

AgeingMatters

in Ireland

Determined

A fair budget

Members set priorities for this year's budget. 4-5

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AgeAction

For all older people

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■ Age Action members at our pre-budget meeting in Cork.

Photo: Eddie Lyons

Opinion

Lost opportunities



Eamon Timmins

The recently published Programme for Government is another bitterly disappointing lost opportunity for our political leaders. Certainly the voices of older people were heard by the politicians on the hustings. There are many welcome (if a little vague) commitments to address the immediate needs of older people and some of the core issues which impact on the quality of people's lives.

But while the parties heard what we were saying, they failed to grasp the bigger picture or understand what is required to plan for the years to come.

Some positives

On the plus side, the new Government has committed to increasing the State Pension and the Living Alone Allowance above the rate of inflation, although there is a worrying lack of detail. It plans to reduce the cost of medicine by lowering the cap on the Drugs Payment Scheme and reducing prescription charges. It promises additional annual funding for extra home care packages and home helps.

There is also a strong emphasis on investing in primary care, with additional GPs, public health nurses and the expansion of services provide at primary care centres.

There is a focus on supporting older people in their communities, with a commitment to protecting the Travel Pass, investing in the Housing Adaptation Grant and the Senior Alert Scheme, as well a commitment to rural transport.

Severe disappointment

But the Programme for Government is disappointing because it focuses solely on the current needs of older people and fails to plan for the future. It acknowledges that it is a weakness of the Irish political system that it does not easily accommodate long-term thinking. It seeks to address this by outlining a new approach which involves consultation to achieve a broad based consensus.

However, disappointingly, the document outlines plans for the establishment of a 'Citizens' Assembly' to discuss a range of constitutional and social issues. Included in this will be a discussion on "the future needs of, and the possibilities and opportunities for, our ageing population".

There is no mention of the National Positive Ageing Strategy. Is it dead in the water, to be replaced by the outcome of the Citizens' Assembly? And who is going to lead Government policy on ageing and develop the cross-departmental thinking and planning that is required?

In the meantime, as this Government gets to work on other priority issues, the clock is ticking. Our population is ageing.

Unless those in power wake up quickly, we will all pay the price in the years ahead.



▲ New Minister of State for Older People, Helen McEntee TD, and Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD.

Photo: Fine Gael

McEntee named new Minister for Older People

The Taoiseach has appointed Deputy Helen McEntee as the new Minister of State with Responsibility for Mental Health and Older People.

Minister McEntee was first elected to the Dáil in 2013 after a by-election following the death of her father, Shane McEntee, who had previously represented the Meath East constituency.

Age Action has welcomed her appointment and has already written to the minister seeking a meeting to highlight the urgent issues of concern facing many older people.

Congratulations

“We’d like to congratulate the minister on her new role,” said Age Action CEO Eamon Timmins. “We look forward to working with her on a wide range of issues facing older people today including the need to implement the National Positive Ageing Strategy, more supports for community care and a fair State Pension.”

Over the course of the election campaign Age Action, along with other organisations represent-

ing older people in the Earn Our Vote coalition, had campaigned for a Cabinet-level minister with responsibility for older people.

“The simple truth is that Ireland is not prepared for the changes that are coming as our population ages,” Eamon pointed out. “More and more people are living longer and this is something to be proud of, it’s a success story.

“But we need to ensure the right policies are in place to support positive ageing, to make Ireland the best country in the world in which to grow old, a country where older people are respected, supported and their continuing contribution to Irish society is celebrated.

“That’s why we believe we need a minister who can drive this agenda forward and we hope we can work together with Minister McEntee to achieve this.”

The new minister is a graduate of DCU with a degree in Law, Politics and Economics and holds a Masters in Communications and Journalism. Before becoming a public representative she worked in the Department of Agriculture and previously for a subsidiary of Citibank.

Age Action members set out their budget priorities



▲ Age Action members in Cork discuss their budget priorities.

Photo: Eddie Lyons

Fighting for a **fair** budget in October

One of Age Action’s top priorities every year is to campaign to ensure the October budget delivers for older people, writes **Naomi Feely**.

While the Irish economy continues to slowly emerge from recession, a range of competing interests are vying for a share of the increased available resources.

It is critical, therefore, that Age Action fights for additional investment in the areas that will make the biggest difference

for older people. Deciding what those areas are has been a major focus of our members in recent weeks.

We rely heavily on you, our members, and other older people to inform this work. Our budget priorities are shaped by the reality of growing older in Ireland.

Over the last two months we

have carried out a nationwide consultation with our members. This has included producing a short survey, which we issued with the previous edition of *Ageing Matters*, and holding a series of consultation meetings around the country.

