

# Annual Report 2015

**third age**

Responding to the Opportunities  
and Challenges of Ageing in Ireland

**senior help line**

**fáilte isteach**

**sage**

**innovation hub**

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## Third Age

Third Age is a national voluntary organisation representing all older people and responding to the opportunities and challenges of ageing in Ireland.

Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland, is Patron of Third Age.

Third Age is a registered Charity 16647, Registered Charity Number 20060459,  
Company No 414509

## Third Age Vision

An Ireland and a world where the third age in life is valued and celebrated

## Third Age Mission

To value the contribution of older to society and help to meet their personal and community needs through innovative programmes



## Chairman's Address

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I have pleasure in presenting you with the Third Age annual report for 2015 – a year of continued development and sustainability for the organisation. Our work took place against a somewhat improved economic climate, but one in which the funding environment in the charity sector remains a challenge.

Third Age is a national voluntary organisation responding to the opportunities and challenges of ageing in Ireland. Third Age has over 1,400 volunteers countrywide, working as tutors, listeners, advocates and befrienders. Thousands of people of all ages benefit each week from our services, by volunteering on our projects, and participating in our programmes, which include lifelong learning, health and social initiatives.

A number of changes took place at board level in 2015. Two board members - Michael Meally and Katie Burke - retired during the year, with Michael also retiring as company secretary. Each brought unique skills, experience and insight to the board, and we thank them for their invaluable work. I would add personal thanks for the guidance and insight which they placed at my disposal in my office as chair. I thank Tom Collins for taking up the position of company secretary.

Through our three national programmes Third Age connects and engages with older people within their communities.

During 2015, as the international refugee crisis dominated the headlines, Fáilte Isteach became even more relevant. Since its inception this programme has been quietly helping to integrate migrants into towns and cities in Ireland, and today it is receiving national and international recognition for the vital community building it offers.

Senior Help Line successfully continued its work of centralisation during 2015. As the numbers of older people, including vulnerable older people as a proportion of the population continues to increase, the work of Sage – Support & Advocacy Service for Older People, becomes increasingly relevant. We thank the volunteers in our three national programmes for their ongoing commitment to the service.

Third Age, Summerhill began life over 25 years ago as an active retirement association, and continues to offer a vibrant programme of activities and services to older people from the village and a wider catchment area.

While this is a challenging time for charities and voluntary bodies, Third Age remains fortunate in attracting funds from those who know our track record, and believe in our vision. I would like to offer a particular vote of thanks for the generous support from The Atlantic Philanthropies, to the HSE our core funder, to the Iris O'Brien Foundation, the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration in the Department of Justice, the Department of the Environment, Meath County Council, and Léargas. We thank members of the public, donors, sponsors and members for their support in 2015.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the professional expertise and generous time given by my fellow Board members, and, on their behalf, express our thanks to our CEO Áine Brady and her loyal staff.

Tom Dowling  
*Chairman*

## Who's Who in Third Age?

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### Board

<b>Board Chairman:</b>	Tom Dowling
<b>Company Secretary:</b>	Maura O'Keeffe
<b>Board Members:</b>	Katie Burke*, Pat Cox, Mary Culliton, Michael Meally*, Tom Collins

\* resigned in 2015

### Senior Help Line

<b>Board Chairman:</b>	Tom Dowling
<b>Company Secretary:</b>	Michael Meally*/ Tom Collins+
<b>Board Members:</b>	Katie Burke*, Pat Cox, Mary Culliton, Michael Meally, Maura O'Keeffe

\* resigned in 2015

+ took up post in 2015

### Staff

#### Third Age

<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Áine Brady
<b>Operations &amp; Finance Manager</b>	Alison Branigan
<b>Communications Manager</b>	Anne Dempsey
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Maeve Carton
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Monica Ryan
<b>Finance Assistant</b>	Noreen Edwards
<b>Finance Assistant</b>	Paul O'Rourke

#### Sage Support & Advocacy Service for Older People

<b>Programme Manager</b>	Mervyn Taylor
<b>Service Administrator</b>	Roisin Clarke*
<b>Service Administrator</b>	Helen Fitzgerald+
<b>Research &amp; Information Coordinator</b>	Maria Patterson*
<b>Research &amp; Information Coordinator</b>	Sinead Hyland+
<b>Education, Training &amp; Support Coordinator</b>	Michelle Rooney
<b>Education, Training &amp; Support Adviser</b>	Dr Meta Reid
<b>Legal &amp; Financial Coordinator</b>	Mary Condell
<b>Development Coordinator</b>	Eileen O'Callaghan
<b>Development Workers</b>	Fiona Anderson, Michael Cahillane, Vivienne Ahern Dooge,* Maureen Finlay, Anne Griffin, Trish Martyn, Danielle Monahan, Eileen O'Callaghan, Noreen O'Brien, Brenda Quigley, Renee Summers, Tessa Digby
<b>Practice Development Adviser, Development Officer Special Projects Special Projects &amp; Rapid Response</b>	Anne Harris

\* resigned in 2015

+ took up post in 2015



Third Age CEO, Áine Brady ▲



### ***Fáilte Isteach***

***Programme Manager***

***National Development Officer***

***National Development Officer***

Ariana Ball

Natasha McAvinney

Claire Dalton

### ***Senior Help Line***

***Programme Manager***

***National Office Administrator***

***Dublin Office Administrator***

Damian Leneghan

Ann O'Brien

Beryl Carroll

### ***Consolidation & Innovation Hub***

***Programme Manager***

***Business Development Executive***

***Administrative Assistant***

Liam Carey

Ruth Loughran

Yvonne Keane

### ***Summerhill***

***Founder, Head of Services***

***Administrative Assistant***

***Driver***

***Driver***

***Little Jobs Project Worker***

***Housekeeper***

***Carer***

Mary Nally

Rosemary Doyle

Martin Daly

Joe Gould

John Kelly

Sai Ying Pak

Rena Murray

*Third Age employs a number of staff under the FÁS Community Employment Scheme*

## **A Year of Consolidation**

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During 2015 a review of the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan took place. This was followed by the initiation of a strategic planning project with a view to the development of the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. Phase one of this has been to set up structures to drive its development, to define ongoing commitments and programmes, to set out delivery and funding cycles to end 2019, and to develop financial projections based on known commitments. This is now underway.

The work to advance and progress the overall governance of the organisation has continued during the year. This has included the continuing development of board roles and responsibilities, support of board sub-committees, human resource policies, risk assessment and the strategic plan.

By year's end we had considerably advanced in our internal review of current policies, procedures and protocols with management involvement. We have signed up to the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland for a Type C organisation, to the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and to the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) 2015. We have adopted for each of our programmes a Child Protection Policy under the guidance of an external specialist, and we have also upgraded our data protection systems.



Third Age has continued the expansion of its national programmes during 2015 while maintaining a philosophy of collaboration within the sector. There is increased interest in Fáilte Isteach from government, from other key stakeholders and potential volunteers, with new groups continuing to open in response to expressed need.

