

2024

Annual Report 2024

The Ballymun Youth Action Project CLG





The Ballymun Youth Action Project Ltd. Annual Report 2024.

Contents.

	Page
Introduction	1
BYAP - Who we are	2
Report of Activities 2024	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

Introduction.

The complexities involved in effectively responding to substance use continue to become more apparent over the years. During 2024 we became increasingly aware of the fact that many people attending our services also struggled with mental health challenges. Homelessness or transient living conditions are increasingly found to make it very difficult for people to manage other areas of their lives. We also noted an increasing disclosure of domestic violence, coercive control, and sexual violence.

2024 was also marked by a significantly high number of deaths in the community, many related to substance use.

It was with sadness that we acknowledge the death of Esther (Queenie) Barnes in August of 2024. Towards the end of 1980, three young people died in Ballymun from drug related causes. In response, Queenie who was a local resident and mother of a young family, along with Frank Deasy, a trainee social worker, and Ineke Durville his supervisor, set about building what was to become the Ballymun Youth Action Project, a community response to drugs and alcohol. We are indebted to Queenie and her determined community spirit for having the courage and the compassion to act.

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



Front Cover: Art piece completed in Sept 2024 – Gabriela

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

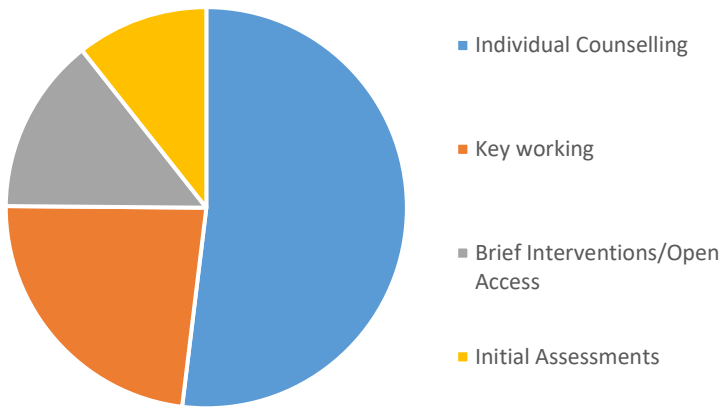


Report of Activities 2024.

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 2024



During 2024, **629** individuals had direct contact with the services of BYAP [366 Males, and 263 Females] through BYAP Core, Day Programme, Aftercare, the Infant Parent Support Project, and the GP Counselling Service

During 2024 there were **4,079** one to one interventions

Activity Type	2024
Individual Counselling	2,021
Key Working Sessions	903
Brief Intervention Sessions/Open Access	554
Initial Assessments	414
Home Visits	80
HSE Case Management	47
Integrated Alcohol Service	60



Other Interventions:

Activity Type	2024
Program Sessions Delivered	252
Therapeutic Groups	172
Client Case Meetings	111
Crack Pipe Exchange	781
Outreach	40
Parenting Interventions	77
Acupuncture Treatments	178
Pro-Social/ Recovery Group Sessions	237
Complementary Group Sessions (Mindfulness/Yoga)	22

B. Education and Training Services



URRÚS provided the following training during 2024:

Urrus provided training to 245 participants during 2024

- Level 5 Community Addiction Studies Course[®]
- Level 5 Community Representatives Training
- Introduction to Addiction Studies
- Community Reinforcement Approach
- Level 6 Urrús Keyworking, Care Planning and Case Management
- Introduction to Alcohol and Street Drugs Staff Training
- Introduction to Key Working and Care Planning
- 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
- Circle of Security
- Recover Me 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 2024, 518 treatments commenced through BYAP that were recorded on NDTRS¹.

Of the 527 treatments finished during 2024 (including some which were initiated in 2023) 242 (46%) were successfully completed or the person was transferred/referred to another service. 102 completed treatment drug free, and 55 had reduced drug used. 48 completed treatment abstinent from alcohol, and 17 completed with reduced alcohol use.

