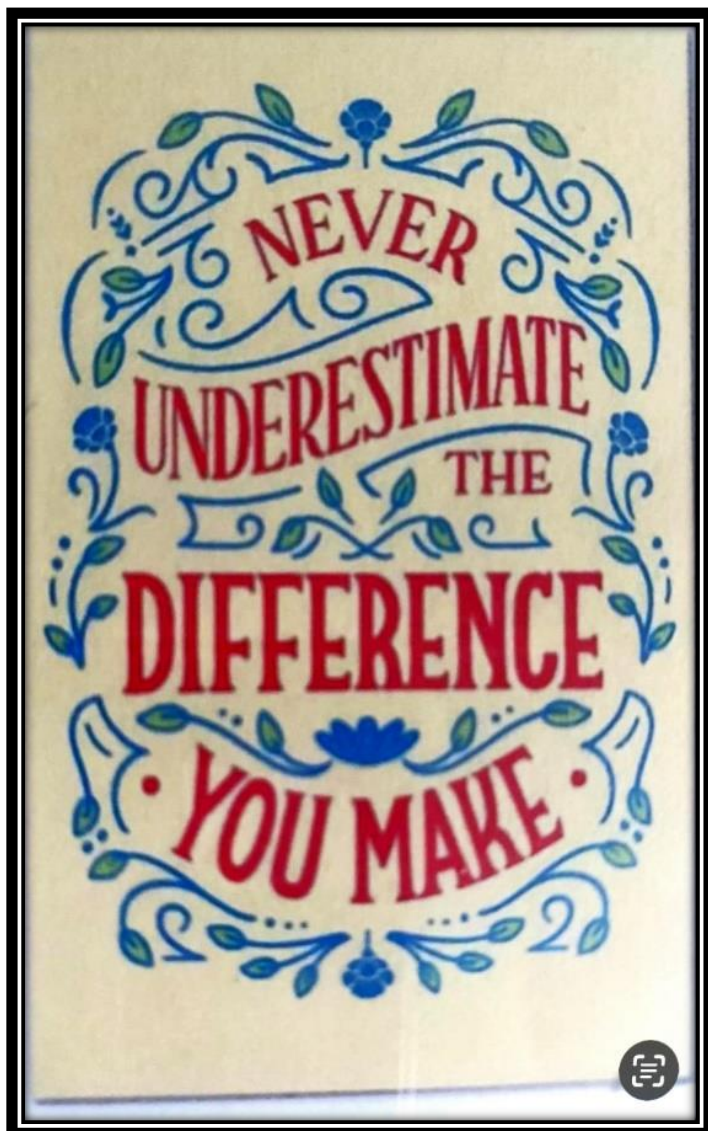


2023

Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force CLG Annual Report



This document captures the range of activities that occurred under the work plan of the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force in 2023. The breadth of work is evident, and the BLDATF welcome the support of all its stakeholders throughout the course of this year and every year.

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Acknowledgment of passing of Henry Harding

Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force would like to acknowledge the passing of Henry Harding in May 2024. Henry has been involved with the BLDATF for many years, as a company director, a community representative, an advocate and overall supporter of the work of the BLDATF and its funded agencies. BLDATF wish to extend their condolences to Henry's family and express their gratitude for Henry's unwavering support of the BLDATF.



Section 1: Background and overview of Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force

BLDATF is one of 12 LDATF around Dublin, which were set up in the late 1990s to address the drug crisis of the time. BLDATF support a number of organisations within the community to provide a range of services and activities across the region. The BLDATF recognises that the impact of problematic substance use extends beyond the individual, to the family and the wider community, and as such we work closely with the wealth of networks within the Ballyfermot community to collaborate, raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with problematic drug and alcohol use.

1.1 Role of Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Local and Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces play a key role in assessing the extent and nature of the drug problem in their areas and coordinating action at local level so that there is a targeted response to the drug problem in local communities (Unit, 2024). They implement the National Drugs Strategy in the context of the needs of their region or local area through action plans which have identified existing and emerging gaps. The goals of the strategy are:

- Promote and protect health and well-being.
- Minimize the harms caused by the use and misuse of substances and promote rehabilitation and recovery.
- Address the harms of drugs markets and reduce access to drugs for harmful use.
- Support participation of individuals, families and communities.
- Develop sound and comprehensive evidence-informed policies and actions (Health, 2024).

Drug and Alcohol Task Forces comprise representatives from a range of relevant agencies, such as the HSE, the Gardaí, the Probation Service, Education and Training Executives, Local Authorities, Youth Services, as well as elected public representatives and Voluntary and Community sector representatives. There are 14 Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces in Ireland, 12 of which are in Dublin and the other two are Bray and Cork.



FIGURE 1: COMMUNITY ADDICTION STUDIES GRADUATES 2022/2023

1.2 BLDATF Legal Entity (BOD)

BLDATF (the company) is funded through core funding from central government, primarily from the Health Service Executive (HSE). BLDATF is a company limited by guarantee formed in March 2017 and registered with the Companies Registration Office, Registration No: 600165. It has two Executive members (directors) namely, Henry Harding and Vincent Jackson that fill the roles of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Company Secretary. The company has a support structure to help it fulfil its role. The company's Memorandum of Arts is provided in Appendix 1.

1.3 Ballyfermot LDATF Company Structure

2023 was BLDATF 6th year as a CLG. The chart below shows the company structure as approved by the BLDATF in 2019.

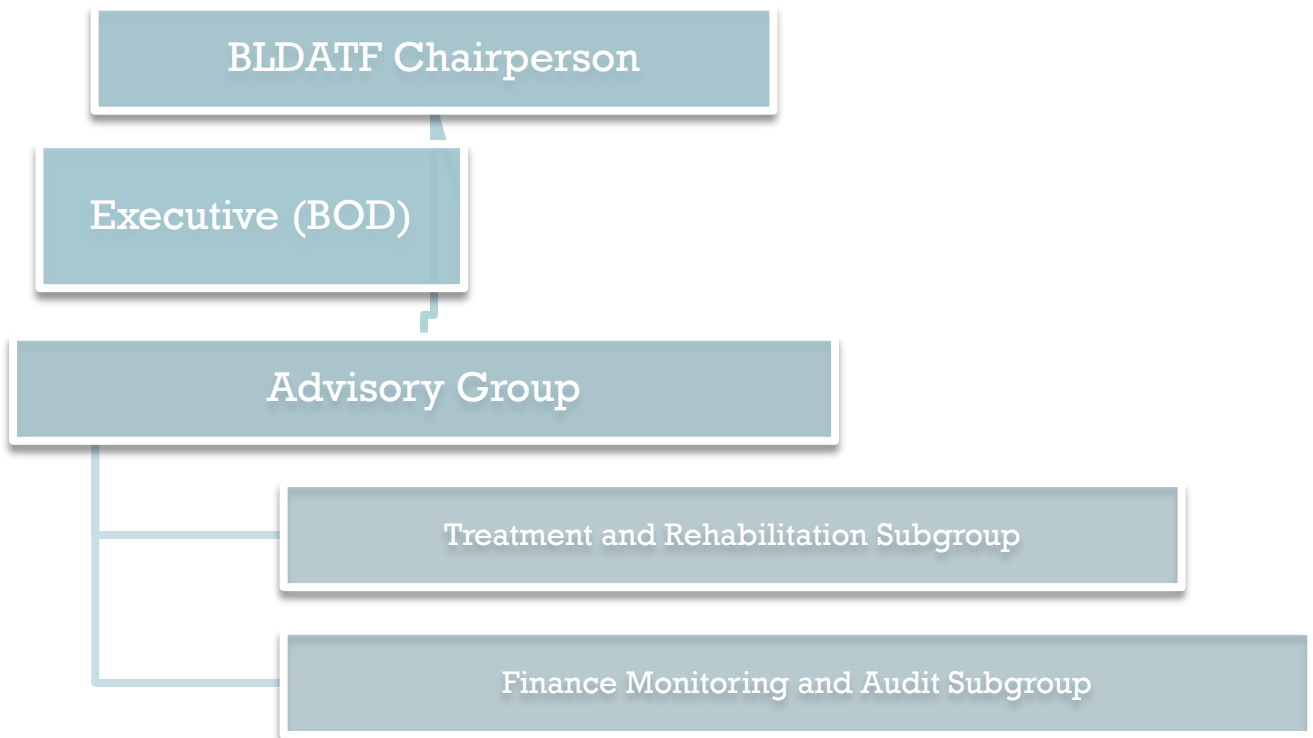


FIGURE 2: BALLYFERMOT LDATF COMPANY STRUCTURE

1.4 Advisory Group (AG)

The AG consists of thirteen (13) representatives from the community and voluntary sector, key statutory agencies and the two directors. The work of the AG is governed by Terms of Reference issued by the company, being guided by the National Drugs Strategy that involves the use of an innovative and evidence-based approach in ensuring the development of a coordinated and integrated response to the harms of drug use. The AG is supported by the following sub-committees with their own TORs.

