interventions. This demonstrates the significant role that CHWs play in ensuring the health and wellbeing of the Traveller community and ensuring that Traveller families received and understood COVID 19 health messages and directives.

At the start of the pandemic the CHWs delivered Hygiene Packs to over 300 Traveller families in Co. Offaly. The Packs contained Hand gel, toilet roll, tissues, bleach and other cleaning materials. They also worked with the HSE staff to organise COVID 19 swabbing on the official Halting Site in Tullamore where 16 families were swabbed.



OTM CHWs Elizabeth and Mary packing up hygiene hampers for clients

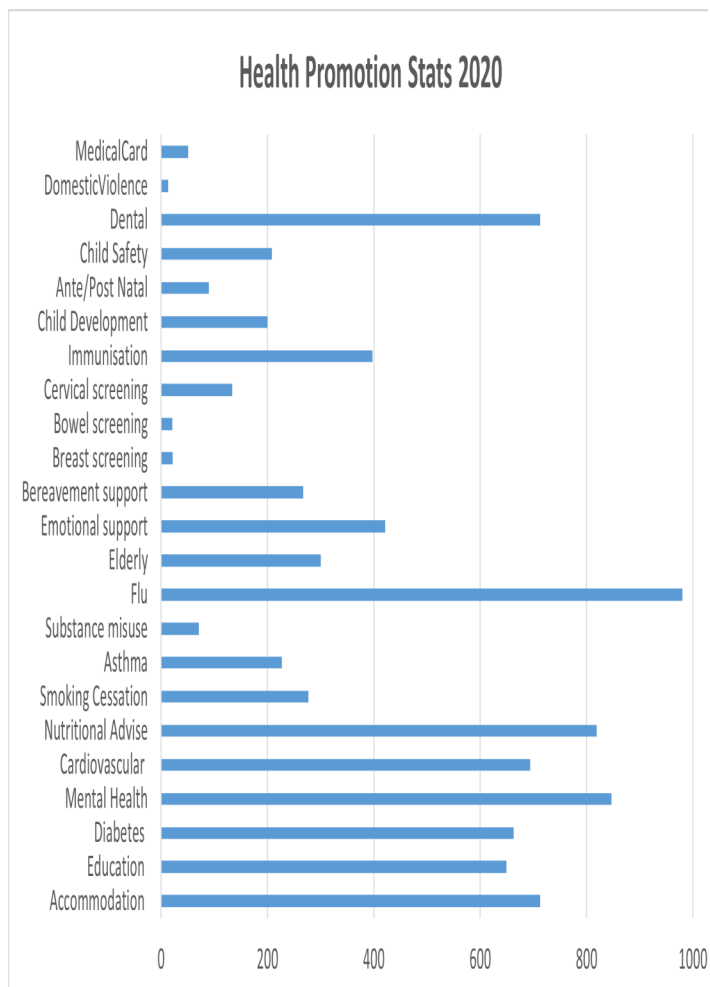
Traveller Primary Health Care programme (PHCP)

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

The CHWs completed training on wearing Protective Equipment and they were also shown how to take a COVID-19 swab. Throughout the year they were also involved in identifying suspected COVID 19 cases and in on-going work and reporting on COVID-19. The CHWs were continuously liaising with Traveller families to support them and to establish what their situation was in relation to COVID 19. CHWs linked with Travellers on a daily basis to collect data on the number of Travellers referred for testing, test results, length waiting for results and number of people in the family isolating. This information was then fed back to the HSE.

Working remotely and connecting in with the project was challenging for some CHWs particularly those with low digital and literacy skills. We worked closely with the Employment and Training Support Worker at Offaly Local Development. She worked on a one-to-one basis with the CHWs to help build up their digital skills. During the year the CHWs increased their confidence and skill levels and by the end of 2020 they were using cross platform WhatsApp, using voice, video calls and messages and they were also able to link into meetings and on-line training using zoom. The team of CHWs linked with the Coordinators weekly on line and were able to stay connected. Some of the CHWs also attended meetings via Zoom e.g. H.S.E., Irish Traveller Movement, National Traveller Women's Forum and Traveller Counselling Service etc.

At intervals when restrictions lifted the CHW also continued a normal programme of work. They did in house training and refresher training on the flu/pneumonia vaccine for at risk groups and the introduction of the nasal flu drops for children 2 years -12 years of age. They worked with Tusla to develop a Traveller specific leaflet aimed at encouraging more Travellers to become foster parents. This was a national leaflet and was launched in OTM adhering to HSE Social Distancing guidelines. They helped to develop a Health promotion information leaflet on Cancer Screening Bowel, Breast and Cervical which was sent out to 300 families via mailshot. 2020 was an exceptional year and in December the CHWs organised a small Christmas Hamper containing Biscuits, Tea, Coffee, Cereal, Soup, fruit etc. to be delivered to the 300 Traveller families on their list. The families who received the hampers were Travellers who would have benefited from attending activities, participated in training or gone on trips with OTM during any other year. Many Traveller families rang OTM to thank the CHWs for the hampers and for their hard work throughout the year.