Sage – Support and Advocacy for Older People’s mission is ‘To promote and protect the rights, freedoms and dignity of older people by developing support and advocacy services wherever ageing poses a challenge for individuals.’ In 2015 Sage advocated for over 500 older people based in nursing homes (65%), hospitals (14%), and in the community (21%). Sage recorded over 1,000 cases (advocacy support), 942 group visits (facilitation and visits to nursing homes) and 524 engagements with care staff (introducing our service to staff members in nursing homes, hospitals and in community settings). Sage dealt with various issues throughout 2015 including financial worries (19% of cases), wellbeing (12%), transitional issues (18%), health (7%) and family issues (9%). A more in-depth view of transitional issues shows us that 59% of those cases clients wished to return home and 20% of those needed support moving between care settings. Regarding financial worries, the main issue reported was fair deal (33%), charges for specific purposes (29%) and fears for the future (16%).

Senior Help Line is on target with its Strategic Plan 2014 – 2016. The work of centralisation is midway. This is strengthening links with volunteers, and meeting our objective of improving quality and achieving sustainability.

Third Age has continued its collaboration with Active Ageing Partnership (Age & Opportunity, Active Retirement Ireland, Third Age), (AAP). During 2015 AAP created a wider Alliance by inviting Age Action Ireland, Age Friendly Ireland, Alone and the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament to contribute to a document geared to pre-election political party manifestos in preparation for general election 2016.

Third Age has also worked with AAP (in co-operation with Age Friendly Ireland and NUIG) in contributing to a pilot Touchstone course held in NUIG during the year. A course evaluation was presented by NUIG and Touchstone participants at an event in September in Galway, which also launched the national Touchstone programme.

## Promoting Our Programmes

Third Age CEO and staff promoted our organisation and programmes internationally, nationally and regionally during the year. These included awareness raising and fundraising events and campaigns, presentations, media interviews, literature rebranding, and updating of our website.

Our CEO was invited to present at the World Elder Abuse International Day conference in Dublin, organised by the National Council for the Protection of Older People. Its theme is ‘Advances in Elder Abuse Research, Practice and Legislation’. Our CEO, Áine Brady also presented at DCU’s international conference ‘Engaging Age’. Our CEO accepted the EESC Civil Society prize in Brussels for our Fáilte Isteach programme.

Third Age presented to the Koerber Foundation conference in Hamburg on the theme of ‘Potentials of Ageing’. Our Consolidation & Innovation Hub Manager also represented Third Age in a number of campaigns with Age Platform Europe. Third Age was shortlisted for a Business in the Community Award by virtue of the fresh and innovative approach evident in many of our projects.



Fáilte Isteach was voted the most successful programme featured in the ChangeX campaign. As part of this success, the programme received national media coverage in The Irish Times on April 25, in The Irish Times online on May 5 and on the RTE Radio 1 Ray D'Arcy Show on May 1.

Senior Help Line launched a number of campaigns promoting issues of crisis and loneliness experienced by many help line callers. Throughout the year, we represented the voice of callers on numerous regional and national radio stations, and also spoke on relevant issues concerning older people, such as home security, elder abuse, home help services, local facilities and amenities, rural transport, income protection and the value of volunteering.

Third Age unveiled a new look during the year comprising our logo, stationery, publicity and exhibition materials, and website. Our new design unifies our three national programmes by a shared palette of blues and greens, while each national programme is distinguished by its own colour shade.

During the year Third Age embarked on a new website design, incorporating our new logos and a refined organisational message. The web site, launched in early September, features a main Third Age section covering general information, local events and services. Our three national projects are highlighted in separate sections in the website – these areas are designed to be user-friendly, and to provide useful information to both volunteers and those who benefit from Third Age.

Third Age also focused on developing its social media presence throughout the year on two key platforms – Facebook and Twitter. We committed to presenting a strong, clear message across a Third Age Twitter account and three Facebook pages – one each for Third Age, Fáilte Isteach and Sage. Senior Help Line plan to launch a Facebook page in 2016. Developing social networks and building on the Third Age follower base has enabled the organisation to communicate with engaged followers across the country quickly and efficiently.

Fundraising events throughout the year include the Soroptimist lunch, Intergenerational Walk in association with DCU, the Gingerbread Village competition, Golf Classic, Mad Hatters tea party, recycling project, bag packing, concerts, summer garden party, Christmas card painting competition and card sale, and the annual raffle. The Senior Help Line choir sang Christmas Carols in Grafton Street in December. We thank our songbirds who braved arctic conditions on the day and our honorary conductor, Emma O'Regan. We offer a sincere thanks to everyone who helped us in many different capacities in our fundraising events throughout the year.

## Third Age Events 2015

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### A Walk in the Park to Celebrate UN World Day for Older Persons

Third Age celebrated the 25th Anniversary of UN International Day of Older Persons on October 1 with an Intergenerational Walk at Albert College Park, at the Dublin City University (DCU) Campus. The walk was launched by Mícheál O'Muircheartaigh, which he led out with the Minister of State, Kathleen Lynch. The event was well attended with DCU staff and students, local older people's groups and organisations, local school pupils and friends of Third Age taking part. DCU President Professor Brian McCraith was represented by Professor Dare Keogh President (DCU) St Patrick's Campus.

The setting was fitting. DCU is leading a global initiative as the first Age Friendly University, with a range of activities on campus to engage older people. This includes a dedicated Intergenerational Learning Programme which brings together young and older students in a teaching and learning opportunity, valuing

the role of both participants as tutors and learners. We express our special thanks to Christine O'Kelly, DCU's Age Friendly Project Co-ordinator who worked with us to make the event such a success.

After the walk, guests were addressed in The Helix by Minister Lynch, "Being age-friendly is more than living longer, it is about capturing a space for each and every person and realising that we are all different. Coming together is hugely important," she said. The Minister presented the DCU Best Practice Intergenerational Prize to the pupils of Ashbourne Community School for their project 'Seniors IT 2015'. In this project, Transition Year students taught IT skills to local older people – an example of intergenerational conversations at their best.

## Sage – Support & Advocacy Service of Older People National Conference

Over 400 delegates attended this first national conference in October at which the Quality Standards for Support & Advocacy Work with Older People were launched. Keynote addresses were given by EU Ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly, by Patricia Rickard-Clarke, by former Law Reform Commissioner and chair of Sage's National Advisory Committee, and by Dr Philip Crowley, Director of Quality Improvement with the HSE, and the President of the High Court.

Mr Justice Nicholas Kearns, chaired the proceedings, and the conference was opened by Áine Brady, Third Age CEO.



Emily O'Reilly European Ombudsman keynote speaker at 'Quality Standards for Support & Advocacy Work with Older People' Sage national conference in October ▲

In her address, Emily O'Reilly affirmed the necessity of a rights-based approach for people of every age: "Older persons have the same human rights as everyone else in society; it's just that some of those rights are more likely to be infringed or denied in the case of older people than is true of the population more generally. We are all simply younger older people, and all of us would wish to be treated just as our now selves when we become our older selves," she said.

"Cultures of care and of protection and of human dignity need to be built by all of us who think at all about this world and the consideration that we give each to the other. And especially so when others need us to stand beside them and to protect them from all harm, to be their voice when theirs has been stilled. We need to be as concerned to protect the rights of younger adults in a care centre such as Áras Attracta in Swinford as we are the rights of older persons in a private nursing home such as the infamous Leas Cross in North Dublin. The standards we apply to older people are no different to the standards we should apply to people generally," she said.