- Treatment and Rehabilitation
- Financial Monitoring and Audit



FIGURE 3: FAMILIBASE READY FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023

1.5 Employees

BLDATF has one direct employee, the Financial and Operational Administrator, who is managed by the company directors.

The company has two seconded employees:

- LDATF Coordinator (the coordinator), employed by the HSE assigned to BLDATF.
- Project Officer, employed by BCP on behalf of the BLDATF, through a GAA in agreement with the HSE.

BLDATF Staffing

Position	Employer	Hours
Coordinator	HSE	F/T
Financial and Operational Administrator	BLDATF	F/T
Project Officer	LAP ¹	F/T

1.6 Reporting Arrangements

The Administrator reports to the Chairperson of the BLDATF, which may be varied to take in to account any changing needs of the company. The Administrator's day-to-day work is directed by the Coordinator.

- The Project Officer reports on a day-to-day basis to the CEO of the Liffey Area Partnership. The day to day work of the Project Officer is guided by the BLDATF Work Plan and informed by the Coordinator. The Project Officer works collaboratively with the Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup of the BLDATF.
- The Coordinator reports to, and is accountable to, the Local Area Operations Manager, HSE Addiction Services, for all human resources matters and work activity. For the efficient and effective delivery of programmes and services, it is necessary for the Coordinator to have a close working relationship with the BLDATF Chairperson and the Advisory Group of BLDATF and to provide such supports, knowledge and expertise that will guide the company in the management of day-to-day operations and the development of its strategic plan.



FIGURE 4: THE WISE WOMEN FROM BLUE DOOR WHO JOINED US FOR THE MOVIE SCREENING FOR RECOVERY MONTH

¹ Liffey Area Partnership formerly Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership, company name changed in April 2024

Section 2: Overview of funded initiatives

2.1 Agency summaries

Project	Support Provided
Advance ballyfermotadvance.ie	Advance is a community based project helping people who are drug and alcohol users and those affected by drug and alcohol use. You can self-refer and we work closely with other local support agencies. Our support services can also be accessed confidentially via our drop-in centre or through the outreach team.
Blue Door bluedoor83.ie/	Blue Door is a crisis intervention community development project working with families/individuals (over 18) who are engaging in or experiencing harmful behaviour. We facilitate pathways to other services and advocate on behalf of individuals/community when engaging with DCC, Gardaí, Intreo and other relevant agencies. We also support groups and provide educational and social opportunities to service users, as well as information, support and advice. We run an in-house counselling service Monday-Thursday.
Familibase familibase.ie/	FamiliBase is a community-based organisation delivering services to children, young people and families in Dublin 10. FamiliBase has three strands of service delivery: Early Years and Afterschool, Child and Family and Youth and Community. It operates an integrated model of practice consistent with the concept of a 'one stop shop', ultimately this means we have a range of services under one roof. Programmes and Services include an Early Years and Afterschool Service, Youth Work Programme, Arts Programmes, Family Support, Parenting Programmes, Key working and Counselling for young people and families. Programmes and Services are driven by local needs which change overtime so get in touch to find out more. You can drop in and self-refer.
Star ballyfermotstar.ie/	Star provide support, guidance, and education to individuals with problematic substance use, their families, and the community. Key working, one to one support and group work is offered. Star use evidence-based interventions and services are orientated to enhance the persons self-esteem and ability to solve their own problems.
Fusion CPL www.fusioncpl.ie	Fusion is based in Cherry Orchard. They provide addiction support for all genders who are aged 18 and over living in the Ballyfermot, Chapelizod or Palmerstown area. We have three integral parts to our service. We support people from the area who are drug free or stable. We have a Community Prison Links Service which provides a link between community and prison-based services. Thirdly we deliver the Reach Out family communications programme for families with a parent in prison. We offer key-working, counselling, group work and holistic therapies. We also offer Rehabilitative Community Employment places through independent CE projects in the community
Ballyfermot Youth Service Ballyfermotys.ie	BYS provides planned educational and recreational activities for young people in Ballyfermot between the ages of 10 and 24 years. A range of services are offered to the young people from Outdoor Education programmes, Drop in Information support, Music and Arts programmes, access to the Erasmus + programme and a comprehensive Drugs Peer Education programme.
Matt Talbot mtct.ie/	Matt Talbot provide support for individuals in recovery from addiction and those in contact with the criminal justice system from pre-court to post prison release. We run a drug free community education programme endeavouring to create change in the community from a grassroots level. We work to tackle the unique social issues that lead to problem drug use and criminal behaviour through the provision of quality education and structured person-centred supports.
Liffey Partnership liffeypartnership.ie/	Liffey Partnership (formerly Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership) was established as a response to long term unemployment and poverty. We host and support a range of programmes dedicated to employment, education, community, enterprise, parenting, health and wellbeing. Our mission is to bring people together to work for a fair and just society for all. We aim to strengthen bonds between individuals and communities, providing a path for diverse voices to be heard, respected, and celebrated.

2.2 List of funding streams within the BLDATF region

Project Code	COF ²	Funding In Euro	Project Promoter	Funding Purpose
BF3	HSE	130,319	BLDATF	BLDATF Administration and programme costs, inclusive of grants for one off initiatives.
BF7	HSE	294,551	Ballyfermot STAR	Programme and salary budget for drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation support services. Including Family Support.
BF2-1	HSE	398,000	Ballyfermot Advance Project	Programme and salary budget for low threshold drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation support. Including drop-in and family support.
BF2-2	HSE	110,829	Fusion CPL Project	Programme and salary budget for drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation supports. Project hosts prison links worker.
BF2-4	HSE	13,601	Ballyfermot Youth Service (BYS)	Programme budget for peer education model for young person's drugs and alcohol education.
BF2-9	HSE	68,385	FamiliBase	Programme and salary intensive family support service for children impacted by parental drug and alcohol use.
PS1	HSE	13,601	Ballyfermot STAR	Peer support programme budget for across whole Star project.
BF2-9A	HSE	152,000	LAP ³	Administrative budget and programme costs to cover childcare fees for individuals looking to access support for problematic substance use.
BF10	HSE	60,000	LAP	Acts as the employer of the Project Officer for the BLDATF. The worker provides community-based supports to the BLDATF.
BF2-10	CDYS B	97,742	Blue Door (BD) (hosted by The Equine)	Programme and salary cost for service based in Cherry Orchard addressing tenancy sustainment.
BF2-14	CDYS B	106,503	Matt Talbot (MT)	Programme and salary cost for drug free day programme.
BF2B-3	CDYS B	51,201	FamiliBase	Salary cost for youth substance use worker



