

ageing matters



Getting Started — a rising STAR



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Age Action Ireland

For All Older People

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■ Cover photo: President Michael D. Higgins presents the Aontas National Star Award to Age Action's Pauline Power. The award was won by our Getting Started programme. See page 5 for details.

Twenty years gone, many more to go

Happy birthday to all the members and friends of Age Action. On 9 March, 2012, we reached the grand old age of 20. Thanks for all your good wishes.

We have reached this milestone through the intelligence and hard work of many people inside and outside the organisation. I will return to this theme in a special edition of Ageing Matters in June to coincide with our AGM on 29 June. For now, I should like to pay tribute to Dermot McCarthy, our first chair, along with the other chairs and directors; to Lorraine Dorgan, our first volunteer and worker, who is still keeping us in order, and all the many staff and volunteers whose dedication has made us an effective advocacy body and a provider of high quality services for older people. I am proud to have served with them all.

Of our many friends, mention should be made of HelpAge International, who gave us our first grant; St Andrew's Resource, who gave us our first office; Help the Aged, who funded our first shop in Camden Street; and more recently Irish Life, who fund our Care and Repair Programme.

We are a member organisation, so the Board of Directors and staff are accountable to the members, most of whom are older people. Our members have played a vital part in our progress, not least in demonstrating what positive ageing really means, like Daniel Hoare from Skibbereen, who at the age of 102 learned computing through our Getting Started Programme. Sadly, Daniel died last year, but his inspiring example will live long in our memory.

During 2012, we will be celebrating our past achievements and, more importantly, planning our work for the future. Effective advocacy for older people will be just as important in 2032.

One glance at this issue of Ageing Matters (itself a great success) demonstrates how little the key issues have changed – fuel poverty, rural transport and the rights of older people in residential care. We are still running information services, the University of the Third Age and computer training. Getting Started richly deserved its recent award. We are involved in the EU 2012 Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations just as we were in the programmes run by the EU in 1993 and by the UN in 1999.

There have been many changes, notably the Care and Repair programme, which provides support to older people to stay in their own homes, and the Generations Together programme, promoting intergenerational solidarity in attitudes, policies and practice – and we are planning to meet the IMF.

— Robin Webster

Age Action to explain impact of cuts on lives of older Irish people to IMF



■ Age Action will explain to the IMF what life is like for pensioners in Ireland in 2012.

Age Action is to meet with the IMF to discuss the Fund's proposals that universal entitlements enjoyed by many older people (such as free travel, Medical Cards and age-related tax credits) should be means-tested, and the level of the State Pension reviewed.

An Age Action delegation has been invited to meet representatives of the IMF and the European Commission.

The contentious proposals were contained in the IMF's fifth review, published on March 2, which stated that older people have "remained largely unaffected by recent welfare adjustments".

Age Action believes the comments suggest that the IMF officials have been poorly informed about the full extent of cuts to key supports and services on older people in Ireland in recent years.

"The IMF statement cites an Irish newspaper analysis article to support claims that older people have been largely unaffected by welfare changes," Age Action spokesman Eamon Timmins said. "We are glad they have agreed to meet us, and we aim to use the meeting to give them a more con-

sidered view of the crippling impact which cuts have had on older people in Ireland. We want to provide them with an overview of what it is like to live as a pensioner in Ireland in 2012."

Age Action's pre-Budget submission, published last September, listed 19 policy changes which had hurt older people. Since its publication more cuts have come, including an 18-25% reduction in free gas/electricity units under the Household Benefits Package, a reduction of six weeks in the means-tested winter fuel allowance, changes to eligibility rates for the State Contributory Pension, and savage cuts to the HSE's budget which will result in a cut of 500,000 in home help hours and the closure of between 555 and 898 public nursing home beds this year.

In Ireland, 10% of older people live on incomes deemed below the poverty line. Many others live on incomes just above the poverty line. More than half the State pensioners are dependent on the State Pension as their main source of income.

"It is not possible for the IMF to speak meaningfully on cutting free travel or energy schemes without first having the full picture about isolation levels or the fuel poverty problems in Ireland," Mr Timmins said.

Getting Started in Ballybane – a surfer's paradise!



