

# AgeingMatters

in Ireland

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■ Cover photo: Peter Kavanagh of Active Retirement Ireland, Justin Moran of Age Action along with Gráinne Ferris and Susan Potts of the Irish Countrywomen's Association ahead of meeting Minister Regina Doherty TD.

## Opinion

# Driving Age Action forward



John Church

As I write this I am looking forward to my first Annual General Meeting since I joined Age Action in October.

Last year was a period of change for Age Action as we took steps to ensure we continue to serve our members and clients well and look to the future to anticipate the changing needs of our members.

Thanks to modern day medicine we are all living longer and by 2026 the number of people over the age of 65 living in Ireland is projected to reach 861,000 compared to 637,000 in 2016. The challenge for Age Action is to ensure we have sustainable income sources to grow our services to meet the demand created by this growing population.

### Identify changes

Since joining Age Action, I have been working closely with the Board to identify the changes we need to make and then supporting our team as we go through these changes.

From the outset, I was very impressed with the commitment to the cause shown by everyone in Age Action. I was also impressed with the impact our services are making on the lives of older people.

Throughout 2018 we are taking a good look at our organisation and sense-checking what we do and what difference we make to the lives of older people. Our vision of making Ireland the best country in which to grow old is certainly more relevant now than ever.

Recently, we moved all of our Camden Street office staff to our premises in Inchicore, bringing all our Dublin staff together under the one roof. This will help create a unified team and prepare us for the changes ahead.

Our current strategic plan comes to an end in 2018 and the planning for a new era has begun in earnest.

### Address funding

One issue we must address is our funding. Age Action relies heavily on funding from the State to run our services and various employment schemes provide nearly 70 per cent of our workforce.

While we are very grateful for this funding, the fuel that will drive our growth is sustainable income delivered by a successful fundraising model.

To this end we are actively seeking more charity partners to collaborate with and to raise some much-needed funds. Our stores are performing well and we are planning further growth in this area given the unrestricted nature of the income they generate.

Together, as members, volunteers and employees of Age Action we must focus in the months and years to come on ensuring that we have a reliable, independent, source of funding to ensure we can deliver for future generations of older people.

– John Church

# Minister to publish homecare report in June?

Minister for Older People Jim Daly TD is expected to publish the long awaited report on how a statutory homecare scheme might work later this month but frustration is growing at the pace of the process.

Age Action and our Glór group in Galway were among those who made more than 2,600 to a public consultation on homecare that was launched in July of last year. Initially, the Government had planned to publish a report on the consultation before the end of 2017.

“A proper, statutory scheme to provide homecare in Ireland is urgently needed and a top priority for tens of thousands of older people and their families,” said Age Action’s Justin Moran.

“It’s important that the Department of Health takes the time to get it right but at this point deadline after deadline is being missed. We were told to expect the report before the end of last year, then before the end of April and now, the latest, is hopefully before the end of June.”

## Homecare options

The report is expected to set out a series of options for how a homecare scheme would work, the types of care that would be provided and how the geographic disparities in accessing homecare could be addressed.

It would also look at how homecare might be paid for. Currently, people in receipt of homecare through the HSE are not expected to make any form of financial contribution but indications from the department are that some form of



▲ More and more older people are reliant on home helps. Photo: Katarzyna Białasiewicz

co-payment will be introduced.

*The Sunday Times* recently reported one Government source as saying, “No one will lose an entitlement to free homecare hours, but new clients above a certain level of income could face charges for the service when it becomes law.”

“The Government is not moving ahead swiftly enough on this,” said Justin. “When the report is published there will be more time needed for decisions to be made, then for legislation to be drafted before, ultimately, it goes to the Oireachtas.”

“In the meantime, waiting lists for homecare continue to grow, more family carers are put under pressure and more older people face being placed in nursing homes because the homecare supports are just not there for them.”



▲ Learners and tutors celebrate a Getting Started graduation at the offices of Phorest, one of our corporate partners.

