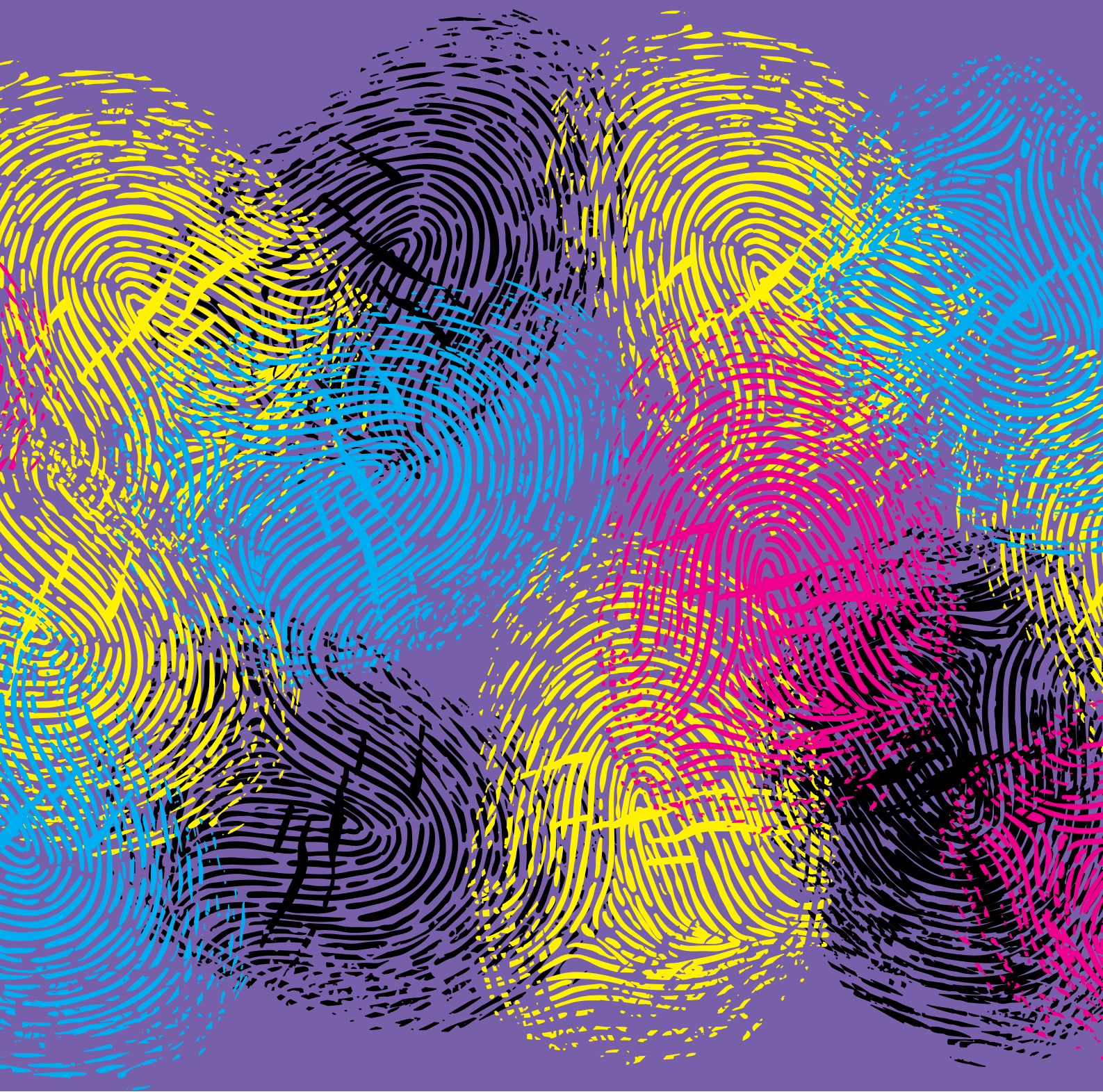




*The Butterfly Club*

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2028



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# Introduction



The Butterfly Club opened in Rathkeale, Co. Limerick in September 2004 as a follow-on to the 2003 Special Olympics World Games which were hosted in Ireland, the first time the games had ever been held outside the United States of America. Catering for 57 children and young people, this is the only service of its kind in the region.

The club was established by a group of volunteers to provide respite for parents/guardians of children, teenagers and young adults with special needs. It operates as a social club each Saturday afternoon. Attendees are divided into four groups (A, B, C and Youth Club) and each group attends for four hours on its allocated Saturday. Some attendees are dropped to and collected from the club by their parents/guardians while others avail of bus transportation provided by The Butterfly Club. The club also organises outings for attendees and their families and operates a two-week-long summer camp.