Health Promotion Stats 2020

Accommodation	713
Education	649
Diabetes	663
Mental Health	847
Cardiovascular	694
Nutritional Advise	819
Smoking Cessation	277
Asthma	227
Substance misuse	71
Flu	980
Elderly	300
Emotional support	421
Bereavement support	267
Breast screening	22
Bowel screening	21
Cervical screening	134

Traveller Public Health Nurse

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly

Role of the Public Health Nurse for Travellers

Nuala Hogan Public Health Nurse in Offaly Traveller Movement seen a continued increase in the demand for the nursing service from Travellers which is a positive result of our service delivery. She states:

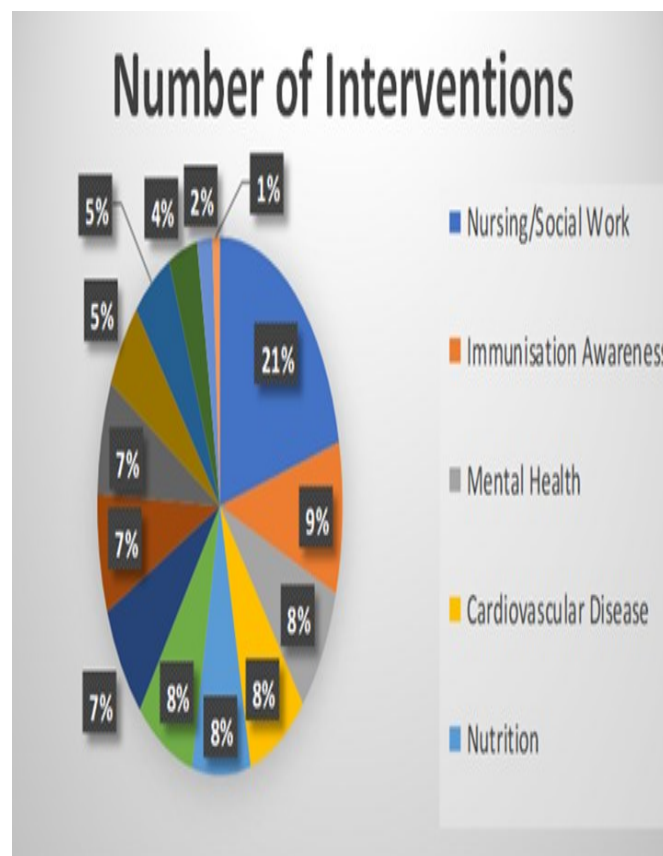
I found 2020 a challenging year and saw a continued increase in the demand for the nursing service to Travellers due to Covid-19. This pandemic brings new challenges to our health care system and creates a lot more challenges within our work as we cannot meet clients face to face. Before the pandemic, I undertook joint home or office visits to clients both 1-1 or jointly with my colleagues in OTM to provide family support, preventative and practical interventions, health promotion guidance for clients. In 2020, the PHN at OTM continued to take both social and clinical referrals. The ultimate goal of my work is to increase service uptake. Despite the many challenges, obstacles and constraints during 2020 we have continued to work towards our mission: to empower Travellers and build partnerships with the wider community and services and to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers, both locally and nationally.

Health issues facing Travellers differ to those of the settled community and this means they are more vulnerable throughout this pandemic. The principal aims when working with Traveller clients is to tackle health inequalities and to ensure inclusivity. Cultural understanding and partnerships are vital within my professional practice that helps me to predict the client's needs accurately and find the best ways to enhance their engagement with health services. I advised and promoted attendance of all clients at medical appointments within mainstream services during Covid. The PHN can act as a conduit between mainstream services and Traveller health to encourage and promote health and social-gain for Travellers.

The public health nursing (PHN) role in partnership with OTM has many diverse components to it. A large part of it is working as a Health Co-Coordinator in the Primary Health Care Programme along sides the 7 Peer Community Health Workers (CHWs). I devise and roll-out Traveller specific health education programmes with the CHWs. The need for Traveller specific programmes is outlined in the All Ireland Traveller Health Status Study (2007-2010). The CHWs deliver these messages to the broader Traveller community in a culturally appropriate manner. In 2020, I covered varying topics such as educational updates on Covid-19, hand hygiene and cough etiquette to the CHWs and the National Traveller Health Unit Covid-19 Helpline. I also provided updates to the CHWs on "Flattening the Curve." I researched reliable information from credible sources such as HSE Ireland, HPSC, gov.ie regarding health awareness messages. Some of the other quarterly programmes I planned and delivered in 2020 with the Peers included cardiovascular disease and diabetes, the food pyramid for 1-4 year olds and the flu vaccine for at risk clients and pregnant women. I also

included the new flu vaccine nasal drops campaign for 2-12 year olds. We rolled out health messages/flyers on physical and mental health and staying well during the pandemic, Covid-19 immunisations and The Pavee Mothers questionnaire. The CHWs then delivered all this information to their clients in a Traveller specific way mainly by telephone outreach calls due to restrictions on meeting in person. All of these programmes are evaluated and all of the data collected was reported quarterly to the Traveller Health Unit.

A brief overview of a Peer Led Programme I carried out with the CHWs in OTM in October/November 2020 demonstrates the importance of the Food Pyramid as a healthy eating guide for 1-4 year olds. I delivered evidence-based health information updates to the CHWs at LTAG in November time and Traveller proofed flyers with six main health messages on the "Food Pyramid" which were then delivered by the CHWs to their clients who consented to this programme. This encouraged dialogue between Peers and their clients. The programme was monitored while running to incorporate any feedback. The findings of the All-Ireland Traveller Health Status Study indicate that the delivery of primary health promotion initiatives through PHCPs have more positive outcomes.



Traveller Men's Health

The focus for 2020 was to increase the number of Traveller men engaging with OTM Men's Health Project. Martin engaged with Traveller men and initiated dialogue to raise awareness around mental health and suicide, physical wellbeing and issues that affect their health. His work focussed on highlighting and challenging the key inequalities in Traveller Men's Health. He continued to progress the goals of the Healthy Ireland Strategy (2013-2025) in line with the needs of Travellers living in Offaly. This included health promotion, education and preventative measures, mental health and wellbeing, supports relating to the social determinants of health and supports relating to promoting Culture and tackling discrimination.

