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# Liquid Therapy

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## Strategic Plan 2025-2027

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# Strategic Plan

Liquid Therapy was established in 2011 with the aim of providing personalised support for participants interested in experiencing surfing but facing barriers to mainstream opportunities.

Over the years, Liquid Therapy has grown from a small, community-based, volunteer-run group to a registered charity with a national reach and year-round staff. In 2023, the organisation served 432 participants through 2,317 individual water sessions across six different programmes, in collaboration with various partners and external agencies.

Moving forward, Liquid Therapy's goal is to continue delivering programmes to meet the increasing demand for its services while maintaining its core mission of providing inclusive surfing experiences to those in need. Additionally, Liquid Therapy is committed to expanding its reach and impact in the wider sporting community by sharing its knowledge and expertise.



# Vision, Mission & Values

## 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.

## Mission

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.



## Values

**Inclusion** – removing barriers to participation.

**Respect** – treating each other and our environment with respect.

**Innovation** – exploring opportunities for learning and growth.

**Community** – supporting our community.

**Fun** – creating connections and building positive experiences.





# The Issues

Liquid Therapy recognises that those with additional needs, as well as children and young people, can experience barriers in accessing physical activities and their resulting benefits.



# Policy Context

Liquid Therapy aligns to the objectives of several important policies – specifically:



## People with Disabilities

**UNCRPD** – Article 30 Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport. Specifically 30.5. With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels.



## Children & Young People

**National Framework for Children and Young People 2023 – 2028** Outcome 1



Active & healthy, physical & mental wellbeing

- 1.1 Physically healthy and make positive health choices
- 1.2 Good mental health
- 1.3 Positive and respectful approach to relationships and sexual health
- 1.4 Enjoying play, recreation, sport, arts, culture and nature



# Evidence of need – Physical Activity and Mental Wellbeing

The positive and causal relationships between physical activity and mental wellbeing are undisputed. In addition, spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing.

Levels of physical activity among children and young people and, in particular for people with additional needs, are areas of concern for policy makers and society.

- Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Report 2022
- Irish Sports Monitor 2022
- My World Survey 2 The National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland



## Physical Activity guidelines are not being met

- 15% of school children with disabilities meet the physical activity guidelines (compared to 24% on average).
- 28% of people with disabilities play sport on a regular basis (compared to 48%)– this 20 point gap is the widest gap among cohorts in the ISM research. This figure was 33% pre-Covid.
- Rates of poor mental health are an issue of concern in the overall population as well as among those with additional needs.



## Mental Health concerns among young people

- Young people in YouthReach (29%) and Colleges of Further education (24%) are more likely to be in the very severe range for anxiety than young people in second level schools (15%).
- Research comparing 2012 to 2019 (before Covid) shows increases in depression and anxiety among adolescents and young adults. And a decrease in the protective factors around mental health, such as self esteem, optimism and resilience.

# Liquid Therapy – a broader view



## Programmes

Every year Liquid Therapy works with between 300 and 500 participants supporting them to experience the Ocean and surfing. In 2023, Liquid Therapy delivered 2317 individual water sessions provided to 432 participants across 6 tailored programmes and 2 events.

## Social prescription

Liquid Therapy continues to work towards the delivery of social prescription services to larger agencies such as MACE, Tusla and the HSE. In 2024, we will be piloting a referral system to facilitate fast track access to surf therapy programmes from relevant child and family agencies.

## Impact

Liquid Therapy is dedicated to enhancing practices and removing barriers to sports participation through effective impact management. In 2023, we reviewed our evaluation framework and collaborated with external researchers to publish a comprehensive report detailing our findings. This collaborative effort was supported by Sport Ireland and our Local Sports Partnerships.

## Collaborations

Liquid Therapy engages in various strategic collaborations and partnerships to further its mission. In the last number of years, this has included involvement in INCLUSEA and BLUESURFEST, two EU-funded consortiums dedicated to promoting inclusive surf practices across Europe; participation in the Sport Ireland 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion' Fund and collaboration with the OTAP network, which aims to advance the outdoor therapy sector in Ireland. In addition, the organization conducts external training events to support the progression of surf therapy practices in Ireland.

## Volunteer programme

Liquid Therapy's volunteer programme significantly enhances the impact of our programmes. Throughout 2023, we conducted 6 volunteer training events, equipping a total of 70 volunteers with additional skills and knowledge. In addition, 432 volunteer hours supported our programmes in 2023.