² Channel of Funding

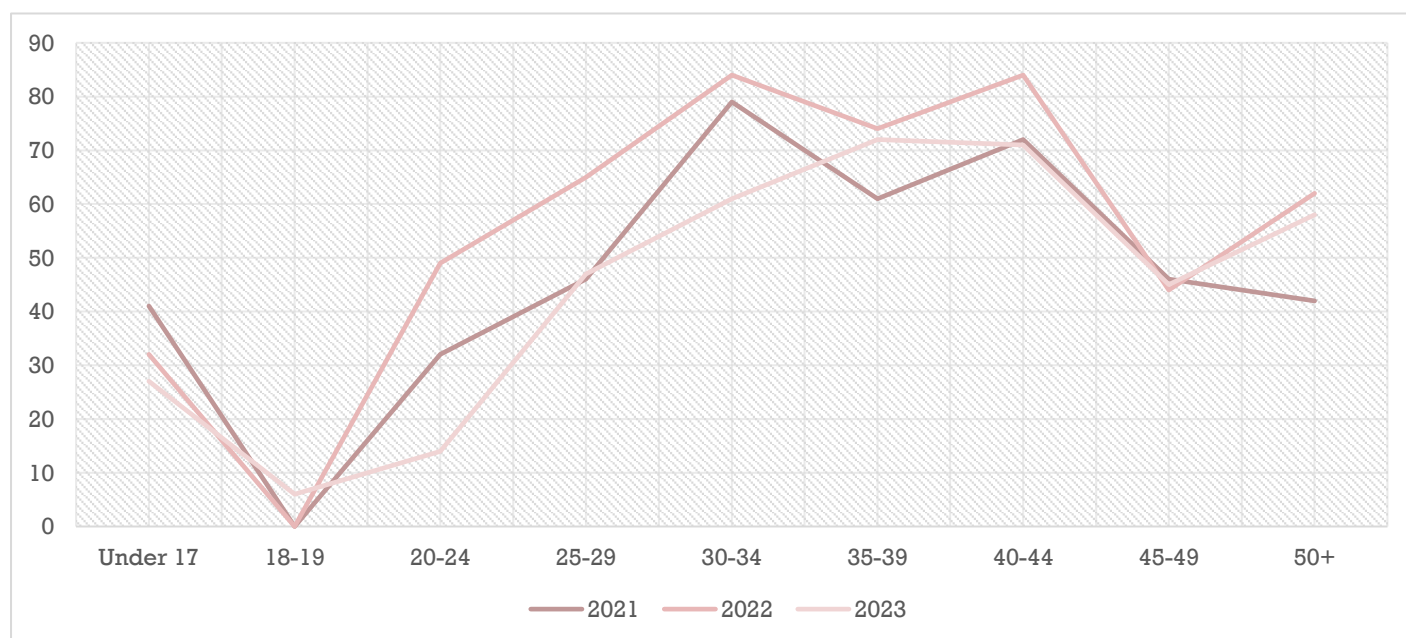
³ This fund moved over to Liffey Area Partnership

Section 3: Overview of treated problematic drug and alcohol use in the Ballyfermot LDATF region.

This section captures the data pertaining treated substance use in the BLDATF region. This information is taken from the BLDATF area National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) (Board, 2024) treatment data for all services inputting into the system in the area. The 2023 data indicates a total of 554 individuals who were assessed or treated in services in Ballyfermot, with the inclusion of in-prison treatment which amounts to a total of 110 people (19%) of the total number. According to the Health Research Board, “treatment is broadly defined as ‘any activity which aims to ameliorate the psychological, medical or social state of individuals who seek help for their substance misuse problems’” (HRB, 2023)⁴. Clients who attend needle-exchange services only are not included in this reporting system. Drug treatment options include one or more of the following: medication (detoxification, methadone reduction, substitution programmes and psychiatric treatment), brief intervention, counselling, group therapy, family therapy, psychotherapy, complementary therapy, and/or life-skills training. Compliance with the NDTRS requires that one form be completed for each new client coming for first treatment and for each previously treated client returning to treatment for problem drug use (Board, 2024). The below data refers to anyone who was treated or assessed for treatment in services in the BLDATF area.

3.1 Age profile of people accessing services

2023 shows a slight levelling off of the number of treated cases reported to the NDTRS. The trend appears to be the same however, with the majority of people who refer for services falling into the 30-44 age ranges, and as with 2022 a jump into the 50+ age range accessing treatment services. Projects inform us that people accessing outreach series only, or drop in services only, although recorded in service data may not always appear in treatment data. Services also report consistently that the complexity of the issues some service users face, means that the workload is increased, regardless of the number of service users. Housing, mental health issues, domestic violence and child protection issues being the most prominent concerns, often occurring together simultaneously. These issues, coupled with poor employment and poor education makes the treatment of the drug issue increasingly complex.

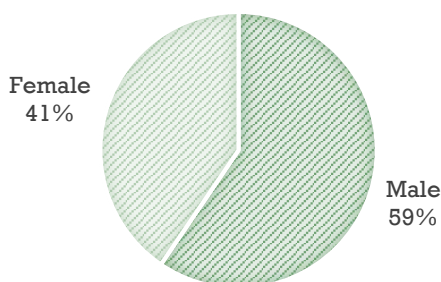


⁴ Health Research board (2023) *HRB Drug Task Force Area Reports: Ballyfermot Local Drugs and Alcohol Task Force 2021* Health Research Board

3.2 Gender of Service Users

Ballyfermot continues to show strong numbers of women accessing services. Although it is known that women face a range of barriers to accessing treatment for drug and alcohol problems (Ivers, 2021), Ballyfermot LDATF alongside its funded agencies and the community as a whole work hard to address these barriers on an annual and consistent basis. The results of these efforts can be through the treatment data.