■ Volunteer tutor Paul Lenihan at work: he attributes the success of the programme to the commitment of tutors.

Ballybane is a suburb of Galway city with an estimated population of 10,000. It has an impressive library which opened in 2006, and Age Action began Getting Started computer classes in the library in 2007.

So far, over 500 older people have learned how to use a computer and browse the internet in Ballybane library, helping to create a surfers' paradise of sorts.

Classes are held every Monday, with the beginners group in the morning and improvers in the afternoon. On a Monday the library is closed to the public but is made available to Age Action. It is a wonderful service and something we are very thankful for.

Learners use the classes

for many purposes, including email, looking at photographs of grandchildren on Flickr and even searching for free sheet music online. Many of the learners acknowledge that learning how to use the internet has changed their lives, particularly in the ability to communicate with loved ones abroad. One learner said it was "a great opportunity to gain computer skills in a relaxed, friendly environment".

Not only is the class itself useful to older people in the Ballybane area, but it encourages people to join the library and use the computers during regular library hours.

Siobhan Arkins, the Executive Librarian in Ballybane library, is keen to have classes like these running in the library, as it creates a positive learning environment and promotes the library among

the local community. There is a selection of classes on offer in the library, including knitting and Irish language classes.

Paul Lenihan, Lilly Mooney and Andrew Blackburn have been volunteer tutors for the Getting Started classes from the beginning.

Andrew finds that the course has been beneficial both to the students and to the tutors. Paul attributes the success of the classes to the support and dedication of the tutors. Lilly is secretary of Ballybane Active Retirement Association and frequently recruits learners from among her fellow members.

It just goes to show what a bit of community spirit can achieve!

— Niamh Hennelly
Niamh Hennelly is the Getting Started Development Officer based in our Galway office.



■ **Meeting the President: receiving the Aontas STAR award for the Getting Started computer training programme for older people from President Michael D. Higgins were (from left) Age Action's Deputy Chief Executive Lorraine Dorgan, Getting Started Development Manager Pauline Power, Getting Started learner Marie O'Gorman and volunteer tutor Jon O'Reilly.**

Our learners show STAR quality

Age Action has paid tribute to the thousands of older people who have learnt how to use computers, and hundreds of volunteer tutors who taught them, after the older people's charity won the nationwide Aontas STAR Award for its IT training programme.

"The award is a tribute to the 11,000 older people who have gone through the programme whose lives are greatly enriched by their new computer skills," Getting Started Development Manager Pauline Power said. "It is also recognition of the fantastic work being done by our 800 volunteer tutors around Ireland who are sharing their time and experience to teach others."

Age Action was presented with the national award by Aontas, the national adult learning organisation. The STAR Awards recognise and celebrate the invaluable collaborative work undertaken by adult learning initiatives in our communities. The awards were presented by President Michael D. Higgins.

"When we made our presentation to the judges the previous week, we stressed that the key strengths of Getting Started were that it was learner-centred, that we partnered with other organisations, and that the skills we provide literally change people's lives," Ms Power said.

The Getting Started programme is financed through a combination of statutory and corporate funding. In the capital, Dublin City Council funds the programme in its sheltered housing

complexes. Nationally, Getting Started is financed up until July by funding from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

"We deeply appreciate the award as it provides recognition of the hard work being done by so many people," Age Action chief executive Robin Webster said. "The challenge now is to find funding to enable us continue this work to meet the huge demand from older people for computer skills. We know the difference the programme is making to the lives of people, and we are anxious to find funding to ensure that everyone who wants to learn how to use a computer can do so."

If you would like to volunteer as a tutor, or sign up for a computer class, contact Age Action at (01) 475-6989 or email gettingstarted@ageaction.ie



■ Pictured with President Michael D. Higgins and his wife, Sabina, at the European Year launch at Dublin Castle were (from left) Anne Connolly (Ageing Well Network); Anne Walsh (National Youth Council), Lorraine Dorgan (Age Action), Maureen Kavanagh (Active Retirement Ireland) and Mary Nally (Third Age).

European Year for Active Ageing

President Michael D. Higgins has called on older people to realise their potential, as he launched the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations.

