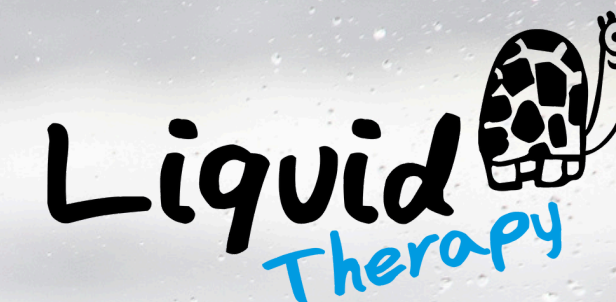


# Liquid Therapy



## Annual Report 2023

Sharing the mental health and wellbeing benefits of the surfing and the outdoors.

[www.liquidtherapy.ie](http://www.liquidtherapy.ie)





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# Words from the Chair



Firstly, I am honoured and excited to step into the role of Chair for Liquid Therapy. Before we reflect on the past year, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible work and dedication of our former Chair – Niamh Boyle, Vice Chair – Daveth Fox and Secretary – Lisa Deery Brown. As they step down from their roles in a positive transition, it ends a significant chapter in the Liquid Therapy story. During their tenure we achieved remarkable milestones, from helping to lay the initial organisational foundations of Liquid Therapy, to officially becoming a registered charity in 2021, to building our dedicated surf centre in Rossnowlagh that we utilise today. Liquid Therapy is a stronger and more sustainable organisation as a result of your passion and dedication – so thank you all!

As we say farewell to Niamh, Daveth and Lisa, I would like to wish a warm welcome to the next wave of voluntary Board Members. To Andrea Borain, Ryan Bradley and Rory Fallon thank you for committing your time and energy to building a sustainable future for Liquid Therapy. To the rest of our board – Katie, Dymphna and Franck – thank you for making the induction on to the board so welcoming and seamless. To Tom Losey, our CEO and Founder, your vision, passion and enthusiasm remain the heartbeat of Liquid Therapy.

As we reflect on 2023, it has been another remarkable year for Liquid Therapy. We have worked with 432 individuals across 6 tailored programmes in 2023, with 266 of those being new participants. Additionally, we hosted over 500 attendees at Ireland's first BLUESURFEST in September, launched our Liquid Therapy app and have delivered 2,317 individual sessions to our participants across 2023.





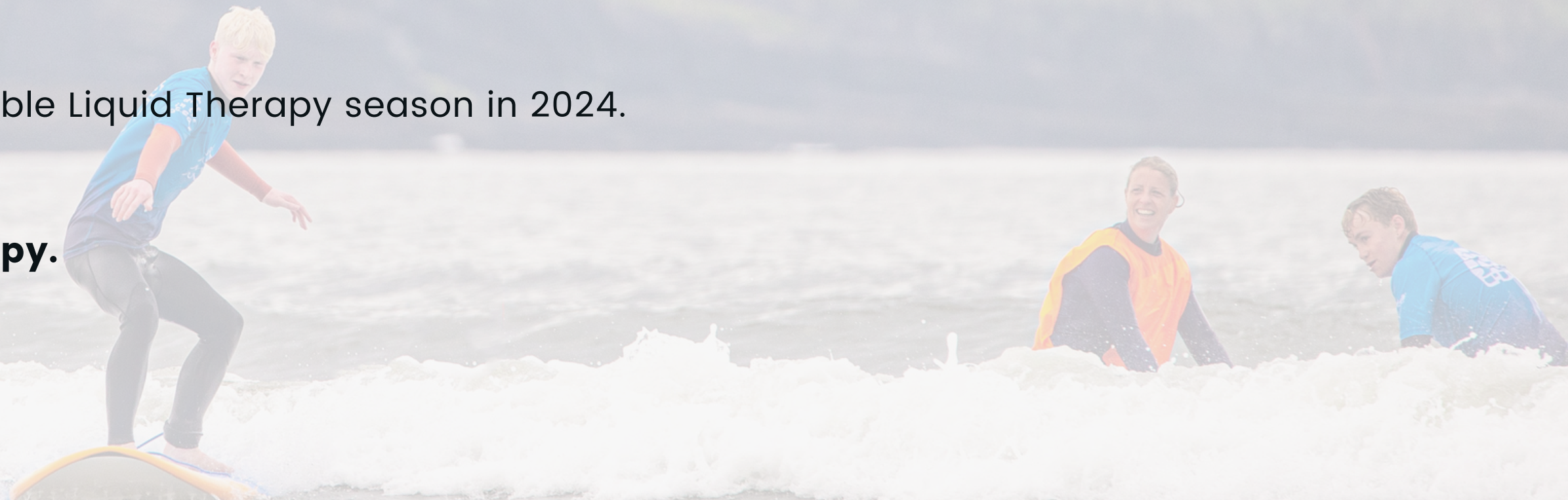
A heartfelt thank you to everyone who makes this possible: our dedicated Liquid Therapy team at HQ, our board and our panel of experts. A special appreciation goes to our Volunteers; your unquestionable energy and kindness enable Liquid Therapy to make the impact that we do.