Hundreds of responses

To date we have had more than 300 responses to our survey. We are currently collating and analysing the feedback. We

The consultations and survey results have given us a starting point to develop our pre-budget submission.

have also met with around one hundred older people over the course of meetings in Cork, Dublin, Galway and Castlebar.

Similar to previous years, our consultations are about giving members the time and the space to talk about the issues that affect them and their families.

The main aim of each meeting was for those attending to identify the top priorities to be included in Age Action's submission.

Members worked in small groups to identify the most important issues they wanted Age Action to highlight.

After a general discussion about the different ideas, everyone was given five votes as they left the meeting so that they could help to decide what should be the top priorities.

Across all our consultations the need for continued and increased funding for home help and home care came up. This will be a major issue for us and one we will focus on when developing our submission for the Department of Health.

Pension and taxes

While an increase in the State Pension was discussed at nearly all our meetings, it was identified

Only you can shape the budget

Unfortunately, fairness doesn't always feature in how Government budgets are planned. More often, the stronger an organisation or a group of people, the better the budget they get in October.

Only you, our members, can ensure we get the budget we deserve. In the coming weeks and months we'll need you to be putting pressure on Government TDs to ensure that the commitments they made during the election are delivered.

Fine Gael promised a €5 increase in the pension. They promised cuts to prescription charges and an extra 2.2 million home help hours.

Only you can ensure they keep their promises.

as a top priority at just one meeting out of the four. Some members felt that an increase might be wiped out by new charges or taxes and that we should focus elsewhere.

The restoration of the Telephone Allowance was a top priority at two of our meetings.

It has been some time since the Property Tax has been introduced but it remains a critical issue for our members. At our meetings in both Dublin and Galway it was identified as a top priority. In Castlebar, providing more funding to tackle the issue

of isolation and loneliness was the top priority.

The consultations and survey results have given us a starting point to develop our pre-budget submission.

Over the coming weeks we will begin developing specific and realistic recommendations for the various government departments.

Once our submission is finalised we will prepare materials for our members so that you can engage with your local representatives on the issues of most importance to older people.



◀ Members voting to decide their budget priorities.

Photo: Eddie Lyons

Are you paying too much on your energy bills?

Switch on the savings

More than four of out every ten people won't switch energy providers because they believe they won't save any money, according to new research from One Big Switch.

This is despite the fact that anyone who seeks out a better deal can save hundreds of euro a year.

"One of the challenges here is that many older people are not online or don't want to pay through direct debit, which makes it hard for them to benefit from some of the discounts out there," said Age Action's Justin Moran.

"Last month, for example, Electric Ireland announced a new loyalty discount of 8.5 per cent for gas and electricity, but only if customers sign up to a direct debit and agree to get their bills by email."

When Age Action raised this with Electric Ireland they pointed out that all customers, regardless of how they pay, will benefit from a 6 per cent cut in the price of electricity from 1 June



▲ Customers can make big savings on their electricity bill.

and anyone paying through the Household Budget Scheme run by An Post can get an additional saving of 5.5 per cent.

Put in the effort

There are good deals out there if customers are willing to put in the effort.

"Householders should be aware that the best savings are for active customers prepared to switch to the best deals," said Simon Moynihan of price comparison website bonkers.ie.

"Wholesale electricity prices are down more than 35 per cent since April 2014 and suppliers are passing those savings on to new customers in the form of discounts, sign-up incentives and even cashback.

"A customer switching from standard rates to the best electricity deal in the market right now will save €214, which is almost four times as much as they would save by waiting for a price cut."

David Liston of the One Big Switch campaign believes the reluctance of customers to switch is one of the biggest challenges to reducing energy prices.

"Apathy around switching and fear of the unknown are two of the biggest issues we face when trying to convince Irish consumers to shop around," he said.

"By not shopping around, consumers are essentially paying a loyalty tax, which is rarely rewarded."

Pilot scheme promises big savings

Age Action has welcomed a new pilot scheme being rolled out by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources that has the potential to make a real impact on fuel poverty.