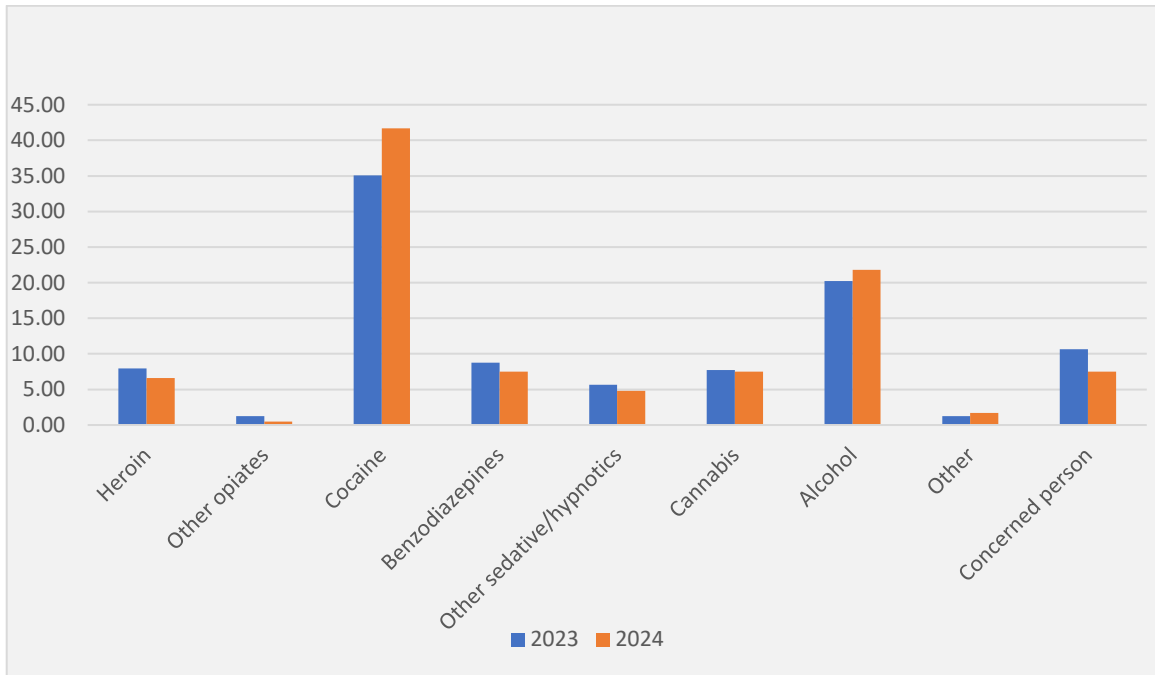


Fig. 1. For the 518 treatment episodes recorded on the NDTRS system during 2024, an examination of the identified main problem drug highlighted a significant increase in the use of cocaine (powder and crack cocaine) and an increase in Alcohol presentations. Heroin, benzodiazepine, other sedatives/hypnotics has all reduced slightly, while cannabis has more or less remained stable on the previous year.

C. Other Services/Activities

Context

Community and Voluntary Drug and Alcohol services continued to be represented through a network organisation known as NVDAS and have been active over 2024. In August 2024 the group met with Minister for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, Colm Burke



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

Organisation



The process of Changing the name of the Organisation from the Ballymun Youth Action Project to BRACE Community Response has been underway since 2023, and the Resolution was finally approved on 12th December 2024. During 2024 the development of the logo with Siobhan Griffin of ALPHABET SOUP and related branding was finalised and agreed.