As the new Chair, I am enthusiastic about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. My goal is to build on the solid groundwork laid by my predecessors and to push the boundaries of what we can achieve together. In the coming months, we will focus on expanding our Blue Space and surfing programmes and create a new strategic plan for 2025 to 2028. We are committed to building a strong Liquid Therapy organisation and a surrounding community with the facilities, infrastructure, and team needed to achieve our vision. We aim to inspire and practically help others to make our Blue Spaces more inclusive, as part of becoming a more open, welcoming sporting community and broader society.

I am confident that with your continued support, we can make a lasting difference. I encourage each of you to stay engaged, spread the word about our work, and join us in our upcoming initiatives. Together, we can make a real impact and advance our mission to bring the benefits of our Blue Spaces to all. Lastly a huge thank you to our Funders, Donors and Partners for your continued unwavering support and generosity.

I look forward to another impactful and enjoyable Liquid Therapy season in 2024.

**Rob Timony,**  
**Chair of the Board of Directors, Liquid Therapy.**







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# Our Story

Established in 2011, Liquid Therapy provides a supported environment for individuals facing barriers to mainstream surfing opportunities. Since its inception, the organization has evolved from a small volunteer-run group to a Registered Charity with a national presence. With a core staff team and dedicated volunteers, Liquid Therapy delivers tailored programmes to its community. In 2021, Liquid Therapy achieved charitable status and opened the first Inclusive Surf Centre in the country. The organisation has been recognised with numerous awards, including the Arthur Guinness Award (2014), the National Lottery Good Cause of the Year Award (2019), and in 2023 the 'Most Impactful Outdoor Company' Award from Outsider Magazine.

Since 2021, Liquid Therapy has been a partner in several large scale projects including INCLUDESEA, an EU collaborative project aiming to create best practice guidance for inclusive surfing and BLUESURFEST, an EU wide series of Blue Health Festival's. In 2023, the organisation also secured the Sport Ireland 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion Funding' in collaboration with Donegal Sports Partnership and Sport Ireland, to further develop its mental health programme A Drop in the Ocean (ADITO).

Looking forward, Liquid Therapy aims to continue to expand to meet the growing demand for its services as well as being dedicated to sharing its knowledge and expertise to contribute to the advancement of inclusive practices in sport.





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# Mission Vision Values



## Our Mission

Our mission is that the mental health and wellbeing benefits of the outdoors, and Blue Space in particular, are available to all – regardless of any existing barriers – intellectual, physical, behavioural or emotional.

## Vision

- To provide Blue Space and surfing programmes to those who currently find that challenging to access, so they can enjoy a variety of surfing experiences and the longer term outcomes this can deliver.
- To build a strong sustainable Liquid Therapy organisation and a surrounding community with the necessary facilities, infrastructure and team for the long term benefit of all.
- To inspire, practically help and train others to make outdoor opportunities and Blue Space more inclusive, by being the leading organisation in Ireland and a thought leader among a welcoming sporting community and broader society.
- To demonstrate our impact and share our knowledge with others.

## Values

- INCLUSION – removing barriers to participation.
- RESPECT – treating each other and our environment with consideration.
- INNOVATION – exploring opportunities for learning and growth.
- COMMUNITY – supporting our families, local area and broader society.
- FUN – creating connections and building positive experiences.



“

“I learned how to surf –  
even if you fall it’s okay  
to get back up.”

Liquid Therapy Participant





# Snapshot



## Headstart

Liquid Therapy is a recipient of the HeadStart fund from Rethink Ireland supporting youth Mental Health in Ireland from 2023-2026.



## BLUESURFEST

BLUESURFEST, an EU funded project in 6 countries across Europe, is the first Blue Health festival in Ireland in September.



## INCLUDESEA

A European consortium developing best practice guidelines for inclusive and adaptive surfing, concludes by publishing an industry 'toolkit' of resources.



## Community Services Programme (CSP)

Liquid Therapy is a recipient of the CSP programme, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCDC).



## Mobile Application

Liquid Therapy's new mobile application is launched.



## Outsider Awards 2023

Liquid Therapy wins 'Most Impactful Outdoor Company' 2023.







# 2023 In Numbers



**2,317**



The number of individual sessions delivered to Liquid Therapy participants in 2023.

**552**



The number of volunteer hours that supported our programmes in 2023.

**500+**



The number of people who attended BLUESURFEST, a festival promoting the physical and mental health benefits of surfing.

**432**



The number of individuals Liquid Therapy worked with in 2023.

