

Leitrim Association Of People with Disabilities Annual Report 2023





OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to empower and enable people with disabilities in County Leitrim to achieve independent living and equal participation and full inclusion in society.

The image shows a two-story, light-colored building with a dark roof and several windows. A sign above the entrance reads 'LEITRIM ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES'. There are blue wheelchair symbols on the pavement in front of the building.

Full Copy of Audited accounts 2023 and Membership form available call 0719651000

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Chairperson's Report Ita Reynolds Flynn



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Annual Report .In 2023 the Association has continued to provide a number of specific aims and objectives, namely : to provide a personal assistant service for people with disabilities to live and work independently in their own community and to facilitate the raising of disability issues at local and national level.Over the years, we have built a strong reputation for delivering quality support for disabled people all over county Leitrim, with our Leaders at the core of our service. We share long-term relationships with all our Leaders, their families, staff, stakeholders and all members of our community.

We continue with our person-centred approach, supporting people with personal assistant services, transport needs and advocating on issues related to disability. I wish to thank and acknowledge the ongoing hard work of our manager ,Karen McPartland and all our hard working office staff. Our committed PA's continue to show incredible commitment and flexibility, in delivering services of the highest level to our leaders, which contributes significantly to enhancing their lives.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by all at LAPWD, to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of those we serve. I would like to acknowledge the commitment of the Board Members; their willingness to devote their time, dedication and share their experiences and skills with the organisation . We can look to the future with confidence with such a dedicated board, manager, team of employees and leaders committed to the LAPWD ethos.

As we reflect on the previous year, we remember the many wonderful people who are no longer with us but have enriched us all and left us with very fond memories. May they Rest in Peace.

Yours Sincerely,

Ita Reynolds Flynn

Managers's Report

Karen McPartland



Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome our readers to the LAPWD Annual Report for 2023.

The Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of the organisations activities, achievements, and challenges over the past year. This report serves as a valuable tool for stakeholders, including funders and all members, to assess the impact and effectiveness of the services provided by the organisation. It gives an overview of the work of the company in 2023, information about the company's activities, as well as providing full details of our financial procedures for the past year.

Additionally, the report outlines various programmes , classes and events hosted by the organisation to promote independence and inclusion.

The core business of LAPWD is the delivery of quality Personal Assistant (PA) services to our Leaders across all areas of County Leitrim and West Cavan. In 2023 we provided a total of 41,017 PA hours, we supported 50 Leaders and have employed 60 staff . The specific needs of our Leaders remains our priority and we make every effort to deliver services to match those needs, remembering at all times the ethos of Independent Living.

Our Bus service was very busy in 2023, our accessible vehicle bus service completed nearly 200 journeys, 70% of the trips were for medical appointments in Galway, Sligo and Dublin. The remaining 30% were supporting people to access social and training programmes .Thank you to our bus drivers, Stephen and Pascal for their flexibility and commitment throughout the year.

Over the course of 2023, we had many successful applications for funding through the Leitrim County Council , MSLETB ,Education Training Board and Creative Ireland ,which enables us to run classes in the Action Ability Centre, including gardening, yoga, art and weaving and we thank to Paul Hamilton for his continued support.

Managers's Report

Karen McPartland



The Rural Social Scheme (RSS) continues to provide us with much needed supports from office administration and garden maintenance. Many thanks to the Leitrim Development Company for their continued support of the organization.

To our Funders, the Health Service Executive (HSE), I express thanks on behalf of our Board for your continued support of our services and our ethos of Independent Living for disabled people in Leitrim .Special mention to the HSE Disability Service Manager ,Denis Coffey and his team in JFK House in Sligo. Throughout the year we also continue to work closely with a range of community health professionals, including Public Health Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Social Work and it is important that we acknowledge these good, shared working relationships.

My ongoing thanks to those PA's, who continue in the great work they do providing vital support to our Leaders we thank them for their continued flexibility, commitment and service which as always has been exceptional. Special thanks to our office staff, Bernie, Emer, Theresa and our newest member to team ,Aine, all who make our working environment one that is so supportive and a pleasure to work in every day.