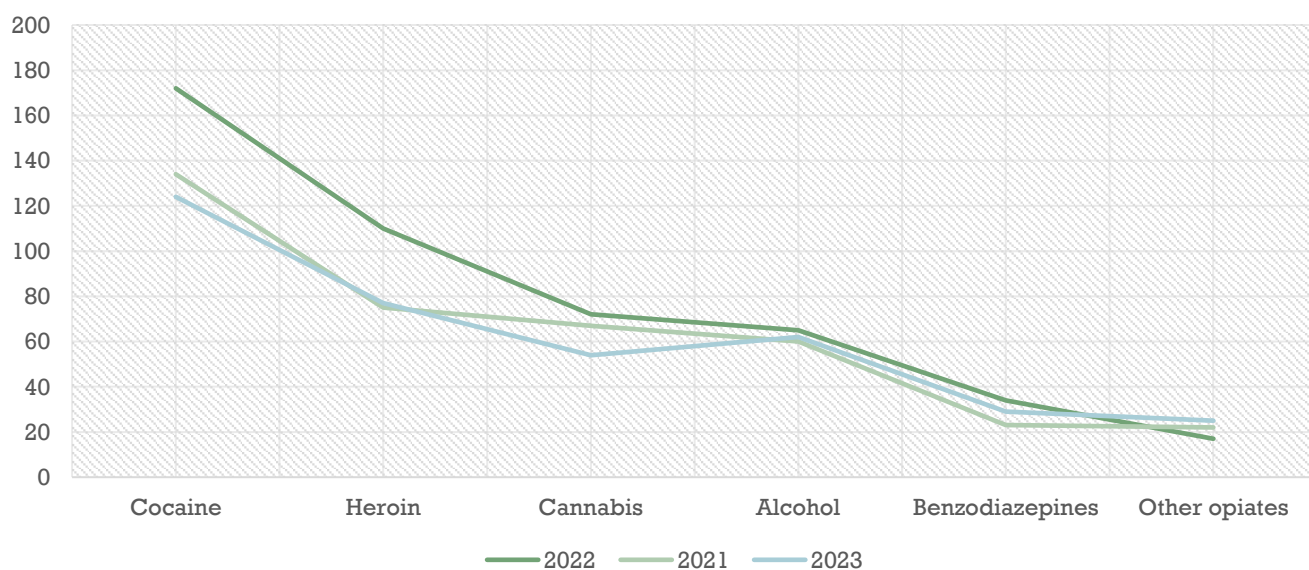
GENDER OF TREATED SERVICE USERS REPORTED TO THE NDTRS IN BALLYFERMOT



3.3 Drug of choice

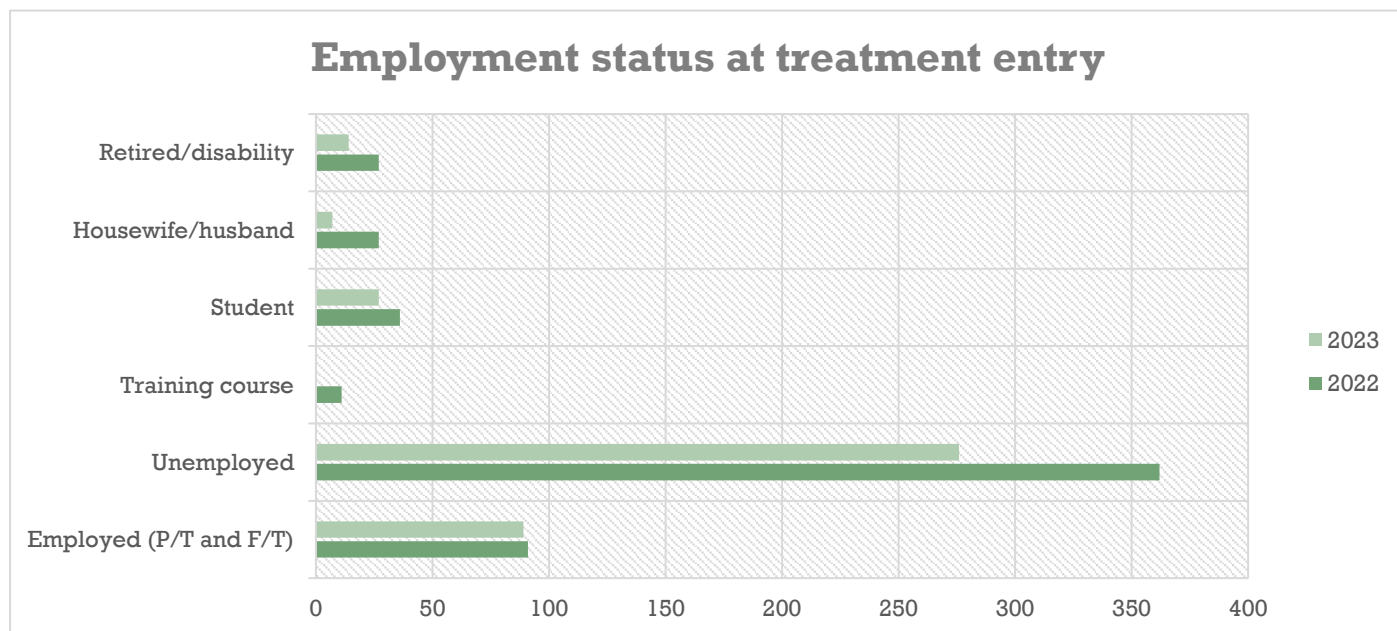
Of all people who accessed services, over half had at least one additional problem substance, and for the majority of people this secondary or additional problem substance was either cocaine, heroin or sedative drugs. 56% of people had been previously treated for a drug or alcohol problem. The trend for people referring for cocaine problems as the main problem substance reported at treatment entry has remained for many years and reflects the feedback from projects indicating the same.

Main problem substance at treatment entry



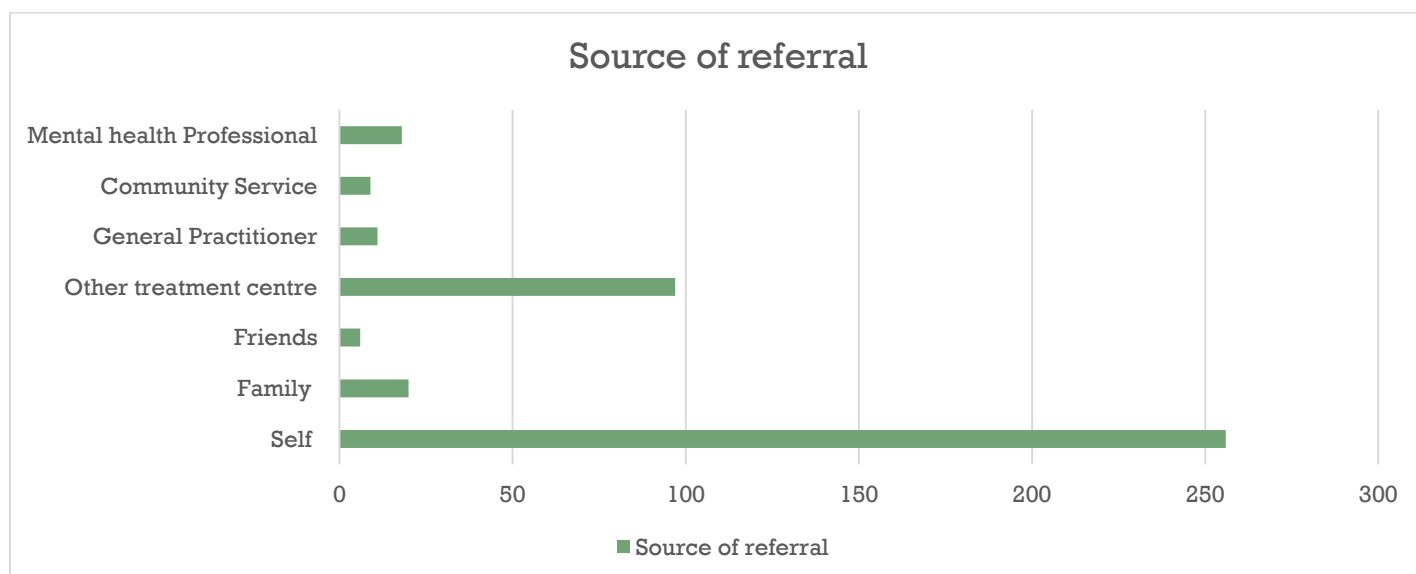
3.4 Employment status

As with previous years, the majority of people who were assessed or treated for services in 2023 were unemployed. However, as with previous years, a number of people are in employment when they access support for drug and alcohol problems, as such services respond with out of hours appointments to accommodate those who are working. Notwithstanding, Ballyfermot has the highest unemployment rate in the Dublin South City area, with rates of unemployment in Ballyfermot at 11% compared with 8.3% across the whole Dublin City South Area (CYPSC, 2024), therefore it can be expected that the majority of people accessing drug or alcohol treatment in the BLDAF area are unemployed.