**7.6%**



The statistically significant increase in well-being from participation in our ADITO programme.





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# Programme Delivery

In 2023, Liquid Therapy expanded its delivery season, delivered a full season of programmes and events and continued to support its surfers and their families. The delivery season ran from April to October, with 2317 individual water sessions provided to 432 participants across 6 tailored programmes and 2 events.

Programmes were held at the Liquid Therapy Surf Centre in Rossnowlagh Beach, Donegal, as well as a satellite project in Streedagh Beach, Sligo. In addition, Liquid Therapy provided 4239 contact hours and 2847 respite hours to participants and families.



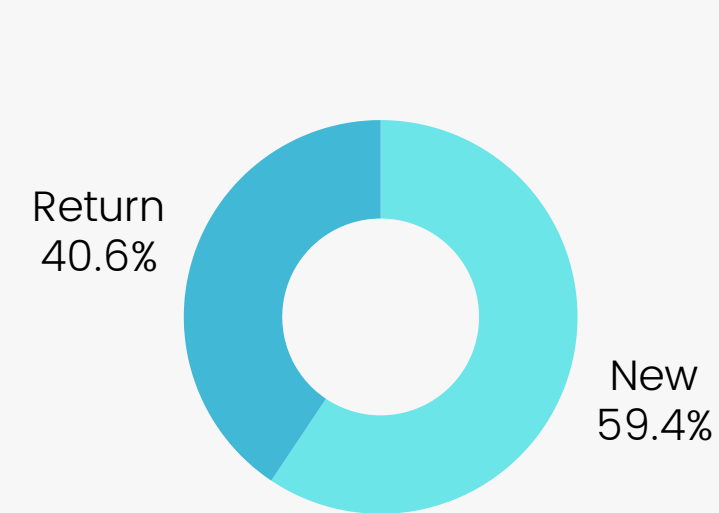




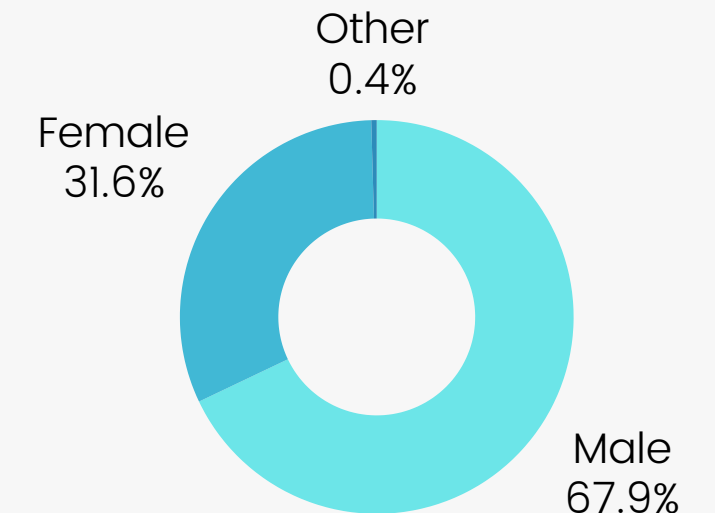
# Our Participants

During the 2023 season, Liquid Therapy worked with 432 participants, out of which 353 service users engaged with the new booking system. This system has been instrumental in enhancing our understanding of Liquid Therapy's audience. The information gathered is essential for us to deliver personalised and effective services. By analysing this data, we have gained valuable insights that enable us to allocate young people more efficiently in our programmes and conduct sessions that are well-informed and safe.

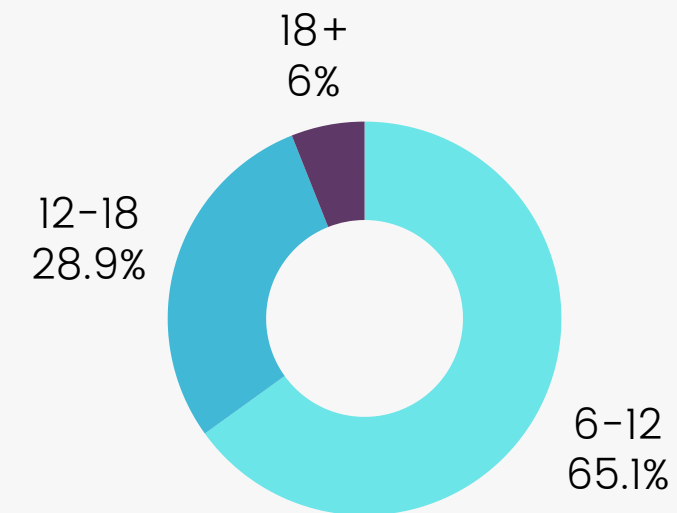
Among the participants in 2023, there were 266 new users and 182 repeat users. The gender distribution consisted of 305 males, 142 females, and 2 non-binary individuals. Additionally, 216 participants were from Donegal, while 159 were from outside the county. In terms of age groups, there were 273 individuals under 12, 96 under 18, and 20 over 18 years old. Finally, in 2023 we worked with individuals across 49 different conditions or diagnosis.