# Majority of over-65s have never used the internet

**In a new Age Action briefing paper the organisation calls for urgent support to tackle high rates of digital exclusion among older people who are in danger of being left behind in an increasingly online Ireland.**

Figures from Eurostat show that 50 per cent of people in Ireland aged between 65 and 74 have never been online compared with 16 per cent in Britain. In 2013, the Government described the number of people over 75 who are online as ‘negligible’.

“An entire generation of older people is being left behind, cut off from all of the opportunities and benefits of being able to use

the internet,” said Justin Moran, Head of Advocacy and Communications with Age Action.

“Far fewer older people in Ireland are online compared with Britain and our other EU neighbours. As service providers like banks push customers to do their business online this is making it increasingly difficult for older people to get information and to access services.

“We know there are enormous social benefits for older people who are online and research shows it can reduce depression among older people by as much as 30 per cent.

“For many older people it is a vital link to friends and families, a way to explore new hobbies and interests, and some have turned their skills to starting businesses or highlighting social issues.”

## Getting Started

Age Action runs its own computer training programme, Getting



Started, with funding from the Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme run by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment.

“We train thousands of older people to use the internet every year,” said Jennifer Glansford, who runs the programme.

“We know they are as capable as anyone else of learning how to send emails, shop and bank online, or to use social media.

“But the resources are simply not there to cope with the demand for classes, to provide them in one-to-one settings or to enable older people to repeat classes to build up their confidence.

“The Government’s training programmes have helped tens of thousands people get online but the stark gap between internet use by older people in Ireland and among our EU neighbours shows just how much we need to improve.”

## Barriers

The paper identifies a number of barriers preventing older people getting online including ageism, a lack of confidence, the absence of broadband locally and cost, which was highlighted as a factor in research from Britain.

This month, a new Telephone Support Allowance of €2.50 a week will be introduced for those who qualify for the means-tested Fuel Allowance and live alone.

“A broadband-only deal could cost as much as €50 a month, which is a lot for someone on the State Pension,” Justin pointed out. “Older people, particularly those living alone, should not be priced off the internet.

“The new funding is very welcome but it’s far smaller than the old Telephone Allowance used to be and restricted to a small number of people. We’d like to see the Government increase it over the next two budgets.”

## Age Action’s proposals

- Immediately double funding for the Digital Skills for Citizens Grant Scheme to €4.4 million in Budget 2019 to provide more training places and to improve the scheme’s coverage in rural Ireland.
- Reform the Digital Skills for Citizens Grant Scheme to provide financial incentives to organisations to deliver one-to-one training, to allow learners to repeat classes, to provide training in the older person’s home and to provide technical support to the newly online.
- Support older people on low incomes to access the internet by increasing the Telephone Support Allowance to €4 per week over the next two budgets.
- Develop and roll out a national digital skills learning programme, integrating it with existing community infrastructure, particularly libraries and post offices.



▲ Celebrating Dell’s support for the Getting Started programme.

# Warning over housing supports for older people

The Oireachtas Housing committee has been warned that housing grants for older people are underfunded and the application process is ‘stressful and upsetting’.

The warning came during a recent meeting of the committee where Age Action was represented by our senior policy officer, Corona Joyce, and senior information officer, Gerry Scully.

“Housing Adaptation Grants are used by many older people to make their homes safer and more comfortable,” said Corona Joyce. “They enable people to install ramps, wet rooms, stairlifts and other things necessary for some older people to live with dignity.”

However, funding for the grant is now less than half what it was in 2010 and the number of payments being made has also fallen sharply.

Changes introduced by the Government in 2014 made it much more difficult for people to make use of the scheme. The size of the maximum grant was reduced and the eligibility age was raised from 60 to 66.

“These changes mean that the poorest of older people now receive a reduced maximum grant while being expected to pay for a greater percentage of the work,” Corona explained.

## Complexity and delays

Callers to Age Action’s information line often complain about the complexity of the application process and the delays in being approved.

“This can be very stressful and upsetting as in our experience most applications are made in emergency and crisis situations,” said Gerry Scully.