Early in February 2020 Martin hosted the Traveller Men's Health Network Meeting. The network is made up of Traveller men from Longford, Westmeath, Laois and Offaly. This space provided the opportunity for Traveller men across the 4 counties to come together to discuss any issues of concern to them within their communities and work together for change.. Martin delivered ongoing health information provision via outreach work in early 2020 and continued this work by regular phone contact during lockdown. For Men's Health Awareness Week Martin developed a short video on the importance of Traveller men linking in with mainstream health services and community supports. This video was posted to OTMs Facebook page and reached many Travellers throughout the county and beyond.

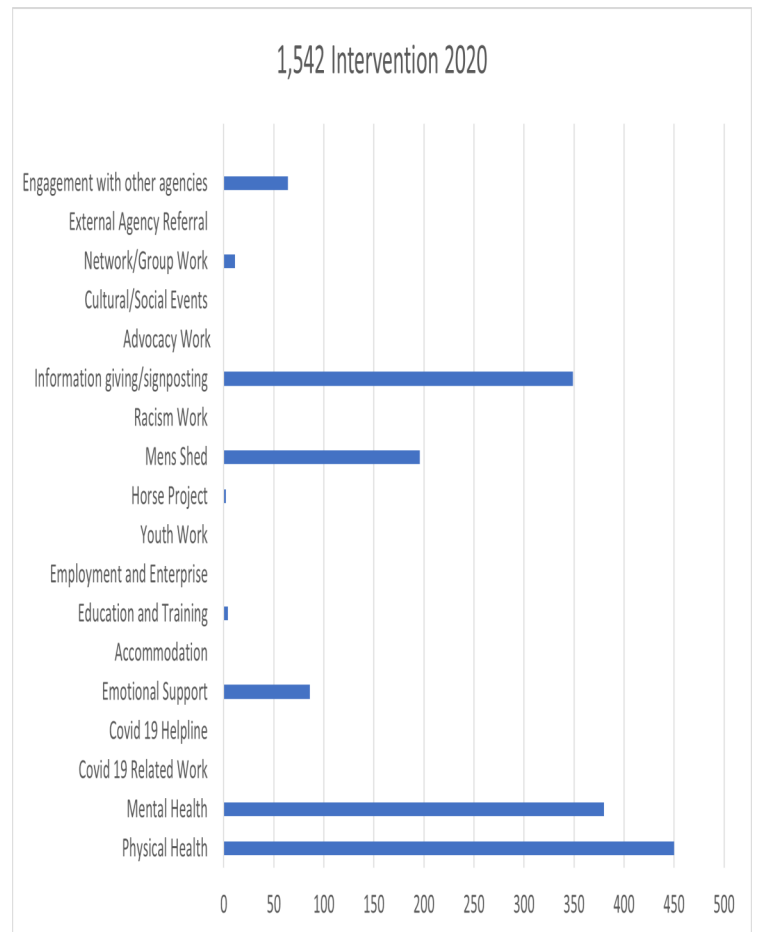
Martin also supported eight Traveller men to take part in a Mincears Tairien Focus Group, that focused on Traveller men's mental health and the prevalence of suicide in the community. The purpose of Mincears Tairien is to equip Travellers with the tools to manage their mental health. The interaction with participants using a variety of tools is a fundamental aspect of this new process.

During the pandemic Martin engaged in training to develop new skills that would support him in his role; he engaged with the National Men's Health Network to gain understanding on how to support and assist Traveller men to organise, participate and engage in group activities and events. In 2020, the OTM Men's Shed was established. For our Traveller men this Shed would be a place of belonging, a place where they can pursue interests, engage in learning and programmes, access health information and reflect on experiences through conversations with other men. This new environment would open the door (literally) to immense opportunities for combating isolation. The shed offered opportunities to men and boys for engagement in a real and uncontrived tactile environment.



OTM Mens Shed 2020

During the pandemic Martin also helped to pack and deliver essential COVID 19 hygiene packs to Traveller families throughout Offaly. These packs consisted of a range of essential items and PPE needed to help protect Travellers from Covid 19. A Covid 19 testing centre was also set up in the official halting site at Kilcruttin with the HSE. Martin linked in with local families on site and provided updated information and advice. There was a large number of people tested on the day. Martin was supported in his work by Frank Kavanagh and although Covid 19 produced many challenges both Martin and Frank continued their work to ensure no one was left behind.



Traveller Horse Project

Horse Project

Lesley Jones works part time on the OTM Horse Project. Travellers in Offaly have a long and rich history of keeping horses. The programme targets Traveller men who have an interest and passion for horses but who are other-wise disengaged with health services.

The focus of the Horse Project is primarily intergenerational work and on projects that fosters father and son interactions and knowledge sharing. The overall aim is to provide a culturally responsive method of improving all health outcomes for Traveller men.

The impact of the Horse Project

- Increased engagement of Traveller men in relation to the social determinants of their health.
- Increased awareness of and access to existing health services and health professionals in Offaly.
- Increased access to and interaction with the OTM's Men's Health Programmes, Primary Healthcare Team and other specialist services.
- Capacity building and leadership skills and roles for Traveller men
- Improvement of men's physical and mental health through the interaction with the horse.

