

2023

Annual Report 2023

The Ballymun Youth Action Project CLG





The Ballymun Youth Action Project Ltd. Annual Report 2023.

Contents.

	Page
Chairperson's Introduction	1
Message from the Director	2
BYAP - Who we are	2
Report of Activities 2023	5
Services to Individuals	5
Education and Training Services	6
Examining the Figures	7
Other Services and Activities	8
Events	10
Organisational	12
Appendices	
Financial Statement	13
Governance	13
Organisational Structure	14

Chairperson's Introduction:

Our annual report marks another busy and successful year for BYAP. As always, we are grateful to the many people who contribute the work of the project, including staff, our service users and the community, as well as funders, board members and others who support the ongoing developments of the service.

The place of BYAP not just as a service provider in the community but also as an influencer in policy and practice initiatives was once again evident in 2023. Engagement with the Citizens Assembly, as part of the National Voluntary Drug and Alcohol Sector, provided a unique platform to share our experiences of communities impacted by drug and alcohol issues.

Among other success stories our Boxing Clever partnership and Infant Parents Support services are being recognised as the inspiring initiatives they are. Our training and education activities through URRÚS are growing from strength to strength and continue to develop timely responses to newly identified needs.

We are facing an important phase in developing responses to drug and alcohol concerns and it is more important than ever that individuals, families and communities are at the centre of those responses.

Once again, on behalf of the board I want to thank the staff for their hard work and commitment to the project. I also want to acknowledge the valued leadership of our Director Dermot King. I look forward to another exciting and innovative year for BYAP.

Hilda Loughran

Message from the Director:

The theme of substance use has featured strongly during 2023, with the conversations taking place as part of the Citizens Assembly, and the impact of newly presenting substances such as Nitazenes. The year has also seen the development of new initiatives that support the overall response to individuals seeking change in their substance use. Among these are the new initiatives within CH09 area to respond to Alcohol use, particularly where it is causing difficulties within the general population, while another initiative specifically targets the Hidden Harms for children where there is parental substance use. BYAP is involved in the roll out of these initiatives locally.

The theme of community has also feature significantly during 2023, partly driven by recent global events that are causing the displacement of peoples and the challenges faced by local governments in responding. Ballymun as a community has been active in promoting a just and welcoming response. Community representatives have also continually identified the need for training to be able to engage at fora where decisions are being made that impact on communities. Urrús with Citywide in 2023 have developed and delivered the first accredited training for Community Representatives.

This annual report will outline the main elements of the services provided and indicate specific additional initiatives that took place during the year.

As always, we are very grateful to so many people who supported the work of the Ballymun Youth Action Project over the year, including the Board of Directors, those using the services, funders and sponsors, and in particular the staff team who daily bring humanity, professionalism, and commitment to the work of the Project. We also thank those who joined us in our events and celebrations, and whose presence serves to remind us that we are responding to the impact of substance use in our community not just as individuals and families, but as a community. As we present this Annual Report, we wish to acknowledge the passing of Esther (Queenie) Barnes in August 2024. Queenie, filled with a sense of community and commitment was instrumental in the setting up of BYAP in 1981 and supported and guided the organisation in its development over the years.

BYAP – Who We Are.

The Ballymun Youth Action Project is a Community Response to Drug and Alcohol issues as they are experienced in this local community, and we work with individuals, families and the broader community. It was founded in 1981 after three young people from Ballymun died from drugs-related causes.

We seek to do this through

- Working with individuals who are using, reducing, or who have stopped using drugs and/or alcohol.
- Supporting families impacted by drug and alcohol issues.
- Supporting the community in their work of prevention and intervention as responses to drug and alcohol issues.
- And building capacity through training and research.

We believe

- That individuals with addictions can and do recover.
- The families of those affected by addiction do not have to cope alone.
- That the Community can be an effective place to recover.

And our ethos is rooted in

- Valuing individuality.
- Valuing the capacity of individuals, families, and communities.