Currently the Government prioritises people in hospitals to get them discharged as quickly as possible but this makes it harder for older people in the community to have their care needs met.

“We need to facilitate community living, mitigate preventable hospitalisations and, if deemed suitable, provide an alternative to nursing homes admissions for those already in hospital and awaiting discharge,” Corona concluded.

“Part of making that reality is reversing the changes brought in four years ago that make it so much more difficult to get the grant and to provide the funding that is needed.”

For information on how to apply for one of these grants contact the information team on 01 475 6989 or email [helpline@ageaction.ie](mailto:helpline@ageaction.ie).



▲ Many older people use the grants to install stair lifts.

Photo: Manuel Faba Ortega

# Age Action meets Minister on 2012 pension cuts

Representatives of Age Action, Active Retirement Ireland and the Irish Countrywomen's Association met with Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection Regina Doherty TD last month as part of their continuing fight for a fair State Pension.

Since February of last year Age Action has been leading a coalition of trade unions and advocacy organisations highlighting the unjust treatment of around 50,000 pensioners who retired since 2012.

Because of changes introduced to the pension system in that year the pensions for those older people were slashed because they were punished for taking time out of the workforce, often to care for family members.

In January, Minister Doherty announced a proposed solution that would benefit most affected pensioners.

Under her plan pensioners can be reassessed under a new system that gives credit for time spent caring and this should see their pensions increase.

But thousands of pensioners whose contribution records are



▲ Pensioners are still determined to fully reverse the 2012 cuts.

broken for reasons unrelated to providing care will see no benefit from the Minister's plan and this was the delegation's priority.

## Fairest and simplest

"We're still convinced the fairest and simplest way to fix this problem is to reverse the 2012 State Pension cuts," said Age Action's Justin Moran.

"It would ensure everyone would get the pension they expected and those who won't benefit from the proposals Minister Doherty brought forward would see their pensions increase."

Unfortunately, the Minister again ruled out any possibility of reversing the 2012 cuts. Though disappointing, it was not

an unexpected response and the campaign intends to pursue meetings with other parties in the coming weeks to build support for full reversal.

There was some positive news from the Minister who made clear that the department was determined to ensure the reassessment for those who will benefit from her plan will be as straight-forward and painless as possible.

Some pensioners had expressed concerns to Age Action about having to find paperwork from 30 years ago but it was made clear that the department will approach this in a positive way, taking pensioners on their word.

# New telephone allowance to be paid this month

The Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection Regina Doherty TD has introduced a new payment, the Telephone Support Allowance, which comes into effect from 4 June.

The allowance is a support payment of €2.50 per week aimed at people who live alone and receive certain payments from the department.

“Age Action, amongst other representative groups, highlighted the effects of the abolition of the old telephone allowance,” said Minister Doherty.

“They pointed out that it made people, particularly those living on their own, isolated and more vulnerable.

“People value communications, particularly in their older years. I was very conscious of that, and that is why I was genuinely pleased to push for it the Budget negotiations.”

### Prevent isolation

Worth €130 per year, the Department hopes it will help to encourage social contact and prevent isolation for those who live alone.

In May, the Department wrote to all customers who qualify for Telephone Support Allowance – about 124,000 people – to let them know that they would be receiving it shortly. There is no need to apply. Those eligible will receive it automatically on top of their weekly payment.

To qualify for Telephone Support Allowance, you must already be in receipt of one of the schemes listed right, in addition to both the Living Alone Allowance and the Fuel Allowance.

For more information contact the department via the scheme which applies to you.

- Longford - Disability Allowance/Invalidity Pension/Disablement Pension (Incapacity Supplement)/Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Contributory Pension under the Occupational Injuries Scheme:

Tel: (043) 334 0000

Locall: 1890 927 770



▲ Minister Regina Doherty TD speaking at the social inclusion forum in Dublin last month.