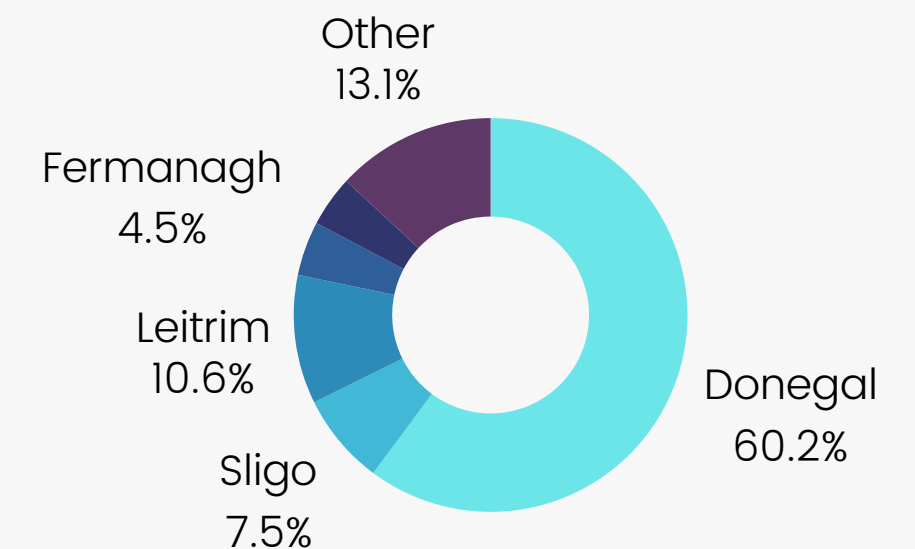
**Repeat participants**



**Gender**



**Age profile**



**County of origin**



# Programmes



## Surf Experience

Surf Experience offers a one to one experience for each surfer allowing them to enjoy the benefits of the Ocean in a supported environment. In 2023, we delivered 199 sessions to 87 individual surfers during July and August.

## ADITO

A Drop in the Ocean (ADITO) is an 8 week evidence based programme with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. In 2023 we delivered 9 programmes, to 95 surfers, delivering 521 individual water sessions and providing over 1000 respite hours to parents and carers.



## Surf Club

Liquid Therapy's Surf Club programme supports surfers who are progressing towards independent surfing. In 2023, 16 surfers benefitted from the programme through 144 individual water sessions.

## Surf Camps

Our Sibling Inclusive Surf Camps offer a chance for a shared Ocean experience. The camps run over 4 days and combine both beach time and surfing time. In 2023, Liquid Therapy delivered 120 individual sessions to 31 surfers.

# Programmes



## Big Brother Big Sister

The Big Brother Big Sister Programme is a collaboration with 'Irish GAP Year' Volunteers providing a unique befriending experience to our surfers. In 2023, two spring and autumn 4 week programmes provided 66 individual surf sessions to 65 surfers.

## LT OPEN

The LT OPEN is Liquid Therapy's end of season celebration event, bringing together families and the community in a big fun day out. On the 24th of September 2023, 68 surfers and 48 volunteers participated in a day long event.



## Surf Experience (wheelchair accessible)

Our wheelchair accessible programme offers additional support for young people with mobility challenges. Over July and August 2023, we delivered 16 sessions to 8 surfers.

## Pool to Ocean

In 2023 Liquid Therapy worked with 13 young Ukrainian refugees. The programme delivered 123 individual sessions over 10 weeks. The programme was part delivered in Waterworld Bundoran, before moving the sessions to Rossnowlagh Beach.



“

“He is a lot happier in himself  
and confidence with the sea  
grew more.”

Liquid Therapy Participant Parent



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# Wider Impact

In 2023, Liquid Therapy was actively involved in various projects and events that extended beyond traditional programme delivery, showcasing a broader impact. Notable highlights of the year included the successful conclusion of the INCLUSEA project, a 3-year initiative funded by the EU's ERASMUS+ programme, which aimed to develop best practice guidelines for surf therapy organizations. Another significant project was BLUESURFEST, an EU-funded network of festivals focused on promoting the physical and mental health benefits of surfing, where Liquid Therapy engaged with over 500 individuals.

Additionally, through the 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion Funding,' Liquid Therapy developed a mobile application to enhance programme delivery and impact monitoring, alongside creating a comprehensive Evaluation Framework to assess programme effectiveness. As part of this project, an evaluation report was published, detailing the positive outcomes of participating in Liquid Therapy programmes.







