



OWN

Older Women's Network Ireland
Bantracht na Sinséar

Yearbook
News

2010

Chairperson's Report to AGM 1st December 2010

The beginning of 2010 was not only affected by the snow and floods but also the aftermath of the December '09 budget when OWN learned that the final year of the 3-year funding from the former Department of Community,

OWN was fortunate to have received a grant from Age and Opportunity under the "Get Vocal" Programme which enabled development work during the year, especially in Galway. OWN was particularly happy that this programme reached some of the more excluded groups of older women, including a deaf women's group in Galway city and HSE housing project for returning migrants to Clifden.

OWN Board Members 2010



Carol Carey



Brid Morris



Maire Uí Bhraoin



Margaret Carragher



Ruth Stenson



Hazel Abdulla



Galway members with their EWM Certs

Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs had been cut a further 14%. This obviously necessitated a major adjustment to the OWN budget for 2010. The employer's contribution to the staff pension fund was reduced and CEO staff hours reduced to a 20 hour week. At last year's AGM, the members agreed to the suggestion in the Strategic Plan to pay for meals at all events during the year (with the exception of the Garden Party).

The "Get Vocal" Programme also gave OWN members the opportunity to attend organised seminars, workshops and a course in UCDD.

OWN also received a grant under the Equality for Women Measure (EWM) administered by Pobal which enabled OWN to provide courses in Dublin, Cavan, and Cork between February and June. Mary White, T.D. Minister for Equality attended the final event for these courses which showcased

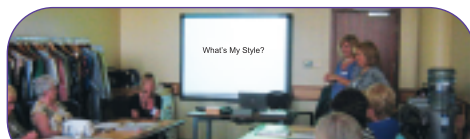
individual projects, and she presented certificates to the participants. OWN then received an extension grant which enabled a further course in Dublin and two in Galway – one in the city and the other in Clifden. Certificates were presented at the end of October to the participants of these three courses in Ballybritt by Carol Carey, OWN Board Member.



Louise Richardson CEO, OWN with Mary White T.D., Minister of State for Equality, Human Rights & Integration, and Pat O'Flynn Chairperson, OWN



Oxendales Staff provide EWM course participants from Cavan with personal grooming tips & advice



Oxendales Staff provide EWM course participants from Cavan with personal grooming tips & advice

OWN was invited to be an official member of the Older and Bolder Campaign and was given a seat on the Board of Directors. OWN has been involved since March in all Older and Bolder activities particularly the current Save the Pension Campaign. Material about this Campaign has been distributed to all OWN members.

Membership – Information and Development

OWN produced its third Year Book in 2009 in A5 format. The Chairperson's Report was illustrated with many of the events which had taken place during the year. The report was available to all members and was used to promote the network during the year.

Regular Newsletters were sent to all members during the year, giving information about upcoming events, training opportunities and information on relevant issues.

During the year members were offered broadcast training by South Dublin Radio. A number of OWN members have continued to receive media training from the Media Co-op in North Dublin where they continue to broadcast on NEAR 90fm and make programmes with OWN members. Funding was received from the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland to fund 6 radio programmes. These programmes were recorded at Newgrange, the Clasac centre in Clontarf and the Comhaltas Ceolteiori Centre in Sandymount.

This media group also hosted several film screenings in Northside Civic Centre which challenged attitudes towards aging and the role portrayed by older female actors.

Vantastic and Northside Legal Advice made presentations to network members which were attended by a total of over 100 members at the Methodist Hall in Abbey Street, Dublin.



OWN members attended a presentation by Vantastic



Computer training was provided to members nationwide under the FIT programme. Fit for Life provided exercise classes to members to improve their cardiac fitness.



Practising some movements from Larissa Atkinsons Keep Fit

Many members attended dance classes offered by Cois Ceim. Members took part in a number of health related research projects throughout the year including brain function and ageing. Members from Cork, Cavan and Dublin took part in a research programme on the impact of the recession on older people which was carried out by Dr. Francesca Lindstrom and Dr. Paddy Hillyard which was funded by CARDI.

Over 80 OWN members from all over the country gathered in Cork to celebrate International Women's Day.



Cork members taking part in a course on public speaking with Ted Corcoran, International Toastmaster



Cork member sings 'On the banks of my own lovely Lee' - International Women's Day



OWN Members from all over the country meet in Cork for International Women's Day

Fingal Co. Council invited OWN members to participate in a committee skills training course and several members living in the Fingal area took part. OWN member Hazel Abdulla was appointed to the Fingal Senior Citizens Network as OWN representative. OWN member Margaret Russell represented OWN on the Coolock Community Forum at several events over the past year. Evelyn Brady represents OWN on the Cavan O50 Forum in Cavan.

22 members took part in the DCU intergenerational learning conference *Share IT – TIT works both ways* - and an OWN member was one of the organisers. OWN members hosted an information stand at this event.