- Sligo - State Pension (Contributory/Non-Contributory) / Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Contributory Pension / Blind Pension / Deserted Wife’s Benefit:

Tel: (071) 915 7100

Locall: 1890 500 000\*

\* The rates charged for the use of 1890 (LoCall) numbers may vary among different service providers

### List of qualifying schemes

- State Pension (Contributory and Non-Contributory)
- Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Contributory Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Disability Allowance
- Blind Pension
- Disablement Pension (Incapacity Supplement)
- Deserted Wife’s Benefit
- Widow’s, Widower’s or Surviving Civil Partner’s Contributory Pension under the Occupational Injuries Scheme.





# CE supervisors waiting 10 years for pensions

Community employment supervisors represented by Fórsa are considering strike action in a 10-year dispute over pensions. The 1,250 workers affected have no access to any occupational pension.

A 2008 Labour Court recommendation, which ordered that an agreed pension scheme should be put in place for the staff, has never been either accepted or rejected by successive governments.

Almost 250 supervisors have retired with no occupational pension since the 2008 Labour Court recommendation was published.

Last month, Fórsa's community employment supervisors' branch voted to reactivate an earlier ballot for industrial action because the process had stalled again.

"This course of action was previously shelved while negotiations appeared to hold out the prospect of some progress," said Paddy Quinn, chair of Fórsa's CE supervisors branch.

"The union raised this issue at the highest level during the Public Service Stability Agreement negotiations last May. It is ten years since the problem was addressed by the Labour Court and we will not continue to wait, year after year after year, for some movement on this scandalous situation.



▲ Fórsa's Paddy Quinn at the union's national conference in the INEC in Killarney.

Photo: Domnick Walsh

"Virtually uniquely in the public sector, CE supervisors have no occupational pension provision at all.

## Condemned by inaction

"They provide crucial supports to long-term unemployed people and the communities they live in, yet they are condemned by government inaction to eke out a retirement living on the State Pension.

Carmel Keogh is a CE supervisor and a member of the trade union.

"We spend our careers helping disadvantaged and marginalised people to gain work in the local community as a stepping stone to regular employment," she explained.

"But when we retire, we become disadvantaged ourselves. It's scandalous that three successive governments have failed to accept and act on a recommendation from the State's highest industrial relations authority."

Approximately 25,000 people currently benefit from community employment schemes, which provide training and support to participants, as well as community services like crèches, meals on wheels, tidy towns support, and the upkeep of community facilities.

Age Action has run a very successful community employment scheme for many years and many of the organisation's staff are employed through the programme.

# Protect yourself from fraud.

With financial fraud on the increase Age Action Ireland has teamed up with FraudSMART, a fraud awareness initiative developed by Banking & Payments Federation Ireland in conjunction with the banking sector, to help consumers recognise and prevent fraud. With over 55s being a specific target group for fraudsters, Niamh Davenport of FraudSMART takes a look at one of the most common type of scams now on the increase and advises how you can protect yourself.

Over the last 12 months there has been an increase in phone scams where a fraudster will call pretending to be your bank. They will convince you that your money is in danger and that you urgently need to transfer it to a "safe account". They may ask you to transfer the funds over the phone with them or go to your branch to make a transfer or even to your local post office. They use tricks such as playing call centre background noise or advise you to contact the Gardai to add to the legitimacy of the call.

Standing back reading this in the cold light of day of course you would never transfer money just because somebody asks you to do so but these fraudsters are extremely sophisticated and good at their job.

*So how do these fraudsters convince you to transfer your hard-earned cash?*

- Fraudsters may already have basic information about you in their possession (e.g. name, address, account details). Do not assume a caller is genuine because they have these details.
- They will create a sense of urgency around the need to protect your money. They don't want to give you time to research or investigate their legitimacy, often saying that your bank cards have been used fraudulently.

- Sometimes the caller will say they need you to be part of an internal investigation as certain branch staff are suspected of being corrupt. They will instruct you not to tell the branch staff why you are transferring money. They may even give you a code word to use.
- The caller ID number may look like your bank. However this has been faked to hide the true origin of the call.
- The fraudster is always slick, professional and the call has an urgent tone.