2020

Akin to the experience of all other departments, 2020 proved to be a difficult year where the absence of connections had a negative impact. Despite significant challenges, the Horse Project successfully retained much engagement and set up their "Crazy Mares" group via virtual platforms such as Whatsapp. The group have participated in daily interactions online and quiz nights twice per week throughout the pandemic



Davy Ward was a founder member of Offaly Horse Project. A strong, powerful, intelligent man devoted to his family and his horse culture. A great friend and advisor to the project from its grass roots stages. We would like to honour Davy's memory as a man of integrity, a man of his word and a wonderful horseman.

Lesley Jones

Strategic priority 2.2: To improve Traveller mental health and wellbeing

Travelling to Wellbeing

Travelling to Wellbeing (T2WB) continues to offer a dedicated culturally appropriate, clinical, therapeutic, recovery focused mental health service for Travellers in Offaly. This service is provided by way of individual and group support, family support, crisis intervention, mental health recovery programs, advocacy and referral pathways to other services to Travellers throughout the County. Travelling to Wellbeing continues to work in partnership and co-production with a range of services, promoting and developing mental health training and local community mental health initiatives, while utilizing the departments in OTM, Men’s Health, Accommodation, Community Development and Primary Healthcare to address the needs of Travellers who engage with the service.

This year has been truly challenging with the impact of Covid 19 affecting our way of working. However, despite the challenges and setbacks the Travelling to Wellbeing team continued to provide an efficient, effective mental health service to our community. This year saw the addition of the Travelling to Wellbeing Peer Mental Health Support Worker, Pinkie McInerney. Pinkie joined the team in August 2020. Pinkie has been a Community Development Worker in OTM for many years. She has vast experience, both lived and professionally, of supporting her community in relation to mental health. We are delighted to welcome Pinkie to the Travelling to Wellbeing Service.

2020 again saw an increase in Travellers engaging with the Travelling to Wellbeing Service. Unfortunately, our weekly peer support groups in Birr, Tullamore and Banagher could not happen during Covid restrictions, however, the Team remained busy behind the scenes coming up with interesting ideas for activities when restrictions are lifted.

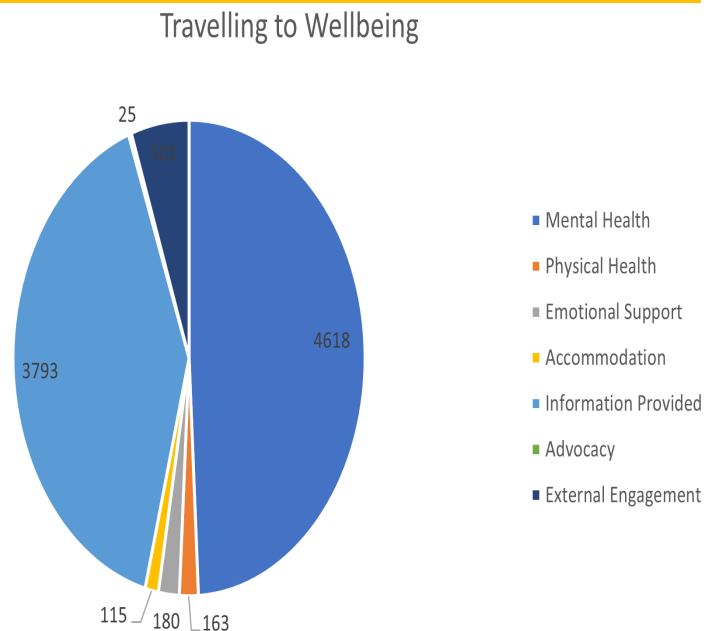
Travelling to Wellbeing continued to work in partnership with a range of local and national organisations, and whilst no in person activities could be organised, we promoted many online programmes, events, webinars and trainings related to mental health on our Offaly Traveller Movement Facebook page.

Karen Boylan, Mental Health Coordinator participated on several trainings throughout 2020. An example of her most recent training LGBT+ Awareness Training. Karen will use this training to support the Travelling to Wellbeing service to become more LGBT+ inclusive and support our LGBT+ community.

Karen also trained in Trauma Informed Care Practice. Trauma is widespread and impacts on the health and well-being of people who have experienced it in turn may affect how they engage with workers and services. Trauma experiences, and a lack of understanding of their impact on individuals, can create difficulties in relationships between people using a service and those providing a service. By incorporating Trauma Informed responses within the organisation, we would hope that individuals and our community can stay engaged and feel safe, respected, empowered, trusted and welcomed within our service.

Offaly Travellers continue to be represented by Travelling to Wellbeing at the Irish Association of Social Workers, Women’s Mental Health Network, National Traveller Mental Health Network, National Travellers Women’s Forum, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Offaly Minding Our Mental Health Working Group.

Travelling to Wellbeing Interventions 2020



Traveller Youth and Education



Strategic Goal 4: To support Traveller youth and education

OTM Youth Project

Offaly Traveller Movement youth project provides young Travellers with informal, social and educational support, and a platform for youth development.

OTM youth aim to respond to the needs of young Travellers in Offaly through the imperative provision of culturally appropriate social outlet, and a safe space, for those from the ages of 10 and over.

OTM youth programmes engage in a process with young Travellers which empowers and builds their capacity to actively participate in community decision making, providing a social and leisure outlet for Traveller youth. Our work encompasses awareness raising and developing understanding of the complex issues affecting young Travellers and increasing young people's self-esteem and confidence. OTM Youth are now working in full compliance with the UBU, Your Place, Your Space National Framework of the Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability and Youth, in accordance with the UBU Targeted youth service requirement. The scheme informs our work with Traveller young people under seven development outcome areas which include: 1. Relationships, 2. Emotional Intelligence, 3. Confidence, 4. Creativity and Imagination, 5. Resilience and Determination, 6. Planning and Problem Solving, 7. Communication.