# Innovation for Sports Inclusion

Liquid Therapy was a recipient of Sport Ireland's 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion Funding' 2023. The fund's vision is to address key challenges and barriers to increase participation in sports. Collaborating with Donegal, Sligo, and Leitrim Sports Partnership, the project aimed to establish a robust framework of resources for Liquid Therapy's mental health and well-being programme, A Drop in the Ocean (ADITO).

This framework included the development of lesson plans, a training methodology for new instructors, an evaluation framework to measure programme impacts, and the creation of a supporting mobile application. The evaluation report highlighted that Liquid Therapy's surf therapy intervention led to significant moderate enhancements in youth well-being and had a substantial positive impact on group socialization. This initiative was made possible with support from the 'Dormant Accounts Fund'.





# Summary of Impacts

Summary of impacts resulting from Liquid Therapy programmes, as identified by the 2023 Report 'A Drop In the Ocean – A Surf Therapy Evaluation', by Dr. Easley Britton & Dr. Jamie Marshall. See link to full report here: [Surf Therapy Report \(ADITO\) 2023.](#)





# BLUESURFEST

BLUESURFEST Ireland was held from September 22nd to 24th, 2023, in Bundoran and Rossnowlagh in Co. Donegal, Ireland. The event, which attracted over 500 attendees, focused on promoting the physical and mental health benefits of surfing. Attendees enjoyed a range of activities, including a full day inclusive surfing event, music performances, film screenings, and educational events and training. A standout feature of the weekend was the 'Power of Blue Seminar', a pioneering event in Ireland that highlighted the benefits of surf therapy and advocated for inclusion in sports. BLUESURFEST was part of a larger European project that also took place in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain during Autumn 2023, with co-financing from the Erasmus + Sport Programme.







# Wider Impact

## Connect Mental Health

Liquid Therapy delivered a Surfing and well-being Workshop as part of the Donegal based 'Mind Your Melon' initiative from Connect Mental Health. Transition Years Students from St. Catherine's Vocational School in Killybegs attended a taster session at our Surf Centre in Rossnowlagh.

## INCLUDESEA

The INCLUDESEA EU Erasmus+ sport project ran from 2020 to 2023. The project aimed to create best practice guidance for surfing instructors working with individuals with physical and/or sensory needs. The project concluded with a best practice guide published in 2023. INCLUDESEA was co-financed by the Erasmus + Sport Programme.



## Outdoor Therapeutic Activity Providers Network Ireland (OTAP)

Liquid Therapy was actively involved in the OTAP network in 2023. With funding from The Wheel, 10 organizations collaborated to conduct 5 online training events, 3 face-to-face events, and an autumn conference. The network aims to support the outdoor therapy sector in Ireland.

## Social Prescription

Liquid Therapy is a registered service provider for the MACE project, managed by the CAWT Partnership and TUSLA, supported by the European Union's INTERREG VA Programme. In 2023, Liquid Therapy delivered the ADITO (A Drop in the Ocean) programme to 12 at risk young people through the MACE referrals system.



# Wider Impact



## Family Days

In July and August 2023, Liquid Therapy ran family sessions with Rossinver Youth & Community Project. The project aimed to support families dealing with addiction issues. Over the course of 8 sessions, 15 individuals attended, availing of 2 to 3 sessions per family and a total of 39 individual water sessions.

## Feasibility study

In 2023, Liquid Therapy secured funding from Pobal to conduct a feasibility study. This study enabled us to perform a market analysis to inform our 2025-2027 strategic plan, development of Liquid Therapy programmes, the Inclusive Surf Centre, and potential service expansion.



## External Training

In Spring 2023, the Liquid Therapy team trained 13 volunteers from Lahinch, in partnership with the West Coast Surf Club. The training aimed to support the surf club to provide inclusive sessions for Ennis Voices for Autism. The training included both theory and practical sessions on the beach.

## Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)

The IWA Letterkenny's 'The Socialites' Youth Club attended a second season of surfing with Liquid Therapy at Rosstown Beach. Four participants attended each of the four sessions held in May and June 2023. The sessions promoted physical activity, social interaction, and personal growth.





# Media & Communications

Liquid Therapy actively engages its audience across multiple social media platforms, alongside regular updates on its website and through email newsletters. This comprehensive approach effectively promotes awareness of its mission and shares compelling narratives surrounding mental health and inclusion within the community and broader networks.

In 2023, Liquid Therapy garnered a substantial following, surpassing 8,000 followers across Facebook and Instagram, with a combined social media reach exceeding 50,000. To broaden its impact, Liquid Therapy launched a LinkedIn account in 2023, utilising the platform to communicate with a B2B audience more effectively. Furthermore, the introduction of a YouTube channel facilitated the housing and sharing of our longer form video content. Additionally, a quarterly e-newsletter launched in late 2022 has attracted over 450 subscribers, keeping families and stakeholders informed of news, programme updates, and organisational advancements.