*FraudSMART and Age Action are determined to address this problem and are urging consumers to protect themselves using three simple steps.*

**A** – Always be alert



**B** – Bide your time



**C** – Contact your bank



# Think A...B...C... Everytime

## Always Be Alert:



- Be wary of random or unexpected emails, calls or texts about your banking or finances.
- Never give out personal or banking information when answering an incoming call
- Never transfer money to a new account or hand over cash even if the caller says it is in your name.
- Never give your PIN or passwords in full on the phone or via email, including keying your PIN into the phone keypad.
- Your bank will never ask you to carry out a test transaction online or be part of an internal investigation.

For more information on common frauds and tips for protecting yourself visit [www.fraudSMART.ie](http://www.fraudSMART.ie) where you can find a host of information, resources and can sign up for fraud alerts.

## Have you got a fraud story to tell?

FraudSMART is always keen to learn your experiences of fraud so we can help others learn from these. If you have a story you are interested in sharing with us, please get in touch at [info@fraudsmart.ie](mailto:info@fraudsmart.ie)

## Bide your time



- Don't allow yourself to be rushed. Take your time to do the relevant checks.
- Remember that it takes two people to terminate a phone call. You can use a different phone line to independently check the callers' identity. If it really is your bank they will completely understand the need to do this.
- If your bank suspects your account has been compromised by fraudsters they will usually 'freeze the account' which will prevent any transactions happening - there is no need for you to do anything.

## Contact your Bank



- Call your bank using the number on the back of your debit/credit card. If you are using a landline make sure you hear a dial tone first.
- You should also report suspected fraud incidents to your local Garda Station.



*This article was written by Niamh Davenport, FraudSMART.*

Dear Age Action,

I am on a waiting list for an ECT scan on my chest.  
Can I get this done abroad or in the North?

Emily from Meath

## Seeking healthcare abroad

Any answer to this question is a bit conditional while we wait to see what implications Brexit might have on EU directives, writes **Gerry Scully**.

Right now, however, you can go abroad for this scan, including to the North, under the Cross-Border Directive (CBD) if you are a public patient.

You can also avail of treatment through the private health service of the country you are traveling to for treatment.

The scope of treatment available is limited to only what is available to a patient of the Irish public health service, other than organ transplants and long-term care.

You should check with the HSE prior to traveling. Under this directive you will pay for your treatment upfront and then get reimbursed.

### Treatment Abroad Scheme

If you need to go abroad for treatment which is not available in the public health service here, you might be able to avail of the Treatment Abroad Scheme (TAS).



▲ Volunteers and staff running a busy information stall.

Photo: Joe Guilfoyle

You must be referred for the TAS by an Irish based consultant in the public health service, unless it is an emergency, such as an organ transplant. The scheme covers the full cost of treatment including travel and accommodation.

However, the TAS only covers treatments available in another country that are offered under their public health system. It cannot be used to get private treatment in a different country to Ireland.

Finally, there is the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

This helps people who become ill while travelling in another EU or EEA country.

It allows people to avail only of the public health service and if there is a co-payment required you will have to pay it but you can get reimbursed when you come home.

For more information, or for assistance in getting healthcare abroad, you can ring our Information Service on 01 475 6989 or email us at [helpline@ageaction.ie](mailto:helpline@ageaction.ie).



◀ Members of the Age Action Cork Glór group.

## New report calls for more housing for older people

**A new report says that the Government must do more to enable older people to participate in policy decisions that affect them and suggests that new housing schemes should set aside housing for older people.**

The report was produced by Níamh Connery of University College Cork through the CARL programme. The Community-Academic Research Links initiative brings together academics in UCC with organisations like Age Action.

The idea for the research came from the local Age Action Glór group. They have been highlighting the lack of long-term planning for the housing needs of older people and members participated in a focus group (see sidebar) run by Ms Connery to provide the benefit of their experience on local housing issues.

