

Kiltale Get Active Community Group

Walking Track

(To access video footage of this project log on to www.getirelandwalking.ie)



The development of a walking track around the GAA pitches in Kiltale, Co Meath has allowed the local GAA club to cater for the physical activity needs of the wider community and in so doing has contributed to the creation of a healthy club atmosphere.

Feedback from the local community has highlighted the huge benefit the track provides for people young and old, male and female who want to become more active. The local GP is now recommending the use of the track to patients who need to get active for health reasons.

Kiltale have also found that the track is of immense benefit to club teams as they have a readymade winter training facility when the pitches are too wet. Players are also using the track for individual training programmes.

In 2004, the Kiltale GAA club purchased a field adjoining its club grounds. One of the main suggestions from the local community in relation to the development of the new field was the inclusion of a walking/running track around the club grounds. The club engaged with Croke Park on their plan, the feedback received was very positive and they were encouraged to pursue the development. To facilitate this development a number of other community based groups in the area joined with the GAA club to develop a healthy club/community culture. The groups formed the Kiltale Get Active Community Group. The groups involved included the:

- Kiltale I.C.A. group
- Kiltale Young at Heart Group
- Kiltale Ladies on the Run
- Kiltale Hurling Club
- Kiltale Camogie Club
- Kiltale School Committee

Through their efforts and cooperation a walking track was constructed in 2011. The construction of the track was financed completely from local fundraising activities.

Consultation with the Irish Heart Foundation throughout the various stages of the project resulted in the track being designated as a Slí Na Sláinte (Path to Health) Route. The Local Sports Partnership was also very supportive of this project.

The Kiltale GAA walking track provides a safe off road route for all members of the local community and surrounding areas. It is used by the whole community; parents after dropping children to school, people on the way home from work, families, and by a number of formal and informal walking and exercise groups.



One of the initial groups formed out of the development of the walking track now has an active membership of over 100 women. The current age profile ranges from 14/15 year olds to members in their 60s. The group started out as a walking group, which aimed to get local women active. Over time, as fitness levels increased the group enlisting the help of two trainers to work with them. While new and some longstanding members of the group continue to walk for exercise, many members are now running and setting new goals for themselves such as walking or running 5k or 10k or taking part in a marathon. The group meet and train on Monday and Thursday evening every week. They also meet socially once a month. This group is now a major driving force behind the further development of the facility and the project is currently working on developing the following additional facilities:

- Construction of outdoor toilets
- Refurbishment of changing rooms for female members
- Provision of meeting room and kitchen facilities
- Construction of sprint area and warm-up area

The track is also used by a walking group that is supported by Meath Sports Partnership on a weekly basis. Local men use the track but as of yet no group targeting men has been established. In addition, people are travelling from areas within a ten mile radius to use the facilities. These people would have previously exercised on the roads but they find the Kiltale facility provides a safer and better option and they like being part of a group which helps to keep them active.

This project in Kiltale is making a very positive contribution to the health and social wellbeing of the local community and beyond. It has also benefited the club through, increased membership and goodwill in the wider community towards the Club.