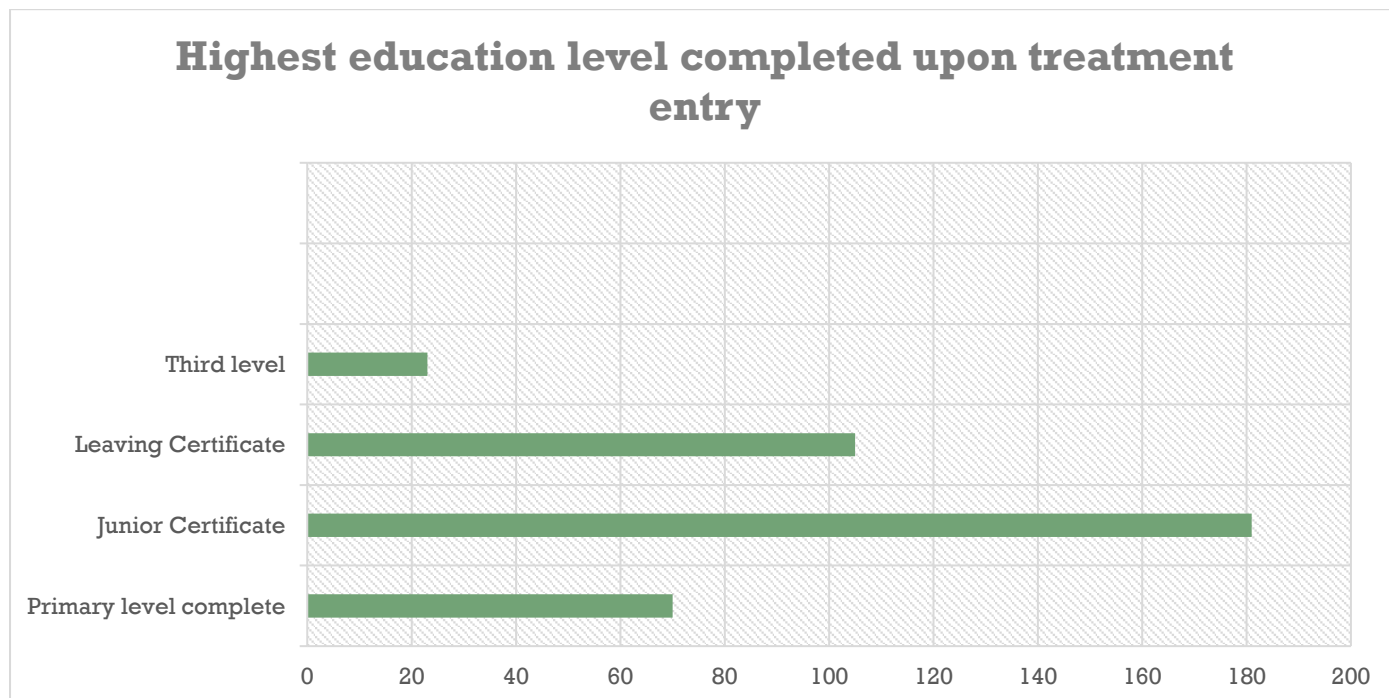
3.5 Source of referral

The below chart shows the source of referrals for people assessed or treated in the reporting period. BLDAF use this data to help inform promotional and inter-agency work across the region. Although broadly the same each year with self-referral being by far the most common route of service entry, 2023 saw an increase in referrals from both General Practitioners and from mental health professionals. This indicates that the work being done to reach out to health services where drug or alcohol problems may be disclosed, is working and that services will refer as needed.



3.6 Educational Status upon Treatment Entry

The chart below shows the breakdown of educational status upon treatment entry for all people assessed or treated in the reporting period, comparing 2023 with data from 2021. The data highlights that although early school leaving is without a doubt a risk factor to problematic substance use, it is not the only factor at play, and individual circumstances and other issues will always have a bearing on someone's drug and alcohol use.



3.6 Living arrangements for those assessed or treated in 2023

As with previously years, the majority of people referring for treatment cite their accommodation status as stable (87%) and just 8% of people identify as homeless. As outreach/needle exchange services only are not captured, the true extent of the housing situation in Ballyfermot cannot be ascertained from treatment data. CYPSC baseline data indicates that Ballyfermot has the highest rate of accommodation rented from the local authority at 16%, twice that of the national average (Committee, 2024). Ballyfermot has a 4% lower rate than the national average of owner occupiers/mortgage holders than the national average, although when compared with other areas in Dublin South, does have a relatively higher rate of home owner occupiers (Committee, 2024). This data indicates that there is some housing stability in the area.



FIGURE 5: BLUE DOOR CELEBRATING RECOVERY MONTH 2023

3.7 Children identified in the NDTRS data

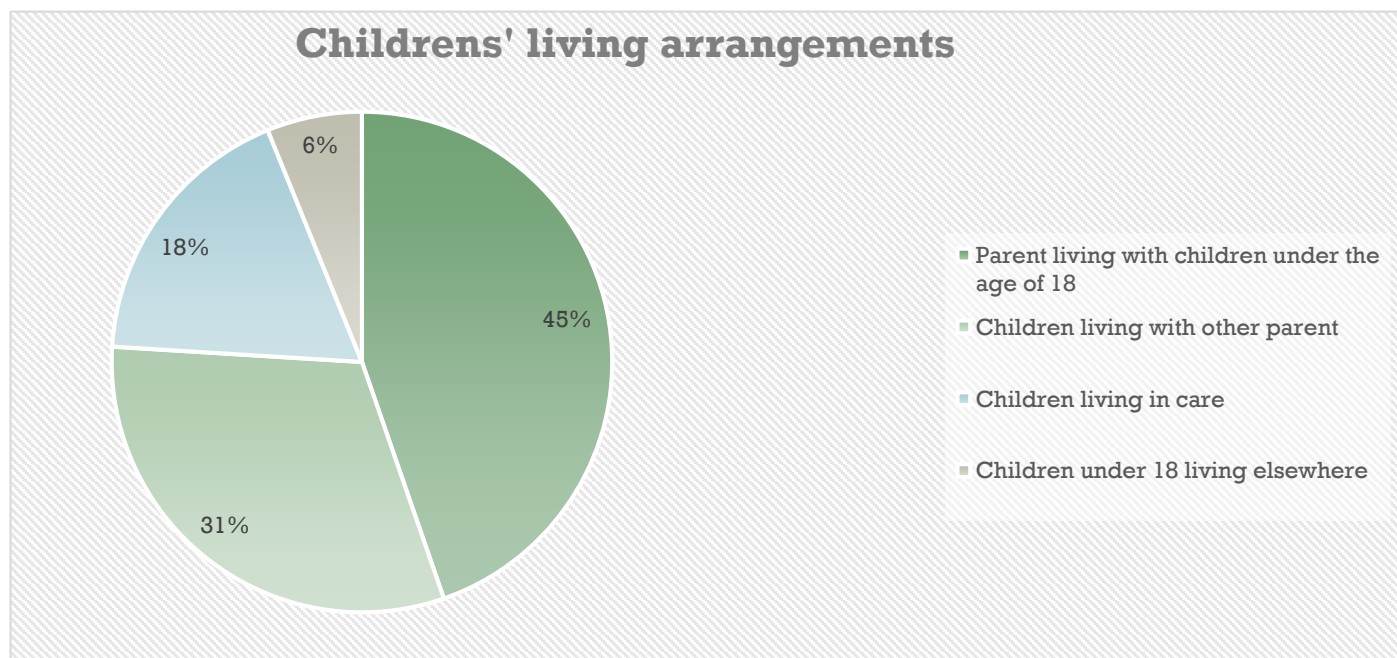
The NDTRS captures data on the number of the children of people who are assessed or treated within any given year. There is a strong link between domestic violence, trauma and mental health issues in families who are impacted by drug and alcohol use (Tusla, 2024). Because of this, it is important that children who may be impacted by drug and alcohol use in the family are identified early so that appropriate responses can be made.

Ballyfermot has a good track record in family support services, and local projects work hard to ensure the voice of the child is heard and that families are supported. In particular in 2023, FamiliBase coordinated and hosted a national conference on hidden harm which sought to highlight the national hidden harm project, but also to offer services and funders alike the opportunity to share ideas around how to address the complexities which children and families face (Barlow, 2024).

Nonetheless, the data continues to show that many service users do not access support until their children are over the age of five, meaning that there are many children who may be living with significant family challenges, with whom no service has had contact. The NDTRS does not capture interventions with children in the absence of parental involvement, except in circumstances where the children themselves are experiencing problematic drug or alcohol use, rather than subject to the impact of problematic drug and alcohol use in the home.



FIGURE 6: FAMILIBASE CONFERENCE REPORT



A large proportion of service users are parents. 45% of parents have children under the age of 18 living with them, some have children living with the other parent (31%), or in care (18%), or living elsewhere presumably with extended family although this is not verified. It is worth noting that the data continues to show though that there are far fewer people referring for treatment with children under the age of 5 years old (13%) compared with parents living with children over the age of 5 (32%). This poses the questions, what is the experience of the under 5s? And why are people waiting until their children are over 5 years old to refer for support?

Section 4: BLDATF Grant Schemes

4.1 Targeted Intervention Funds

Feedback on the Targeted Intervention Funds (TIFs) during the 2021 strategic review work was positive. The recommendation was to continue to offer the TIFs, alongside the other small grant schemes when funds are available.

Applications were invited for the TIFs in March 2023 with payments going out in April 2023. The decision-making procedure for these funds remained that the Finance Subgroup processed all applications, with recommendations brought to the main TF meeting for comment and approval.