“For the last 18 months our members in Cork have been looking at housing issues for older people,” explained Age Action’s Corona Joyce.

“The overwhelming majority of people, as this research shows again, want to stay at home for as long as possible but others, who might be interested in downsizing or may have to consider it for medical reasons encounter real problems.”

### Long waiting lists

“There is a lack of appropriate housing for older people and there are long waiting lists for many sheltered housing communities.

“They can also be much more difficult to access for those who own their own homes and would like to move into a community like that.”

### Voices of older people

“If you plan for the old, you include the young and if you only plan for the young, you exclude the old.”

“Downsizing means leaving an area that you’re very familiar with where you have built up a friendship and relationship with the people around you.”

“From a health situation where you couldn’t manage on your own... none of us know what the future holds, we might have to even though we don’t choose to downsize

“Everything should be on the flat, particularly toilet facilities, walk-in shower and things like that, they’re all important to the older person really.”



▲ The Government must prioritise investing in homecare.

## Politicians ignoring solutions to the health crisis

**An extraordinary aspect of the current capacity crisis in the health service is the failure of the media and public attention to reflect on the causes and solutions for the problem, writes Professor Des O'Neill.**

This short attention span has focused on the final common pathway of the problem, the crowded emergency department, rather than those elements causing it, some of which could be resolved in the short term.

A helpful analogy for the trolley crisis is that of a bath overflowing, and what measures might be undertaken to stop it, apart from mopping the floor and wringing hands.

The first is to turn off the tap, ie the numbers of patients presenting to the service. Known as ad-

mission avoidance, the scope for this is limited, as most patients that I see on every post-take ward round (a review conducted every morning of patients admitted overnight) need admission.

However, Tallaght Hospital, like many major hospitals, has undertaken strenuous efforts to lower the flow, developing an acute medical assessment unit, a chest pain service, engagement with services to provide intravenous medications at home, an integrated care team for older people, etc.

The second option is to increase the size of the bath by increasing hospital bed numbers, which with the best will in the world takes time and money. While planning for this should start immediately, in the interim the bath will continue to overflow.

### Freezing of homecare

What is most disheartening is that the obvious solution – removing the bath plug – is off the table largely due to the effective freezing or severe rationing of homecare packages in some areas.

An additional factor is the failure to provide tailored dementia care in nursing homes for those with more complex needs.

In our own hospital more than 20 patients could be discharged if their homecare package was available, and multiplying this number by the weeks or months they are waiting is a clear major contributory factor to the trolley crisis.

This is made worse by a freeze on new homecare packages to those living at home in our and other areas, not only causing suffering but also potentially contributing to hospital admissions.

That this outrageous situation (imagine if antibiotics or cancer therapies were cut off in this way) has not received due attention seems to be due to complex dysfunctional interactions between the Government, Department of Health, various sections of the HSE, and in the final analysis is also due to us as well in terms of our signals to our TDs as to how we should prioritise healthcare spending.

### Older people who suffer

It is predominantly vulnerable older people, and the many hundreds daily who end up on trolleys, who suffer from the freezing and restriction on homecare packages.

So, the next time you or a family member suffers the distress of being admitted to hospital on a trolley, or you hear debate in the media or apologies about stays on a trolley, remember this might well have been averted if homecare packages and tailored nursing home care for dementia



▲ Homecare is a major issue for Age Action members in Cork.

had been made available in a timely fashion in every community health area.

A focus on normalising access to homecare packages, a basic building block of care, would also afford an opportunity to review how homecare staff are funded and supported. In many areas, there have been difficulties in recruitment to the private care agencies who generally provide the care.

It would appear that a very high proportion of the HSE payment is retained by the agencies, with care worker payments set at around the minimum wage level contrasting sharply with much higher rewards for the owners of such agencies.

Developing better pay and conditions for direct care work-

ers must also become a priority element to support stated Government policy of prioritising care at home.

The media and general public need to redirect their ire, outrage and political energy about trolley crises away from the hospital and towards the key remediable aspect of the situation: readily accessible and high-quality homecare packages and more sophisticated nursing home options for those with complex needs.