"If ageing is to be a positive experience, it must be accompanied by opportunities to realise the potential of all people and to participate in all facets of society. This is the essence of active ageing," the President said at the launch at Dublin Castle last month.

Speaking to delegates from all over the country who will be celebrating the year, he said: "The Year also provides an opportunity to send a clear and strong message that active ageing is not meant for older peo-

ple alone; it is of relevance to everyone in Ireland, no matter what age he or she may be."

There was "something extraordinarily natural, imaginatively and ethically superior, when you have solidarity between generations," he said.

President Higgins said that, during his 14 months campaigning for the Presidency, nobody – younger or older – had asked for anything at the expense of another generation. "There is in the people a fine ethical balance of wanting inter-generational solidarity, he said. "This is something that is natural. The year enables us to have a vision celebrating ageing and valuing contributions from all ages."

He also spoke of the age discrimination he experienced during the presiden-

tial election campaign from sections of the media, who questioned his age and the barriers they believed it would pose as President. However, he experienced no ageism among the general public while he was on the canvas trail.

The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations calls on everyone to reflect on how Europeans are living longer and staying healthier than ever before. People of all ages can enjoy an extensive programme of events taking place in Ireland throughout the year.

A key message for the year in Ireland is that you are never too old or too young to engage with life and its many opportunities.

Mr Ronan Toomey, National Coordinator of the Year at the Office for Older People, said the opening



■ **ABOVE:** Members of the Milk and Cookies story telling group who entertained the audience, (from left) Richard Marsh and the Evans sisters Nadia (9), Zara (10) and Danielle (6).

■ **LEFT:** Mary Russell entertaining the audience as part of the Winter Jazz Men group.

event was just one of several national seminars his office will host throughout the Year. "We will be encouraging people of all ages to take part, enter into dialogue with each other and foster and build on the contact and support between generations that already exist in Ireland," he said.

"While the Office for Older People in the Department of Health is responsible for organising the year, we wanted this to be a collaborative process. The response from the NGO sector and other Government Departments has been encouraging. There is a real sense of partnership in planning and delivery of events around the country throughout the year," he said.

Ms Mary Cunningham, Director of the National

Youth Council of Ireland, said this was just the beginning of an exciting year celebrating the great work of younger and older people together. "This inter-generational contact is so positive. It leads to more realistic images of older people and younger people and puts young people at the forefront of challenging ageism," she said.

Other speakers at the launch included Professor Rose Anne Kenny from the TILDA study on ageing and Dr Maurice Devlin from NUI Maynooth. There were several workshops, including one facilitated by Age Action and the National Youth Council on inter-generational projects (see panel).

Further details of events throughout the year are available at www.activeageing.ie

Workshop full of energy and ideas

The breakout workshop exploring life experiences across the generations was literally sparking with energy and ideas.

Facilitated by the National Youth Council and Age Action it highlighted some of the marvelous inter-generational work which is taking place around the country.

Approximately 100 people, many representing organisations, attended and went away inspired.

The Rathnew Legends youth group told of how the young people enjoyed greater respect in their Co. Wicklow community in the wake of the computer training classes they organised for older people.

Representatives of the inter-generational group which produced the best-selling *Waterford Life Now & Then* book told the story of how the successful publication came about.

From the floor there were stories of inter-generational pool competitions in Dublin's East Wall, and students undertaking age-friendly surveys in Ennis, Co. Clare.

After the conference, Age Action and the National Youth Council have held inter-generational workshops in Dublin and Galway, and plan to hold one in Cork.

Fuel poverty survey exposes cold facts about winter deaths

The full impact of fuel poverty on the most vulnerable older people in Ireland is highlighted in a new report.

Fuel Poverty, Older People and Cold Weather: An All-island Analysis was produced by researchers at the Dublin Institute of Technology and the Institute of Public Health, and funded by the Centre for Ageing Research and Development in Ireland.

It not only looks at the scale of the problem on this island (giving the statistics and accounts of the human stories) and the combination of factors which are adding to the issue, but examines the policy changes needed to address the problem.

Who's at risk?