# Impact Management

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Liquid Therapy has achieved notable advancements in its evaluation framework and research endeavors. In 2021, the organisation established its first Theory of Change, supported by funding from Rethink Ireland. Liquid Therapy regularly gathers feedback from its participants and creates a feedback loop to inform its development.

In 2023, the organization collaborated with Sport Ireland, Local Sports Partnerships, and Blue Space researchers Dr. Easkey Britton and Dr. Jamie Marshall to review existing evaluation methodologies and develop a comprehensive evaluation and impact management framework for its programmes. The evaluation report highlighted that Liquid Therapy's surf therapy intervention led to significant moderate enhancements in youth wellbeing and had a substantial positive impact on group socialization.

In broader terms, Liquid Therapy is committed to establishing long-term relationships with independent researchers and universities to further advance its understanding of the impact of surf therapy. In addition, the organisation aims to share and contribute to the body of knowledge within surf therapy as well as cross sectorally.





# Theory of Change

Problem and Solution	Audience	Characteristics	Activities	Outputs	Mechanisms for Change	Outcomes		Impact
<p>People who face barriers in accessing sports and as a result do not enjoy the benefits that sports, the outdoors and Blue Space can bring.</p>	<p>People with additional needs, trauma or wellbeing issues.</p> <p>Schools and Youth Groups.</p>	<p>People with additional needs, intellectual, physical, behavioural or emotional.</p>	<p>Blue Space or Ocean based Surf Therapy programmes that incorporate physical activity (Surfing) and wellbeing interventions.</p>	<p>Total attendance at sessions.</p> <p>Number of programmes delivered.</p> <p>Completed questionnaires.</p>	<p>A tailored challenge that meets you where you are at.</p> <p>Achievable goals based on your ambitions.</p> <p>Trust in the instructor and bonding with the group.</p>	<p>Positive social connections.</p>	<p>Building Confidence and Self-efficacy.</p>	<p>Participants enjoy long term mental health and wellbeing benefits.</p> <p>Participants carry over their confidence about learning and socialising into other aspects of their lives.</p>
		<p>People affected by mental health or wellbeing issues.</p>				<p>Positive learning experience.</p>	<p>Sense of Mastery.</p>	
		<p>People facing typical life challenges.</p>				<p>Improved wellbeing.</p>	<p>Safe Spaces.</p> <p>Blue Space - Nature Connections.</p>	
	<p>Their parents, sibling, carers and teachers.</p>	<p>Educating and caring for children and young people with a wide mix of needs.</p>				<p>Calmer and more engaged people who have enjoyed the benefits above.</p>	<p>Knock-on positive effects on families and classes / groups.</p>	



# Evidence of our Impact

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. Easkey Britton & Dr. Jamie Marshall. See link to full report here: [Surf Therapy Report \(ADITO\) 2023.](#)

<h2>Liquid Therapy</h2> 				<p><b>Improved Participant wellbeing</b></p> 
<p><b>Safe Spaces</b></p> 	<p><b>Positive Social Connections</b></p> 		<p><b>Building Confidence &amp; Self-efficacy</b></p> 	
<p><b>Sense of Mastery</b></p>  		<p><b>Positive Learning Experience</b></p> 		<p><b>Relationships with the Natural World</b></p> 



# Goals & Objectives

Liquid Therapy is in a strong position to deliver on this plan over the next three years. Our board and the team have agreed the following high-level plan:





### **1. Consolidate our ability to deliver our programmes, and formalise our processes:**

- Deliver programmes as planned in order to continue to meet the demand for our services from our community.
- Continue to put systems and structures in place and develop supporting programmes and materials.
- Continue to build our team and provide training opportunities for development and growth.



### **2. Be a learning organisation – maximise our impact:**

- Demonstrate the value of Liquid Therapy through our impact management framework and academic collaborations.
- Adapt our programmes as we learn from our participants.
- Communicate our results to the Liquid Therapy team, to parents/carers and to funders and stakeholders.
- Develop and implement a communications plan.



### **3. Collaboration and partnerships:**

- Collaborate with agencies to develop social prescription services that enhance accessibility to our offerings.
- Offer training and expertise within the sporting, surfing, and broader community.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations to amplify our impact and advance our mission.



#### 4. Be prepared and networked to take advantage of opportunities for capital infrastructure development:

- Develop local and national strategic relationships in order to work towards future development opportunities.
- Scan the horizon for opportunities.
- Earmark capacity to engage in collaborations.