Our services respond to a continuum of needs ranging from low threshold harm reduction positions to post substance use/abstinence-based aftercare provision. We believe that individual substance users do not exist in isolation, and accordingly we work with families and the community to facilitate change. We recognise the impact that drug use has on families and the local community, and our services also seek to address that impact. Within the delivery of services there are target groups who are in a transitional phase within their drug use, and the manner of service delivery is designed to incorporate this reality. Accordingly, there are also some collaborative pieces of service delivery within the organisation.

The work of the Ballymun Youth Action Project is funded from several different sources. The HSE, the Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force, and the Probation Service are the principal funders.



BALLYMUN YOUTH ACTION PROJECT

A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

SERVICES

ACCESS AND INTERVENTION CENTRE

PROVIDES MULTI-ISSUE DRUG AND ALCOHOL USERS, WHO STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN COMMITMENTS AND WHO HAVE MINIMAL CONTACT WITH OTHER SERVICES, ACCESS TO A RANGE OF DRUG TREATMENT SERVICES.



ADDICTION COUNSELLING

ADDICTION COUNSELLING IS A THERAPEUTIC PROCESS, INFORMED BY SPECIFIC SKILLS/THEORY IN WORKING WITH ADDICTIONS,



TREATMENT PROGRAMS AND COURSES

STRUCTURED DELIVERY OF SHORT COURSES, AND LONGER PROGRAMMES WHICH ADDRESS SPECIFIC ADDICTION RELATED AREAS.



PRISON RELATED SERVICES

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS TO DRUG/ALCOHOL USERS WHILE IN PRISON.



AFTERCARE/ CONTINUING CARE

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE CHANGES IN THEIR DRUG/ALCOHOL USE, ALONGSIDE RECOVERY ORIENTED ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING AND CELEBRATING CHANGE.



INFANT PARENT SUPPORT PROJECT

FOR PARENTS, PRE-BIRTH - 2 YEAR OLDS, WHO EXPERIENCE ISSUES WITH PROBLEM DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE,.



URRÚS

TRAINING, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH DIRECTED TOWARDS FACILITATING MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO THE CHALLENGES OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AS THEY IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

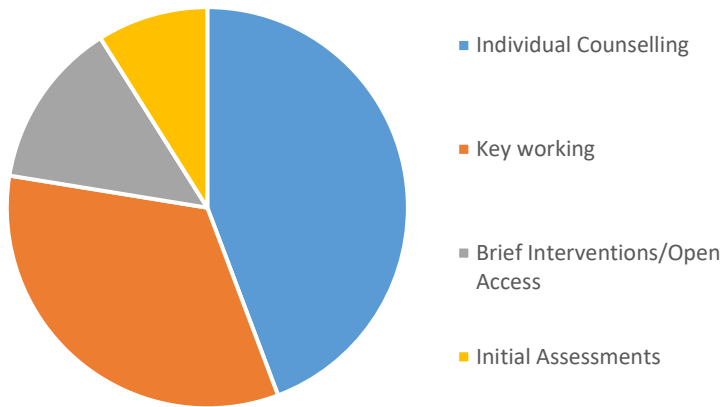


Report of Activities 2023.

In the following section the Activity of the Project is broken down into three sections. The Services Provided to Individuals, the Education and Training services, and the Other Services and Activities, including new initiatives.

A. The services provided to Individuals.

The Primary Work with Individuals during 2023



During 2023, 642 individuals had direct contact with the services of BYAP [372 Males, and 263 Females] through BYAP Core, Day Programme, Aftercare, the Infant Parent Support Project, and the GP Counselling Service

During 2023 there were 4,958 one to one interventions

Activity Type	2023
Individual Counselling	2,067
Key Working Sessions	1,555
Brief Intervention Sessions/Open Access	630
Initial Assessments	418
Home Visits	171
HSE Case Management	117



Other Interventions:

Activity Type	2023
Program Sessions Delivered	342
Therapeutic Groups	51
Client Case Meetings	122
Crack Pipe Exchange	628
Outreach	51
Parenting Interventions	182
Holistic Treatments	47
Acupuncture Treatments	153
Pro-Social/ Recovery Group Sessions	134
Complementary Group Sessions (Mindfulness/Yoga)	7

B. Education and Training Services



URRÚS provided the following training during 2023:

Urrus provided training to 214 participants during 2023

- Level 5 Community Addiction Studies Course[©]
- Level 5 Community Representatives Training
- Level 7 Diploma in Community Drugs and Alcohol Work
- Introduction to Addiction Studies
- Level 6 Urrús Keyworking, Care Planning and Case Management
- Level 9 Women and Substance Use
- Introduction to Alcohol and Street Drugs Staff Training
- Key Working and Care Planning
- Boundary Management
- Health Related Fitness (Boxing Clever)

The Day Programme/Treatment Programmes/Courses provided:

- Recovery Support Programme
- Relapse Prevention Programme
- SMART Recovery
- Boxing Clever Programme
- Crack Cocaine CM Group
- Stabilisation Programme
- Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention Programme
- Circle of Security
- Recover Me Programme
- Addiction Change and Recovery Programme



Examining the Figures

BYAP gathers data as part of the National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS). Within that data treatment is any activity involving a person who has an issue with substance use and which aims to improve the psychological, physiological and sociological state of the individual seek help. Treatment is linked to specific goals involving change. Normally it involves reduction or abstinence in relation to the main problem drug. During 2023, 479 treatments commenced through BYAP that were recorded on NDTRS¹.

Of the 472 treatments finished during 2023, 246 (52%) were successfully completed or the person was transferred/referred to another service. 104 completed treatment drug free, and 82 had reduced drug used. 44 completed treatment abstinent from alcohol, and 13 completed with reduced alcohol use.

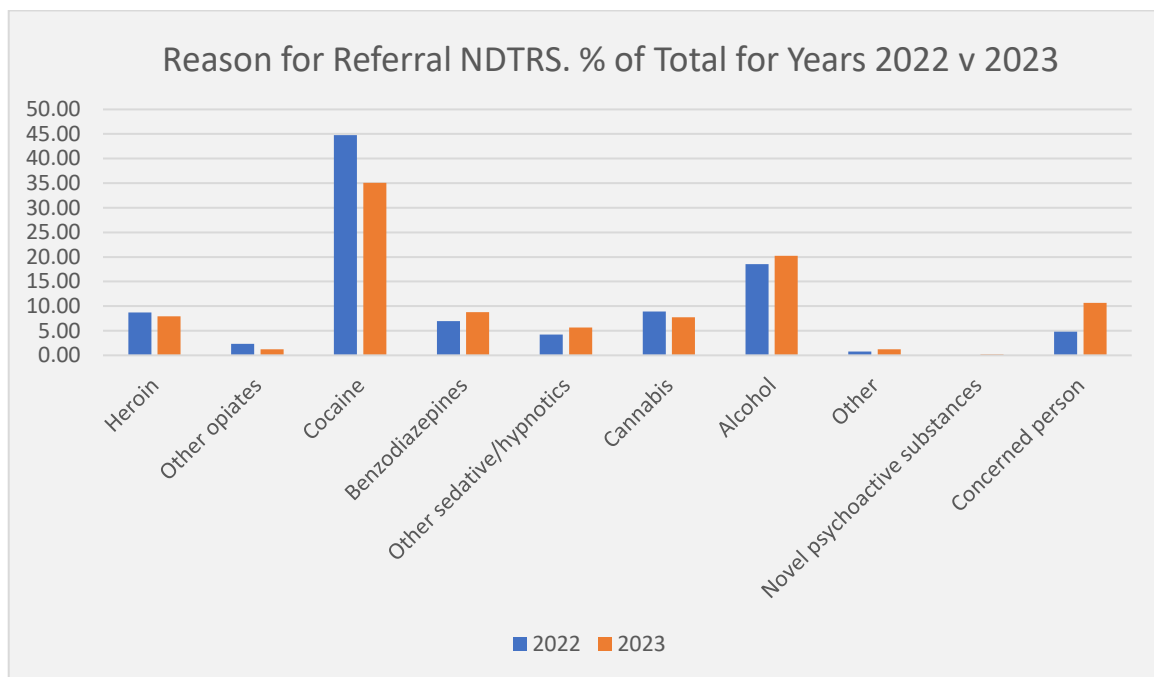


Fig. 1.