Fuel poverty

■ In 2006, the CSO estimated that 22% of people older than 65 in the Republic spent 10% or more of their disposable income on heat and light.

occurs when someone is unable to afford to heat their home to a healthy and safe level. It is caused by a combination of high fuel prices, low income and poor energy efficiency of homes. Some older people are doubly affected by fuel poverty because, not only are they more likely to experience fuel poverty, but they are more vulnerable to ill health and social harm as a result.

In 2006, the CSO estimated that 22% of people aged over 65 in the Republic spent 10% or more of their disposable income on heat and light. Although the figures are not directly comparable, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive estimated in 2009 that 65% of those aged over 65 in Northern Ireland were in fuel poverty.

The

researchers found that the risk of fuel poverty is greatest among older people living alone, across the island. In the Republic, single-person households in which the person is older than 65 experience fuel poverty in 36% of cases. In the North, the same figure is 84%. The proportion of older people in fuel poverty also increases with age, with the over-75s experiencing higher levels than the 65- to 74-year-olds.

The research found that those most at risk of fuel poverty among older people were people living alone, the rural population in Northern Ireland, those with a chronic illness/disability, low income groups, and people who did not have central heating or who lived in poorly insulated homes.

Key factors

Energy efficiency of homes, income levels and fuel prices all contribute to the fuel poverty problem for older people in Ireland.

Almost half of all older people in the Republic live in homes built



before 1960. These are generally hard to heat and more likely to lack an efficient central heating system. The majority of older people also live in detached or semi-detached houses, which lack the insulation provided by an adjoining property.

In 2008, 11% of pensioners were at risk of poverty. Cuts to the Household Benefits Package, including the gas and electricity units, and other social protection payments, have badly affected these people. When social transfers are excluded, 88% of pensioners in the Republic are at risk poverty.

Fuel prices have risen sharply in recent years. The price of home heating oil (the most common fuel used by older people) rose by about 60% between 2009 and 2011.

Impact of fuel poverty

The project analysed the excess winter death figures for the winter of 2006-7 – the most recent winter for which accurate data is available. It found there were 1,284 excess winter deaths that year – of which 1,216 were people aged 65 and over.

A study by Professor Pat Goodman (who also co-authored the DIT/IPH fuel poverty research) of temperature-related mortality for Dublin in 2004 showed that cold temperatures

were associated with higher mortality rates. The effect extended for two to three weeks after a cold snap. The older population was hardest hit, with each fall of one degree centigrade associated with a 2.6% increase in mortality rates.

The DIT/IPH research also succeeds in putting a human face on the problem. It surveyed 722 older people, who filled in questionnaires distributed using groups and services which worked with older people (including Age Action). The survey was conducted after the severe winter of 2011.

Almost a quarter (24%) of those questioned said their homes had been too cold during the winter, and 62% were worried about the cost of heating their home. Over half (51%) had gone without necessities, such as clothing and food, to pay their fuel bills during the winter. More than a quarter (27%) went to bed earlier to keep warm.

Policy response

The report makes a number of recommendations of what policy makers need to do to tackle fuel poverty. The researchers note that giving older people more money to heat their homes is not the solution, but rather a multi-faceted approach must be taken. The broad policy focus should be on home improvement and energy efficiency schemes,

alongside fuel allowance schemes, as well as addressing the wider problems associated with low incomes.

The report stresses that older people living alone should be a specific focus of any policy response to fuel poverty. Their particular vulnerability to fuel poverty must be recognised by governments when reviewing income supports. People aged over 80 and those with a disability are particularly at risk from fuel poverty.

“With the governments in both the Republic and Northern Ireland introducing significant cuts to household benefits, including fuel allowances, a simple policy measure would be exemptions from these cuts for the most vulnerable groups of older people,” the report said.

Given the importance of state supports in keeping older people out of poverty, cuts to state pensions or other benefits are likely to have a knock-on effect on fuel poverty, the report warned. “It is important that decisions to cut benefits take this into account, especially if the alternative is for the older people to move from a cold home to expensive residential care,” the authors concluded.

— Eamon Timmins

Copies of the report can be downloaded from www.publichealth.ie



■ Claire Bellis with her grandmother

Diary of a Care & Repair Development Officer

My name's Claire Bellis, and I'm the Dublin Care and Repair Development Officer. You'll probably know that Care and Repair is Age Action's programme which carries out minor repairs for older people, to allow them to live at home in their own communities safely for as long as they wish.