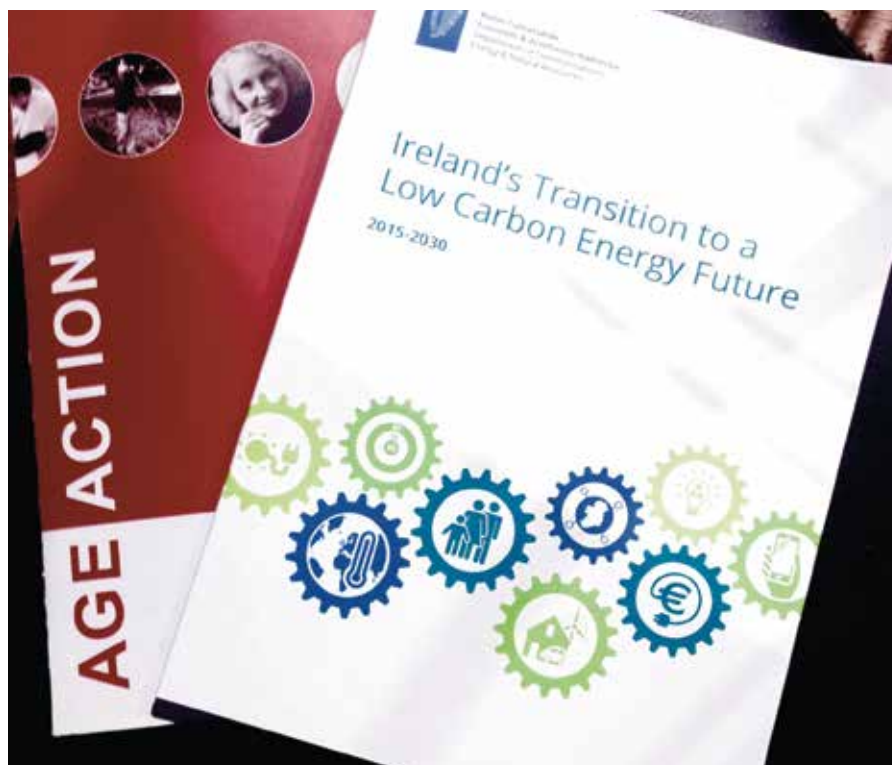
The Warmth and Wellbeing Energy Efficiency Scheme is initially available to over 55s in Dublin 12 and Dublin 24 who have been diagnosed with asthma or COPD, and who are eligible for the Fuel Allowance.

"This is very similar to the Warmer Homes Scheme," said Justin Moran, "but on a much bigger scale with grants of €20,000 available to upgrade the energy efficiency of your home and install things like wall or attic insulation.

"This could mean big savings on your heating bill but the ambition of the project is much bigger than that. By targeting people with health problems like asthma and giving priority to those receiving home care, it's aimed at improving people's health by ensuring their homes are kept warm."

The scheme is currently only available in parts of Dublin but it has the potential to expand if researchers can show the health of people who avail of this offer is improved.

If you live in Dublin 12 or Dublin 24 and think you might be eligible for the scheme, please contact your local GP.



▲ Energy costs are a big issue for many Age Action members.

By targeting people with health problems like asthma and giving priority to people receiving home care, [the scheme is] aimed at improving people's health by ensuring their homes are kept warm.

Helping you to make the switch

Bonkers.ie has a terrific price comparison website, which is very easy to use, but they will also compare prices for you over the phone. Just call them on 1800 930 255.

Switcher.ie is another really good website for price comparisons and you can also register with **onebigswitch.ie**, which negotiates discount deals for large groups of customers.

You can get more information from the Commission for Energy Regulation at energycustomers.ie.

Conference considers how scheme can be funded in future



▲ The conference heard from a number of national and international actuarial and pensions experts.

Photo: Fennells

Securing our State Pension

Growing numbers of older people in the coming decades mean we need to act now to ensure the future of the State Pension, a conference organised by the Society of Actuaries was told last month.

The event was held to examine a research paper published last year by actuarial consultants, Milliman, which explored the financial sustainability of the State Pension in Ireland.

Researchers Michael Culligan and Aisling Barrett looked at how the cost of the State Pension is due to rise in the coming decades in line with increasing numbers of pensioners.

They also demonstrated a number of different ways these costs could be met, including increasing PRSI rates, changes to retirement ages and the level of payment.

Speaking to an audience of pension experts and actuaries, the team was keen to emphasise they were not proposing any one particular solution, but presenting the various possibilities to try and make clear just how serious a challenge we're facing.

They acknowledged that, "there is no easy solution to improve the sustainability of the State Pension, with all of the possible options involving difficult policy choices".

Mandatory retirement

One of these options was highlighted by Dr Alan Barrett of the ESRI, who looked at the issue of mandatory retirement.

Dr Barrett stressed that he was not suggesting people should be forced to work longer, but pointing out that many would like to do so if the opportunity was there.

This would allow them to keep contributing to



◀ Age Action's Justin Moran highlighted the importance of the State Pension to enable older people to age with dignity.