I wish to thank all our Board members who give of their time , share their lived experience and who oversee the governance of the organisation. Special thanks to the Officers of the Board, Brigid McGourty our Treasurer ,who continually shares her expertise in this area and our Chairperson, Ita Reynolds Flynn for her support to us throughout the year.

In conclusion, the LAPWD Annual Report is a vital document that not only showcases the achievements of the organisation but also serves as a roadmap for future initiatives and improvements. It underscores the importance of promoting independence and inclusion for disabled people in our community.

Yours Sincerely,



History of LAPWD

The Independent Living Movement has a well-established history, pioneered by and for disabled people. In Dublin it emerged as a movement in 1992 and the Leitrim Association of People with Disabilities followed in 1996 and was established by Sr. Emmanuel Farrelly.

Driven by a group of people with physical disabilities their aim was to raise awareness about the Independent Living Movement, advocate for services to facilitate their independence and to establish a support network to empower peers. The purpose of LAPWD remains to work to ensure that disabled people achieve independence, choice and control over their lives and full participation in society as equal citizens.

LAPWD is a not for profit organisation funded under Section 39 Health Act 2004. Currently we support over 50 people throughout county Leitrim and West Cavan .We employ 60 staff which comprises a team of community based personal assistants who deliver the services daily, and administration staff who help coordinate and support the service based in the Action Ability Centre in Mohill. All staff are responsible to a Manager who reports directly to a Voluntary Board of Trustees [Board of Management].

Our Trustees are entrusted with the responsibility to steer the organisation towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance, and financial management policies, as well as by making sure that we have adequate resources to advance our mission. Our trustees bring to their role ,their experience from community development, finance, social and disability services. Also 50% of our Board are disabled people and 30% receive a PAS through LAPWD.



HSE Service Level Agreement

LAPWD are funded under Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act to deliver a Personal Assistant service. Section 39 bodies related to agencies / groups undertaking services which are similar or ancillary to those of the HSE and to whom the HSE is providing grant aid to do so.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

All organisations are required to sign a service level agreement which is a contract between the HSE and agency to deliver a service that complies with all relevant standards and legislation.

Community Physiotherapy

The Community Physiotherapist has their clinic here on the ground floor of the LAPWD building. The clinic is open 2 days per week (Monday and Tuesdays) and proves a very valuable asset to the community.

In July of 2023, our long term resident physiotherapist, Patricia McLoughlin retired. Patricia was here for many years and was very much part of the LAPWD family. We wish her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

We have now welcomed our new physiotherapist, Aine O'Connor to the LAPWD building.

To contact Aine directly you can call her on 071 9631128.



Accessible Transport

LAPWD operates a wheelchair accessible door to door transport service for members. Membership forms can be downloaded from the web-site or at the office in Mohill.

Accessible transport allows more and more people to continue living in their own homes and communities. Our transport service was extremely busy in 2023. Our accessible vehicle service completed 200 journeys in 2023, 70% were for medical appointments in Galway, Sligo and Dublin. The remaining 30% were supporting people to access social and training programmes.

LAPWD Bus



Can carry two wheelchair users plus five seated passengers. Please note that advance booking is essential to avoid disappointment, we do our best to accommodate as many requests as possible.
For more information, call our office on 07196 51000.

Donations

Leitrim Association of People With Disabilities (LAPWD) would like to sincerely thank Leo Corcoran, a native of County Wicklow ,who made a donation of €5,000 in memory of his mother Breege Gallaher, who was born in Mohill and grandparents, Kate and John Gallagher who had a successful Pub Business on Main Street Mohill .Leo is also the first cousin of our Honorary President Andy McGovern.

This donation helps provide services for people with physical and sensory disabilities all over County Leitrim.

Again this year we were delighted to be contacted by our anonymous donor who donated €6,500 to LAPWD .He would like it acknowledged , that the donation was from an expatriate with a deep love for his native Leitrim and the people of Leitrim.



Funding Applications

MSLETB - Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board

With the support of the MSLETB we could provide so many classes throughout the year, these included:

- Gardening programme
- Yoga & gentle movement to music
- Beginners Art Course
- Photography



We were also successful in our application to Age and Opportunity and were very fortunate to be able to put on Yoga classes

Funding Applications

We have been very fortunate this year in many of our funding application.