For the 479 treatment episodes recorded on the NDTRS system during 2023, an examination of the identified main problem drug highlighted the continued significance of cocaine (powder and crack cocaine) although there was an almost 10% reduction in reporting of cocaine as main problem drug from the 2022 figure. Heroin presentations remain consistent, while alcohol, benzodiazepines and other sedatives/hypnotics show small increases on the previous year.

¹ Note: The figures do not include individuals who linked to the services of BYAP, but for whom a HRB Form was not completed.

C. Other Services/Activities

Context

The Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use was established in 2023 to consider the legislative, policy and operational changes Ireland could make to significantly reduce the harmful impacts of illicit drugs on individuals, families, communities and the wider Irish society. The first meeting of the 100 members took place on the 15/16 April 2023, following a period of preparation by all stakeholders, including the Ballymun Youth Action Project. The Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use was published on 25th January 2024. To download the report, click on the links below.



- [Volume I: Foreword, Executive Summary, Meetings Summary and Recommendations](#)
- [Volume II: Record of Meetings, Results of Balloting, Appendices](#)

Apart from any legislative changes that may follow, the Assembly had the additional positive effect of placing communities and the impact of substance use back into the limelight.



During 2023 communities also faced another series of challenges emerging from an increase in protests against refugees and asylum seekers. In Ballymun this led to the formation of a community response, titled Ballymun for All, as local organisations, community groups and individuals recognised that such activity does not represent the spirit of Ballymun.

Community and Voluntary Drug and Alcohol services are now represented through a network organisation known as NVDAS and have been active over 2023. In July 2023 the group met with Minister Hildegard Naughton, Minister of State at the Department of Health with special responsibility for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy. The group also addressed the Citizens Assembly from the perspective of community and voluntary services.



The Probation Service hosted the first ever Community Based Organisations Summit: "Changing Lives in Our Communities" on the 28th of April 2023. The event was attended by Minister for Justice Simon Harris and Minister of State James Browne alongside other experts and stakeholders and provided an opportunity for the community organisations (CBO's) working with the Probation Service, including the Ballymun Youth Action Project, to showcase our work and to promote and encourage more collaboration with the Probation Service.

The National Drugs Forum 2023, Building Bridges for Evidence Informed Public Policy, took place on the 16th of November 2023. This annual forum allows

stakeholders to learn about and discuss new developments and thinking in drug and alcohol research and policy. The conference addressed the Irish and EU Drug and Alcohol Strategies, new developments within the Irish Health Care system, and undertook an exercise on “Foresight” which involves reflection on how to develop preparedness and anticipate both the threats we will face over the period of the next drugs strategy and the type of responses that will be needed. BYAP team members involved in this exercise as both facilitators and contributors. (PIC)



For several years, the team in BYAP and Urrús have been working with the Addiction Counsellors of Ireland (ACI) Organisation to create a recognisable standard for Project Workers who are involved in the Addiction area. In 2023 this was finally achieved with the introduction of a new category of membership for the ACI of Addiction Worker. Training for Addiction Worker Supervisors also commenced in 2023, and this recognition is a very positive development for workers and organisations.

Organisational

For several years there has been consideration of the need to review the name of the organisation, the Ballymun Youth Action Project. As the years have passed the “Youth” part of the title has become less representative. Additionally, it was increasingly felt that the name did not capture the work of the project. A process was started in 2023 to explore the possibility of changing the name. Representatives from the Board identified Steve Griffiths as the consultant who would work with BYAP in this process. Several stakeholder meetings were held from March to May 2023, which identified general agreement with the idea of a new name and outlined the possible titles that might be used. These ideas were developed further and eventually put to an EGM in early 2024.

