



**County:** Leitrim

**Nominee:** John Joe Byrne

Lough Allen is a Community Games area which caters for the small rural town of Drumkeerin and its surrounding area in County Leitrim. The main pastime for children in the area is Gaelic football however this does not limit the activities in which the children participate. Children regularly participate in various Community Games areas such as Art, handwriting, soccer, handball, music, swimming, choir, football and athletics.

John Joe became Chairperson and Area Event's Organiser of the Community Games in the Lough Allen Area 25 years ago and has remained in the position ever since. The club was threatening disbandment at that time with no volunteers willing to take on positions and lack of funding available. John Joe started fundraising through creating a wren group who collected money every St. Stephen's day to fund the Lough Allen Area.

John Joe served on the Community Games county board taking up numerous roles including assistant secretary, child welfare officer, vice chairperson, chairperson and is currently serving as the President of Leitrim Community Games.

John Joe has also coached many teams through their Community Games Journey including an u12 girl's team to a National final. John also created Drumkeerin's first u15 girls soccer team who competed at Connaught level.

John Joe also founded a Community Games choir in his area which won provincial titles and competed in the National final. Lough Allen area has hosted many area, county and Connaught events throughout John Joe's 25 years in the Community Games. John Joe co-ordinated these events running handball, art, choir and athletics events to name just a few.

John Joe attends the county athletics finals every year and supervises the shot put station throughout the day. John Joe refs the handball competitions at a Connaught level annually

Community Games aside, John was one of the original committee members who fundraised and built the Handball, Sport and Leisure Centre and revived the local handball club 2008. John is the current secretary of this committee.

John Joe has coached numerous juvenile football teams over the years from u10 to u18 in both boys and girls football. He also coached the Junior ladies team in the local GAA club.

John Joe also served as a vice chairperson of Leitrim's Coiste na nÓg which carried out a report on improving football in the Leitrim area

John Joe has also served as an active member of the John Mc Kenna traditional society to promote traditional music and singing in his area. He helps to organise and run music classes throughout the year and a music festival annually.

John also a current member of the Board of Management in the local primary school.