I want to let you have a glimpse of the variety of things that our team does

and encourage you to find out a little more about us.

Our Dublin-based team receives lots requests for help, and, using our "Man in Van" team as well as city-wide volunteers, we carry out hundreds of practical jobs throughout the county every year.

Spring is now truly in the air, and a couple of weeks ago, I received a phone call from a lady whom I'll call Patricia, who was a very keen gardener. She recently had a stay in hospital and came home to find her garden was somewhat overgrown. Patricia couldn't tackle the problem herself, and naturally it hurt her to

see her pride and joy looking so very forlorn.

She decided to call Care and Repair on (01) 475-6989 to see if we could help.

We arranged for a pair of our volunteers to contact Patricia, and they made short work of taming the overgrown grass. We've now arranged that the team will make a fortnightly call to Patricia so that she can enjoy the lighter work in her garden without having to worry about heavier jobs.

In this way, an older person's life is made easier and two of our volunteers have the satisfaction of knowing that they're really making a difference.

New Care & Repair partner joins us in Cobh, Co. Cork

We are delighted to announce that a new Care & Repair franchise partner has begun work in Cobh, Co Cork.

During the last few months of 2011, Anneline Weinmann and Aislinn Hegarty, of Cobh Family Resource Centre, did some excellent work to get the programme off the ground.

An impressive team of volunteers was assembled and trained, and an extensive promotional campaign was undertaken, resulting in the first calls coming in from clients in January.

In total, 30 jobs were done by volunteers for clients in Cobh within two weeks of the first call, so they have certainly got off to a flying start! We would like to wish the new Cobh group every success with the project.

The Cobh Care and Repair team can be contacted by phoning 021-4816103 or emailing anneline.cfrc@gmail.com



■ **The new Care and Repair service got off to a busy start with 30 jobs completed in the first fortnight.**

When we can't tackle a job that might turn out to be too big, or require specialist skills, the Care and Repair team can recommend a trusted tradesman to the client. By using our Trade Referral Service, older people can be sure they will have a reliable tradesperson who will deal respectfully with them, will not charge call-out fees and will provide high quality work at a reasonable price.

We have just updated our Dublin Trade Referral Service, so whether it's a painter, plumber, glazier or gas man you need, we can usually provide the details of someone reliable.

Developing the Care and Repair programme is really satisfying work. As well as talking to our clients and training our excellent volunteers, I am involved in working with community groups who are setting up Care and Repair teams in their own neighbourhoods.

I'm frequently to be found giving presentations to community development groups, so if you know of any such group who would like to hear more about setting up a Care and Repair franchise, do let us know.

Similarly, I often give talks at residents' associations, daycare centres and other groups to spread the word

about Care and Repair, so if your group would like to hear more, please contact us.

Finally, in this European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations, Care and Repair can provide a befriending service to put older people in touch with younger volunteers to develop friendships that enrich everyone's experiences.

So if you live in Dublin and would like to know more about how Care and Repair can help you, please call us on (01) 475-6989 or drop us an email at care&repairdublin@ageaction.ie

Come celebrate our 20th birthday

Celebrate Age Action's 20th Birthday in style with us at two fantastic parties being planned in Dublin and Mayo in May!

Bring your friends and neighbours and join us for an Afternoon Tea Party which will be packed with entertainment and fun, featuring some of Ireland's most popular singers.

The first event will be held in the Burlington Hotel on May 8. A lovely traditional Afternoon Tea will be served, and the entertainment for the afternoon will be provided by everyone's favourite – Sonny Knowles and Tony Kenny.

They will perform some of their well known hits – “My Son”, “Any Dream Will Do”, “Butterfly Kisses” from Tony

and “My Child”, “When the Snow is on the Roses”, and of course a wave from Sonny. There might even be an old-fashioned sing-along.

Date: May 8

Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Tickets: €20 (€15 for groups of five or more)

Venue: Burlington Hotel, Upper Leeson St, Dublin 4

The second Afternoon Tea Party will be held in the Mount Falcon Hotel in Ballina. This will be the first joint Age Action and Garda Community Relations event for older people in the West. We are delighted that Tommy Marren from Mid-West Radio will be our MC for the day and that Sandy Kelly, the queen of Irish country, will entertain us along with other performers from the area.