#### 5. Funding – work towards sustainable funding:

- Continue to actively pursue funding from grants, philanthropic sources, donations, and fundraising initiatives.
- Strive towards establishing a sustainable funding model for long-term financial stability.
- Work towards gaining larger capital funding for longer term infrastructure and sustainability.



# The Team

Liquid Therapy has built a robust team and infrastructure over the last number of years, giving the organisation a solid foundation for growth and success.





## Staff:



**Manager and Founder:** responsible for the oversight and management of all Liquid Therapy's programmes and services. This includes but is not limited to; the development and implementation of policies and procedures, managing budgets and expenditure, management of public relations and the media, strategic direction and oversight.



**Development Officer:** responsible for areas of development, new business, project management, funding, donations and reporting. This role is key for providing strong foundational support for the organisation.



**Operations Officer:** this position will oversee all aspects related to the preparation and delivery of programmes. This includes programme delivery, health and safety, equipment, as well as supervising the beach team.



**Programmes & Bookings Coordinator:** this position plays a crucial role in coordinating programmes, engaging with families, managing relationships with third parties and agencies.

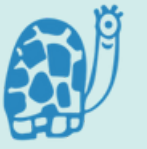


**Volunteer Coordinator:** this role is responsible for volunteer management and programme delivery, including volunteer coordination as well as the planning, development and delivery of programmes.

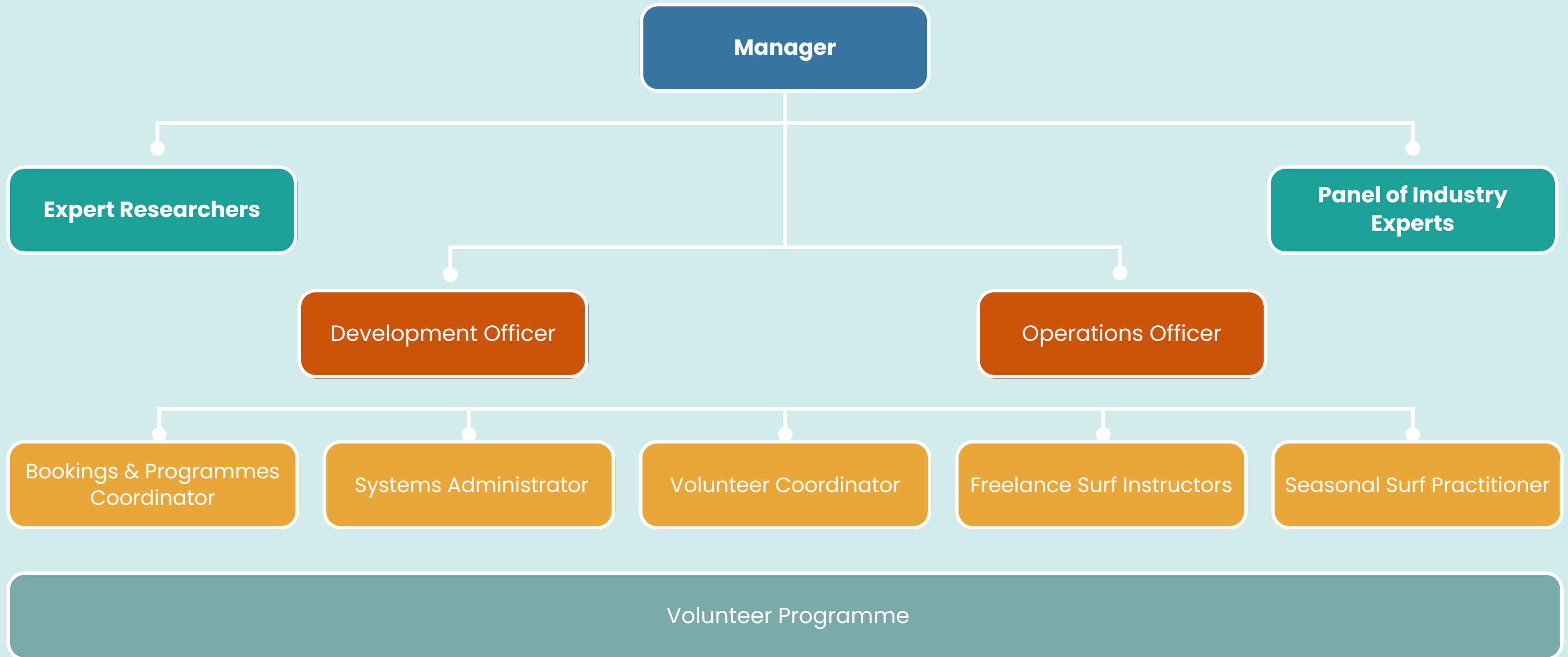


**Seasonal team and freelance instructors:** a seasonal team and freelance instructors allow us to increase our delivery capacity in the summer season and meet the demand for programmes during the peak period in a sustainable way.





