

# THE YOUNG OFFENDERS

Ireland (2016) 83 minutes

**Director and Screenplay:** Peter Foott

**Cast:** Chris Walley (Jock Murphy), Alex Murphy (Conor MacSweeney), D. MacHale (Sgt Healy), Hilary Rose (Máiréad MacSweeney)



**Screening 6 December 2017 at Swindon Arts Centre**

## Synopsis

Inspired by the true story of Ireland's biggest cocaine seizure in 2007, *The Young Offenders* is a comedy road movie about best friends Conor and Jock, two inner-city teenagers from Cork. Jock is a legendary bike thief who plays a daily game of cat-and-mouse with the bike-theft-obsessed Garda Sergeant Healy. When a drug-trafficking boat capsizes off the coast of West Cork and 61 bales of cocaine, each worth €7 million, are seized, word gets out that there is a bale missing. The boys steal two bikes and go on a road trip hoping to find the missing bale which they can sell.... but Sergeant Healy is in hot pursuit.

## Reviews



An Irish buddy movie that has already set domestic box-office records, this tale of a pair of gloriously feckless 15-year-old aspiring drug dealers has a home-grown charm that is hard to resist.

The story is inspired by a real-life event: the seizure of a record amount of cocaine in a drugs bust off the coast of Cork. In this spin on the story, our hapless heroes set off across country on stolen bikes to help themselves to one of the bales of drugs that they imagine are littering the shore.

The humour here is spot-on - it's the most perceptive comic portrait of the adolescent male since *The Inbetweeners*, but with a naturalism that is unexpectedly disarming. A scene in which Conor tries to cadge a compliment out of his brutally unsentimental mam (Hilary Rose, excellent) is glorious.

Inspired by a real news story, the script sends two idiots in search of drugs washed up in West Cork.

Along the way, things happen in no particular order. Narrative knots are tied up with furious haste. This remains, however, an enormously funny, genuinely sweet romp that would register as a contemporary classic.

The key to the film's success is a magnificent comic partnership between Chris Walley and Alex Murphy. You might detect a little of Laurel and Hardy, but the hierarchies are not so sharp here - Jock may be a little more assertive and Conor the one who is more easily led astray.

As they leave Cork city for the terrifying countryside, a deranged copper hunts them obsessively like the trackers in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*.

Conor's fishmonger mum trades in priceless banter: "That's called a sucker fish. That'll be your nickname in prison."

An antic delight - magic, like.

*Wendy Ide, The Observer*

## Film Facts

- *The Young Offenders* premiered at the Galway Film Fleadh on 8 July 2016, and won Best Irish Feature Film at the festival. It became the fastest Irish film to break the €1 million mark at the Irish box office in 2016.
- The film had its U.S. premiere at Fantastic Fest in Austin, Texas on 23 September 2016, where it won a Special Mention for Best Comedy Debut.
- The film was shot in some of the most iconic locations around Cork city and along the Wild Atlantic Way last year.

*Donald Clark, The Irish Times*