Date: May 29



■ Sonny Knowles

Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Tickets: €20 (€15 for groups of five or more)

Venue: Mount Falcon Hotel, Ballina, Co. Mayo



These events are kindly sponsored by Bluebird Care, and the cream cakes are being provided by Superquinn.

Send us your special Easter prayers

The days are getting longer and if we look, we all have a lot to be grateful for, and perhaps you might want to put that in words — words of a prayer. You then might like to share that prayer with us in Age Action.

We are running another prayer competition in which we will combine all the prayers entered and select a few winners. These prayers will then be published on our website.

The best 10 prayers will be read at a prayer service in Dublin, and these people will receive a certificate of merit. The overall winner will receive a unique trophy.

To enter, download the form from our website, attach your prayer and send it to Age Action, 30 Lr Camden St, Dublin 2, or email it to Fundraising@ageaction.ie along with €10.



Help us out with a Dine at Mine evening

Dine at Mine is Age Action's version of the TV programme 'Come Dine with Me' – with a fundraising twist!

Whether you are an experienced party host or a complete cooking novice, your evening can take any form – a three-course formal meal, a pizza



party, or a good old fashioned BBQ! The possibilities are endless! Sounds easy, and it is. Just invite your friends and family and raise funds by asking them to make a donation for their meal.

Plus, we're making it extra easy for you, with tips for planning

menus and running successful parties, complete menu suggestions, recipes and simple ways to manage the fundraising.

Rhona O'Connor, fundraiser at Age Action, said: "Whether you're a great cook or not, you can invite some friends around and have a fun evening. You can make it formal, fancy dress, murder mystery or a good old fashioned one-pot supper!"

If you would like to take part in Dine at Mine, please contact Rhona O'Connor on (01) 475-6989 or email fundraising@ageaction.ie for your fundraising pack, complete with a suggested menu and recipes, a foodie quiz, an apron and tips to help make your meal a massive success!



■ Robin Webster at last year's abseil

Are you up for the abseil challenge?

The Clarion Hotel is the site of our next Abseil. It is the tallest hotel in Ireland and a real challenge! Are you up for it?

Join our chief executive, Robin Webster, as he abseils down his second iconic building! He was one of nearly 50 abseilers who came down the outside of the Irish Life building in Dublin last year.

All you have to do is register (fee €65) and then raise €250 in sponsorship. The event is on Saturday, April 28, from 10am until 5pm. Call Rhona O'Connor at 01 4756989 or visit our website www.ageaction.ie for more details.



■ Studies show that befriending is highly valued by the people who are befriended, as admitting to loneliness and isolation can be difficult for a great number of older people.

Volunteering to be a friend

Age Action North East Advocacy Project is delighted to announce that it is expanding the service it provides to nursing home residents in Co. Meath.

Age Action has begun a volunteer befrienders' service in St. Joseph's Community Care Nursing Unit in Trim, and at Beaufort House Nursing Care Unit in Navan. It already provides an advocacy service for the residents in these homes.

In October we advertised for volunteer befrienders to work alongside our volunteer advocates in our two care units. We had a huge

response, and following interviews, selection, and a three-week training course, we now have a total of 13 volunteer befrienders visiting residents weekly. They visit for one to two hours a week with a commitment for 12 months.

Befrienders are volunteers who choose to spend time with an older person rather than being under a professional or family obligation to do so. Their role is to become a friend to older people in residential care in a strictly confidential manner by visiting, listening and sharing their experiences. Good friendships are built up between residents and volunteer befrienders.

Visiting older people

who feel alone is the most important work carried out by befrienders. Studies show that befriending has been found to be highly valued by the people who are befriended, as admitting to loneliness and isolation can be difficult for a great number of older people.

The Volunteer Befrienders Programme is a pilot project that will be monitored carefully with the hope of extending the service into other care units in Co. Meath and possibly across the nation.

Age Action's development officer in the north-east, Maureen Finlay, can be contacted by emailing aane@ageaction.ie or phoning 087 9133785.

Cautious welcome for rural transport plan

Age Action has cautiously welcomed the Government's plans to integrate Ireland's rural transport services.