BLDATF Targeted Intervention Funds 2023		
Projects	Description	Amount Approved
Candle	Funding towards the therapeutic space	€ 7,680.00
The Bungalow	Funding towards community based counselling service	€ 7,000.00
The Equine (Blue Door in partnership with St Ultans and the Bungalow)	Counselling provision in Blue Door	€ 7,000.00
Fusion CPL	Additional holistic therapies	€ 1,800.00
Familibase (in partnership with Advance and Fusion)	Family systems counselling	€ 8,000.00
Matt Talbot (in partnership with Blue Door, Advance and Star)	Peer to peer life coaching	€ 4,680.00
Ballyfermot Youth Service (in partnership with Gurteen and Ballyfermot BMX Club)		€ 7,000.00
Advance (in partnership with Familibase and Matt Talbot)	Music therapy and contingency management for cocaine users	€ 7,240.00
Equine (Cherry Orchard Integrated Youth Service)	Bereavement support programme for young people	€ 1,520.00
St John's Ambulance	Life saving and drugs/alcohol course for young people	€ 4,000.00
Gurteen	Early morning football Programme for teenagers transitioning to secondary school	€ 2,400.00
		€ 58,320.00

4.2 Community Grants

Ballyfermot LDATF fund small community projects in the community to strengthen the community capacity to minimize the impact of problematic drug and alcohol use. In 2023 the BLDATF agreed to retain the criteria used in previous years and to also continue with the support of Liffey Area Partnership (LAP for the administration and promotion of the grants. The maximum overall budget available in 2023 for these grants was €10,000. Each application could be awarded a maximum of €2000. As with previous years, the grant applications were assessed by an inter-agency committee made up of BLDATF, the LAP and Dublin City Council.

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount Awarded</i>
<i>Elite Twirlers</i>	Club membership and equipment	1000
<i>C/O Boxing Club</i>	Equipment	1900
<i>Together FM</i>	Equipment	1500
<i>Cherry Orchard Running Club</i>	Equipment	1500
<i>Ballyfermot Adults Learning Together</i>	Facilitation costs	1000
<i>Total awarded</i>		€6,900

4.3 Summer Programme Budgets

In response to feedback on the positive impact of small grants on local projects and groups to run activities for young people and families across the Ballyfermot LDATF area, BLDATF welcomed applications for the *Summer Programme Budget 2023* in May 2023. This budget was open to local organisations and groups with their own bank account. Budgets up to €1500 were considered and should target families, children, and young people.

<i>Project</i>	<i>Project description</i>	<i>amount awarded</i>
<i>Advance</i>	Pro-social outings for service users over the summer period to help reduce social isolation.	€1430
<i>Ballyfermot De La Salle</i>	Funding for 4 day programme for between 60 and 70 young people, regardless of affiliation with DLS. Funding towards materials and guest speakers.	€1500
<i>Ballyfermot Star</i>	Funding towards family summer programme for families engaged with Ballyfermot Star. 20 families and 3x support workers.	€1500
<i>Ballyfermot Youth Service</i>	Contribution towards Killary summer camp trip for 12 young people from the area.	€1500
<i>Cherry Orchard FRC</i>	Budget towards art materials and day trips for families in the area, 20 adults and 40 children for two day trips, arts workshops 5x 2hours.	€1300
<i>St John's Ambulance</i>	Contribution towards summer programme for cadets.	€1050
<i>Familibase</i>	Trip to Funtasia for 75 young people.	€1462
<i>Gurteen</i>	Materials towards summer programme for youth club for up to 200 young people from Cherry orchard and Ballyfermot.	€1500
<i>St Ultans</i>	Funding for trip to Dublin Zoo trip as part of the summer programme.	€1500
	Total awarded €12,742	

4.4 Christmas programme budgets

In November 2023, BLDATF welcomed applications for the Christmas Programme Budget. The aim of this budget was to support local community organisations and groups to run programmes over the Christmas and new year period to help reduce isolation, support families and to strengthen community and social engagement over the December-January period. It was hoped through using this budget that we could reach older people in the community as well as young people and their families.

<i>Projects</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount awarded</i>
<i>Familibase</i>	Funding towards trips ice skating and pantomime for young people	€500
<i>Markiewicz Family Resource Centre</i>	Funding towards senior citizen's Christmas dinner	€500
<i>Cherry Orchard Family Resource Centre</i>	Family cinema trips, 50x E10 Vue vouchers	€500
<i>Candle</i>	Purchase 25xE20 self-care hampers for young people and their families.	€500
<i>Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership</i>	Funding towards Christmas packs for older people	€500
<i>Fusion CPL</i>	Funding towards Christmas packs for children under Reach Out programme	€500
<i>Ballyfermot Youth Service</i>	Funding towards Santa Cycle	€500
<i>Ballyfermot Advance</i>	Funding towards Christmas meal and gifts	€500
<i>Ballyfermot Star</i>	Funding towards Wild Nights Dublin Zoo trip	€500
<i>Gurteen Youth Club</i>	Christmas movies and selection boxes	€500
<i>Ballyfermot De La Salle</i>	Funding towards a community gathering for up to 200 young people	€500
TOTAL		€5,500



FIGURE 7: SOME YOUNG PEOPLE FROM FAMILIBASE HAVING FUN IN THE WATER

Section 5 Additional Budgets

5.1 Community Alcohol Detox Project

The Community Alcohol Detox Project (CADP) was established to cover Ballyfermot, Canal Communities, Dublin 12 and the South Inner City. This budget was provided as part of the *Strand 2* funding initiatives which were awarded in 2019. The Community Alcohol Detox project focused on four core areas: the employment of an Alcohol Liaison Worker to complete the work programme, to strengthen the interagency model of practice under the National Drug Rehabilitation Framework, to develop a best practice model for a Community Alcohol Detox project framework for use by community drugs projects in partnership with the HSE Addiction Services, Primary Care and Community General Practitioners.

In 2023 the project was reviewed by an external consultant. The recommendations from this review are summarised as:

- The CADP should link in with HSE regional alcohol forums and supports.
- Online resources to be maintained to keep them up to date
- Use of a community development approach to raise awareness around alcohol related harm and the manual itself
- Each of the four TFs involved should apportion budgets for:
 - Training in SAOR⁵ and Motivational Interviewing⁶
 - Distribution and printing of the manual

5.2 Supporting Women to Access Appropriate Treatment

Supporting Women to Access Appropriate Treatment (SWAAT) is a National Drugs Strategy Strand 2 Strategic Health Initiative which aims to build community capacity to support women to access treatment and recovery from drug and alcohol use across the Tallaght and Ballyfermot LDATF areas. A SWAAT Coordinator was employed in March 2020, and she finished in her role in August 2023. The project sought to ensure a focus was given to the unique needs of women in terms of accessing support for drug and alcohol problems. There was a training as well as an awareness raising element to this project.

The project was reviewed in 2023. The main recommendations of the review were as follows:

- To continue to support a Trauma informed approach to working with women.
- To retain and strengthen the inter-agency SWAAT Steering Group
- To support the development and enhancement of gender specific groups in treatment projects
- Enhance pathways to education and training for women impacted by substance use.
- Continue to collaborate with Tusla in relation to the needs of women as parents.
- Continue to raise awareness in the local communities.

5.3 Cocaine Harm Reduction and Intervention Service

In summer 2023, the Minister for State for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan TD, has created a €2 million fund to enhance community-based drug and alcohol services - the Community Services Enhancement Fund (CSEF). BLDATF and D12LDATF collaborated this piece of work and submitted a joint proposal for out of hours outreach work in both communities. The project sought to have a wide reach into the community working out of hours and in creative ways to target support where it is needed; the workers to have a robust relationship with the community drug projects and a synergy would occur having maximum beneficial outcomes for those hard to reach complex drug users in both areas.