- Under Pobal-Community Centre Investment Fund we secured funding to replace the front and back door to our Action Ability Centre
- Through the Social Enterprise Fund /LDC we secured part funding to replace the Chairs in the Action Ability Centre.
- Community Support Fund administered by Leitrim Co Council we secured funding that enabled us to update our CCTV System.
- We were also successful in the National Lottery Grant Fund which enabled us to purchase a new laptop and fire boiler extinguisher.
- Festival Fund-We were approved for €620 under the Festival Fund, this enabled us to provide our medals ,trophies and refreshments on the day of our 5K fundraiser on September 24th.



Funding Applications

Healthy Ireland Funding

We secured €1,000 through this Fund to enable us to roll out our “Hug in a basket” initiative.

We purchased all the items for the hampers from RJS Chemists Drumshanbo, Kieran’s Chemist Mohill and C & D Chemist Mohill.

Theresa and Aine in the office put together the hampers for all the Leaders and we delivered them to everyone just in time for Christmas.

LAPWD would like to take this opportunity to thank Healthy Ireland for their support in our Hug in a basket Initiative . They were so well received and Healthy Ireland have given a commitment to roll out this funding again for 2024.



Their support enabled us to present each Leader with a Wellbeing basket. Many of our Leaders are in rural areas within Leitrim. This initiative has been greatly received by all and much appreciated. [#HealthyIreland](#) [#LeitrimCounty Council](#) .

Funding Applications

LAPWD were delighted to secure funding with Creative Ireland to facilitate our Weaving Connections in our Community 2023 Project to all our Leaders, PAS, and members.

This Project aim was to bring people together, integrating, reconnecting, and establishing bonds and friendships in our community. The project involved 5 practical workshops to weave a range of functional and practical garden and household items .



Events

15th February 2023

Manager took part in an Access All Areas Radio Interview on Phoenix FM. The interview detailed the history of LAPWD ,the current operations and activities and the services, classes, bus service etc that we provide in County Leitrim.

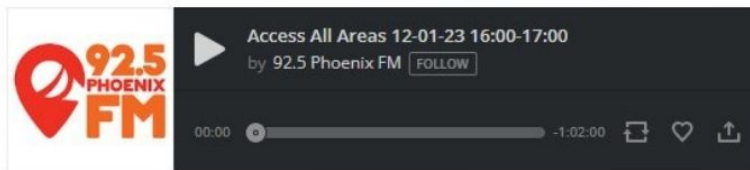
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Access all areas 92.5 Phoenix FM Podcast

LAPWD Staff • 26th January 2023 • [Edit](#)

Our Manager Karen McPartland recently took part in a radio interview with John Comiskey who works with Blanchardstown Centre for Independent Living on 92.5 Phoenix FM on their Access all areas programme.

Click the link below to have a listen to Karen's Interview .Karen elaborated on the history of LAPWD and gives an account of the services we provide .Interview is from 24 mins in to the below podcast.



23rd March

The Bee Park Resource Centre, Manorhamilton.
Community Fair in Manorhamilton.

As part of the Healthy Leitrim Programme - An Garda Síochána Community Engagement & Crime Prevention Units are working with Leitrim PPN, Muintir na Tíre, Leitrim Development Company and Leitrim County Council to host a Community Information Event.

The aim of this event was to inform people of the services and activities that are available in their areas. The focus of this event is aimed at all members of the community over 55 years of age. The manager hosted an information stand at this event.



Events

14th June 2023

AGM

On June 14th, LAPWD held our AGM in our Action Ability Centre in Mohill. AGM gives a comprehensive account on our company's activities throughout the preceding year.

According to the Companies Act 2014, Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are held once every calendar year. The primary purpose of an AGM is to allow the company's members to meet the directors, ask questions and receive information about the company, its activities and financial reporting.