2020 proved to be a challenging year for all and this was no exception for OTM Youth. Restrictions delayed the opening of the youth café within the new Mens Shed premises which had been eagerly anticipated last year. However, this provided a opportunity to work on preparing the space, developing it into an appropriate dedicated youth space.

OTM Youth continued to provide culturally appropriate youth support to young Travellers in Offaly, by adapting services where possible which included the provision of weekly drop in clubs and peer support. programmes and projects, up until March 2020, when Covid restrictions came into play nationally. Thereafter, we provided support to young people and parents over the phone and via various virtual platforms in adherence with national public health guidelines.

Throughout the year, we recorded a total of 602 youth interventions with activities including one to ones, phone and WhatsApp communications, online photo and art competitions, capacity building, well-being, team building, orienteering, music creativity focused art projects, education support and liaising with schools and Tusla. We engaged young people through creative means during the year through the delivery of art and photography competitions as well as an art mural project later in the year which created an imperative opportunity for young people to take ownership of their space.

We maintained links with relevant youth services, schools, educational institutions, and provided one to one support and advice to young people. This year we worked closely with the education Welfare service, Tusla, as a result of challenges retaining Traveller young people in school and resuming attendance in schools once opened. OTM Youth secured devices/ tablets in order to support young peoples digital literacy and build online capacity. OTM Youth engaged with initiatives and agencies such as Youth Work Ireland, Offaly Youth Arts council and College Connect. Although 2020 presented us with significant obstacles, we continued to adapt and provide appropriate support and responses in light of the pandemic. We provided activity packs and back to school supplies for 132 young people in Tullamore and Birr as well as other supports and covid related responses.

Youth Interventions for 2020 month by month analysis



Art Competition Winning Entry by Annalisha Ward

Traveller Youth & Education

Strategic Goal 4: To support Traveller youth and education



Youth workers continued to provide support over the phone and in terms of homework and helping young people access online learning in schools via Microsoft teams.

OTM Youth participated in a team building and orienteering day at Lilliput Outdoor Adventure Centre when Level 3 restrictions allowed for this in July. This provided much needed and highly beneficial respite for young people after four months of being confined at home without recreational activities or school. Other activities included a small choir group in Birr who sang Christmas carols and posted them on social media.

Some key activities of OTM Youth, 2020 included:

Highlights of 2020

Jan/ Feb: UBU outcome areas activities in drop in clubs.

March/April: Outreach service provision and adapting of services to phone support, one to ones, virtual response etc.

May: Online Photography competition with One For All vouchers given to winners

July: OTM Youth Orienteering and team building day at Lilliput Outdoor Adventure Centre.

Sept.: Distribution of activity pack and back to school supplies for young people in Tullamore and Birr.

Increased engagement with schools and education welfare office.

October: Consultation workshop with outside facilitator and youth workers on designing Traveller specific youth content for upcoming mental health programme Minceirs Taireann

November: Delivery of Creative Connection Art project, which ran for 6 weeks into December. A local artist was contracted to facilitate young people designing and painting a wall mural in the youth café space.

December: Online Christmas Photography competition with One for All vouchers given to winners.

“Muffled Masker Minceirs” choir in Birr, recorded Christmas songs virtually and posted online.

Christmas Selection boxes distributed to young people via outreach service provision.



Activities at Lilliput Adventure Centre, July 2020



Creative Connection Art Project mural in youth space., Dec ‘20

Traveller Local Training Initiative

Offaly Traveller Movement announced in December 2020 that we had secured LOETB funding for the first Traveller specific Local Training Initiative (LTI) in Co. Offaly. This training initiative is not only an important acknowledgement of the significant discrimination Travellers in the region face when accessing education, training, and employment, but also an attempt to address such shortcomings and provide for the specific needs of the Traveller community going forward.

2020 saw the hiring Sharon Mellsop as Programme Co-Ordinator and Pauric Brazil as Assistant Co-Ordinator. The team worked on developing a culturally appropriate programme to empower Travellers in the community through education.

The primary aim of the initiative is to create a welcoming and enjoyable environment for our learners to attend and develop the confidence, knowledge, and skills to seek further training or employment.

The hands-on, practical nature of the course is designed to provide learners an opportunity to re-engage in education by partaking activities which are not only of interest and relevant to them, but contribute to the Traveller community in the region. Our first LTI will commence in February 2021, and include modules such as Wood-work, Health and Fitness, Painting and Decorating, and Career Preparation.

The collage features several key elements:

- Mind Map:** A central box labeled 'TRAINING' is surrounded by various related terms: Advising, Motivations, Education, Instruction, Learning, Knowledge, Workshop, Mentor, Skill, Coach, Teaching, Ability, Development, and Goal.
- Poster:** A poster titled 'NEW HANDS ON COURSE FOR TRAVELLERS' listing activities like 'PAINTING & DECORATING', 'HEALTH & FITNESS', and 'and more!'. It shows hands working on a wooden project.
- Logos:** The Offaly Traveller Movement logo (a green map of Offaly) and the LOETB logo (a green stylized sunburst) with the text 'loetb Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Laoise agus Uíbh Fhailí Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board'.
- Text:** 'Offaly Traveller Movement Skills for Life LTI' and 'STARTING SOON AT OTM'.
- Photos:** Two small photos of individuals, a woman with glasses and a man, likely staff or participants.