Patricia Rickard-Clarke spoke strongly on the need for advocacy: "Some older persons need support in asserting their rights, in having their voice heard and in articulating their will and preferences. It is widely accepted that support and advocacy has an important role to play in helping services to meet the range of needs of individuals and groups who require additional support", she said.

In introducing the Quality Standards, Doctor Michael Browne explored the background and thinking behind their development. In a series of responses the Ombudsman, Peter Tyndall welcomed the Quality Standards and gave them his strong support. Ita Mangan, chair of the Citizens Information Board indicated the need for legislation to formally recognise the role of advocacy, and Catherine Byrne T.D. (standing in for Jerry Buttimer T.D. chair of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health & Children) announced that the first hearings on advocacy, to which Sage was being invited, would be held by the committee in late October.

*A series of afternoon workshops were held with the themes:*

- Understanding Capacity & how to enhance it
- Non-Instructed Advocacy
- Training & Support in Advocacy
- Long-term Care – Future Options
- Elder Abuse.

In a graduation ceremony at the close of the conference, certificates were presented to 81 Sage Representatives who had completed the Information, Advice and Advocacy Course (QQI level 6) organised through the Irish Times Training Consortium.

## Soroptimist Lunch

For the second successive year, the North Kildare branch of Soroptimists International hosted a November event for Third Age at the K Club, Co Kildare. Guest speaker Grace O'Shaughnessy spoke about her early life as a fashion model, and how much she is enjoying growing older. The lunch was a benefit for Fáilte Isteach, and Áine Brady reflected on what the programme's success says about Irish people: 'Our experience, through the nine years of the project, is that Ireland is full of people of compassion, consideration and humanity, and our volunteers are the living embodiment of this. I feel the current refugee crisis is showcasing these qualities on a much wider scale. Fáilte Isteach demonstrates the openness and welcome that has been offered quietly for many years to those in need in Ireland. We look forward to this continuing into the future, and we thank you all for your support today in helping to make this possible', she said.



Áine Brady Third Age CEO and Grace O'Shaughnessy guest speaker at the Soroptimist fundraising lunch autumn 2015 ▲

We thank the Soroptimists, and their North Kildare President, Moya Murphy, for their generous recognition of the work we do.

## Gingerbread Village

In December, Third Age held its second national annual Gingerbread Village competition at the Clayton Hotel, Dublin. Maria Kelly of Cabinteely, D18, carried off first prize of €500 with her sugary creation entitled 'Merry Minion'. "I really enjoyed doing this, it was such good fun", she said.

The competition was judged by chef Ciara Fennessy of 'Ciara's Kitchen' as seen on RTE's 'Today' programme, who commented on the high standard: "This entry won because the more I looked the more I saw, and even without the Minion story, it was still a beautiful creation" she said. The winning entry was one of over 50 hand-decorated Gingerbread Houses exhibited to the public – all part of Third Age's Gingerbread Village celebration. The afternoon included games, face painting, a colouring competition, photo booth and An Post Santa's Post Box. There were craft stalls with jewellery and gift-buying ideas for parents and grandparents. Admission was free.

The tradition of making decorated gingerbread houses started in Germany in the early 1800s, with the first confectionery linked to the Grimm's fairy tale 'Hansel and Gretel'. Today Gingerbread Villages feature in Christmas exhibitions and celebrations all over the world. Third Age is the first Irish charity to invite members of the public to participate and share the experience.



Third Age wishes to thank all our sponsors, including Comfort Keepers and An Post who lent us a giant post-box to receive Santa's letters.

### Fáilte Isteach Award

In December 2015 Fáilte Isteach was awarded the 2015 European Economic and Social Committee, (EESC) Civil Society Prize. The EESC has dedicated the prize to organisations distinguishing themselves through their creativity and success in combating poverty. Fáilte Isteach was selected from 106 applications from across the EU.

The award was accepted in Brussels by CEO, Áine Brady: 'This programme is unique across Europe, and we are obviously delighted that the tremendous work of our volunteers is being validated by this award at an EU level. We are especially pleased that this support has borne such rich fruit, and that Ireland is seen as a leading example to other member states of the benefits of supporting local communities to enhance integration,' she said.

The Fáilte Isteach model builds in social inclusion at its heart, bringing the people in a local community and their new migrants to learn together. There is an added inter-generational bonus in that many of the migrants are young people away from their homes and families, and they are offered particularly mature support from mainly older volunteer tutors.

## Sector Collaborations

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### Operation Conversation

Operation Conversation, which began as a pilot project in Co. Meath, developed into a national initiative in 2015. The objectives of the campaign include raising awareness of Third Age and its programmes. While the communication industry is booming, many people in Ireland, particularly older people, can experience great isolation and loneliness. The campaign also acknowledges the value and significance of social media including texts, email, posts and message boards in facilitating intergenerational communication.

It has been said of the 21st century that never before have we been so connected, thanks to modern technology. Due to current communication methods from Skype to smartphones, you need never be alone. However, this new kind of connection has, to some extent, replaced the more old fashioned ways – talking face to face, listening to each other, sitting around the table at family meals, discussing and arguing and sharing different view points.

Older people can suffer from loneliness if they are ill, housebound, bereaved or with few social contacts. Operation Conversation, while geared for everyone, is particularly aimed at promoting intergenerational social connections for the benefit of older people.

The 2015 Operation Conversation Campaign took place from Wednesday, September 23 through Sunday October 1, culminating on UN International Day of Older People and preceding National Positive Ageing Week 2015.



DCU was the partner of choice, and the flagship event was an intergenerational walk in Albert College Park beside the university grounds.

### Active Ageing Partnership

Active Ageing Partnership's (AAP) collaboration between Age & Opportunity, Active Retirement Ireland and Third Age continued during the year in the building of civic engagement and to inform policy. The Partnership, (in conjunction with Age Action, Age Friendly Ireland's NGO Forum and the Older People's Council) presented to the Department of Health, a detailed action programme relating to the NPAS' own declared goals. The aim is the setting up of a Forum for the implementation of the Strategy, with representation from each government department. The NGO forum comprises Active Retirement Ireland, Age & Opportunity, Age Friendly Ireland, Alone, Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Carers Association, Irish Senior Citizens Parliament and Flexibus.

This work, along with the participation of the wider group of NGOs and the Human Rights of Older People (HROP) working group, has an important influence on the individual work of each of the partners of AAP and the wider NGO activities. It also serves to strengthen the relationship between Age Friendly Ireland (AFI), and AAP. The HROP working group comprises Active Ageing Partnership, Sage, Age Action, Irish Council for Civil Liberties, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, The Lifecourse Institute (Disability and Law) NUI Galway.

The influence of the AAP members in taking practical steps to face the housing issues of older people has been achieved by working collaboratively with AFI and Dublin City Council. This coalition has initiated a response to the wishes of older people to stay in their own homes and within their own communities for as long as possible, and to provide some alternatives to long term care.