Photo: Fennells

the economy and supports Age Action's call for mandatory retirement to be scrapped.

Age Action's Head of Advocacy and Communications, Justin Moran, was the final speaker at the event and highlighted the importance of the State Pension for older people.

"A fair State Pension is what enables older people to age with dignity and with independence, keeping them out of poverty," he said. "We have to protect it.

"But that means we must act now. The number of people over 65 will have almost trebled by 2046 and the sooner the Government appreciates the urgency of the problem and takes action, the better for future generations of pensioners.

"We need a Government that thinks beyond the next election, that understands its obligations not just to today's pensioners, but to all of us who hope to grow old in Ireland.

"The failure to implement the National Positive Ageing Strategy is a worrying indicator of how seriously the Government is taking ageing issues and preparing for the future."

Increasing PRSI

Looking at the various solutions that were contained in the Milliman report, Mr Moran focused on one in particular.

"No matter how you measure it," he said, "our

PRSI rates are among the lowest in the European Union, nearly dead last.

"The economist, Michael Taft, has pointed out that if employer's PRSI was raised to just the EU average, this would have the potential to bring in an additional €8 billion.

"We are not going to be able to secure our State Pension without confronting the need to increase PRSI contributions, particularly from employers, and that debate needs to start now."

A lively panel discussion, chaired by Olivia O'Leary, was dominated by discussion over which of the proposed solutions might work best, with participants agreeing that there was no single action that would fully protect the State Pension.

Speakers from the floor of the conference, including the TCD economist Professor Gerry Hughes, pointed out that substantial sums of money are already spent by the Government through tax breaks for private pensions.

These tax breaks disproportionately benefit the better off and Professor Hughes suggested that some of this money should be used to support our State Pension system.

Ideas like this, and those proposed in the Milliman report, need to be examined closely by the new Government if we are to ensure that there is a fair, decent, State Pension there on retirement for today's workers.

Brendan has raised money for urgent causes around Ireland



▲ Brendan sets off on another cycle.

A passion for cycling

Now in his 80s, but with no sign of stopping any time soon, **Brendan Geoghegan**, one of our Galway members, writes about how he developed his passion for cycling.

My first introduction to long distance cycling was for the Co-Operation North Maracycle, a

distance of 206 miles. I took part in this every year from 1985 to 1989. The main purpose was to

raise money for teenagers from the Catholic and Protestant areas of Belfast who were affected by the conflict.

I had to travel to Dublin with my bike by train, stay in a B&B at my own expense and cycle from Dublin to Belfast. There was a

break along the way for a meal in Dundalk RTC that took one hour. Every ten miles there were rest points providing water or juice. One of the main ideas behind the project was to organise joint holidays to create bonds of friendship between groups of young people, who might never

City to Kinsale.

On the day of my return I asked a garda to show me the way to Galway. I cycled from Cork to Quin, Co Clare, and stayed overnight with my uncle and cycled to Galway the following day.

I also took part in the Croí cycle here in Galway. It was organised

a circuit of Galway lakes, started off in Galway City and then on to Maam Cross, then Clonbur, then going along through Headford, to finish up back in Galway, a total distance of 75 miles. There was a shorter route of between 25 to 30 miles for other cyclists.

It is a very tough route overall, hilly terrain with tremendous views of the Corrib lakes and Connemara.

As a result of the money raised by the maracycle some of the children were brought to the USA and later to other European countries for a holiday. I have met visitors from the USA and the continent who met those children over there.

have met, by taking them away from the hostile influences in their neighbourhoods.

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Training

The Co-Operation North organisation sent us a training schedule to prepare us and improve our fitness levels for the maracycle. I received a prize for my fundraising efforts so I opted for a weekend in Cork city. I travelled by bus with my bike and stayed in a B&B in Turner's Cross. While I was there I cycled from Cork

in the month of May every year. I took part in this event for 15 years.

The highest incidence of heart disease occurs in the west of Ireland. This dictated the urgency of this fundraising event.

Initially, the number of participants averaged 300 to 500 cyclists dedicated to helping this very worthy event.

The cycle got a big boost when Seán Kelly of Carrick-on-Suir, famous for his wonderful exploits in the Tour de France and other international competitions, lent us his support. The number of participants rose dramatically, as high as 10,000.

Seán is a wonderful athlete and a source of great pride throughout Ireland.

The routes for the Lakes cycle,

Dedication

The sheer dedication of these cyclists giving of their best and, through their fundraising, providing badly needed facilities for their fellow citizens in need of urgent medical attention deserves enormous credit.