Traveller Counselling Service

2020 has been a very busy year for the Offaly Traveller Movement Counselling service. As we work with the most marginalized and disadvantaged community in the county, we ensure that our services and programmes are culturally appropriate, innovative and creative and fully engaged with by the local Traveller community. When a Traveller presents to our service it is not just the issues that people present with include: suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, self-harm, issues relating to abuse, housing issues, relationship breakdown, family issues, bereavement and anxiety to name a few. Offaly Traveller Movement with limited funding from TUSLA continue to offer a culturally inclusive counselling service to individuals, families and children who are in crisis and require an immediate response, to ensure that they are supported without delay and therefore continue to engage in order to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Working in partnership with the National Traveller Counselling Service to ensure that our counselling service in Offaly is culturally appropriate and in accordance to best practice.

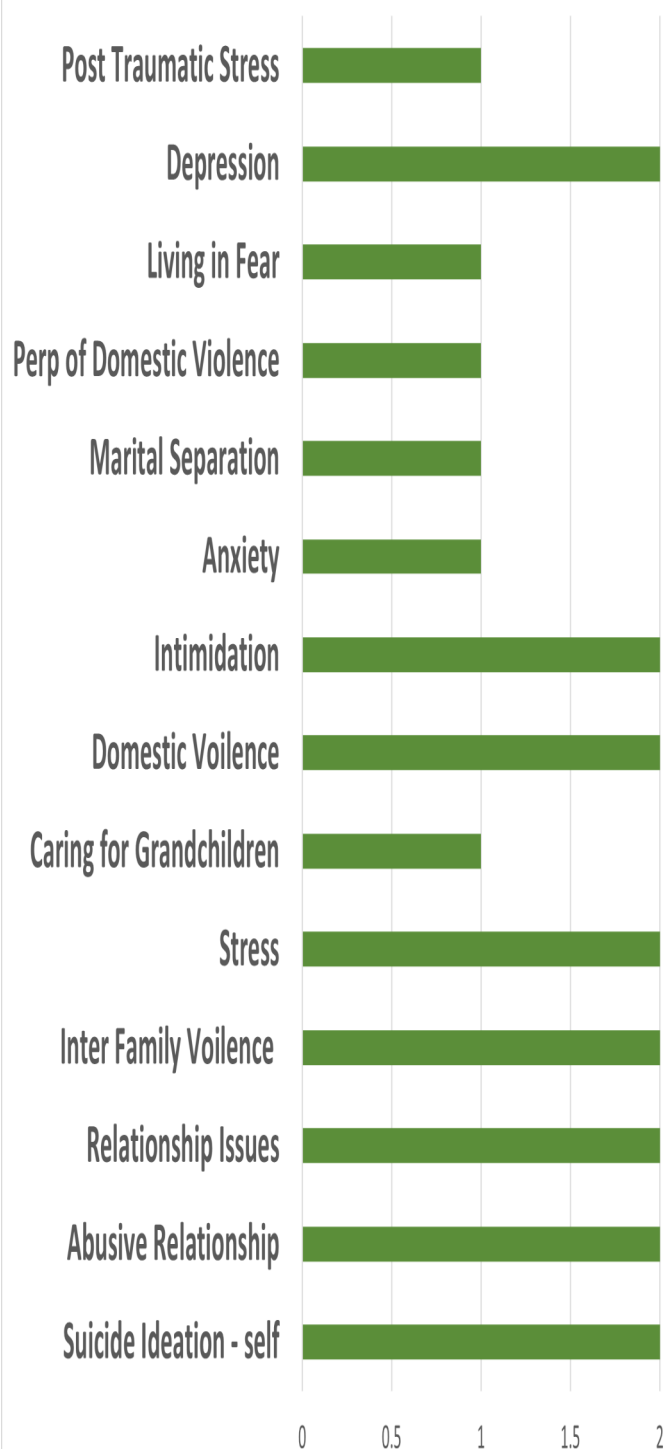
The total interventions in 2020 were 117, 61 of these were female and 56 male.

Our counsellor has an understanding of Traveller lifestyle, culture, norms and traditions. This ensures that service users' culture is taken into account, respected and understood. It is now recognised internationally that it is crucial to take culture into account when providing a counselling service to members of a minority or other ethnic group, as the norms, values and traditions of that group will not be the same as the majority community and their experience will be very different. Not to acknowledge this difference could reinforce the discrimination, inequality and lack of respect which the members of that group have experienced in wider society.

The counselling service was available to all members of the Traveller community in two locations in the county on a bi-weekly basis however due to the impact of COVID 19 the service was delivered remotely online or by phone to Travellers throughout the county.



Summary of Emerging Issues



Culture and Ethnicity

Strategic priority: 6.1 To promote Traveller culture in County Offaly



OTM Traveller Pride Video 2020



In 2020 Offaly Traveller Movement commissioned the production of a dedicated video honouring Traveller Pride and celebrating Traveller culture, through current and previous work of OTM. This was to mark Traveller Pride week and subsequently maintain our participation in this annual national event.

The unprecedented pandemic and subsequent restrictions around Covid 19 presented significant obstacles in bringing people together in celebrating culture, and the video provided an appropriate platform for dynamic celebration and creativity through visual and technological means. The video compiled old and new footage and produced a visually vibrant celebration of culture in the absence of our annual pride festival.

The video used a reflective approach on past celebrations and focused on the positivity and uniqueness of Traveller culture in a relevant context. It served as an alternative to both physical and online platforms (such as Zoom) allowing the flexibility of access at any time.