AAP has also been a driving force in forging a political alliance of age sector NGOs in preparation for the general election 2016. A document for influencing the political manifestos with three overarching proposals was agreed and circulated. The core messages in the document came from older people themselves, gathered during the wide range of consultations of the member organisations. The common issues of: health and community services; housing; and planning for pensions will be the themes of our public pre-election campaign.

### Touchstone

Touchstone began as a free six week course for people aged over 55 which aims to develop their skills and knowledge in playing a part in helping to make their communities more age-friendly. Participants would explore a range of interesting and topical issues, carry out practical projects, try new experiences, and hopefully form some new friendships.

Touchstone has been developed by the Active Ageing Partnership (AAP), in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland (AFI). Galway Touchstone was hosted and developed in co-operation with the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology (ICSG), NUI Galway.

Such was the demand that two separate courses were offered in Galway, in mid May and early June respectively. Key issues included: how an ageing society affects older adults, opportunities for volunteering and engagement, research, planning and managing a campaign, using the media to support civic engagement, and using the formal political system to bring about change. At the end of the course there was an opportunity to apply new knowledge and skills with a practical project development over the summer months.

A total of over 50 people attended the two courses, with tutors for three modules provided by the members of AAP. The interactive course had an emphasis on discussion and on drawing on the opinions and life experiences of participants. There was also input on volunteering opportunities in Galway.

An awards ceremony for participants was held in Galway in September. In welcoming participants, organisers and tutors, Professor Tom Scharf, Department of Gerontology, NUI Galway, said that the programme had exceeded expectations in the interest from the general public, in the qualities and enthusiasm of the participants, and in the number of projects that the training had fostered. A number of course participants presented their projects to the group. These projects included:

- organising a seminar for family and carers of people with dementia
- organising a monthly discussion group for participants
- reflection on the challenges facing older people in rural Galway
- research into the participation of older people in a regular keep fit programme, and how such programmes could be run for maximum benefit to this age group
- presentation on the need for future planning for independent living as we age
- the value of pre-retirement planning

Speaking after the ceremony, AAP chairman Maurice O'Connell highlighted the reason behind Touchstone: 'There is much research evidence of the immense benefits of volunteering for older people post-retirement. We also know that older people have a lot to give, because as we age, we have a lot of skills and life experience to bring to the table. But the problem is that older people are often passed over as potential volunteers. Our new Touchstone graduates are confident that they will put their time to good use, and can make a difference', he said. A Volunteer Fair at the awards ceremony showcased the range of organisations and opportunities available for older people in Galway city and environs. An evaluation report on the Touchstone programme is being prepared.

## Meath Touchstone

Regular meetings were held during the year with Meath Age Friendly Alliance, whose steering group worked closely with our CEO and Consolidation & Innovation Hub Manager in setting up Meath Touchstone, which will begin next year. Active Retirement Ireland and Age & Opportunity are also planning Touchstone programmes in 2016.

## Befriending Network Ireland

Befriending Network Ireland (BNI), is a national network of organisations that offer a befriending service to vulnerable people face to face, or on the telephone, at home, or in a care setting. The network was initiated by Alone, which in 2014 began to map befriending services in Ireland and published a first directory of these. The overall aim of the network is to respond proactively to the growing issue of older loneliness in ageing Ireland.

The network was formally established in 2015. Its mission statement is to promote the work of befriending, and support befriending groups in providing quality services to older and vulnerable people to alleviate social isolation and loneliness. The goals include:

- provide a network of Befriending Groups and sharing information and learning
- support and promote best practice in training, resources and quality assurance tools
- collect evidence-based data on the value and impact of befriending on the health and wellbeing of recipients
- campaign to alleviate loneliness, and provide a national voice on behalf of the befriending sector in Ireland
- ensure the future sustainability of BNI

The network is growing steadily, with regional and local befriending organisations applying to join. Third Age is a member of BNI and is represented on its national advisory group. Some training and shared learning sessions for new befriending groups were offered during the year, and the plan for 2016 is to hold a national seminar and to continue to develop shared goals.

## Sector Events 2015

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### 6th Annual Seminar Irish Association of Former Parliamentarians

Áine Brady was invited to chair an afternoon session of the above seminar which took place in Leinster House in January. The seminar title was 'Ageing Well – Ageing Positively'. Morning inputs included presentations from Professors Rose Anne Kenny, Trinity College, Dublin, Eamon O'Shea, NUI Galway and Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, St Vincent's Hospital, Dublin. Afternoon speakers included Eamon Timmons, Age Action CEO, Sue Shaw, National Development Officer, Active Retirement Ireland and Doctor Ronan Collins, Tallaght Hospital.

### HIQA Thematic Seminars Dublin & Cork

Áine Brady presented at two HIQA Thematic Seminars early in 2015 on the subject of 'Advocacy & Dementia Care'. These were organised in conjunction with HIQA inspections, which aim to support staff in the care provided to residents through the implementation of comprehensive policies based on best practice.

In her presentation, Áine Brady described the various approaches to non-instructed advocacy employed by Sage Support & Advocacy volunteers. These includes an approach that keeps the person at the centre of the decision-making, a rights-based approach which acknowledges that the rights of someone with less cognitive capacity is the same as any other citizen, and the need to pursue these rights on their behalf. 'Our work often results in compromises having to be made, but from our independent and impartial position we can be creative and challenging, which can result in the best possible outcomes for all concerned' she said.

### 10th World Conference on Elder Abuse and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2015

Áine Brady was invited to address the above conference in May on 'Elder Abuse - the Role of Listening and Advocacy'. She spoke of Sage – Support & Advocacy Service for Older People and Senior Help Line, and their respective links with elder abuse and advocacy.

'The development plans for Sage – Support & Advocacy Service for Older People require it to be available to all vulnerable older people in all care settings and in the transition between them. The programme sees support and advocacy as part of a continuum, which can require a range of skills, including brokerage, mediation and befriending, as well as legal, financial and healthcare expertise. Through support and advocacy, the voice of the older person can be heard and honoured. The motto of the service is 'Nothing about you/without you', she said.

Senior Help Line receives regular calls from people experiencing elder abuse: 'We listen by getting the context, giving the caller an opportunity to express feelings and discuss what they want to do. The safety

of the caller is paramount in abuse situations, Senior Help Line volunteers have access to the contact details of the HSE Senior Case Workers for the Protection of Older People situated round the country. These contact details may be offered to the caller' she said.

## Laois Mental Health Week

Áine Brady presented to community groups on 'The Positive Engagement of Older People' during Laois Mental Health Week in October. In her talk, she defined mental health, looked at mental health and older people, made a link between positive mental health and engagement in life, and told her audience of the positive role of Third Age in promoting the volunteering ethos of older people.

## Co. Wicklow Network for Older People Seminar

Áine Brady was invited to discuss whether the contribution of older people has been sufficiently valued in Irish society. In a broad-ranging presentation, she looked back at the ways in which older people were viewed to the present day: 'There are many good reasons for valuing older people. As well as the moral case, we can agree that older people continue to contribute as parents, grandparents, carers, neighbours, friends, campaigners, and volunteers.

'Older people remain vital to the passing on of values and to the social cohesion of society. They have been described as the glue that can help to keep a family together. Investing in their health and wellbeing makes for good sound economic and social policy. Simply put, an age-friendly society is friendly to all ages, and making life better for older people today, will help us to develop attitudes, values and services which benefit all age groups tomorrow', she said.