The next time you hear criticism of cyclists remember the many people who unselfishly give of their time and energy to assist in a very practical way the many worthy causes here in Galway and around Ireland.

A word of praise is also due to the back-up teams who help at the rest points where the cyclists receive drinks of water or orange, and fruit. For maintenance there is a group giving mechanical aid, fixing punctures and so on.

We usually finish up in the Croí Centre, Moyola Park, Newcastle. Tea and refreshments are enjoyed and everyone who participated is presented with a certificate showing the completion of their cycle, as a worthy thank you for their wonderful effort on the day.

Are **you** being hit by nursing home charges?

*Dear Age Action,
I am currently in a nursing home under the Fair Deal Scheme. In the last couple of months, the bill I've been getting has increased a couple of times. I'm struggling to pay the new costs and not sure what I should do.*

Maggie, Clare.

We've received a number of reports like this in recent months. The first thing to understand is that the Fair Deal Scheme only covers long-term nursing home care. This means it pays for your bed and board, and basic nursing and personal care like laundry.

However, it doesn't cover a number of other items for which nursing homes can charge.

The nursing home agreed a contract with you shortly after you arrived. This would include details of the services they would provide and the fees they'll charge.

You should never be charged fees that are not set out in the contract and before you sign it, make sure you ask about any hidden charges.

Itemised bill

The first step is to ensure you get an itemised bill. You're entitled to know exactly for what you are paying. You need to ensure you're not being charged for things like doctor's services or incontinence wear if you have a medical card that already covers them.

You should also keep an eye out for charges for



social activities. It's fair enough for a nursing home to have some sort of charge but if you were unable to take part in those activities, you shouldn't have to pay for them.

If you do not get satisfaction from your nursing home, you can complain to the Office of the Ombudsman. You can find out more at their website, www.ombudsman.gov.ie, or get in touch with us.

The review of the Fair Deal Scheme, published last year, recommended that nursing home residents should be able to opt out of extra services they cannot use and this is something Age Action is pursuing.

Please contact our information team on these, or any other issues, at 01 475 6989 or helpline@ageaction.ie. The line is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and closed for lunch.

You should never be charged fees that are not set out in the contract and before you sign it, make sure you ask about any hidden charges.



Will you jump **out of a plane** for a good cause?

When it comes to charity fundraisers that get your heart racing, few can match skydiving from 10,000 feet!

Age Action has teamed up with Skydive Ireland to organise an unforgettable, adrenaline-fuelled, jump this summer. Registrations are now open and we are looking for volunteers to take up the challenge.

Age Action ran very successful skydives in 2010 and 2011 and many people have been in touch hoping we were going to do it again.

"If skydiving or parachuting is on your bucket-list of things to do, this is a golden opportunity," said Age Action's fundraiser Daragh Matthews.

"I jumped for Age Action in 2010 and I can honestly say it is one of the most exciting and unforgettable experiences of my life," said Age Action Chief Executive Eamon Timmins.

Roar of the wind

Strapped to your experienced tandem master, you reach speeds of 200 kph before the parachute opens and you enjoy breath taking views and a slow descent before landing.

"The exhilaration and the roar of the wind as you fall are terrifying, but then the parachute opens and there is absolute peace and spectacular views of the scenery below," Eamon recalled. "The tandem master was in control throughout, but he let me help steer the parachute before re-taking control to bring us down safely."

To book your seat on the plane you must raise a minimum of €480 per person. This includes the discounted charity rate to cover the cost of the

jump and training.

In addition, there is a €30 registration charge, in return for which Skydive Ireland will send out sponsorship cards and handle all the administration for your jump.

Once you have raised a minimum of €480 you can book and complete your jump at the Skydive Ireland base, just outside Kilkenny, any time up to October.

However, Age Action is organising a group jump day (provisionally booked for Saturday 3 September) and we'd love you to join us to get a big Age Action team together for what promises to be one of the most memorable experience of our lives.

For more details email skydive@ageaction.ie or call our fundraising team on 01 475 6989.



◀ Mary Robison with the executive of the Irish Dementia Working Group (L-R) Ronan Smith, Helen Rochford Brennan, Cathy Ryan, Colette Kelleher and John Clifford at the launch of the charter.

Photo: Alzheimer Society of Ireland

First human rights charter for people with dementia

Former President of Ireland and UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robison has launched Ireland's first Charter of Rights for people with dementia.

The ground breaking charter, which was drawn up by the Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) and the Irish Dementia Working Group, demonstrates the importance of human rights for the 48,000 people with dementia in Ireland.

People with dementia have the same human rights as every other citizen. However, it is widely recognised that, in addition to the impact of the condition, they face cultural, social and economic barriers

to fulfilling these rights.