Our website, is a key platform for users to engage and access information, which saw significant traffic in 2023. Our website boasted impressive metrics with nearly 27,000 page views and over 4,250 new users engaging. Finally, the organisation received media coverage from more than 15 online and print outlets in 2023. Liquid Therapy also received coverage on national radio station Today FM, where they attended our BLUESURFEST and documented their first attempt at surfing on their social channels. Looking forward, Liquid Therapy is developing an expanded communications strategy for 2024 and beyond.







# In Numbers



**50,000+**



Reach on Instagram & Facebook

**26,900+**



Total website page views

**8,000+**



Followers on social media

**450+**



Subscribed to our newsletter

**16+**



Coverage on Irish Media Outlets



“

“The young people are much more relaxed and joyful after their sessions.”

Group Leader



# Strategic Plan

Liquid Therapy's strategic plan for 2022-2024 was developed in collaboration with an external consultant in 2021 to outline the organization's key goals and objectives until 2024. Throughout 2023, significant progress was made towards achieving these goals by expanding programmes to new audiences and securing sustainable funding sources, including Government funding, social enterprise development, and philanthropic support.

The focus was also on scaling the ADITO programme, enhancing impact management with external researchers, and sharing successes and learnings. The organization remains dedicated to accomplishing its remaining goals for 2023-2024 and plans to create a new strategic plan for 2025-2028 in 2024.





# Strategic Plan

## High level Goals

Liquid Therapy's current strategic Plan runs from 2022-2024. Planning is currently underway for the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan.



### Build and scale our programmes

- Increase staff levels to match our increased size.
- Broaden out to other audiences.
- Serve 960 participants by 2024.



### Infrastructure for our participants

- Develop Phase One of the Surf Centre.
- Prepare for Phase Two on the site as it is developed.



### Be financially sustainable

- Increase funding with current sponsors.
- Gain new funders and seek more sustained funding streams.
- Develop a fundraising and donations plan.



### Inspire and help others

- Collaborate with the Local Sports Partnerships.
- Develop one new location per year.
- Develop and scale up A Drop In The Ocean.



### Be a learning organisation

- Demonstrate impact.
- Adapt as we learn.
- Communicate results and best practice.
- Develop a communications plan and implement.





# Our Team



Tom Losey  
C.E.O. Founder



Darragh Gorman  
Operations Manager



Kieran Nugent  
Volunteer Officer



Fran Duffy  
Bookings Coordinator



Aoife Britton  
Development Manager





# Our Volunteers

All of our programmes are supported by our dedicated team of volunteers, who greatly enhance our efforts and provide invaluable support both on and off the beach. In 2023, a total of 552 volunteer hours were dedicated to supporting our programme delivery. Liquid Therapy currently boasts 112 registered volunteers, with approximately 50 of them actively participating at any given time. A Volunteer Coordinator was appointed in 2021 to oversee volunteer recruitment, induction, and engagement. In 2023, 70 volunteers took part in Liquid Therapy's 'Inclusion Training', with 58 internal volunteers, including the Liquid Therapy Board of Management and our panel of experts, and an external group of 12 individuals.





# Our Board



Niamh Boyle  
Chair (Resigned 18 January 2024)



FRANCK HOMBURGER  
Treasurer



DAVETH FOX  
Vice - Chair



Lisa Deery Brown  
(Resigned 7 May 2023)



Dymphna Nugent  
(Appointed 8 March 2023)



DR KATIE MCANENA  
(Appointed 8 March 2023)



Rob Timony  
(Appointed 18 January 2024)



Ryan Bradley  
(Appointed 18 January 2024)



ANDREA BORAIN  
Secretary (Appointed 18 January 2024)



Rory Fallon  
(Appointed 18 January 2024)





DANIELLE MCELWEE  
Physiotherapist



DR AOIFE MOLONEY  
Clinical Psychologist



KATIE STACK  
Children's Occupational Therapist



ELAINE LOSEY  
Early Years Specialist



MILDRED O'BRIEN  
Senior Social Worker



DR EASKEY BRITTON  
Blue Space Researcher

# Our Panel of Experts



“

“My first wave was like I was  
the bubble on top of a glass  
of 7up.”

Liquid Therapy Participant



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# Company Information



## Directors (2023)

Niamh Boyle (Chair - Appointed 11 February 2021)  
Franck Homburger (Treasurer - Appointed 11 February 2021)  
Lisa Deery Browne (Secretary - Appointed 11 February 2021)



## Registered Office

Violet Hill, Kilbarron, Ballyshannon, Donegal, Ireland.  
Liquid Therapy Company Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number: 687705  
Charity Tax Exemption Number: 22851  
Charity Registration Number: 20206265



## Accountants

Hanna and Co. Accountants Limited Chartered Accountants. Main St,  
Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal, Republic of Ireland.



## Bankers

Allied Irish Bank, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal, Ireland.