We believe the plans to integrate the Rural Transport Programme, school transport and HSE non-acute transport (which currently operate with no official co-ordination) have the potential to provide a better public rural transport service.

However, Age Action warned the plan would be closely monitored to ensure it

was not a guise for cutting services.

"We need to make maximum use of publicly funded vehicles, especially in parts of rural Ireland which are currently poorly served by Bus Éireann and Iarnród Éireann," Age Action spokesman Eamon Timmins said. "We frequently come across older people who have never used their free travel pass because they do not have public transport services in their area."

U3A MEETINGS



© Dublin City U3A

Meetings last Tuesday of month, (not June-August), 11am, at the Chester Beatty Library. Contact John Roche, (01) 201-7490

© Blackrock U3A

Contact Eileen Larkin: (087) 4128607, (01) 455-7653

© Ballyroan U3A

Meet every 2nd Monday at 11am in Ballyroan Library. Contact Al Connor: (01) 490-3212

© Ballymun U3A

Meetings every 2nd Monday, 2pm in Ballymun Library. Contact: Vera Butler (01) 842-2256

© Lucan U3A

Meetings 1st Thursday of the month, Ballyowen Castle. Contact Gretta Rabbitte: (085) 710-4853

© Blessington U3A

Meetings 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Anne Cowie: (045) 865-159

© Sutton/ Baldoyle U3A

Meet 2nd Wednesday each month, 10.45am-12.45pm, Baldoyle Library. Email u3asutbal@gmail.com or just come along. Or visit <https://sites.google.com/site/u3asuttonbaldoyledublin> or www.twitter.com/U3Asuttonbaldoyle

© Active Virginians U3A

Meet every week. Contact Ann Brodie at (049) 854-8232

© Maynooth U3A.

Maynooth Library. Meet every 2nd Friday 11am. Contact Helena Kirkpatrick: (01) 628-5128

© An Cosan U3A Tallaght.

Meet every 2nd Thursday.

Contact Imelda Hanratty: (01) 462-8488

© Waterford U3A

Contact Terry (Theresa) Moloney: (051) 876542 or email tmoloney@wit.ie

© Monaghan U3A

Contact Mary Beagan: (047) 75942, (086) 3314439

© Roscara U3A,

Co Roscommon. Contact Helen Waldren: (094) 962-1233

© Tramore U3A

Meetings 1st Thursday each month, 11am, Coastguard Station, Love Lane, Tramore. Contact Mollie Hunt, molliehunt@eircom.net

Email Age Action Education Officer Margaret Fitzpatrick at u3a@ageaction.ie or (01) 475-6989 for information.

Annual membership application

We/I wish to join Age Action Ireland and enclose € membership fee, plus € voluntary donation = € total payable to Age Action Ireland Ltd

- €20 Individual — retired/unwaged
- €40 Individual — employed
- €60 NGO
- €200 Statutory body
- €500 Corporate

Name

Organisation

Address

.

.

Tel

Fax

Email

Contact person

Signature

Date

Please return to:

**Age Action Ireland Ltd,
30/31 Lower Camden Street,
Dublin 2**

Tel: (01) 475-6989

Fax: (01) 475-6011

Email: info@ageaction.ie



■ Mayor Waterford Pat Hayes (left) and Age Action's Tiernan Martin (right) with volunteer tutors and students from the over-55s computer club in Ballybeg, Waterford.

Waterford computer learners receive certificates

A group of students who took part in an over-55s computer club were rewarded for their efforts when they received their certificates from Waterford Mayor Pat Hayes and Age Action Ireland Getting Started Programme Coordinator for North East Cork and West Waterford, Tiernan Martin.

The club is run by Access IT. The Getting Started programme was run in partnership with Age Action.

Age Action South goes from strength to strength

Age Action South continues to grow. We have appointed a new administrator in our Cork office to support John O'Mahony's work with the Care and Repair programme and Susan Permain's work with the Getting Started programme. This will help to keep building momentum on these programmes, which are growing rapidly in the region.

Plans are afoot to run a workshop for inter-generational work in Cork to help mark the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. If you would like to get involved in any of our activities, please contact John O'Mahony on (021) 453-6554.