**Professor Des O'Neill** is a geriatric consultant at Tallaght Hospital. This is an abridged version of an article that first appeared in the *Irish Times* and is reproduced with their kind permission.



▲ Margaret Byrne won the overall award for her campaigning and her commitment to handicrafts. Photo: Marc O'Sullivan

## Activist and craftsperson is our **Silver Surfer** 2018

**Margaret Byrne from Tallaght, in Dublin, was the overall winner of the 2018 open eir Silver Surfer Awards. She was presented with her award at eir's Dublin headquarters by well-known fashion designer, TV and radio personality Brendan Courtney.**

In addition to winning the overall award Margaret also picked up The Hobbies on the Net award. Margaret (also known as "The Crafty Irish Girl"

from her hugely popular blog) is a crochet, knitting and jewellery making enthusiast who uses social media to help keep hand craft skills alive.

### **Campaigning for others**

On top of embracing technology to promote her chosen hobby, she actively campaigns for survivors of mesh implant complications through the online support group "Mesh Survivors Ireland", of which she is a co-founder.

The group has grown to 250 survivors and has



provided help to those suffering through meetups and support groups.

Margaret uses Facebook, Twitter and email to reach out to younger generations who represent their older parents online, and who are sufferers of mesh implant complications. Because of her online campaigning, Minister Simon Harris has agreed to carry out an investigation on the matter.

### Truly inspirational people

“We are proud to celebrate some truly inspirational people,” said John Church, CEO of Age Action.

“These Silver Surfers are challenging ageist stereotypes that the internet, social media and new technologies are only for young people.”

“Today’s winners are a fantastic example of what can be achieved by embracing technology,” said Carolan Lennon, CEO of eir. “We are delighted to support an initiative that celebrates older people and those who support them.

“The awards are a fantastic opportunity to shine a light on some of the remarkable ways that older people are taking advantage of the possibilities that connectivity offers.

“Our Silver Surfers are ambassadors for a digital landscape and reinforce our belief that everyone should have access to a best in class broadband and mobile network.”

## Full list of Silver Surfer Award winners

- The Getting Started IT Award went to **Tom Langan** from Renmore, Galway.
- **Gordon Lawson** from Carrigtwohill in Cork was the Golden IT winner.
- The Community Champion Award was presented to **David Rowe** from Sandyford in Dublin.
- **Margaret Byrne** from Tallaght in Dublin was the winner of the Hobbies on the Net Award.
- From Ardee in Louth **Mary Dunne** was the winner of the IT Enthusiast Award.
- **Marie Hogan** from Birdhill in Tipperary was the winner of the IT Tutor of the Year Award.
- **Dominican College Griffith Avenue**, Dublin was presented with the Schools Tutor of the Year Award.
- And the Corporate IT Tutor of the Year Award went to **VW Ware** from Cork.



▲ Pupils and teachers from Dominican College, Dublin, celebrate winning an award.

Photo: Marc O'Sullivan

# Dublin Bus launches new customer safety video



▲ Safety is a top priority for Dublin Bus.

With almost 140 million customers carried last year, it's no wonder that safety awareness is high on the priority list for Dublin Bus.

The company has just launched a new customer awareness video to help all bus users travel safely and understand the needs of fellow customers.

Entitled *Be Aware, Be Safe*, it can be seen on the company's YouTube channel [youtube.com/dublinbusnews](https://www.youtube.com/dublinbusnews).

Dublin Bus carries 72 per cent of commuters during peak hours on more than 1,020 buses across the city and Greater Dublin Area.

## Older people

The video includes important messages for older people and customers with mobility needs. It highlights the features available on each bus to ensure they have a safe journey including accessibility ramps and the ability to lower the bus to make it easier for them to board.

"The safety of our customers has always been and will remain a priority for Dublin Bus," said James McHugh, Dublin Bus Environmental, Health & Safety Manager.