# Team structure forecast 2025





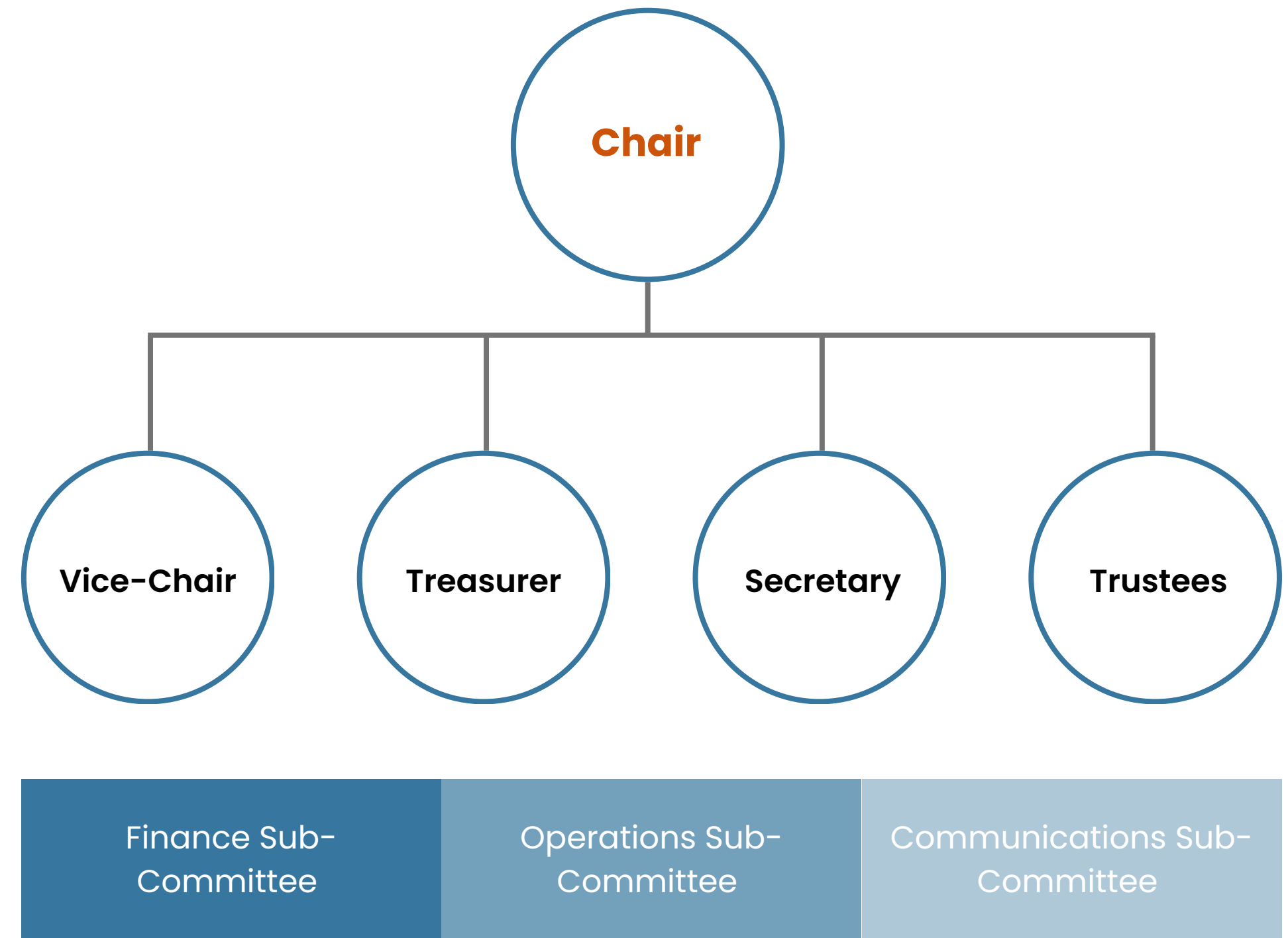
# Organisational Structure and Governance

Liquid Therapy became a registered charity in 2021. The organisation is fully compliant with the Governance Code.