Service

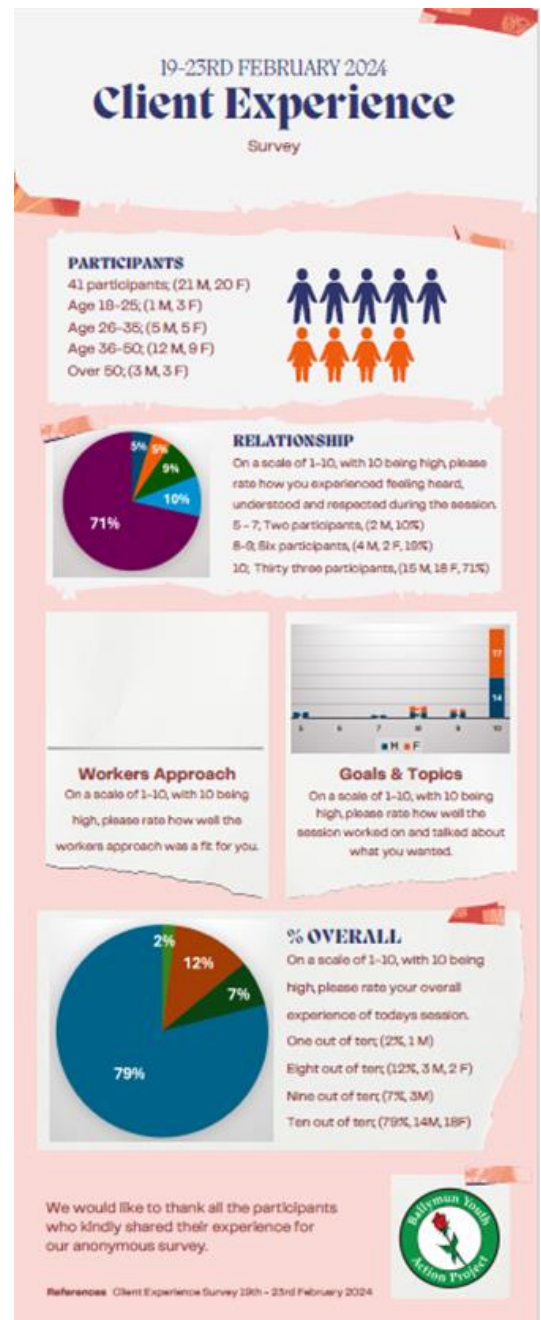
In February 2024 we undertook a survey of client experience. The results were very positive from this relatively small sample of those attending.

As part of the developments within the Addiction Counsellors of Ireland Organisation (ACI) and the development of a new membership category of Addiction Worker, staff of BYAP have completed training to be supervisors of workers seeking accreditation within this category, and relevant staff within BRACE have been working to attain this accreditation now that the structure is in place.

The specific Abstinence Based Aftercare Group initiated in BYAP, a rolling nine-month programme with specific abstinence-based entry criteria, has continued during 2024, with graduations occurring on an ongoing basis.

The development of a new Integrated Alcohol Service by the HSE commenced in 2023, and during 2024 Staff from BYAP completed training in a specific intervention approach titled SAOR Extended Brief Intervention (SAOR EBI) which addresses alcohol use, particularly for individuals who are not accessing services. Involvement with Primary Care is a key part of this approach.

During 2024 a new Narcotics Anonymous group commenced on the BYAP Premises, due to increase demand for attendance. CoAnon also ran a meeting in the premises during 2024.





For a number of years BYAP has linked to organisations addressing poverty in communities, and has joined “Food Cloud”, “Clothes for Change”. In 2024 we became part of the Ballymun Bike Library, which allowed members of the local community take out a three-month loan on ten electric bikes.

Events:



The Boxing Clever Graduation took place in July 2024. Guest speaker on the day was Eric Donovan, who retired from boxing in 2022, holding the EBU super-featherweight title, and

at the Graduation spoke to the potential that sport & fitness can play in the rehabilitation/recovery process.



Recovery Month.

BYAP has played in integral part of Ballymun’s Recovery Month since this celebration of recovery started locally in 2019. In 2024 a new initiative was launched as part of Recovery Month, funded by Ballymun Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force. Several speakers completed the Speak About Your Lived Experience training programme (SAYLE). They then took to the AXIS Theatre stage to share their stories providing hope, support, and encouragement to those on their own recovery paths or those seeking a recovery pathway.