Momentous day

"As a person living with dementia this is a momentous day for those of us who are dedicated to fighting for equal rights as citizens," said Helen Rochford-Brennan, Chairperson of the Irish Dementia Working Group

"We are fighting for the rights of every single person with dementia and their families who are every day fighting to stay in their homes, access services and be treated with the dignity they deserve."

"For the first time in Ireland, a conversation has been started about human rights and dementia with the launch of this Charter," said CEO of the ASI Colette Kelleher.

"The objective is to inform a human rights-based approach

to the development of services and supports for people with dementia and carers living in Ireland."

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robison officially launched the charter at an event in Dublin.

"I hope that the launch of this Charter will enable us all to see people with dementia in a new light, with the same human rights as all of us, and with a voice which needs to be heard," she told the audience.

The number of people with dementia is expected to increase significantly in the coming years; rising to 68,216 by 2021 and to 132,000 by 2041.

The overall cost of dementia care in Ireland is just over €1.69 billion per annum and 48 per cent of this is attributable to family care.

Helping older refugees survive with dignity

More than 3.9 million people have so far fled the violence in Syria. Among them are tens of thousands of older women and men who are in desperate need of assistance.

Age Action is affiliated to HelpAge International, which is working with these refugees in Lebanon and Jordan.

In conflicts, older men and women and people with disabilities are some of the most vulnerable. Their needs are very different from those of other groups.

HelpAge specialists are working in local communities to identify individual older people and people with disabilities who need help, like Fteim El Salam, who lives in Beqaa after fleeing her home in the Syrian city of Homs.

"In three years in Syria, I only received assistance once...I now receive medication for my high blood pressure and heart disease," she says. "I have also seen a cardiologist and received lab tests for free."

Surviving with dignity

Working with local partners in Lebanon and with individual older people, injured and disabled people and their families, HelpAge targets assistance at those who need it most, helping them to survive this terrible crisis and do so with dignity.

HelpAge is also providing drugs, such as insulin, and medical equipment to measure blood pressure and blood sugar through static and mobile clinics to assist older people with non-communicable diseases like hypertension and diabetes.

Support like this is vital to support older people in Lebanon. The country's healthcare system is struggling to cope with the rising numbers of refu-



▲ A busy reception at a HelpAge supported health centre in Lebanon. Photo: Quentin Bruno/HelpAge International

gees. The system is also largely privatised, which raises huge problems for older people with chronic health conditions.

To find out more, or to support the work of HelpAge, log on to www.helpage.org.

Making a difference in Lebanon

To date, HelpAge has:

- ▶ Screened 3,275 patients for type II diabetes and hypertension;
- ▶ Provided medical consultations to 2,365 patients;
- ▶ Seen 2,467 people attend health education sessions on diabetes, hypertension and healthy nutritional habits;
- ▶ Provided training on older people's health needs to 353 employees from humanitarian and government agencies;
- ▶ Held social events for 471 older people, including nutritious meals and cooking classes for 642 people.

Mayor opens new Age Action office in Cork



▲ Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Chris O'Leary with Juliette Ahern; Eamon Timmins, CEO of Age Action; John O'Mahony, Regional Manager for Age Action; and Julie Oates

◀ A big crowd of members, volunteers and supporters attended the launch.

Photos: Gerard McCarthy

The **essential** guidebook to ageing in Ireland

The seventh annual *Senior Citizen and Family Carer: The Essential Guidebook* is now available.

This free publication has served as a trusted a one-stop shop for senior care and ageing issues since its initial publication almost ten years ago.

The guidebook provides a comprehensive overview of ageing issues in Ireland including:

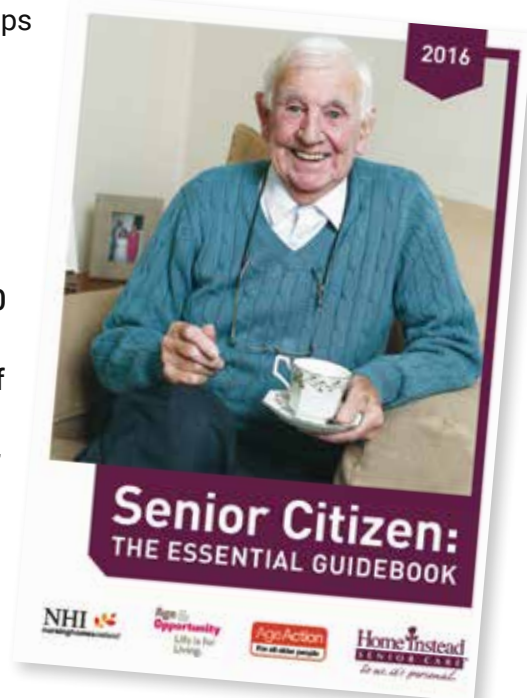
- Allowances and Entitlements
- Financial Advice
- Legal Information
- Community Support
- Alzheimer's and Dementia Care

Care options

"The information available is for family carers and older people to make it easier to navigate the caring and ageing terrain in Ireland," said Ed Murphy, CEO of Home Instead Senior Care.