## DCU Conference 'Engaging In Ageing'

Áine Brady was invited to present at the above conference and chose to speak on 'Demonstrating the Value of Continued Community & Social Engagement for Older People'. She drew on Irish and international research into proven physical, emotional and psychological links between volunteering and engagement and the health and wellbeing of older people. She discussed volunteering, lifelong education, the digital divide, and looked to the future engagement of older people: 'First, we need to examine how new social roles can be developed for older people to promote engagement through: volunteering, social networks, relevant organisations, learning opportunities, involvement in sports, the arts, policy development and decision making. Second, we need to redefine later life to recognise that older people have a wide range of views, experiences, skills and foibles that need to be identified, acknowledged and used for the benefit of society. Third, we need to see the implementation of the National Positive Ageing Strategy.

"Older people are an asset and frequently an untapped resource in their communities. They have the time, talent and life experience and interest to play a role. The challenge is to make communities more aware of the potential resource that older people represent," she said.

Third Age also facilitated a conference workshop 'Challenges & Opportunities in Becoming Engaged'.

## Our Programmes

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### Senior Help Line

Senior Help Line continued to recruit, train and support Dublin volunteers, and by year's end the programme was two thirds way through its three year Strategic Plan 2014-2016. Senior Help Line is a national confidential listening service for older people, provided by trained older volunteers. The service is on target to achieve the goal of service sustainability, improved quality of service, a more cost-effective model, with no break in service during this transition.

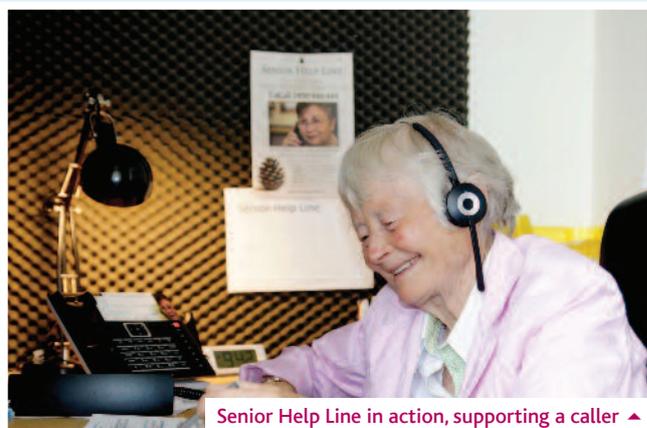
During 2015 Senior Help Line recruited, trained and mentored a total of 58 new volunteers. The majority

have been trained to work in our city centre call centre from 10am to 4pm in the offices of Cluid Housing Association. We wish to place on record our continued gratitude to Cluid, and we have been happy to demonstrate this by adapting some of our listening modules for Cluid's own call centre staff. In 2014 we were offered call centre accommodation in the Royal Hospital, Donnybrook, Dublin 4, and during 2015 we began to train volunteers to take up rota duty in Donnybrook. These volunteers will work from 4-7pm. A small number of volunteers continue to work at our Leopardstown centre from 7-10pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. We are extremely grateful to the Royal Hospital and to the Laura Lynn Centre, Leopardstown, Dublin 18 for showing their confidence in our service in such a practical and helpful way.

At the same time, and in accordance with our planned development, centres closed during the year in Dundalk, Finglas and Wexford. We held a thank you lunch for the volunteers in these centres and awarded each with a Certificate of Appreciation. Meeting our long-term volunteers for the last time is somewhat of a bitter-sweet occasion, and we are managing to convey our deep gratitude for their many hours of listening over the years to some of Ireland's most vulnerable older people.

Our regular audit of calls to the service continues to illustrate that very many older people have nobody to talk to, and live alone or feel alone. During the year our volunteers responded to very difficult calls where individuals, (and in some cases, couples) were suffering abuse from a family member. Verbal, psychological and financial abuse are the calls most frequently reported on the help line. The service has a strict protocol for elder abuse calls, a response which can be a practical and emotional support to the caller and also offer a guide to our volunteers. Other serious caller issues include mental distress, depression, anxiety, family conflict, isolation, difficulty with neighbours, safety and security. These problems can be exacerbated if someone is frail and alone. The numbers of people who phone the service on a very regular or daily basis continued during the year, with regular callers frequently telling us we are their lifeline. During 2015 we began to measure caller impact. Nine out of 10 callers tell us that they found phoning Senior Help Line to be either 'useful' or 'helpful'.

In centralising the service, we are achieving our goal to provide more support for volunteers. With our three groups working in Dublin, the opportunities for contact are maximised. We produced regular newsletters for volunteers during the year. We provided a number of workshops to upskill all our new volunteers, and these were very well received. In addition we began a social group for volunteers who are interested in forming friendships. The Great Gas Group (3Gs), came into being during the year. This group organised a number of walks, theatre visits and outings, and we facilitated by providing meeting space and secretarial backup. Our Dublin volunteers may now also be invited to join the varying events organised by Third Age and its programmes, and this is adding to their feeling of being part of Third Age.



Senior Help Line in action, supporting a caller ▲

During the year Senior Help Line began working with Volunteer Ireland in their programme 'Investing in Volunteers'. This programme awards the national quality standard for good practice in volunteer management, in the Republic of Ireland.

The standards will provide us with a framework to benchmark the quality of our volunteer programme, guide us in the steps we need to take, and enhance our reputation as an organisation where volunteers want to be involved. The process will take up to two years, it will include interviews with volunteers and staff, working closely with Volunteer Ireland, and improving our policies and procedures. The aim is to value volunteers, and ultimately deliver a better quality service to our callers.

## Senior Help Line Case Study

**Caller Experience:** Robert, Age 67

*"I live in south city centre and am pretty well housebound due to chronic mobility problems. The days hang very heavily and I look forward to phoning Senior Help Line. They are always welcoming and many of them know me now, they know my name and they know my story. I have a carer that comes in once a week and he collects my pension, changes my library books and does my shopping. I did not have brothers and sisters, my parents are dead and I have very few people in my life. It is really good to phone the help line and talk to different people. They always listen, and I feel that though they can't change my situation, they really care about me. It helps me to know they understand, and that I'm not completely alone."*

## Fáilte Isteach

2015 was a particularly successful year for Fáilte Isteach, a community-based project that offers free conversational English classes to migrants across Ireland. This year we have been acutely aware that the service is flourishing against the current unfolding refugee crisis in Europe. We have been proactive in offering our support to the state and other groups working in the area by proposing the support, experience and expertise of Fáilte Isteach as part of the strategy to deal with the appalling situation of migrants and refugees fleeing from war and conflict.



The opening of new groups in: Ashbourne, Ferrybank, Kilbeggan, Kilcoole, Killarney, Kinsale, Maynooth, Nenagh, Portlaoise, Roscrea, Tipperary, Warrenmount, TLC Citywest, Trim and Tullow brings the number of classes nationwide to 83. The growth of the project this year ensures that every week approximately 800 volunteer tutors welcome to the community over 2,500 migrant students from 78 different countries. This practical welcome helps them to integrate and thrive. Fáilte Isteach groups, located in a total of 23 Irish counties, now offer a combined total annually of 42,000 hours of free tuition.