⁵ <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/addiction/national-addiction-training/alcohol-and-substance-use-saor/>

⁶ <https://www.miiireland.com/>

The proposal recommended a communications and networking aspect to the work to help reach the wider community with regard to harm reduction information relating to the use of cocaine and crack cocaine. The networking element with other organisations aims to help reduce the stigma associated with crack cocaine use and to strengthen workers' capacity to support people to manage the complex issues which may arise as a result of cocaine and/or crack cocaine use.

Ballyfermot Advance were successful in the awarding of the budget, the full allocation was €40,000 per year for three years (€120,000 total). It was agreed that this be provided over a two-year period, so €60,000 per year to employ two part-time Assertive Outreach Workers per year. Recruitment was successful in early 2023, with workers in place by the end of Q1. The project to date has been central to the local areas' response to cocaine use. The team have outreached to people experiencing very complex issues with referral into services being a very positive outcome for people, who were struggling to access support due to their living situation and the extent of their drug use.



FIGURE 8: BALLYFERMOT ADVANCE CELEBRATING RECOVERY MONTH 2023

Section 6: Community Engagement

6.1 International Women's Day

BLDATF has been celebrating International Women's Day since 2017. In March 2023, a similar format to previous years was employed, with local projects running events, which were part funded by the BLDATF. In addition t-shirts were distributed amongst projects and a range of pamphlets, reports and information for the community. Once again the feedback about International Women's Day was positive. It was a good opportunity once again to get written materials into the community whilst at the same time linking up with an important global event. There was a strong inter-agency element to IWD this year, with a number of organisations from right across the community getting involved. Menopause was a strong theme this year, with a showing of a menopause documentary in Cherry Orchard community centre being one of the many events. BLDATF would like to thank all those who got involved this year and for their ongoing enthusiasm for International Women's week.



FIGURE 9: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PROMOTIONAL LEAFLET 2023

6.2 Citizen's Assembly

BLDATF conducted an in-person event, as well as used an online and paper questionnaire form for the community to inform its submission to the Citizens Assembly on Drug Use⁷. The survey was promoted online via social media, circulated to the BLDATF extensive email list and hard copies of the survey information and QR code were printed and circulated around the community. The survey remained open until 26th June, as feedback seeking an extension was received. As well as receiving online responses directly, one of the BLDATF agencies printed the survey and supported community members to fill the form out in person. On 16th June the BLDATF hosted an event in the Ballyfermot Community Civic Centre. This event was promoted online via social media and through email, as well as posters put up around the community in the weeks leading up to the event. The event was open to anyone living or working in the local community as well as people accessing services. The recommendations that came through from the consultation were broad and far reaching.



FIGURE 10: ATTENDEES AT THE CITIZEN'S ASSEMBLY IN-PERSON EVENT JUNE 2023

⁷ <https://citizensassembly.ie/assembly-on-drugs-use/>

The recommendations were broken down into our main areas:

- Policy recommendations
- Legislative recommendations
- Operational recommendations

In general what was recommended was a clear understanding of the complexities faced by people who are experiencing problematic substance use, the impact on their family and on their parenting. Stigma was also a common theme and the need to challenge this in order to move forward. The need for services to be flexible in their operating hours was recommended and the need for sufficient resources to fund agencies was abundantly clear from the discussions.

6.3 Recovery Month

2023 was the fourth year that BLDATF celebrated International Recovery Day. A number of events were held across the community, projects were each given a small budget to help with their own events, and the BLDATF lit up a number of buildings purple in the community. BLDATF hosted a film viewing in the Civic Centre and an “Open Mic Night” in Familibase.

SEPTEMBER 2023 Recovery Month 				
Date	Time	Event	Location	Extra Info
5TH	2:30pm-4:30pm	Movie Screening of “28 Days”	Main Hall, Civic Centre	This is an over 18s event. Contact Aoife for more info- 0871486080
7th	7pm- 8:30pm	Come play Bingo followed by a prayer service dedicated to anyone struggling with addiction.	Unit, Labre Park	For more information, contact Amy on 0879420916
20th	11am-3pm	Recovery Cafe -This fun event will include refreshments, a recovery speaker, bingo and music	Ballyfermot Advance Project, 5b La Fanu House, Ballyfermot	For more information, contact Mick on 0858868824
21st	7pm-9pm	Open Mic Night- Sing, dance or read a poem on the night! Or come and enjoy the show. Refreshments provided	Familibase, Blackditch Road, Ballyfermot	This event is over 18s. For more information or if you would like to sign up to perform, please contact Aoife on 0871486080
29TH	10am-1pm	Wellness Morning- Including Holistic Therapies and Yoga	Star- Realt Nua Unit 3&A Lavery Avenue Park West Ind Est, D12	For more information, contact Eoin on 0876549457

6.4 Community Addiction Studies

The Community Addiction Studies Course⁸ has been delivered locally by BLDATF for many years. It is open to anyone living or working in the local area and there are no educational requirements to attend. It is a QQI Level 5 course which is accredited through URUS in Ballymun. The Community Addiction Studies is coordinated and delivered by the BLDATF Project Officer, with the support of a co-facilitator from the community. In 2023, a total of 17 graduated from the course. A graduation event was held in Matt Talbot Community Trust in November 2023, and whilst not all graduates could make it the event was a positive one. Everyone received their certificate either on the night or through the post.

This particular course ran after the out-going Project Officer gained employment elsewhere, however he continued to work on the course and BLDATF is grateful of this commitment by Gary Roche. The course participants gave positive feedback on their experience and it was clear from the night that the group had a strong bond and support for one another. Some graduates have gone on to the level 7 Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies, through University of Limerick which is run by HSE Addiction Services.

⁸ <https://byap.ie/services/urru/community-addiction-studies-course>

Section 7 Service User Engagement

All projects have robust and inclusive service user involvement mechanisms within their agencies. Some projects have service user representation on their board of management, while others host service user consultations regularly and involve participants in the design and delivery of a range of activities within the service.

Whilst not working directly with services users themselves, BLDATF will always seek service user feedback as part of the outcome reporting on all its grant schemes and welcome and invite feedback on its own events and activities.

The voice of people who access services are vital as they help to shape the work that we do. However, not only this, it is only by inclusion that we can move forward with challenging the stigma associated with accessing support around drug and alcohol problems. Ballyfermot Advance held their 20 year anniversary late in 2023 and as part of this invited a female participant to speak about their experience accessing service, the power and strength of this voice and others like her should never be underestimated. So while people may seek support at a time of crisis or sadness in their life, the very act of seeking help is in itself a sign of significant strength.

The quote below comes from a participant on the Reach out Programme, which is a parenting programme designed for parents and children where one parent is in prison. This programme is coordinated and managed through Fusion CPL.