Admission to The Butterfly Club is on a referral basis from the West Limerick Children's Disability Network Team which conducts the initial assessment of need and suitability. Due to unprecedented demand, there is currently a waiting list for places. Attendance is completely free-of-charge.

Critical to the success of The Butterfly Club is the involvement of a myriad volunteers, all of whom are committed to working with children and young people with special needs to enable their parents and guardians to have four hours of respite time. Parents and guardians value this time deeply as it gives them the opportunity to do things they would not otherwise be able to so, safe in the knowledge that their child is being cared for by people they know and trust.

In addition to a voluntary board, there is also a committee of volunteers which meets on a monthly basis to plan and review their work. Each of the four groups has a volunteer group leader who is supported by a number of volunteers.

The Butterfly Club's volunteers span all age groups from transition year pupils to the retired. They are exceptional people who give of themselves and their time with no expectation of anything in return. Volunteers are rewarded with a sense of fulfilment and an opportunity to develop new skills and a better understanding of the needs of children and young people with special needs. Indeed, at least one volunteer has been inspired to use their voluntary service as a pathway into employment working with children with special needs.

The Butterfly Club is fortunate to have been given the opportunity to rent superb premises based in an industrial estate in Rathkeale, complete with parking facilities. The space has been customised specifically for children and young people with special needs and are sub-let to Enable Ireland during the week. This not only ensures that the facility is in use throughout the week, but it also provides a rental income stream for The Butterfly Club.

Other sources of income include grants and voluntary donations from a host of supporters, the majority of whom are connected in some way to a family that has availed of The Butterfly Club for their child.

Like all voluntary groups, COVID-19 had a profound effect. Having weathered that storm, the time is now right to look forward to the next 20 years of The Butterfly Club, ensuring that families are able to access what is seen as a 'priceless' service which delivers so much to both parent/guardian and child as well as volunteer.

# Our Mission

To provide leisure activities in a safe, fun-filled environment for children with special needs, while providing respite for parents/guardians.



# Our Values

## Professional

We are committed to maintaining excellence in governance, service delivery, volunteering, fundraising and our engagement with families, supporters and stakeholders.

## Trusted

We work as a trusted partner with families, volunteers, supporters and stakeholders. We value these relationships and are committed to developing them as a service provider and source of expertise.

## Caring

We care about children and young people with special needs and their families. Our actions are motivated by the goal of making a tangible difference to lives through service provision and promoting a better understanding of special needs.

## Community

"It takes a village to raise a child". We are committed to creating a community of people who interact positively with children and young people with special needs, and their families, allowing them to be themselves in a safe and healthy environment.

# Our Strategic Priorities

## 01

### Organisational Excellence

We are committed to working in the most efficient and effective way, using the trust placed in us, and the funds donated to us, to make a real and tangible difference to the lives of the families and children we work with.

## 02

### Service Delivery

We are committed to maintaining our high standard of quality, caring for as many families as possible, providing not just a respite service, but also access to facilities, expertise and information, as well as promoting a better understanding of special needs.

## 03

### Volunteering

Our volunteers enable us to deliver our service and, as an organisation, we want to continue to ensure that they feel appreciated, supported and fulfilled.

## 04

### Fundraising

Covid-19 has completely changed the fundraising environment, driving donations online. We will evolve the way in which we attract and engage with our supporters to ensure funding for future growth.

## 05

### Communications

Effective communications is key to raising awareness of the work of The Butterfly Club, volunteer recruitment, fundraising and our goal of promoting a better understanding of special needs.



# Strategic Priority 1

## Organisational Excellence



We are committed to honouring the trust placed in us by working in an efficient, effective and transparent manner which not only meets our legal obligations, but also makes a tangible difference to the lives of those living with special needs and their families.

### Governance

We will review and update all policies and procedures, to ensure the highest standards of governance in respect of The Charities Governance Code and our legal and moral obligations in respect of Health & Safety, Employment, Safeguarding/Child Protection, Fundraising and Data Protection.

### Board Development

We will embark on a board member recruitment process, looking for new people who share our vision and who are willing and able to share their time and talents with us. This will include the development of board member training and a succession plan to ensure we have a steady flow of new people ready, willing and able to serve as Directors.

### Board and Committee Meetings

We will review the structure and frequency of our board and committee meetings to ensure that volunteer time is used effectively, better facilitate informed decision making and to continue to ensure that each area of our work gets the dedicated time it needs.

### Professional Standards

We will become members of the Charities Institute Ireland and comply with their Triple Lock Standard.

### Impact Reporting

We will publish information about the work we do, the money we spend, and the impact we are making.