A particular cause of celebration in 2015 is that the tremendous commitment of our volunteers was recognised at a European level by the awarding of the EESC Civil Society Prize.

This year the Fáilte Isteach team took a new approach to tutor training. Our interactive training workshops aimed to inform volunteers, and also to facilitate discussion, problem solving and a focus on the distinct priorities of each group. The training workshops were delivered to each group during the autumn months. Volunteers variously commented on the value of exchanging ideas, on the support being offered from tutors, and on coming together to experience the enthusiasm and energy in the room.

A Co-ordinator Handbook and a Tutor Handbook were developed and designed in-house in 2015. The coordinator handbook provides guidance for new and existing coordinators on initiating and managing the ongoing operation of a Fáilte Isteach group. The tutor training handbook provides practical guidance and advice on teaching a Fáilte Isteach conversational English class. These two handbooks were introduced to coordinators and tutors alongside the training workshops, and again received a very positive welcome from all concerned.

Our tutors continue to be supported on an ongoing basis through enhanced online resources delivered via the Third Age web site and a new Fáilte Isteach Facebook page. Through these media, there is increased capability to share resources, advice and teaching tips allowing our tutors to further benefit from the knowledge and expertise of our growing Fáilte Isteach community.

Between February and April 2015, Fáilte Isteach sought feedback from students through two avenues – through local focus groups and online questionnaires. The results confirm that the project continues to meet the diverse needs of its participants, while also providing constructive suggestions for future developments. 84% of students stated that they would be returning to classes in 2016, while 96% confirmed that their English had improved significantly since attending their local class. Students mentioned the conversational element of the class and a strong relationship with tutors as their main reasons for returning.

In 2014 Fáilte Isteach joined a new initiative entitled ChangeX. This aimed to share previously tried and tested social initiatives with communities who may benefit - within Ireland and internationally. In 2015 Fáilte Isteach participated in ChangeX 100, a campaign to have 100 teams in Ireland to adopt an initiative in their community with the goal of making it a better place to live. Fáilte Isteach was the most successful programme featured in this campaign nation-wide. This resulting coverage in print and radio media coverage inspired a number of new groups to set up a Fáilte Isteach class and helped us to exceed our target growth for 2015.

Our experience, through the nine years of the project, is that Ireland is full of people of compassion, consideration and humanity, and our volunteers are the living embodiment of this. The current migrant crisis is showcasing these traits on a much wider scale, and Fáilte Isteach feels privileged to be playing its part.

## Fáilte Isteach Case Study

### **Noemi is a Fáilte Isteach student from Sicily**

*"Despite visiting Ireland on holiday, when I arrived to live, I still felt like a tourist. As the weeks passed, I realised I wouldn't be taking that flight back to Italy, and that my new life was now rooted here. I also began to understand how important it was to settle in, discover new activities, and get to know new people.*

*Speaking English with local people is vital if you need to improve your language skills. After a couple of weeks sneaking around my local library's shelves, I discovered that English classes were being held in Bray, Co Wicklow. In my first class, I met with the Bray coordinator and volunteer tutors, and was placed in an advanced group. And so, my experience as a Fáilte Isteach student began! Since then Wednesday is my favourite day of the week, and I wait for it with the excitement of a child. Attending English lessons is the same as going out with my friends, with the advantage of learning at the same time, and having the chance to enjoy a cup of tea and some sweets during the break.*

*My tutor, John, is fun and kind. His lessons are interactive, giving everyone a chance to express themselves.*

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*My team has people from Romania, Hungary and Spain, and although we speak different languages and have different cultures, at that small work desk we all sit under the same colour flag. It is no coincidence that I've written the word 'team'. This is what we are – a team of curious people, friendly and fun with one aim: to improve our English while smiling.*

*The lessons with our tutor are well organised, efficient, varied and never too heavy. We use lots of materials to learn English, including newspaper articles and magazines, and I have been able to learn a lot about Ireland's history and culture. I've discovered new places, which I've then visited, and others, which I plan to visit. The most beautiful thing is that I'm not only learning standard English, but I am exposed to English idioms and sayings - one of my favourite parts of the lessons. My English is constantly improving, and I can really see the improvements in my everyday life.*

*For me, to be a part of this community as a student of Fáilte Isteach is like being part of a big group of friends. I could have not chosen a better activity to feel like I have a home far away from home. It's a wonderful feeling to know that Ireland is now not only my other home, and also the greenest one."*

### Sage – Support & Advocacy Service for Older People

Sage, Support & Advocacy Service for Older People completed its establishment phase – September 2014 to December 2015. Particularly important to the future development of Sage was the signing of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 on 30th December 2015. The Quality Standards for Support and Advocacy Work with Older People were formally launched at a national conference on October 16th at which keynote addresses were given by the European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly and former Law reform Commissioner Patricia Rickard-Clarke. In 2015 the programme continued to consolidate its structure and develop its service. The service works to expand access to support and advocacy services in all care settings, and wherever ageing poses a challenge for individuals. It is committed to addressing individual and systemic issues. Our approach is to 'collaborate where possible – to challenge where necessary'. To provide such a service requires wisdom, judgement and experience – the qualities of a sage.

The development of Sage is based on the use of core paid staff supported by and, in turn, supporting a network of well trained and supported volunteers. To emphasise the importance of providing a quality service and that a professional approach is expected, all volunteers are known as Sage Representatives. Each Sage Representative is part of a national team of people that Sage is slowly building, a team which is capable of tackling the most complex support and advocacy challenges presented by older people and/or people with an intellectual or other disability. Sage Representatives work in one or more of the following roles: advocate; facilitator; support person; legal/financial specialist. Most Sage Representatives were listed as advocates at the end of December 2015.

In order to clarify the responsibilities and expectations between Sage and care providers, Sage developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to formalise engagement with a number of care providers. In February 2015 the TLC nursing home group, which runs three nursing homes became the first provider to sign the MoU. At the end of December, a total of 75 MoUs had been signed. Each is valid for a period of twelve months, unless otherwise ended by either party giving notice of one month.

An initial set of Policies and Operational Guidelines were drafted to guide the work of the service. This process was led by Dr Michael Browne and overseen by the Practice and Guidance Work Group. A framework for providing support and supervision was developed and circulated to all Sage Representatives in October 2015. The purpose of support and supervision for Sage Representatives is to ensure a person receives adequate guidance and support to meet the organisations' objectives and standards, and to enable personal and professional development within the role.

During 2015 six training programmes began – three in Dublin, and one each in Cork, Galway and Limerick. A total of 81 people successfully completed training in 2015. In addition, 20 new candidates began training during the year and these are scheduled to complete training and receive their Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI), award in early 2016. In March and June Sage hosted five Reorientation and Refresher national training programmes for 97 existing volunteers who had trained with the programme prior to 2015. The purpose was to introduce participants to the significant developments in Sage, and to provide the necessary knowledge to their role of Sage Representative.