Mary Mason OWN Member and organiser of the Share IT Conference



Members Veronica Barnwell & Sadie Canon host OWN stand at the DCU event



OWN members from Cavan attend DCU event



OWN members from Cork take part in a digital photography course as part of the EWM Course



Cork members with photographer Keith Jack

OWN's National Development Officer Christine O'Kelly, gave presentations to a variety of interested groups in Bayside, Blanchardstown, Fingal, and Dundrum. She also continued to liaise with a wide range of organisations offering training opportunities to OWN members including DCU Outreach Learning Programme; the Media Co-op Northside, Dublin City Council; Community Forum Computer Training; FIT (Fastrack to IT).

Profile of OWN

- OWN is now recognised by Government Departments, statutory organisations, academic and research institutions and other NGOs as the official organisation representation older women in Ireland
- As well as being a member of the NGO Liaison group on the National Positive Ageing Strategy, OWN has been invited by the Minister for Social Protection to give the views of its members to a meeting in Farmleigh on the National Pensions Framework and to a follow up meeting and was invited to speak, or chair sessions, at meetings and events organised by a variety of organisations.
- OWN was invited by the media to comment on various issues and the CEO was invited to speak on the Pat Kenny show about the potential cuts to the pension.

Pat O'Flynn, OWN Chairperson was invited to a large number of launches, events and meetings.

One of the most satisfactory developments during 2010 was the number of individual members who represented OWN at events, launches and meetings throughout the country including a conference in Trinity College, where two members gave presentations, The Age Action conference on the UN Day of Older Persons; the world Hypertension Day.

Members of OWN also gave presentations to the Get Vocal meetings held in Galway in September.

A large number of members were also involved in focus groups meetings with a variety of statutory and voluntary organisations.

Networking with voluntary and statutory organisations is vital to the work of OWN. It raises the profile of the organisation, is a great source of information and increases the potential for OWN members to participate and to influence the policy agenda.

OWN is a member of the Ageing Well Network which is made up of representatives of Government Departments, local authorities and the HSE, Gerontologists, Researchers, Older People's organisations and relevant business people and others. The Ageing Well Network has produced a position paper for the Office for Older People which it hopes will help shape the Healthy Ageing Strategy.

OWN is a member of the National Women's Council of Ireland; the Senior Citizen's Parliament, the Community Platform, which is made up of over 30 national voluntary organisations and the Equal Rights Alliance and continues to co-operate with other NGOs that made up the Anti-Poverty Networks Programme. OWN continues to work co-operatively with all the other older people's organisations both through Older and Bolder, the Ageing Well Network and also directly with each organisation.

OWN and the EU

2010 is the European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion. As the Irish representative on the Executive Committee of the European Anti-Poverty

Network, OWN's CEO Louise Richardson attended the opening conference in Madrid and chaired a session at the Irish conference held in Croke Park which was attended by a number of OWN members. OWN's CEO, Louise Richardson was again elected to serve for a further three years as the Irish representative on the Council of AGE, the European Platform for Older People. She was subsequently re-elected as AGE Vice-President. Sadly due to the Icelandic volcano, Louise and Evelyn Brady (Board Member) who was the OWN delegate, were unable to attend the General Assembly of AGE in Brussels in May.

Louise had also been invited to speak at a Spanish Presidency conference on Older People and Mental Health but this conference was also cancelled due to the Ash. However, her paper was included in the report on the conference.

She represented AGE at a conference on Age Discrimination in Financial and Insurance services in Zurich and was subsequently invited to speak to the Insurance Federation of Ireland.

Christine attended a Grundtvig lifelong learning meeting in Frankfurt in January and also attended a film festival for older people in Dusseldorf later in the year. An application for Grundtvig funding was successful and OWN will co-ordinate a five-day workshop in June 2011 entitled "Laughing Matters – The Benefits of Humour in Health Education", which will be attended by participants from England, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland.

OWN is a member of OWN Europe which is an umbrella organisation for older European women.

The EU Commission representation has continued to support OWN by giving us the use of its Board room for meetings of the EU working group and also inviting OWN members to many events and activities in its Dublin office.

2011 will be the EU Year of Volunteering and 2012 will be the EU year of Positive Ageing and Inter-Generational solidarity. These years should ensure that OWN is strongly linked with older women in Europe.

As well as local meetings, OWN has continued to organise projects and events in response to members' needs, interests and suggestions:



Professor
Ian Robertson

- In October, OWN hosted its third Health Information Day, this time on Mental Well-Being. The Alzheimer's Society gave a presentation on coping when someone close to you has dementia. We were also delighted to welcome back Professor Ian Robertson, who gave an entertaining presentation of how to keep mentally alert as we age.
- The Intergenerational partnership with St. Mary's Holy Faith, Killester which began in 2009 continued with a visit to the Museum of Decorative Arts which allowed OWN members to share their stories and recollections with the students. Christine has since had discussion with the Museum about developing an intergenerational programme.

- The intergenerational group also attended a talk given by Dr Anne Matthews on the 1916 Widows.
- The Annual Summer Event and Garden Party were held on 7th July. A large number of members from all over the country attended. Once again, it was a most enjoyable occasion with lots of food and drink, music and chat, and activities in the grounds, organised by 'Go for Life'. The raffle brought in almost €700 which helped to offset some of the expenses.