July 13th – 24th 2020



Travellers in Offaly provided an abundance of cultural offerings, which includes previous footage, and other primary sources of history, folklore, music and other creative mediums, which was compiled in addition to current material acquired. The video indeed celebrates Traveller culture but also highlights positive messages of Traveller culture, celebration of Traveller pride and as a culturally appropriate source of visual information.

The significant challenges of engaging people in the pandemic meant that cultural celebrations were not carried out in physical spaces, however OTM still maintained their commitment to celebrating culture and ethnicity with this Traveller Pride video project in December 2020 which was accessed virtually.

OTM Staff Team of 2020

Name	Position	Profile
Sandra McDonagh	Managing Director/ Mental Health Social Worker	Full Time/Part time
Sharon Mellsop	Local Training Initiative Co-ordinator	Full time (From Dec)
Pauric Brazil	Local Training Initiative Assistant Co-ordinator	Full time (From Dec)
Karen Guilfoyle	Financial Administrator	Part Time (Until Feb)
Patrick Daly	Financial Administrator	Part Time (From March)
Pascal Delaney	Administrator	Part Time
Bridget McInerney	Administration Support	Part Time
Margaret Lovett	Health Co-ordinator	Part Time
Nuala Hogan	Health Co-ordinator/ Public Health Nurse	Part Time
Mary McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Brigid McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Pinkie McInerney	Community Health Worker & Mental Health Support worker	Part Time
Sarah McDonagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Geraldine Ward	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Caroline McDonagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time (From Sept)
Lily Kavanagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Celine McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
Patrick McDonagh	Community Health Worker	Part time (Jan-May)
Karen Boylan	Mental Health Co-ordinator	Full Time (Part time from August)
Joanne Saunders	Counsellor/Psychotherapist	Part Time
Sorcha Lewis	C.D Accommodation Worker	Part Time
Sarah O' Brien	Accommodation Worker	Part Time (Until Dec)
Saranne Lovett	Youth Worker	Part Time
Elizabeth Doyle	Youth Worker	Part Time
Martin Houlihan/ Frank Kavanagh	C.D Men's Health Worker	Part Time
Lesley Jones	Horse Project Facilitator	Part Time
Chantelle Ward	CE Placement: Receptionist	Part Time
Killian O Connor	Student Placement UCD Social Work	Full Time (Jan –July)
Rebecca Curran	Student Placement TU Dublin-Blanchardstown	Full Time (Jan– March)
Susan O Brien	Student Placement NUI Galway	Full Time (Jan - March)
Bryan Lenehan	Student Placement NUI Maynooth	Full time (from Nov)