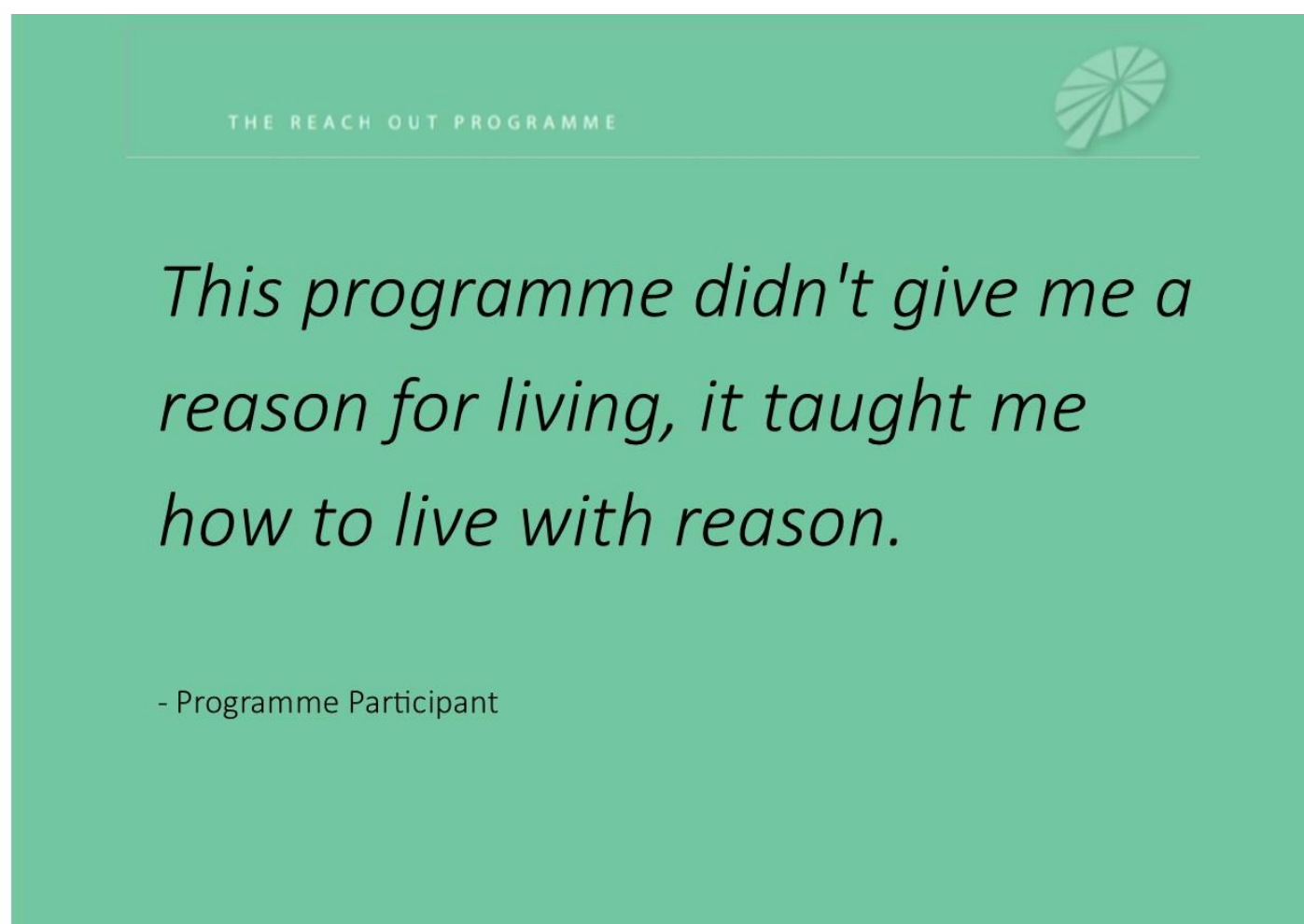


FIGURE 11: PARTICIPANT QUOTE FROM FUSION CPL REACH OUT PROGRAMME

Section 8: BLDATF Meeting Details

8.1 Meeting schedule and frequency

The BLDATF agreed to continue with six weekly Task Force and Finance Subgroup meetings, with the Treatment and Rehabilitation Sub-group continuing at bi-monthly. On one or two occasions in the year, where a meeting was cancelled due to low numbers or other circumstances, follow-up was made via email with members as required. At the end of 2023 the BLDATF agreed to reduce finance meetings to quarterly to coincide with any issues relating to quarterly returns and the evaluation of funding applications under the various funding schemes operated by the BLDATF.

8.1.1 Changes to membership in 2023

Sunniva Finlay finished with the BLDATF in 2023 after over 20 years working in the local area. BLDATF would like to thank Sunniva for her support of the BLDATF over the years. Garda Shaunagh Gaffney joined the group during the year, in partnership with her colleague Garda David Leonard. Saragh McGarrigle finished up during the year as our representative from the Probation Services, replaced by Tracy Phibbs. Grainne Finnegan from Tusla finished up during the year, BLDATF would like to thank her for her support of the work of the BLDATF and providing an important link into Tusla. BLDATF would like to welcome back Fiona Kearney who after a period of maternity leave returned to the Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup in November 2023.

Meeting	Frequency	No. 2023 meetings
Main BLDATF	6 weekly	7
Financial Monitoring and Audit Subgroup (FMA)	6 weekly	5
Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup (T&R)	Bi-Monthly	6

8.2 BLDATF Membership

Name	Organisation/Sector	Other Subgroup membership
Vincent Jackson (Chairperson)	DCC Local Elected Rep	Finance and Monitoring
Henry Harding (Secretary)	Community	Finance and Monitoring Governance Subgroup
Anne Fitzgerald	Liffey Area Partnership	Finance and Monitoring T&R Subgroup
David Leonard	An Garda Siochana	
Shaunagh Gaffney	An Garda Siochana	
Maureen Bahaouri	Education Training Board	
Mick Mason	Voluntary Rep	T&R Subgroup
Sunniva Finlay	Voluntary Rep	T&R Subgroup
Esther Wolfe	HSE Addiction Services	T&R Subgroup
Grainne Kelly	HSE Primary Care	
Tracy Phibbs	Probation Service	
Damian Murphy	HSE Addiction Services	Finance and Monitoring
Sunniva Finlay	Voluntary Rep	T&R Subgroup
Sean Mangan	DCC	Finance and Monitoring

8.3 Finance Monitoring and Audit Subgroup membership

Name	Organisation/Sector	Other Subgroup membership
Vincent Jackson (Chairperson)	DCC Local Elected Rep	Finance and Monitoring
Henry Harding (Secretary)	Community	Finance and Monitoring Governance Subgroup
Anne Fitzgerald	Ballyfermot Partnership	Chapelizod Finance and Monitoring T&R Subgroup
Damian Murphy	HSE Addiction Services	Finance and Monitoring
Sean Mangan	DCC	Finance and Monitoring

8.4 Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup membership

Name	Organisation/Sector	Comments
Anne Fitzgerald	Liffey Area Partnership	T&R Chair
Aidan O'Halloran	Blue Door	
Brendan Cummins	Familibase	
Clara Geaney	Task Force Coordinator	
Eoin O'Doherty	Ballyfermot Star	
Esther Wolfe	HSE Addiction Services	
Fiona Kearney	Familibase	Returned November 2023
Gary Roche	Project Officer	
Gráinne Finnegan	Túsla/Regional CFSN Coordinator	
Gráinne Jennings	Matt Talbot Community Trust	
Kathy Watts	Fusion CPL	
Martin Nugent	Career's Edge (BCP Jobplan rebranded)	
Mick Mason	Ballyfermot Advance	
Sunniva Finlay	Ballyfermot Star	

BALLYFERMOT LOCAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL TASK FORCE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PASSING OF HENRY HARDING IN MAY 2024. HENRY WAS INVOLVED WITH THE BLDATF FOR MANY YEARS, AS A COMPANY DIRECTOR, A VOLUNTEER, A COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE, AN ADVOCATE AND OVERALL SUPPORTER OF THE BLDATF OVER MANY YEARS. BLDATF WISH TO EXTEND THEIR CONDOLENCES TO HIS FAMILY AND EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE FOR HENRY'S UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF THE BLDATF.

Appendix 1: BLDATF CLG Memorandum of Arts

The following is an extract from the company's Memorandum & Articles of Association showing the Main Objects of the company, 2017.

The BLDATF is governed by the Main Object contained in its M&A, which states its aims as: The main objects for which the Company is established (the "Main Objects") are:

- i. To provide corporate governance, human resources, accounting and audit functions for the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol BLDATF.
- ii. To ensure members of the community who wish to move from problem substance misuse have access to a range of evidence based early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation options within their community.
- iii. To provide support and information and training in relation to all aspects of addiction to drug users, their families and the wider community, through a range of awareness raising and capacity building initiative.
- iv. To work with the community and funded projects to respond to current and emerging drug related issues in the area, by developing and implementing a strategy to achieve these objectives under specified core themes.
- v. To provide an independent informed strategic response to existing and emerging issues relating to Alcohol and Drug use in Ballyfermot.

Our approach to our work is rooted in respect for our stakeholders with integrity and trust being the foundation of what we do and how we do it. We believe that our best work comes through collaboration and through the experience, expertise and creativity of our stakeholders.

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