"The guidebook also includes real life stories from people who age successfully – these are the people who have prepared for their senior years and taken steps to safeguard their health, safety, social and family needs."

Call 1890 930 847 to order a free copy of the 2016 edition of *Senior Citizen and Family Carer: The Essential Guidebook*.



Seven reasons to create an online memorial

Losing a loved one is an incredibly difficult experience and often leaves you feeling lost and hopeless. Mental health professionals around the globe stress the benefits of expressing your grief rather than holding it in.

During the bereavement process you might feel the need to record and share the memories of your loved ones and online memorials might be just what you need.

Why spend time writing an online memorial?

1. Help yourself and others by expressing your feelings

Online memorials provide space for you to put together your thoughts, memories, pictures, poems and quotes about your deceased loved one. This is a healing process where your thoughts and emotions get focused on creating a lovely memorial for everybody to see.

2. It is not there just for a day

Online memorials are stored on a website. They are virtual grave-stones and they last much longer than any newspaper notice or social media post.

3. Online memorials are easily accessible

Online memorials can be accessed online anytime. They are searchable and provide an extra space for others to share their own messages, thoughts and tributes.



4. They will be there for future generations to see

Online memorials leave a digital footprint in the internet and other generations will be able to see it and learn from it.

5. Online memorials are easily shared

Online memorials can be easily shared with others using a link. They can also be searched for in a search engine.

6. They make it easier for others to help you

There are people there who

would like to comfort you but are reluctant to call. An online memorial gives them the opportunity to reach out to you online and gives them space to share their own feelings too.

7. Online memorials are safe

Many online memorials, such as BMDnotices.com, provide an excellent customer service to let you make changes or to remove information you no longer want. Administrators check all content prior to publishing to ensure it is appropriate.

Volunteers making the **difference** with Age Action

Like many charities, Age Action relies hugely on our volunteers and nowhere is this more true than our Getting Started Programme, especially an innovative initiative providing computer classes in Dublin City Council Sheltered Housing Complexes.

Each year more than 100 volunteers take part, visiting local housing complexes in their community and providing one-to-one training in computers, laptops and SmartPhones.

Dublin City Council supports the project by providing funding for training volunteers and the co-ordination of the classes. They also help to maintain the computers and broadband connections that have been installed in the community rooms of 20 complexes.

Pop-up classes

Donations of laptops and mobile wifi devices have allowed Age Action to offer the training at more venues and over the last 12 months we ran “pop-up” classes in another seven locations.

“Our volunteers come from all walks of life,”



▲ Brigid Healy with learner Eilish McPhilips

said Age Action’s Robert Carroll who coordinates the programme.

“They include transition year and university students, retired persons, company employees (either as individuals or as part of a corporate programme), job-seekers and parents working in the home.

“The one thing they all share is a commitment to helping their neighbours and contributing to their communities.”

If that sounds like you and you might be interested in volunteering with the Getting Started Programme, email us at gettingstarted@ageaction.ie.

Meet our volunteers

Brigid Healy is from Cork and works with a leading firm of solicitors. She has tutored in “pop-up” classes in Veschoyle Court, Maxwell Court and Beggars Bush Court. Brigid says tutoring close to work and home makes her feel more part of the community and helps her learn about the area.

Claire Ann Ferry has tutored in classes in Mellows Court, Mer-

ville Court and more recently in St Peter’s Court in Phibsborough.

Claire Ann worked in sales for a number of years before returning to education and she is studying business in Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design. She finds tutoring a break from her studies and enjoys meeting older residents from her part of the city.



▲ Claire-Ann Ferry

Empty your closet and attic for Age Action

Declutter your home and help raise a few euro for Age Action at the same time!

Our Dun Laoghaire shop needs donations for our next big event on 30 June from 4pm to 9pm. You can help by donating small or medium sized pieces of furniture, china and glass (part or full sets).

Old radios, gramophones and record players are also very popular and we're always keen to get designer and vintage clothes, handbags, jewellery and shoes from any era.



Call us on 01 280 8610 or email dishopmanager@ageaction.ie. We will collect free of charge if you live in the greater Dublin area.