BOM MEMBERS 2020

Chairperson: Lilly Ward

Vice Chairperson: Mary Rose Kerrigan

Secretary: Marianne O'Shea

Treasurer: Liam Rodger

William McDonagh

Thomas McDonagh

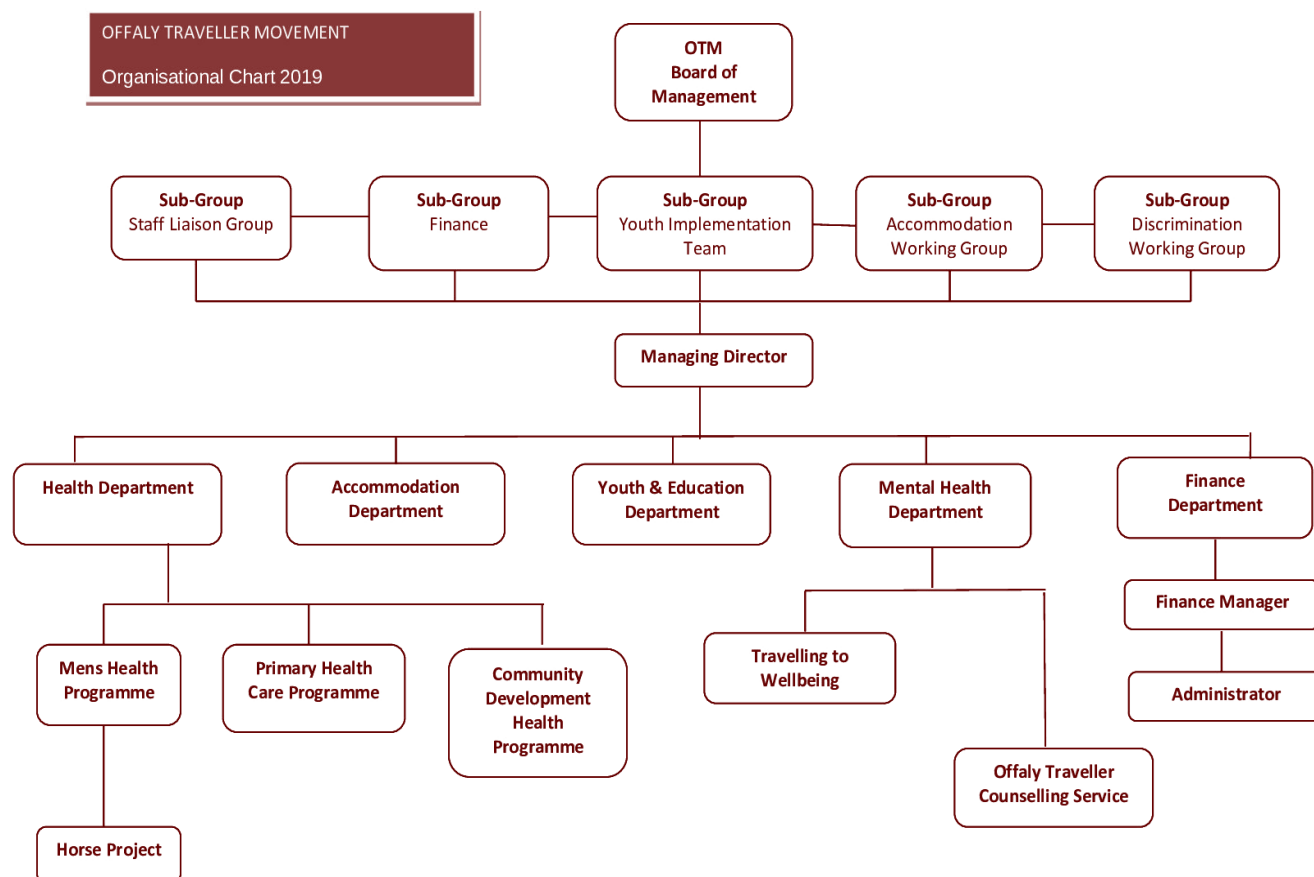
Susan Fay

Chris McDonagh

OTM Staff Representative Sarah O'Brien

*Offaly Traveller
Movement Board of
Management oversees
the strategic
direction, financial
management and staff
development of the
organisation*

Organisational Chart



Representing and Networking

During 2020 OTM was represented on the following external bodies

Birr Travellers & Settled People Group
 Committee for the International Eradication of Poverty
 European Anti Poverty Network
 European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
 Irish Traveller Movement Accommodation Sub Group
 Irish Traveller Movement Central Group
 Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC)
 Midlands Regional Mens Network
 Midlands Region Health Network (MHN)
 Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force Education and Prevention Sub Committee
 National Traveller Health Network
 National Traveller Health Network (NTHN)
 National Traveller Partnership, both as a Board member and on operations committee (NTP)
 National Traveller Suicide Awareness Project Steering Group
 National Traveller Women's Forum Board
 Offaly County Council
 Offaly Domestic Violence Support Services (ODVSS)
 Offaly Mental Health Talk Week Committee
 Offaly Traveller Interagency Group (TIG)
 Public Participation Network
 Regional Traveller Health Unit and finance sub-committee (THU)
 Travelling to Wellbeing Steering Group
 Tullamore School Completion Programme Board of Management
 University College Dublin

OTM are members of:

Community Workers Cooperative
 European Anti Poverty Network
 European Network Against Racism
 Irish Traveller Movement
 National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)
 National Traveller Partnership

Financial Report 2020

Tullamore Travellers Movement Company Limited by Guarantee

Income and Expenditure Account for the financial year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	31 December 2020		31 December 2019	
		€	€	€	€
Income	1		520,280		533,220
Expenditure					
NTP	2	98,220		100,124	
Youth DCEDIY/LOETB	3	47,359		47,288	
Health Service Executive	4	215,349		226,079	
Health Service Executive - Men's Shed	5	9,279			
Health Service Executive - Health Networks	6	759			
Health Service Executive - TTM THU	7	1,411		-	
T2WB	8	83,392		61,197	
TUSLA	9	7,770		7,431	
Traveller Pride Week	10	2,000		2,051	
OLDC Grant	11	-		350	
UN Poverty Grant	12	-		3,026	
General Expenses	13	29,519		38,385	
Credit Union	14	-		600	
Other Grants	15	-		810	
Maynooth Research	16	-		6,575	
National Lottery Grant	17	-		1,300	
HSE CYPSC	18	2,000		-	
Covid 19	19	993		-	
Offaly County Council Grant Expenditure	20	1,751		-	
LTI	21	5,732		-	
OCC - Community emergency Relief	22	1,000		-	
The Community Foundation	23	4,998		-	
The Community Foundation - Beging Together Fund	24	2,850		-	
LOETB	25	1,745		-	
Youth Arts	26	1,795		-	
HSE - Back to Work Funding	27	21,342		-	
HSE - Covid 19 Hygiene Packs	28	4,995		-	
			544,259		495,443
Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year			<u>(23,979)</u>		<u>37,777</u>

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Tullamore Travellers Movement Company Limited by Guarantee

**Schedule of Income and Expenditure
for the financial year ended 31 December 2020**

	2020	2019
	€	€
Note 1: Income		
NTP	100,125	100,124
Youth DCEDIY/LOETB	47,761	47,290
Health Service Executive	215,340	264,011
HSE Mental Health-T2WB	74,196	71,539
HSE - Back to Work Funding	21,342	-
HSE- Covid 19 Hygiene Packs	4,995	-
HSE- Health Networks	759	-
HSE - THU	1,411	-
TUSLA	7,779	7,779
Traveller Pride Week	2,000	2,000
OLDC	-	350
UN Poverty Grant	-	3,000
General Income	21,289	25,602
Credit Union	-	650
Lotto Grants	-	3,300
Miscellaneous Grants	-	1,000
NUI Maynooth Grant	-	6,575
Youth Sundry Income	340	-
Project Grants Income	850	-
Offaly County Council Grants	1,622	-
Offaly Local Community Development Committee	1,000	-
The Community Foundation	5,000	-
HSE - CYPSC	2,000	-
The Community Doudation - Begin Together Fund	2,850	-
LOETB - ICT Grant	1,750	-
Youth Arts	1,795	-
UCD Social Work Student Placement	390	-
LTI	5,686	-
	<u>520,280</u>	<u>533,220</u>



Offaly Traveller Movement



Society tells you that travellers are no good, unfortunately.