Disabled Drivers Association

In June 2023, the Minister for Finance Michael McGrath, TD signed regulations that establishes a fourth category of reliefs in the Disabled Drivers and Disabled Passengers Scheme, for people with disabilities who require complex and significant adaptations to their vehicles to enable in-vehicle wheelchair access. The new reliefs provide up to €48,000 for disabled drivers and €32,000 for disabled passengers. This will be applicable to those who have borne or paid VAT, VRT or residual VRT on or after 1st August 2022. To find out more, visit; <https://ddai.ie/news>



Events

24th September 2023

Make Way Day

The aim of Make Way Day is to educate and raise awareness of the needs of people with disabilities in the public spaces we all share. Make Way Day is about one impactful, coordinated, and decisive day of action to improve the access of our towns and cities for everyone. LAPWD played their part in this important event.

11th October 2023

Mental Health and Wellbeing Fair

Mental Health and Wellbeing Fair marking World Mental Health Day, was held in The Landmark Hotel, Carrick On Shannon. The LAPWD Manager hosted an information stand at the event, there were also workshops on, Journalling for Wellbeing, Mindfulness & Relaxation and Creative art for Wellbeing. Guest speakers included Miffy Hoat, Development Officer, Mental Health Ireland, for Sligo & Leitrim.

26th October 2023

Community Event

As part of the Healthy Leitrim Programme-An Garda Siochana Community Engagement and Crime Prevention Units worked with Leitrim PPN, Leitrim Development Company and Leitrim County Council to host a Community Information Event in the Landmark Hotel. As member of the PPN, the Manager had a stand at the event. It was a great gathering and very informative and successful event.



Andy McGovern's 90th Birthday Celebrations

In February 2023, our Honorary President, Mr Andy McGovern celebrated his 90th birthday.



Andy reflects on his life as world's longest survivor with Motor Neurone Disease;

"I feel blessed, ninety years on this earth is a blessing that I treasure and appreciate deeply. Daily I rise with the morning sun. I never fail to admire the beauty of the scene before my eyes as I look out of my kitchen window overlooking the beautiful village of Cloone.

PPN Love Where you Live Awards 2023



Love Where You Live is run jointly by Leitrim County Council and Leitrim Public Participation Network (PPN) each year. The aim of these awards is to publicly acknowledge the great work of communities and volunteers.



What a wonderful night we had at the awards in The Landmark Hotel. Thank you to Leitrim County Council and Leitrim PPN . We are delighted to have received an award in the Social Inclusion category and received a cheque for €150 .It was amazing to see the amount of active Community groups all over County Leitrim.

Cairde Liatroma

Cairde Liatroma is a social, leisure and recreational club primarily for individuals with intellectual disabilities in Leitrim and has been running successfully in Leitrim for over 12 years.

This club is a partnership approach between community representatives, voluntary and statutory organisations including Leitrim Development Company, HSE, Learning Disability Services, parents, RehabCare Ballinamore, St Ciarans Day Centre, Childhood Days, LAPWD, Saol Nua Social Club, National Learning Network, Manorhamilton, National Learning Network Carrick on Shannon.



CAIRDE LIATROMA

Cairde Liatroma

The aim of Cairde Liatroma is to promote social interaction and personal enjoyment through monthly, organised social, recreational and sporting events and activities for all ages and abilities.

In June LAPWD hosted members of the Cairde Liatroma group for a fun event at Lough Rynn including a music, games, food van, ice cream van. One of the highlights on the day was trip around the area on the TrioBikes. The idea of the TrioBike is to provide accessibility wheelchair users and disability groups with limited mobility to be taken out for a cycle in the natural environment. Many thanks to Seamus Gibbons, owner of electric bike trials Leitrim Village for facilitating these trips, which everyone enjoyed so much.



Fondly Remembering Past Employees

It was with deep sadness that we learned of the sad passing of our beloved colleague and friend, Bernie Kelly, who passed away unexpectedly on Thursday 28th September. It was such a shock, and she is so missed by us all. Bernie worked with LAPWD for over 16 years and was one of the most dedicated, hardworking and loyal PA's. Bernie was a much-loved member of staff and friend to all who had the pleasure of working with her. We will never forget her kind and funny character, which has left such a lasting impression on us all. We miss you Bernie. May her kind soul Rest in Peace.