OWN Annual Garden Party 2010

- In August, 82 Members travelled to Kilkenny for a cultural visit.
- Members also took part in guided tours of Glasnevin Cemetery.

Influencing policy

The main objective of OWN is to give Older Women a voice. OWN works to ensure the opinions of its members are conveyed to the relevant policy makers.

- A series of meetings were organised jointly by OWN, the National Women's Council and the Women's Health Alliance to hear the views of older



OWN Cavan & Dublin Members taking part in a workshop in preparation for the Womens Right to Health Shadow Report

women as part of the Women's Right to Health shadow Report which was presented to government.

- The CEO continued to represent OWN on the NGO Liaison Group, which was established by the office of Older People to ensure that the views and concerns of older people are reflected in the strategy. The September meeting was held jointly with the Inter-Departmental group which was attended by senior members from each government department. Many members of OWN took part in the consultative meetings on the Strategy which were organised by Minister Brady around the country. The draft report on these consultations will be discussed at the December meeting of Liaison group.
- OWN members also made submissions to the development of a strategy in response to a consultation Paper on Affordable Energy.
- In October, the Garda Strategy for Older People was launched in Garda Head Quarters and included the input from the Older Women's Network.
- The Department of Justice invited OWN to send a representative to a consultation meeting with older citizens on the White Paper on Crime.
- The Irish Human rights Commission invited OWN to two consultative meetings with NGOs
- The results of the motions at the 2009 AGM on the single supplement were conveyed to the travel industry and we are happy to note that during the year an increasing number of holidays were offered in Ireland and abroad with no single supplement.

Conclusion:

I would like on behalf of you all to express their sincere gratitude to the Minister of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs for the core-funding which enables us to do our work.

I would also like to record our thanks

- to Age and Opportunity for the 'Get Vocal' grant for our development work in the West of Ireland;
- to the then Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, (now Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs) and Pobal for the Equality for Women Measure Grant
- and to HSE for our small annual grant

I am happy to let you know that Minister Pat Carey has announced recently that the funding support for the Voluntary and Community sector is to continue. Of course, we shall have to apply again but hopefully, our application will be successful and the Network can continue its work.

I would like to thank the members of the Board – Ina Broughall, Ann Gallagher, Kitty Harlin, Mamo McDonald, Phil Ui Mhurchu, and Evelyn Brady, and the three co-opted members who joined us in June, Carol Carey, Ena O'Hare and Margaret Russell, for giving their time voluntarily to the organisation.

Four of the members of the Board have completed their full term of six years and are stepping down – Ina Broughall, Mamo McDonald, Kitty Harlin and Pat O'Flynn.

Sincere and grateful thanks for the wisdom and expertise they have brought to OWN.



All Halls Winter 2010

On your behalf, I would like to thank the staff – Christine O'Kelly, Development Officer; Teresa Mc Sweeney, Administrator and of course



Teresa Mc Sweeney
OWN Office
Administrator

Louise Richardson, OWN CEO for her commitment to and hard work for this organisation during her years here. So with all the departures it is a time of change, but I hope you agree that good foundations have been laid and I have no doubt that OWN will continue its work of facilitating older women throughout the country to have a voice in policy-making by providing information and organising events on issues of interest for you.

During my term of six years on the board I have been in the chair for three of them. I am grateful to all members who offered support and thanks. It is very gratifying when on leaving a meeting



Pat O'Flynn, Chairperson
of OWN presents
Louise Richardson with a
gift to mark her retirement

members state that they enjoyed it. It gives an endorsement to what we have been trying to do. Thanks also to the board members who placed enough confidence in me by appointing me as chair. I always enjoyed board meetings, even the ones where there was a lot of business to cover. Now I look forward to being an ordinary member, if indeed there is any such thing in our Older Women's Network.

Pat O'Flynn, Chairperson 2010



OWN

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Bantracht na Síneair

Membership Application Form

**Are you a woman over 55?
Do you want to meet other women?
Do you want to exchange ideas?**

What does OWN offer its members?

- Connects you with other older women
- Provides you with information
- Organises events to provide opportunities to express your views, to promote lifelong learning and to influence policy;
- Invites you to workshops and seminars to discuss issues of interest
- Helps to make your voice heard

OWN works in close co-operation with older people's organisations, women's organisation and community groups.

OWN connects its members with education and training opportunities

OWN informs its members about the activities being offered by other organisations and encourages them to take an active role in contributing to these events.

Application form:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate if you are joining as an

Individual Member €15.00 or Organisation €30.00

(Membership runs from January to January)

Please enclose cheque, postal order or draft made payable to OWN Ireland: Older Women's Network (OWN Ireland), Senior House, All Hallows College, Gracepark Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

Please tick if you are happy to receive information from OWN :

by email

by text alerts to your mobile

Would you be interested in volunteering with OWN?

Tel: (01) 8844536/537/538 Fax: (01) 8844534 Email: ownireland@eircom.net

Registered No.: 356577 Charity No.: 14722