## Mobile technology

"In an age where public transport users are more reliant on the use of mobile technology during their journeys, it's easy to see how some can become distracted while travelling on the bus.

"We've created this video as a guide for our customers to ensure their safe and comfortable journeys."

## Child-minder needed

Looking for a child-minder for our 11-month baby. **Three hours a day, Monday-Friday**, to look after from our home in **Blackpitts, Dublin 8**.

**Flexible hours** as I work for myself. Looking for someone, kind, friendly, with childcare experience and looking to build a bond with our daughter. Includes decent pay.

For details please email: [madeleine\\_blaine@hotmail.com](mailto:madeleine_blaine@hotmail.com).

# Free grocery delivery for Age Action members

**Grocer.ie is an internet only grocery store that offers a premium range of quality fresh foods alongside a wide range of everyday grocery items delivered direct to your doorstep – everything from premium Irish T-Bone steaks to teabags!**

We use just-in-time production for our fresh foods so that our customers are guaranteed to

get the freshest products every single time.

Check out their website [www.grocer.ie](http://www.grocer.ie) to see their full range of products and special offers.

## Free delivery

As a special offer to Age Action members Grocer.ie is offering free delivery to all members and will donate to Age Action for every purchase.

Members should use the coupon code AA001 at the checkout

stage to avail of free delivery.

This service is currently only available in Dublin but there are plans to deliver nationwide soon.

Please get in touch if you live outside of Dublin and they will keep you up to date on their expansion nationwide.

**If you would like to know more please contact Grocer.ie at [jonathan@grocer.ie](mailto:jonathan@grocer.ie) or check out their website [www.grocer.ie](http://www.grocer.ie).**

## U3A groups

### Active Virginians U3A

Patricia at (087) 235-0515

### An Cosán U3A Tallaght

Imelda at (01) 462-8488

### Ballymun U3A

Peter at (087) 292-4001

### Ballyroan U3A

June at (01) 494-7030

### Blackrock U3A

Eileen at (087) 418-8607

### Blessington U3A

Peter at (087) 815-1018

### Bray U3A

Linda at (086) 045-1600

### Carrick-on-Shannon U3A

Margaret at (086) 837-2934

### Club 50, Donegal U3A

Anne at [Annegallagher60@yahoo.ie](mailto:Annegallagher60@yahoo.ie)

### Dublin City U3A

John at (01) 201-7490

### Dun Laoghaire, Dalkey, Killiney U3A

Email [dldk@gmail.com](mailto:dldk@gmail.com)

### Maynooth U3A

Helena at (01) 628-5128.

### Lucan U3A

Mary at [lucanu3a@gmail.com](mailto:lucanu3a@gmail.com).

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

### Monaghan U3A

Eamonn at (087) 918-6567

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

Matt at (01) 458-9007

### Roscommon U3A

Sam at (01) 475-6989

### Rusheen Woods, Galway, U3A

Angela at [rusheenwoods3a@gmail.com](mailto:rusheenwoods3a@gmail.com)

### Sligo U3A

Kathleen at [katemf@eircom.net](mailto:katemf@eircom.net)

### Sutton-Baldoyle U3A

Christine at (01) 832-3697

### Tramore U3A

Mollie at [molliehunt@eircom.net](mailto:molliehunt@eircom.net)

### Waterford U3A

Josephine at (051) 871-037

# We've moved – but the shop's staying!

Age Action staff in our Camden Street office have now all moved to our Inchicore premises. This brings all of our teams in Dublin under the one roof for the first time in years.

Our flagship Camden Street store will continue to operate from the ground floor offering top quality clothes, gifts and designer wear at bargain prices.

As well as allowing Age Action to save money on the rent of the Camden Street premises bringing our Dublin staff into the one office will enable our teams to work more closely together.

Age Action's new head office address is 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8.



▲ Our old home on Dublin's Camden Street.

## 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, 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8.

Email: [membership@ageaction.ie](mailto:membership@ageaction.ie)

Tel: (01) 475 6989

Fax: (01) 475 6011