Service

2023 saw a range of new initiatives begin within our service delivery. A clear referral pathway was developed within our eCASS data management system, which makes for much easier and clearer referral into and from the service.

2023 also saw the initiation of a specific Abstinence Based Aftercare Group in BYAP, a rolling nine-month programme with specific abstinence-based entry criteria.

As part of the wider HSE Initiative to Reduce the Health-related Harms from Cocaine and 'Crack' Cocaine BYAP rolled out the recently piloted Crack Cocaine Programme in July 2023.

The development of a new Integrated Alcohol Service by the HSE commenced in 2023, and staff of BYAP undertook the training to deliver SAOR EBI, a specific alcohol related intervention which addresses a currently unmet need.

Finally, in 2023, the Ballymun Job Centre entered a partnership with BYAP in the development and delivery of a new Career Compass Programme aimed at enabling service users return to meaningful employment in the work force.

The Ballymun Does Recovery Podcast, with Host Jimmy Ball, in December 2023 produced a helpful overview of the services of BYAP as part of a series on Treatment and Rehabilitation services. To hear the podcast go to:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/50TzLSfiYxir8UuL8FHq3y>

Events:



The Boxing Clever Graduation took place in July 2023. Guest speaker on the day was Mary Hulgraine, Kildare GAA Star, who spoke to the personal challenges of mental health, and to the potential of the role that sport & fitness can play in the recovery process.



Launch of the IPSP Room. The need for a dedicated



room to support the work of the Infant Parent Support Project was highlighted by the increasing number of parents attending the Project with babies and toddlers, and the lack of a suitably welcoming space. After a remodelling of the room, and a painting job supported by Seetec staff and other

volunteers, the room was launched on the 17th of November 2023 by Deputy Roisin Shortall TD.



IPSP Report Launch.

In May 2023 a report on the first 10 years of the Infant Parent Support Project was launched in the Ballymun Civic Offices Council Chambers. The report, “Someone to talk to...” Learning to Practice: Implementation of Ballymun Infant Parent Support Project 2012-2022”, by Laura O’Reilly, and Marie Lawless, is a very important step in documenting the significance of this initiative and the value of Infant Parent interventions where substance use is involved. The event, chaired by Prof Catherine Comiskey, Trinity College Dublin, alongside presenting the report, also provided a chance for those attending to hear the experience of parents who have engaged with the Project over those 10 years.



Launch of the Mural.

Starting in 2022 a group of people from BYAP, along with a local Art Tutor Christine Kiernan, began the process of designing a mural for the Courtyard in the Horizons Building. After 7 weeks of meetings and discussions, the final design for the Mural, “The Nature of Recovery” was agreed, and when the weather became

suitable in 2023 the painting commenced. The Mural was launched on the 18th of September and coincided with a Virgin TV AM programme broadcast from the Horizons Centre in Ballymun to celebrate Recovery Month.



Recovery Month.

BYAP has played an integral part of Ballymun's Recovery Month since this celebration of recovery started locally in 2019. Among the various events hosted by BYAP during the month of September including a pop-up Café, Naloxone Training, Open Meetings for AA, NA, GA, and CA, and Recovery Yoga, BYAP also formed the "Recovery Dance Group" who performed at the Recovery Gig, the Recovery Walk, and other events during the month.

Friends Remembering Friends.



The annual BYAP event to remember those who have died and support those who are grieving took place on the 15th May. Led by Fr Peter McVerry, the celebration used symbols, readings, and song to remember and support those who attended. There is an article in UISCE Magazine, Vol 1. 2023, pages 40-41 which features the event. See

<https://myuisce.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/UISCE-Magazine-Web-version-Website.pdf>

Urrus

There were significant staff changes in the Urrús training centre during 2023, with a change of both Director and Administrator. During those changes, the work done with the QQI Reengagement Panel led to the final approval by the PAEC on 21st September 2023. QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) is the state agency responsible for promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education system. QQI require all organisations who have been delivering QQI Accredited training to reapply for certification after a certain period.