U3A groups

📍 Active Virginians U3A

Contact Patricia Rice at (087) 235-0515 or email m spatrice@gmail.com.

📍 An Cosán U3A Tallaght

Contact Imelda Hanratty at (01) 462-8488.

📍 Ballymun U3A

Contact Peter Branigan at (087) 292-4001

📍 Ballyroan U3A

Contact June Murphy at (01) 494-7030.

📍 Blackrock U3A

Contact Eileen Larkin at (087) 4128607 or (01) 455-7653.

📍 Blessington U3A

Contact Peter Polden at (087) 815-1018, (045) 867-248 or email pjpolden@gmail.com.

📍 Bray U3A

Contact Linda Uhleman at (086) 045-1600 or email linda_uhlemann@yahoo.co.uk.

📍 Carrick-on-Shannon U3A

Contact Margaret Fawcett at (086) 837-2934 or email mgtfaw@gmail.com.

📍 Dublin City U3A

Contact John Roche at (01) 201-7490.

📍 Galway U3A

Contact Livio Rocca at u3agalway@gmail.com.

📍 Lucan U3A

Contact Maureen Newell at lucanu3a@gmail.com.

📍 Maynooth U3A

Contact Helena Kirkpatrick at (01) 628-5128.

📍 Monaghan U3A

Contact Mary Beagan at (047) 75942 or (086) 331-4439.

📍 Newcastle, Dublin 22 U3A, Retired Active Men's Social

Contact Matt Dowling at (01) 458-9007 or (086) 844-3820.

📍 Roscommon U3A

Contact Vivienne Clarke at (087) 126-7639 or email clarkevivienne@gmail.com.

📍 Sutton-Baldoyle U3A

Contact Christine at (01) 832-3697 or email u3asutbal@gmail.com.

📍 Tramore U3A

Contact Mollie Hunt at molliehunt@eircom.net.

📍 Waterford U3A

Contact Josephine Murphy at (051) 871-037 or email jo1murphy7@gmail.com.

For more information, email Sam O'Brien-Olinger, U3A Development Officer, at u3a@ageaction.ie or phone (01) 475-6989.

Can you spare an hour for Age Action?

We can only build Age Action with your support. We're organising Church-gate collections throughout Dublin in July and August.

If you can help, or you would be willing to organise a collection at your local church, please contact the fundraising team on 01 475 6989 or email fundraising@ageaction.ie.

- ▶ **16 & 17 July** – Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary, Castle Street, Dalkey, Co Dublin.
Mass times: Saturday 10am & 6pm, Sunday 8.45am, 10.00am, 11.15am, 12.30pm, 7.30pm.
- ▶ **16 & 17 July** – Assumption of the Blessed

Virgin Mary, Milltown, Co Dublin.

Mass times: Saturday 10am & 6pm, Sunday 10am, 11.30am & 5.30pm.

- ▶ **16 & 17 July** – St Peter and Paul's, Main Street, Baldoyle, Co Dublin.
Mass times: Saturday 10am, Sunday 9am & 11.30am.
- ▶ **20 & 21 August** – Good Shephard Church, Nutgrove Avenue, Churchtown, Dublin 14.
Mass times: Saturday 10am & 7.15pm, Sunday 10am & 12 noon.
- ▶ **27 & 28 August** – St. Anne's, Strand Road, Portmarnock, Co Dublin.
Mass times: Saturday 6.30pm, Sunday 10:30am & 12 noon.

Annual membership application

I wish to join Age Action and enclose € membership fee, plus €..... voluntary donation payable to Age Action Ireland Ltd.

If you are already an existing Age Action member and wish to renew your membership, please write your membership number here

Full name:
(Block capitals please)

Address:.....
.....

Tel:

Email:
(Block capitals please)

Date:

FEES

- €20 Individual – retired/unwaged
- €40 Individual – employed
- €60 Voluntary Body
- €200 Statutory Agency
- €500 Commercial

STANDING ORDER

To the Manager
(Name of Bank/Building Society)

Bank Address:

Please pay annually to Age Action Ireland, Permanent TSB, 70 Grafton Street, Dublin 2, BIC: IPBSIE2D

IBAN: IE82 IPBS 9906 2587 7790 21

the following amount € until further notice. Starting on: 1st day of January 20

Name:
(Block capitals please)

BIC:

IBAN:.....

Signature:.....

Please return to:

Membership Development,
Age Action Ireland Ltd,
30/31 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2.

Email: membership@ageaction.ie

Tel: (01) 475 6989

Fax: (01) 475 6011