# Strategic Priority 2

## Service Delivery



Demand for the service we offer has increased over recent years and will continue to do so. As well as striving to increase capacity, we will also look at new ways to support parents/guardians and their children.

### Capacity

We will review our service delivery with a view to developing capacity and the ability to offer even more families access to our respite service. We will also explore the ability to access other leisure facilities on an exclusive basis to enable families to spend family time together in a sensory-friendly environment.

### Additional Support for Families

We are acutely aware of the struggle families experience when trying to access information and other services for their children. We will explore the possibility of integrating access to speech therapy, occupational therapy, family therapy and other important services as part of our service offering.

We will also work with parents, guardians and volunteers to establish a peer support group to enable families to meet, share experiences and knowledge, and support each other.

### Promoting a better understanding of special needs

We will dedicate specific time to promoting a better understanding of special needs amongst the general public through a range of initiatives to include a specialist speaker series and the provision of information and insight on a new Butterfly Club website and across our social media channels.

We will develop a workshop to enable people to better understand the experience and needs of children and young adults with special needs so that they can shape their own practice and behaviour to better meet the needs of the children and young adults they work with as part of their day-to-day work.

# Strategic Priority 3

## Volunteering



Our volunteers enable us to deliver our service and, as an organisation, we want to ensure that they continue to feel appreciated, supported and fulfilled. We also need to attract new volunteers to The Butterfly Club to enable us to meet our plans for the future.

### Volunteer Recruitment

We will embark on a volunteer recruitment drive to attract a new and diverse range of people to The Butterfly Club across a range of roles. This will include developing new volunteering collateral such as a Volunteer Manual, forming links with key organisations such as colleges and local community and professional groups, and creating a dedicated volunteering section on our new website.

### Training and Development

We acknowledge that volunteering is a great way to develop new transferable skills and build confidence. With this in mind, we will develop a training and development plan which will enable our volunteers to not just participate in robust induction training, but also access fully-funded specialist training delivered by other organisations to help them develop their skills base and interest in working with children and young people with special needs.

### Celebrating Volunteering

Without our many volunteers, The Butterfly Club simply would not exist. We want to celebrate the time and talent that so many people have given to us and the families we care for, not just as a means of saying 'Thank You', but also as a way of highlighting the diversity of roles we have to offer and inspiring others to get involved.

The development of the new Butterfly Club website is key to enabling us to showcase the tireless work carried out by very many people committed to making a difference to the lives of children and young people with special needs and their families.

# Strategic Priority 4

## Fundraising



Covid-19 has completely changed the fundraising environment, driving donations online. Like all charities, The Butterfly Club must evolve the way in which it attracts and engages with its supporters.

### Fundraising Governance

We will review and update all policies and procedures relating to fundraising, to ensure the highest standards of governance. We will also create guidelines for supporters holding events to fundraise for The Butterfly Club to ensure that we are able to support them fully as they support us.

### Digital Fundraising

We will embrace digital fundraising, facilitated by a new website, to enable supporters to donate electronically and by card. This will also include the introduction of personalised supporter QR codes and support for those utilising third-party fundraising platforms.

### Donor Relations

We will introduce a new system of keeping in touch with our supporters, which will include the production of newsletters and other communications to show them how their donations are making a difference to the lives of children and young people with special needs, and their families.

### Tax Efficient Giving

We will be more robust in encouraging supporters who exceed the tax effective giving threshold to allow us to reclaim the tax they have paid on their donation, enabling us to increase the value of their gift at no extra cost to the donor.

# Strategic Priority 5

## Communications



Effective communications is key to raising awareness of the work of The Butterfly Club, volunteer recruitment, fundraising and our goal of promoting a better understanding of special needs.

### Digital Communications

Our website is our shop window. We want people to be able to visit it to learn about our service, find useful information, express an interest in volunteering and donate. We also want it to be a place where we can celebrate the time and talent that continues to make a real difference to the families we care for.

We will develop a new online presence that is easy to navigate, fully accessible and helpful to families, potential volunteers and donors alike. We will also expand our social media presence to include additional channels and explore other ways of communicating with families, volunteers, supporters and stakeholders.

### Media Relations

We will put in place a media relations plan that will enable us to engage with local and national media on a more regular basis, showcasing our service and the expertise we are able to offer in respect of children and young adults with special needs.

### Crisis Management

Our reputation is our most valuable asset as it underpins the trust placed in us and the service we offer. We will develop a crisis management communications plan to enhance our already robust operational response planning, ensuring that we are able to communicate with families, volunteers, supporters, media and other stakeholders in an open and effective manner should an incident arise.

## Contact

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