Community Reps Training, developed in partnership with Citywide, and supported by the Department of Health, commenced delivery in November 2023 and provides a significant resource to individuals who have been given the task of representing their communities at local levels, particularly on Drug and Alcohol Task Forces.

As part of a wider review of the programme, the Diploma in Community Drugs and Alcohol Work, a partnership between Urrús/BYAP and UCD, was not delivered.



E. Organisational.

The BYAP Company AGM took place in person on the 28th of September 2023.

Ballymun Youth Action Project is compliant with the **Governance Code** for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector in Ireland, and is also registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority.

BYAP is also registered on the Register of Lobbying.

Support for the Project. We want to express our thanks to the BYAP Company members and the Board of Directors, whose enthusiasm, professionalism, and readiness to support the work of the Project have proven to be an enormous resource over the year. We also want to thank the many people who use our services, and who have stepped up into roles within groups and activities that have proved of benefit to everyone involved.



We are also very appreciative of the support that is given to BYAP from other organisations. Our thanks go to NOSTRA who continue to manage our IT system, and Salesforce and CANVA who provide software under their donations schemes. We would like to thank the Hygiene Bank Dublin, who continue to supply our service, and Seetec who supported the painting of the IPSP room.



We also would like to thank the many others who have been quietly supporting our work over the year.



Appendix 1: Financial Statement.

The Ballymun Youth Action Project Ltd.

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2023

Income.	896,442
Expenditure	
Cost of Generating Funds	28,991
Direct Charitable Expenditure	808,478
Governance Costs	8,384
Total Expenditure	845,853
Excess (Deficit) Income for Year General Fund.	50,589

Appendix 2: Governance.

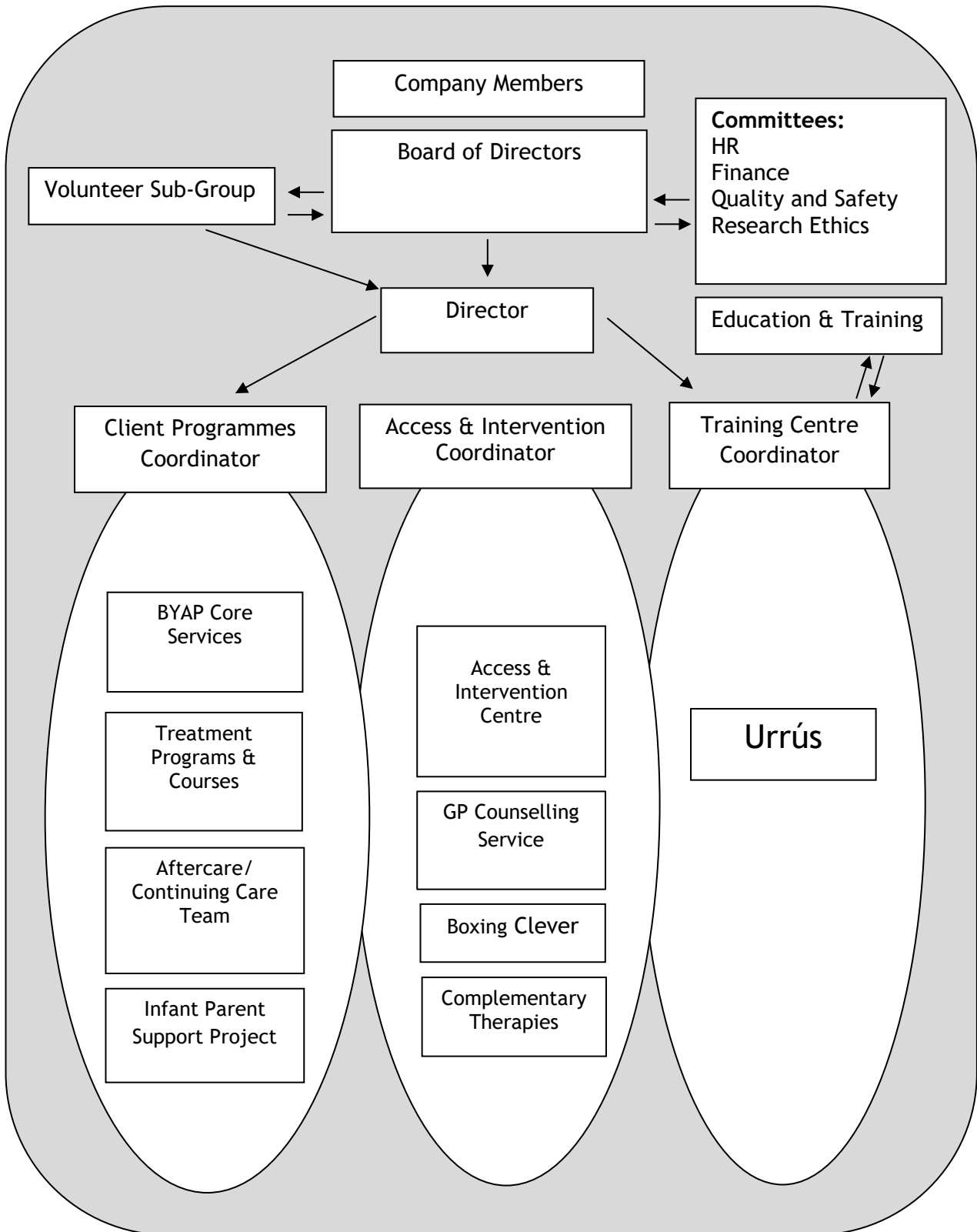
Ballymun Youth Action Project: Board of Directors: 2023.