Term limits mean that a board succession plan is in place. The board is created on a skillset matrix including Medical, Education, Legal, Media, Volunteer Management and Social Enterprise Management skills and experience.

The Managing Director is responsible for the oversight and management of all Liquid Therapy's programmes and services and liaising with the Board of Directors and keeping them informed of relevant matters.

The current directors/trustees are capable and prepared to take on the tasks at hand.





# Financial Management and Projections

Liquid Therapy has successfully established a strong pipeline of programme funding over the past five years, thanks to its growing reputation.

In the short term, the organization employs a multi-layered approach to funding, which includes applying for various government grants, seeking philanthropic funding, and engaging in fundraising and donation initiatives.

Looking ahead, Liquid Therapy is focused on securing more sustainable sources of funding in the long term. This includes securing long-term funding, building partnerships and exploring opportunities for traded income to ensure the organization's financial stability and continued growth.

Successful entry into the Pobal funded Community Services Programme (CSP) in 2024, (which funds 2 FTE Full Time Equivalent staff), has been transformational as it allows us to secure core staff roles and develop programmes in a consistent manner.

Liquid Therapy is actively building reserves to safeguard the organisation and plan for future developments.



# Financials

	Details	Forecast				
Income (secured)		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Trading income		€22,940	€35,000	€60,000	€70,000	€80,000
Grants - State*		€114,395	€20,000	€50,000	€50,000	€50,000
Grants - Trusts / Foundations*		€53,500	€30,000	€35,000	€35,000	€35,000
Community Services Programme			€55,000	€55,000	€55,000	€55,000
Headstart Rethink Ireland		€39,300	€42,200	€54,700		
Donations & Fundraising		€34,555	€30,000	€35,000	€40,000	€45,000
Income (non-secured)		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
EU funding		€50,560	€35,000			
Grants - State*				€100,000		

\*Liquid Therapy has identified specific funds it is working towards, such as EU funded Peace Plus and Sport Ireland's 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion Funding', which have informed these projections, both in terms of income and subsequent additional associated expenditure.



	Details	Forecast				
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Grants - Trusts / Foundations				€50,000		
Replacement Funding					€50,000	€50,000
<b>Total Income*</b>		<b>€317,273</b>	<b>€249,224</b>	<b>€441,725</b>	<b>€302,026</b>	<b>€317,027</b>
Traded income %		7%	14%	14%	23%	25%
Annual Growth %		0%	-21%	77%	-32%	5%
<b>Expenditure*</b>						
Salaries / Wages		€123,507	€150,000	€170,000	€190,000	€210,000
Other expenditure		€155,616	€60,000	€215,000	€70,000	€75,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>€279,123</b>	<b>€210,000</b>	<b>€385,000</b>	<b>€260,000</b>	<b>€285,000</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit</b>		<b>€38,150</b>	<b>€39,224</b>	<b>€56,725</b>	<b>€42,026</b>	<b>€32,027</b>
Surplus / Deficit %		12%	16%	13%	14%	10%

\*Liquid Therapy has identified specific funds it is working towards, such as EU funded Peace Plus and Sport Ireland's 'Innovation for Sports Inclusion Funding', which have informed these projections, both in terms of income and subsequent additional associated expenditure.

# Funders and partners

Liquid Therapy is hugely grateful to our funders and partners for their steadfast support, which has been instrumental in enabling our organisation to fulfil its mission and extend our services to more individuals and families. Their support plays a pivotal role in upholding high standards, expanding our network connections, and fostering the ongoing development of our organization.

Many of the funds have inbuilt partnerships or mentorships which have significantly impacted the growth and development of the organisation. Liquid Therapy will continue to seek out and avail of beneficial relationships in order to develop and grow.





# Implementation Plan

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# Implementation Plan



		2025				2026				2027			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Goal 1: Consolidate our ability to deliver our programmes, and formalise our processes:</b>													
Deliver programmes as planned in order to continue to meet the demand for our services from our community.	Whole Team												
Continue to put supporting systems and structures in place and develop programmes and supporting materials as needed.	Whole Team												
Continue to build our team and provide training opportunities for development and growth.	Manager												
<b>Goal 2: Be a learning organisation – maximise our impact:</b>													
Demonstrate the value of Liquid Therapy through our impact management framework and academic collaborations.	Manager & Development Officer												
Adapt our programmes as we learn from our participants.	Manager & Operations Officer												
Communicate our results to the Liquid Therapy team, to parents/carers and to funders and stakeholders.	Manager & Development Officer												
Develop and implement a communications plan.	Manager & Board												