The Sage Legal & Financial Group was formally launched in April by Ms. Justice Mary Laffoy of the Supreme Court. The event was opened by Patricia Rickard-Clarke, chair of the National Advisory Committee (NAC), and a presentation was made by Mary Condell, Legal Adviser to Sage, and Co-ordinator of the Legal & Financial Support Group. 48 people attended. Membership of the Group is by invitation, and Sage will provide CPD where attendance is compulsory. Group members would also be required to provide a minimum number of hours to Sage in a voluntary capacity. Arising from a review of potential members, some 58 people were then invited to the first meeting of the group in June. A protocol for the Group has been developed. Key areas of work for the Group included:

- a schedule for presentations nationally regarding the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Bill (2013)
- preparation of fact sheets and other key legal resources for the web site
- a Wards of Court project and
- an awareness project regarding the need to plan ahead through the use of mechanisms and resources such as Enduring Power of Attorney, Advance Healthcare Directives, 'Think Ahead'.

At its first national conference in October 2015, Sage launched Quality Standards for Support and Advocacy Work with Older People. Developed by researcher Dr Michael Browne following a process of stakeholder and public consultation, the Quality Standards were warmly welcomed by the Ombudsman Peter Tyndall who spoke at the event.

In a foreword to the Quality Standards, Ms Justice Mary Laffoy of the Supreme Court provided a clear message as to their significance. 'Each of the six Quality Standards, set out in this document, are simply stated and clearly explained. They set out what is required of those who undertake support and advocacy work with older people. They also set out what is required of the service provider and the expected outcomes for those availing of support and advocacy services. They are a lodestar to guide people in what can sometimes be extremely challenging journeys and they are something to be practised rather than preached. They suggest a need to match aspiration with perspiration,' she said. Justice Laffoy quoted former President Mary Robinson who made a wider point on human rights: 'The aim is to push beyond standard-setting and asserting human rights to make those standards a living reality for people everywhere'.

In November 2014 Sage established a national Information and Advice Line/Rapid Response Service, and informed nursing homes and hospitals of the number – 1850 71 94 00, and hours of availability 8am to 10pm daily. Where urgent support for older people is required, an experienced Sage Representative will call to where they are needed within 48 hours.

## Sage Case Study

*Helen was hospitalised after a minor stroke and a fall at home. The stroke caused some communication difficulties and posed questions about her cognitive functioning. Helen is now medically fit for discharge, wants to go home, but family is concerned about her ability to manage. They feel Helen should consider nursing home care.*

*Helen's medical social worker contacted Sage, as she felt Helen would benefit from the support of an independent advocate in looking at post-discharge options. The advocate visited Helen, explained his role, and that the advocacy service was led and instructed by her in ensuring that her preferences would be upheld. Helen agreed to talk to the advocate about her future, and on two subsequent visits, displayed insight into the risks of returning home, including another fall, but said 'she would rather die at home than go to a nursing home.'*

*Helen signed a Sage 'Consent Authority to Act Form' giving the advocate permission to work on her behalf in discussing her needs with professionals. She was open to the idea of a home care package, attendance at a local day care centre and to work with her local public health nurse. Helen requested that the advocate attend on her behalf a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting to articulate her will and preferences.*

*At the meeting, the advocate confirmed that Helen could understand, retain, weigh and communicate her desire to return home and displayed insights into the risks involved. The advocate subsequently met Helen to explain what had happened, and the outcomes, which would take time to implement. During the following long-drawn out process, the advocate had regular support and supervision sessions with his supervisor, which gave him a platform to raise and explore system issues such as, for example, delay in accessing home care packages.*

*After considerable effort from the MDT, and many conversations with Helen's family and advocate, a plan was put in place. This was a discharge home with a home care package. Helen was happy with the outcome. However, her family remained apprehensive regarding the decision. By agreement, the advocate, therefore, continued to support Helen and her family during the transition, with Helen agreeing that she would like the advocate to remain involved. He has visited Helen at home, and remains available if she needs further support.*

## Consolidation & Innovation Hub

The Third Age Consolidation & Innovation Hub was envisaged as a project which is:

- capable of being applied to existing programmes
- a fit with the Third Age ethos supporting and developing services which benefit people of all ages and help to build communities
- will facilitate the development of strategic alliances – international, national and local
- does not duplicate existing services but looks to best practice in Ireland and beyond
- will have income generating potential
- and will become a resource for other organisations that may wish to develop programmes and initiatives that help the lives of older people in Ireland.

The Consolidation & Innovation Hub Manager presented to Keorber Foundation conference in Hamburg, Germany, on the theme of 'Potentials of Ageing' to an audience of civic and municipality groups working in the fields of ageing, community development and integration. The Innovation Hub also worked with Fáilte Isteach in its successful application for the EESC Civil Society Prize, which was presented in Brussels in 2015.

During the year work began with NUI Maynooth to set up and co-ordinate an eight week Touchstone course – Civic Engagement of Older People. This represents a partnership between Third Age, Meath Age Friendly Alliance and the School of Applied Social Studies in Maynooth. The expectation is that a number of initiatives will come from this programme, and Third Age will be in a position to support participants in developing these once the course has been completed.



A partnership is developing between Senior Help Line, the Consolidation & Innovation Hub and DCU, towards developing a telephone support service provided by older volunteers to DCU students who would benefit.

A partnership is also being explored between the Consolidation & Innovation Hub and Flexibus towards the development of a rural transport service to particularly meet the needs of isolated older people. Flexibus currently runs a much-needed service in the North East.

The following networks have been developed to position Third Age as a strong partner in addressing the challenges of ageing in Ireland:

- The Human Rights of Older People Working Group, a group comprising Third Age, Active Retirement Ireland, Age Action, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Age & Opportunity and the Irish Centre for Civil Liberties
- Meath Co. Council Age Friendly Committee
- The Joint Policing Committee in Meath, focusing on the needs and concerns of older people around safety and security and looking at effective and innovative schemes to address these concerns
- The Local Community & Economic Development Strategy in Meath – attended consultations on Wellbeing in the community and resilience
- Ashoka and ChangeX, a platform of proven innovations for those who want to strengthen their community
- Council member and Irish representative on Age Platform Europe, a European network of age-related organisations focusing on a range of policy issues that focus on older and retired people.

Third Age was nominated as the Community representation on the Housing, Community & Cultural Development of the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) in Co. Meath.

The Consolidation & Innovation Hub team has carried out a number of fundraising and marketing events in 2015, and has built relationships with a number of corporate partners in order to promote the work of Third Age.

In 2015 The European Commission invited organisations to submit ideas for issues or services deserving of funding by the first Horizon Prize for Social Innovation. Horizon 2020 is the EU's research and innovation funding programme, and the prize fund is €2m. Thanks to a campaign by the Council of Age Platform, 'The Challenge of an Ageing Population' has received the largest support in an open public vote. Based on this result, the Commission, in co-operation with the European Investment Bank Institute, will receive a Horizon Prize that rewards the innovator or team that comes up with the best solution that addresses the challenges and opportunities of ageing, and improves the quality of life for older people. Our Consolidation & Innovation Hub Manager, representing Third Age on Age Platform, is coordinating viable entries for this competition, which will open in February 2016.

## Third Age Summerhill

2015 was a busy year for Third Age Summerhill where the philosophy is one of inclusion and collaboration. Regular members meetings are scheduled so that members can decide what activities they would like, and

plan accordingly. A guest speaker is invited to such meetings to inform members on issues such as safety in the home, legal matters, foot care, health and wellbeing.