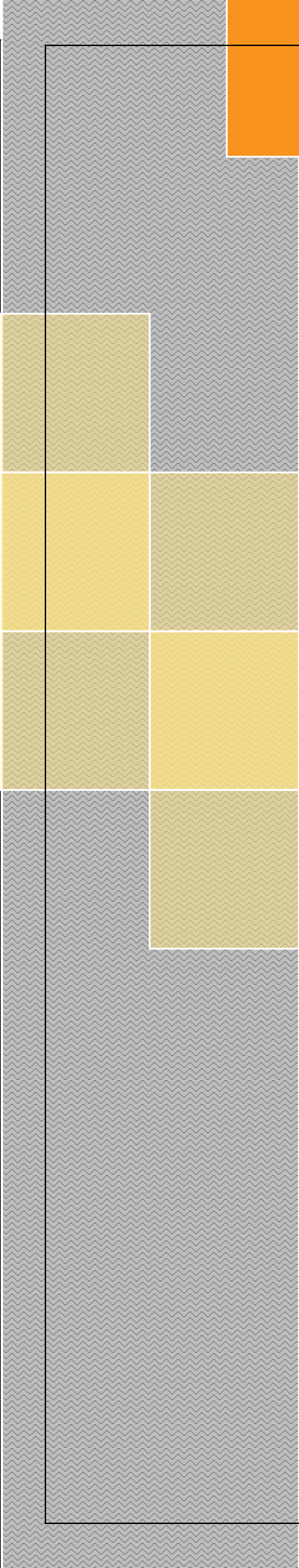
Hilda Loughran	Chairperson.	[11]
David McKenna	Secretary	[10]
Sylvia Gallagher	Treasurer.	[9]
Mary O'Flynn		[8]
Susan Ahern		[2] (Resigned November 2023)
Micheal Clear		[7]
Brid Hollywood		[3]
Marian Hackett		[6]
Nicola Watson		[2]

The Board of Directors met 11 Times during 2023.
Directors do not receive any fee or expenses.



Appendix 3: Ballymun Youth Action Project: Organisational Structure 2023





The Ballymun Youth Action Project Ltd
Horizons Centre
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Ballymun
Dublin 11

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Email: info@byap.ie. Web: www.byap.ie

