



club gan ainm!



## Press Release

**06/05/2011**

**For Immediate Release**

### **Teenage endeavour delivers €400,000 Ireland's first community activity zone**

The initiative and endeavour of a group of Mayo teenagers has helped bring about a €400,000 community and activity zone that will bring physical and mental health benefits to a Mayo community for generations to come. The Páirc Bheo project is being officially opened today, Friday May 6<sup>th</sup>, in Belmullet at 2.30pm.

The project has been brought about because teenage members of Erris No Name Club identified the need for such a facility and formed a partnership with Mayo County Council to plan and develop Ireland's first community activity zone. Funding for the project was secured from MFG Leader, the Corrib Gas Partners and the Bellacorick Enterprise Fund.

The mental health and activity zone features:

- An interchangeable football pitch and basketball court
- A tennis court
- An outdoor gym (featuring bikes, steppers, abdominal workout area, stretching tower)
- A Boccia Court
- A teenage activity area to include table football, table tennis, a skate trainer, Dutch Disc and NEOS electronic game (this is an electronic game for kids, teenagers and adults and tests their mind, balance, agility and stamina).
- Trim track (providing a safe facility for the community to run or walk on).

The activity zone has been developed at the side of Belmullet Civic Centre and today's official opening will be attended by local councillors, the project funders, community leaders, No Name Club representatives, and students and staff from Our Lady's Secondary School and St Brendan's Vocational School.

The teenage Hosts and Hostesses\* of Erris No Name Club identified the need for a health and fitness outlet within their community and partnered with the local authority to plan the development. The first meeting between the local authority and the youth organisation took place in April 2010 and the first sod on the project was turned last October.

The project came about after the teenagers participated in a No Name Club initiative on healthy eating and nutrition that got the teenagers talking about health and fitness. Their discussions focussed on the community only having activity facilities that were attached to sports clubs and the idea for the activity zone was born. The first meeting between Mayo County Council and Erris No Name Club took place in April 2010 and the first sod on the project was turned October last year. Funding for the development was sourced from local and national grant sources.

The project is being funded through the Leader initiative (€150,000), the Corrib Natural Gas Erris Development Fund (€170,000), the National Lottery via the Department of Health (€40,000), Bellacorick Enterprise Fund (€33,000) and funding the No Name Club won thru The Sun/Super Valu Spirit of the Community initiative (€2,000).

**Edith Geraghty, Chairperson of Erris No Name Club,** says: *"This is a magnificent achievement for the teenage members of Erris No Name Club. They saw the need for a health and fitness amenity within the community and took it upon themselves to have such a facility delivered for young and old alike. We expect it to deliver much-needed and valued physical and mental health benefits to generations of young people and adults for years to come. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mayo County Council for engaging with the young people and helping them make their concept become a reality. The young people have created an excellent legacy for themselves by playing a lead role in developing this outstanding community amenity."*

**Con Nolan, Chief Executive Officer of the No Name Club** says: *"The No Name Club believes in the excellent capacity teenagers have to make valued contributions to every community in Ireland. This project highlights what can be achieved when young people are encouraged to play an active role within their local community and are provided with the support to do so. A core philosophy of the No Name Club is to develop teenagers' confidence and leadership skills and the work undertaken to provide this community amenity will stand the hosts and hostesses of Erris No Name Club in great stead for the years ahead."*

**Padraig Brogan, Senior Staff Officer in Mayo County Council** adds: *"Mayo County Council has built up a strong working relationship with Erris No-Name Club, commencing with the*

*successful “One for Life!” Road Safety campaign and culminating in the Páirc Bheo recreational park project which will be of benefit, not just for teenagers, but for all sections of the community. The hard work and enthusiasm by the club has seen a development which will be the envy of the county! I would like to pay tribute to Peter Hynes, County Manager; Joe Beirne, Director of Services; Martin Keating, Senior Executive Officer; Peter Gill, Parks Superintendent and four local County Councillors for their support for this unique facility, as well as the funders and the contractor Creative Play for their advice and support throughout the process.”*

**Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta**, the community development company, supported the project through the LEADER programme and **Eithne Dixon**, programme **Administrator** comments: *“The provision of this state-of-the-art facility encompasses many sections of the Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta Teo (MFG Teo) Business Plan for the delivery of the Rural Development Programme Ireland (2007-2013). Under the measure ‘Basic Services for the Economy & Rural Development’, the objective is to provide appropriate cultural and leisure facilities to local communities, not otherwise available to them. Under the LEADER programme, we are delighted to be involved in the provision of grant assistance of €144,513 to Erris No Name Club for the development of Páirc Bheo, which will benefit all elements of the Erris community, but specifically teenagers and those with special needs and the elderly.”*

**Paddy Cosgrove**, a member of the board of the **Corrib Natural Gas Erris Development Fund** says: *“We are delighted to be funding such a worthwhile project. Great credit is due to all members of Erris No Name Club, whose innovative idea to develop a safe recreational area for teenagers and young people in the Erris area has now been brought to fruition. Likewise great credit is due to Mayo County Council, whose technical input into the development has been invaluable. We have no doubt that this excellent facility will bring widespread benefits to the youth of the area for many years to come.”*

**Deputy Dara Calleary**, a long-standing supporter of the project comments: *“As a steadfast supporter and friend of Erris No Name Club since it's foundation in 2006, I am particularly pleased that the initiative, commitment and dedication of the group has come to fruition with the opening of this magnificent facility. This Activity Zone will greatly enhance youth facilities in the Belmullet town and wider community and I have no doubt that Erris will see the benefits of this in both the short and long term. It is especially encouraging to witness young people taking a stand to identify and deliver something that was sorely lacking in the community and I hope now that the entire community make use of the facilities. I am delighted to have been able to assist Erris No Name Club in their endeavour to deliver this most worthwhile project and wish them continued health, happiness and success for the future.”*

\*Hosts and hostesses are teenage male and female members of No Name Clubs and develop their leadership and confidence skills thru their involvement with the national youth organisation. They work with adult committee members to run activities and events that bring benefits to the wider community.

***Press release issued by Michael McGlynn, Communications Officer with No Name Club. For further information you can contact him at 045 435444 or 087 9082970. Edith Geraghty is available for further comment and can be contacted at 086 0820266.***

**Note for the Editor**

No Name Club is a National Voluntary Youth Organisation founded in 1978 and has 45+ clubs throughout the country. No Name Clubs are run by and for young people aged 15 years + who come together in a safe and lively environment where there's fun, friendship and enjoyment without the pressure of alcohol or other drugs. No Name Clubs were founded to provide an alternative to pub culture for young people in Ireland. They demonstrate a lifestyle in which the use of alcohol or drugs is seen as unnecessary to the enjoyment of a happy, cheerful and fulfilling social life for young people. Over the last 30 years, thousands of young people have valued their involvement in a programme of activities that allow them to enjoy themselves socially with their peers in a safe and friendly environment, free from the dangers and influences of alcohol and drugs. At present there are over 15,000 young people involved with No Name Clubs throughout the country.