Friends Remembering Friends.



The annual BYAP event to remember those who have died and support those who are grieving took place on the 17th June. The theme this year was “Diversity”, and the event was led by Fr Peter McVerry, the celebration used symbols, readings, and song to remember and support those who attended.

Crack Cocaine Research. In December the research “An exploration of women and crack cocaine use in Ballymun: trajectories, experiences, and interventions”, authored by Dr Laura O’Reilly, Criostoir MacCionnaith and Marie Lawless, was launched. The research builds on and responds to the findings emanating from the previous report (2019) by exploring the experiences of women using crack cocaine including their substance use and crack cocaine use trajectories; health and social experiences and intervention and supports needs. The Report is available at



<https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/42769/1/Women%20and%20Crack%20Cocaine%20Use%20in%20Ballymun%20pdf.pdf>



The **O’Rourke Memorial Cup** and **The Hanley Shield** football tournament took place in June 2024, with players and supporters from the community and from services.

Urrus

Certificates for the Community Reps Training, developed in partnership with Citywide, and supported by the Department of Health, were presented to participants in January 2024



E. Organisational.

The **BYAP Company AGM** took place in person on the 26th of September 2024.

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 wish to thank Alan Kinsella and the Ballymun Challenge Group who raised €6,000 for BYAP through completing this 48-hour challenge. Our thanks also go to Athora for their donation of stationary and a printer to BYAP during 2024.

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 2024

Income.	953,156
Expenditure	
Cost of Generating Funds	23,269
Direct Charitable Expenditure	919,530
Governance Costs	7,769
Total Expenditure	950,568
Excess (Deficit) Income for Year General Fund.	2,588

Appendix 2: Governance.

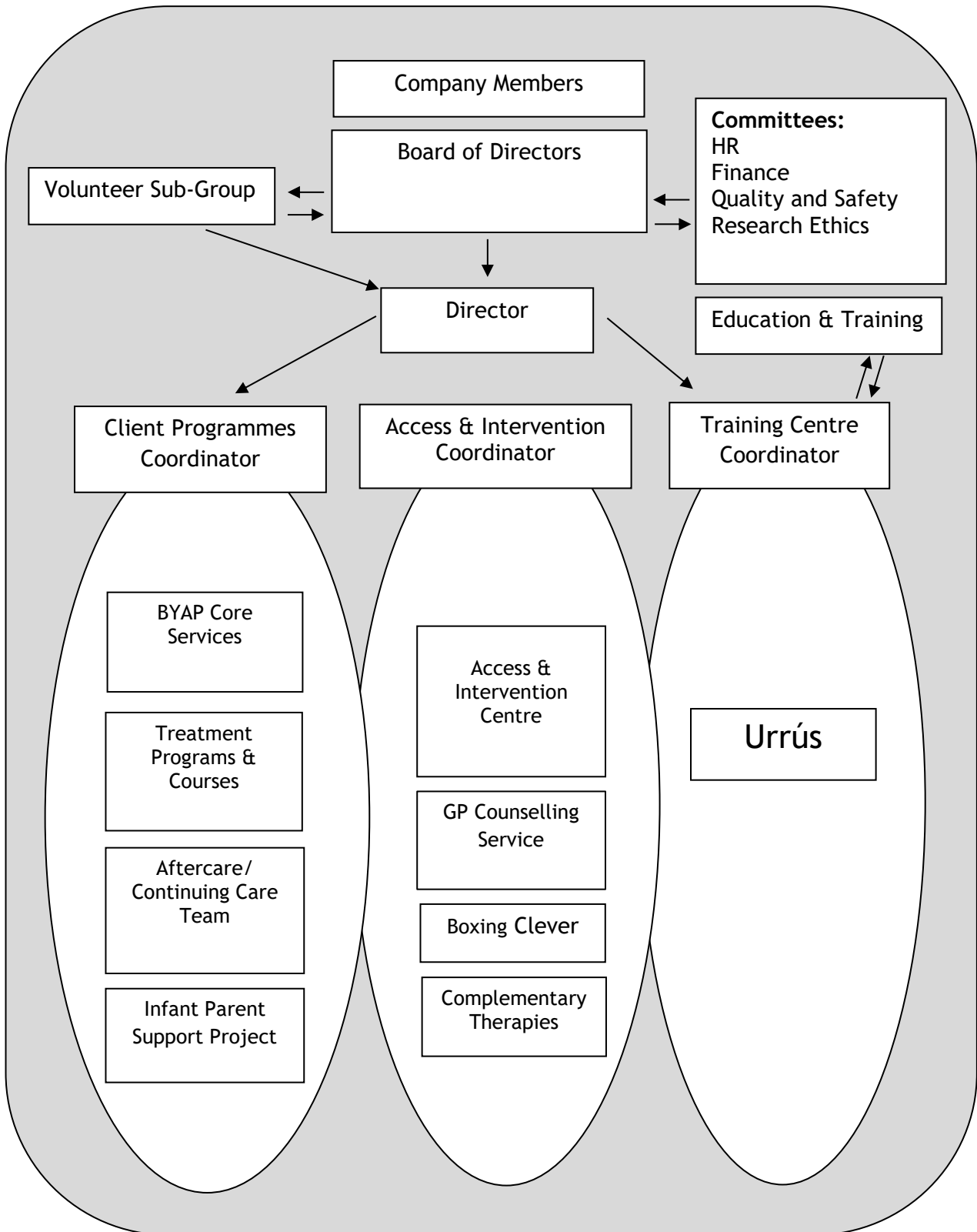
Ballymun Youth Action Project: Board of Directors: 2024.