## **An A-Z of established activities and services for members in 2015 includes**

- Advocacy
- Access to Socially Monitored Alarms Scheme
- Aromatherapy
- Art & drama
- Beautician
- Chiropody
- Computer classes
- Counselling
- Dance
- Drop in centre
- Hairdressing
- Health promotion
- Holidays
- Homeopathy
- Library
- Little Jobs Project (community service)
- Ondamed (neurological stimulation for pain relief)
- Outings
- Resource centre
- Socials
- Third Age choir
- Transport service for members

## **New Programmes & Services**

A Third Age carer, Rena Murray, was appointed during the year. Rena travels on the Third Age bus with members and is also available to help them while in the centre.

An eight-week Mindfulness course was held in May. Presented by Cormac Lynch, founder of the Camara Group, mindfulness is a therapeutic approach, which focuses awareness on the present moment.

## **Ongoing Programmes**

The popular Slimathon Programme, which began in 2014, continued this year. The programme begins with a weigh-in and health check. Each week participants were weighed, heard talks on relevant self-care, health promotion and illness prevention. 30 members began the course, with 20 literally staying the course and emerging slimmer, fitter and better informed.

A Get Fit for All programme was expanded in 2015 as an ongoing service. Facilitated weekly by fitness expert Frank Fahy, members come together for exercise and movement, with external speakers offering advice on healthy eating, nutrition, sensible shopping and related subjects.

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The intergenerational dance project continued during the academic year. 'Rap Around the Clock' is based in Scoil Dara, Kilcock and facilitated by a dance teacher. 'The Way We Were' history exhibition also continued its visitation to schools and nursing homes. Both of these programmes were featured on RTE1 in a short programme profiling community initiatives.

Residents from St. Joseph's Hospital, Trim and Beaufort Nursing Home, Navan attend Third Age every two weeks for music, singsongs, arts, crafts and friendship. This welcome from a community outside the residential setting is very much appreciated.



Third Age members mastering Nordic Poles with fitness expert Frank Fahy ▲

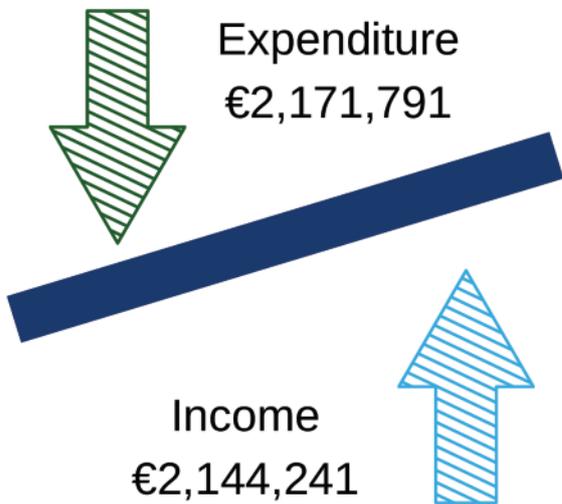
## Events

Third Age members participated in Grandparents' Day in Dangan Primary School in January. In February Areaman Productions visited Summerhill to record a morning of jokes and humour with members. Member's day outings during the year included a visit to the historical tour of Glasnevin Cemetery, to the Lusk Garden Centre, and to Carlingford, Co. Louth. There were a number of garden parties and barbecues during the summer months, as well as the annual Mass for deceased members. Third Age staff in Summerhill had fire safety training in June. Members had three holidays – to Wexford, Cobh and to Fuengerola, Spain. Third Age offers many members the only opportunity they would have to experience such a holiday. During the year members worked with NUI Maynooth graduate, Joe Duggan, who chose Third Age as his thesis subject. In early December a Carols by Candlelight evening was held in Summerhill. The choir from St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Trim joined members of the Third Age choir in a quiet and spiritual occasion. In December a small group of members travelled to Dublin to present gifts of warm clothing, food and toiletries to homeless people. The group was affected by what they saw and the stories they heard, and it is planned to repeat this activity in 2016.

Mary Nally was involved in a number of Ashoka events during the year. These included presenting on Fáilte Isteach at a conference in Milan on the integration of refugees, attending the conferring of Dame Esther Rantzen as an Ashoka Fellow in London, and participating in a three day Ashoka workshop in Co. Mayo. She presented on Third Age at a festival in Temple Bar, to members of the ICA on older people and rural isolation, attended Dementia Awareness training, and a number of Social Entrepreneurs events in Dublin.

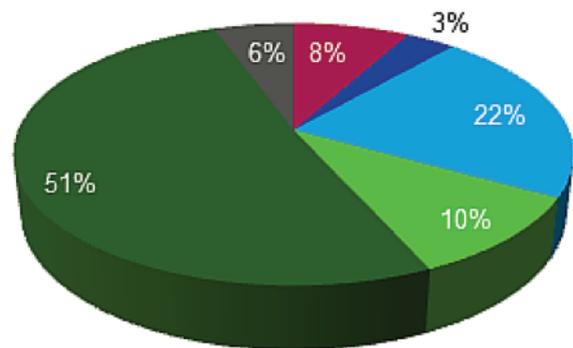
## Fundraising

Third Age Summerhill organised a number of fundraising events during the year. These included a coffee morning and cake sale, bring and buy sale, annual Christmas raffle, and entertainment provided by Brendan Shine, TR Dallas and Brendan Grace.



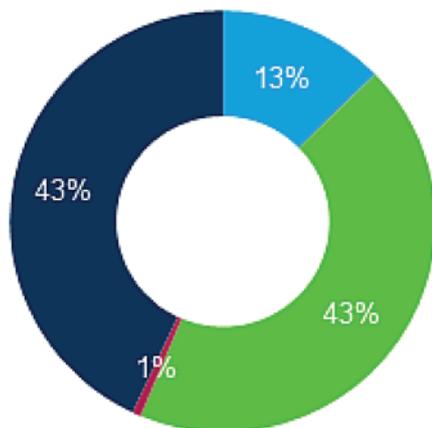
## Programme Expenditure

- Innovation Hub
- Fáilte Isteach
- Third Age Local
- Sage
- Senior Help Line
- TA other initiatives



## Sources of Income

- Fundraising/donations
- Statutory
- Grants
- Philanthropic



In 2015, there were 32 Third Age employees working alongside seven community employment participants

Full details of the Audited Accounts and Financial Statements for both Third Age Foundation Ltd. and Senior Citizen's Help Line Ltd. can be obtained from the Companies Registration

Third Age Foundation Ltd.  
Company Number: 414509  
CHY 16647  
Registered Charity Number: 20060459

Senior Citizen's Help Line Ltd. T/A Senior Help Line  
Company Number: 414508  
CHY 16756  
Registered Charity Number: 20061104

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Responding to the Opportunities  
and Challenges of Ageing in Ireland

[www.thirdageireland.ie](http://www.thirdageireland.ie) 046 955 7766 [nationaloffice@thirdageireland.ie](mailto:nationaloffice@thirdageireland.ie)

fáilte isteach senior help line sage innovation hub