## Governance

Liquid Therapy became a registered Charity in 2021. Liquid Therapy is fully compliant with the Governance Code and aims to implement the highest standards of governance and accountability.

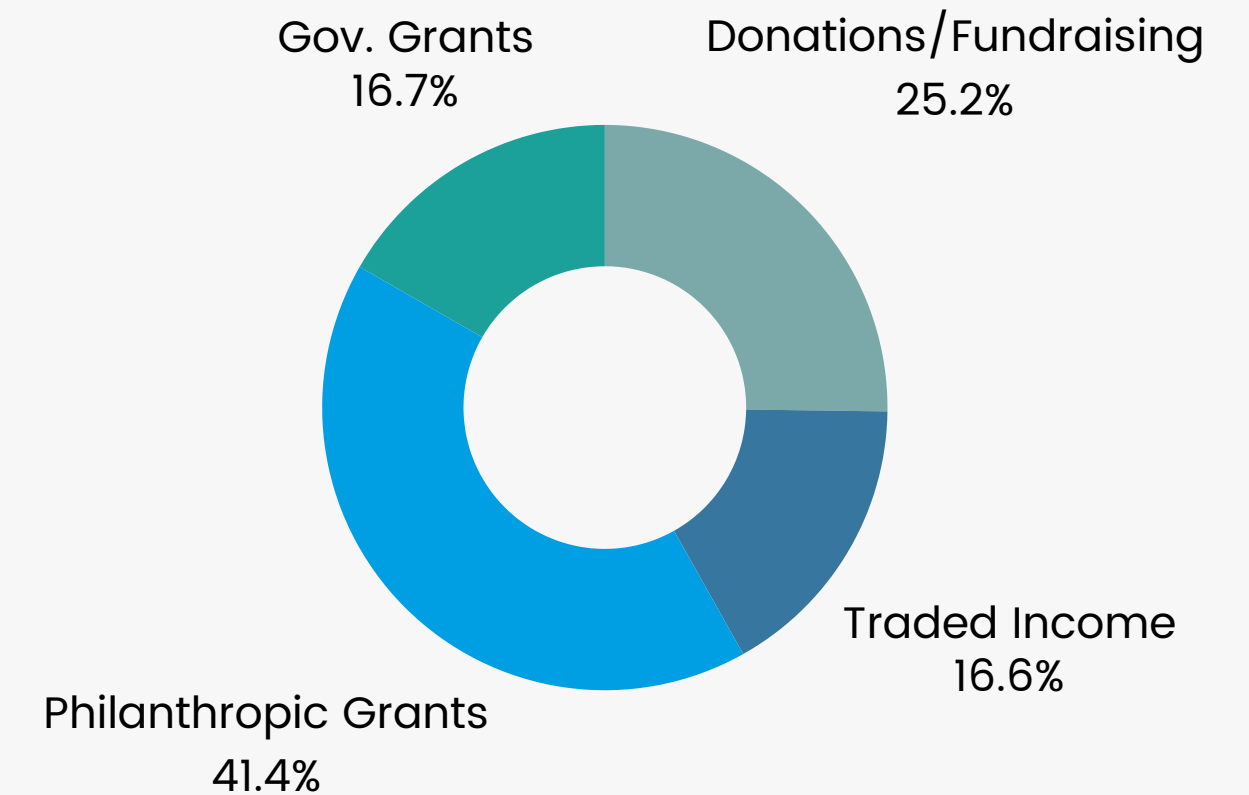


# Our Income

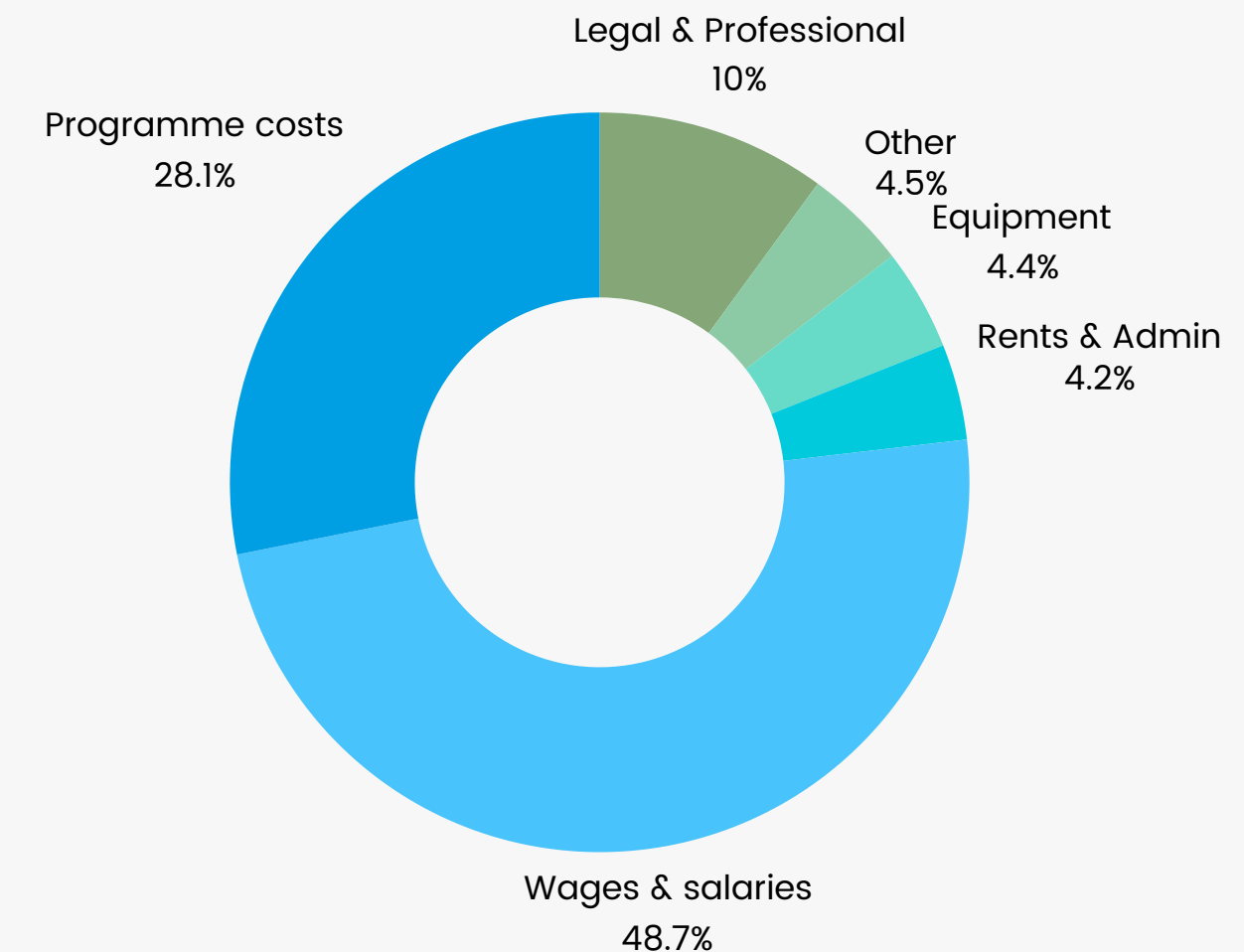
Liquid Therapy is a registered charity and social enterprise. We aim to establish sustainable income streams for our non-profit organisation to meet the demand for our services. Our approach to income generation is diverse, encompassing donations, fundraising, philanthropic grants, revenue from partnerships and collaborations and service delivery with larger agencies. Liquid Therapy is working towards building an appropriate level of unrestricted financial reserves in order to provide stability and provide working capital, to meet any future unexpected expenditure or shortfalls in income. Liquid Therapy's reserves policy is reviewed regularly by the Board of Directors and finance sub-committee. Copies of our annual audited accounts can be found on our website.

	Income	Expenditure
2023	€315,250	€279,123
2022	€198,889	€186,491

## Income 2023



## Expenditure 2023





“

“My son has become a lot calmer and relaxed after Liquid Therapy. Surfing was his dream but he never got the chance before Liquid Therapy.”

Liquid Therapy Participant Parent



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# Memberships & Partnerships



## **INCLUSEA**

INCLUSEA is a European consortium dedicated to the creation and development of an innovative methodology for adapted surf instruction.



## **International Surf Therapy Organisation (ISTO)**

Liquid Therapy is a member of ISTO. ISTO is a collective of the world's leading surf therapy practitioners, clinicians, researchers, and influencers working together to advance understanding in the sector through research.



## **IRISH SURFING**

Liquid Therapy is a member of Irish Surfing, the Governing body of surfing in Ireland. Liquid Therapy is an affiliated Surf Club and is regulated by Irish Surfing.



## **Outdoor Therapeutic Activity Providers (OTAP)**

The OTAP Network Ireland is an organisation dedicated to promoting outdoor therapy in Ireland. The OTAP aims to foster collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and professional development among practitioners in the field.



## **Social Enterprise Network Donegal (SEND)**

The SEND network is facilitated by Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC) aims to support and enable social enterprises across Donegal.





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# Funders & Partners

Liquid Therapy is very grateful to its funders and partners who continue to support our work and allow our organisation to achieve its mission and reach more families. In addition, we would like to give a special thank you to the many individuals, businesses and other organisations who have supported our work in 2023, through giving their time, awareness raising, fundraising and many other ways in which they have supported our organisation.





**RETHINK  
IRELAND**



**DLDC**



# Funders & Partners





Liquid  
Therapy