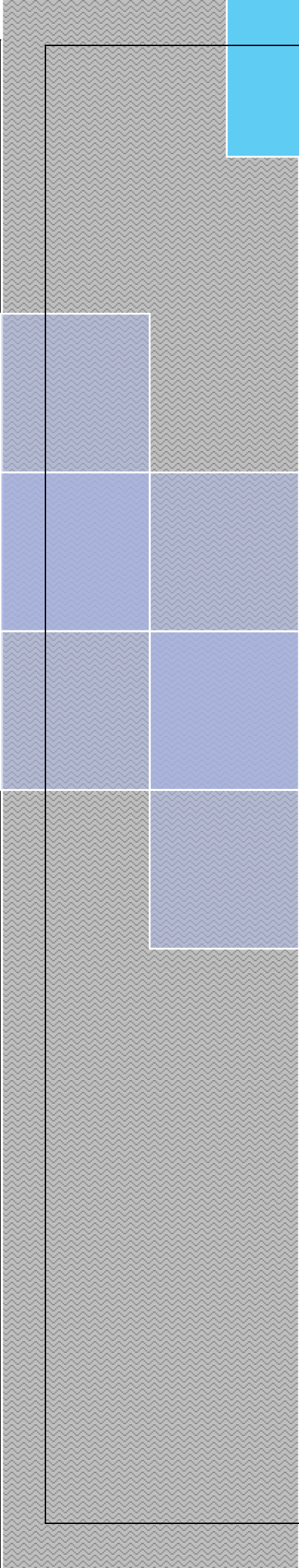
Hilda Loughran	Chairperson.	[10]
David McKenna	Secretary	[11]
Sylvia Gallagher	Treasurer.	[7]
Mary O'Flynn		[10]
Micheal Clear		[7]
Brid Hollywood		[4]
Marian Hackett		[10]
Nicola Watson		[9]

The Board of Directors met 11 Times during 2024.
Directors do not receive any fee or expenses.



Appendix 3: Ballymun Youth Action Project: Organisational Structure 2024





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