Ann Marie Bohan also sadly passed away this year, she would have been so proud of her family and how they rallied round her and did everything they could for her in her final weeks.

Ann Marie was a former employee and valued member of the LAPWD team for nearly 20 years, she had such gentle manner and was a joy to work with. May her kind soul Rest in Peace.

Country Market

The hugely successful Country Market continues every Friday morning from 9am to 1pm. This is such a lovely social morning, with beautiful homemade goods available to purchase. All welcome.



Fundraising LAPWD RUN WALK ROLL 2023

Our Annual fun, run, roll or stroll was held on Sunday 24th September 2023. Thank you to all who helped out in any way on the day, An Garda Siochana, Stewards and volunteers. Michelle Fanning from Leitrim Sports Partnership for her energetic warm up and to Enda Stenson for kicking off the race.

We are extremely grateful to all the people who donated, on the day we raised €1,125.00. All funds raised will support LAPWD to continue to support Independent Living for people throughout of all County Leitrim and West Cavan.

Thank you to Leitrim County Council for their sponsorship #enjoyleitrim.

Special thanks to Terry and Martina Williams for taking photos which captured the day so wonderfully.



Fundraising LAPWD RUN WALK ROLL 2023



Fundraising

LAPWD RUN WALK ROLL 2023



Lapwd
Run, Walk
or Roll
2023

Networking-Sharing Resource and Information

Joint Working/Sharing Resources and Information.

Throughout the year we take every opportunity to engage in joint working with as many public agencies and community groups as possible to bring benefits and opportunities to our members.

The bodies include Health Service Executive, Public Participation Network, Leitrim Development Company, Disability Federation of Ireland , Leitrim County Council etc. (please see list below)



Networking-Sharing Resource and Information



NCBI has been renamed as Vision Ireland and is in the process of rebranding its 124 stores across Ireland.

Vision Ireland provides services -- including rehabilitation training, assistive technology, advice and information, emotional support, and employment advice -- to over 8,000 people annually.

Vision Ireland said the name change was necessary to help the public and medical professionals to better understand that the organisation provides services and supports for people who live with all types of vision impairment.

The national sight loss agency will continue to support service users who are blind or vision impaired in the same way as every, but the name is supposed to be more inclusive and designed to help the organisation reach more people.

The process of replacing NCBI signs on shop fronts is expected to be completed by September 2024.

Membership

Membership of LAPWD is open to everyone on the completion of Annual Membership form and payment of membership fee of €10. Family membership is €20. A copy of the Membership form is at the back of the report.



Conclusion

The Annual report is an important time of reflection, a time to recognise the wonderful services and opportunities that we provide throughout LAPWD, remembering always the Leaders who are at the core of our service and the Philosophy of Independent Living.

Everyone in the community is welcome to become member, all are welcome to our groups, courses and classes.

We are continually networking with other agencies, both local and national to keep us updated on the constant challenges the Disability Sector faces.

Going forward over the next year, we will strive to maintain our level of services and supports. Our Core Values remain the same, underpinned by the Philosophy of Independent Living and our activities are aimed towards promoting, Independence, Options, Rights and Empowerment.

As always, we extend our thanks for your commitment and interest in LAPWD and look forward to your continued support in the coming years. We hope you found the report to be a true reflection of our work throughout the year.

LAPWD again uses this opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the Board of Directors, Core Office Staff & Staff in the community who strive every day to make this organisation the success that it is today.

Here's to another successful year for LAPWD. We look forward to the year ahead and we believe it can be a year of continued achievement and development.

OUR OFFICE TEAM



Karen McPartland
Manager



Bernie McGovern



Gary Boyne



Aine Cox



Theresa Duignan



Emer Clancy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Bridget Mc Gourty



Eddie McGowan



Philip McTeigue



Peter Kearns



Terry Williams



Bernie Donoghue



Ita Reynolds Flynn



John Rooney



Anne Gilpin



Leitrim Association of People With Disabilities,
Action Ability Centre,
Station Rd,
Mohill,
Co. Leitrim
Phone: 071 96 51000
www.lapwd.com
info@lapwd.com
Charity Number: 12005
Company Registration Number : 273863

