



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

**Age &
Opportunity**
Life is for
Living.

Inspiring and empowering older people to live healthy and fulfilling lives

Influencing policy to ensure the active participation of older people in ways that benefit our community and wider society



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Chairperson's Statement

Age and Opportunity has had a busy, eventful and successful 2014. We had a celebration for our 25th birthday. We said goodbye to our founding Chief Executive, Catherine Rose and welcomed our new CEO, Karen Smyth. I want to put on record the deep gratitude of the Board to Catherine for all her work over the past 25 years and wish her a long, happy and active retirement. We have recruited Karen who is a very competent and committed successor.

There were changes in Board membership as well. I want to thank John Hynes for his chairmanship of the Board over the past six years. John has generously agreed to remain on the Board to ensure a smooth transition. We were joined by new Board members John O'Brien and Shane McQuillan and we welcome their expertise and commitment.

Our major events, Bealtaine, Go for Life Games and Samhain continued to expand and garner wide support. We continued to expand our education and training programmes. We agreed out Strategic Plan 2015 – 2017.

As with all voluntary organisations, Age & Opportunity has needed to work very hard to source funding for the many activities we pursue. We would love to be able to do more but we are constrained by the available finances. We are putting plans in place to make the organisation more sustainable. This is a major challenge but we must replace funding sources, particularly that of the Atlantic Philanthropies, which will end in the near future.

Unfortunately, the reputation of some voluntary organisations was seriously damaged during 2014 and there is a danger that all organisations could suffer as a result. I welcome the establishment of the Charities Regulatory Authority and hope that it will serve the sector well by ensuring that all charities are run in a transparent and accountable manner. Age & Opportunity has always been open about its finances and activities and will continue to be so.

We recognise the need to work with other organisations in the older people sector and we will continue our efforts to ensure a more cohesive and effective sector. The organisations in the sector all share similar aims – we all want to facilitate older people to live full and active lives. We look

forward to working with government, local authorities and other similar organisations in the implementation and monitoring of the National Positive Ageing Strategy.

We are very fortunate in having committed, capable staff who are working harder than ever to promote the interests of older people. I want to thank them for their commitment and hard work and I look forward to continuing our work in 2015.

CEO's Statement

I am delighted to present Age & Opportunity's Annual Report for 2014.

It has certainly been another strong year for Age & Opportunity, as we continue to deliver on our mission of inspiring everyone to reach their full potential as they age.

We are uniquely positioned in the ageing sector in terms of the variety of programmes that we offer, shaped by and lead by older people, in arts and culture, sport and physical activity and active citizenship and lifelong learning. In sport, we have now trained over 2,000 Physical Activity Leaders, have developed a CarePALs programme for people working in residential care, have extended the Go for Life Games and sustained FitLine, while also carrying out a survey on PALs and commissioning research on attitudes and behaviours around physical activity. In the arts, we ran a successful Bealtaine festival with approx. 120,000 participants, collaborating successfully with a number of other festivals in bringing top-quality events to Irish audiences and participants. Our Samhain festival also developed significantly this year. In active citizenship and lifelong learning, we developed a number of accredited programmes, delivered Creative Exchanges in both Cork and Dublin and rolled out Year 1 of the Get Engaged programme, building civic engagement for older people.

We have a very strong culture of creativity and innovation, and this was cultivated by Catherine Rose, our founding CEO, who retired in May 2014. This culture, combined with the enthusiasm, energy and commitment of our Board and staff will stand us in good stead in years to come. It means that we continue to strive to ensure that the voices of older people are stronger than ever before so that they can shape the programmes and services that we have to offer, and shape wider policy in relation to growing old in Ireland.

A strong belief in equality for all older people has also been developed in Age & Opportunity and this will enable us to continue to reach out to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged older people in our society, finding new ways to engage, motivate and support them to live their longer lives to the full.

Throughout 2014 we developed and fine-tuned our strategic plan for 2015 to 2017. This process was led by Crowe Horwath, and involved a searching analysis of the activities, initiatives and programmes with which we are involved, against the backdrop of ongoing reductions in funding and evolving service level agreements with funders.

We have also developed our business plan for 2015, which involved a thorough analysis of our cost base in order to guarantee economy, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money in all aspects of our future operations. We are faced with a myriad of challenges in terms of our financial sustainability over the coming years, due to the fact that the Atlantic Philanthropies, one of our major funding partners, will be concluding its grant making at the end of 2016. We have been working hard to develop sustainability plans to ensure that other sources of funding can be harnessed, so that we can progress the work required to engage older people who are marginalised or socially excluded.

In 2014, we developed our ongoing commitment to good governance and we signed up to the Code of Governance for Community and Voluntary organisations, to which we will be full signatories shortly. We also registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority and we established an audit committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tom Costello, whose term in the Atlantic Philanthropies came to an end in December 2014. His insight into and commitment to the ageing sector has ensured a legacy of collaboration and innovation, and this is displayed particularly through the Active Ageing Partnership, a partnership between Age & Opportunity, Third Age and Active Retirement Ireland. In 2014, AAP firmly laid the foundation for the development of four Touchstone districts in Ireland, and 2015 will bring a co-ordinated approach to enhancing the active participation of older people and their greater inclusion in the life of their local community. AAP is committed to sharing resources, practical experience and academic learning to advance the civic engagement of older people. AAP is also working in conjunction with Age Friendly Ireland and Project Lifecourse in NUIG.

I would like to thank our other main funders, without whom our work would be impossible. We receive tremendous support from Austin

Warters and his team in the HSE, John Treacy and his team in the Irish Sports Council and Orlaith McBride and her team in the Arts Council.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors, who have been steering our organisation through a challenging period and have been showing resolve and sound judgement along the way. I would also like to thank our staff and contractors, who have displayed energy, enthusiasm and commitment in developing innovative and compelling initiatives to enhance the quality of life for older people.

Our Board, staff and contractors have great insight, knowledge and expertise to creatively and positively contribute to ensuring that Ireland is a great place in which to grow older.

Sport and Physical Activity

Go for Life, which is run by Age & Opportunity with funding from the Irish Sports Council aims to involve more older adults in all aspects of sport and physical activity more often. The programme operates through two main strands: the Small Grant Scheme and the Leadership Programme. Go for Life also engages in awareness projects on physical activity. During 2014, the Go for Life programme directly involved approximately 39,408 people in physical activity and sport. This is made up of those reached through the various strands of the work, principally the grant scheme and the PALs peer leadership programme.

Small Grant Scheme

In 2014, the Small Grant Scheme was in its fourteenth year. The amount allocated was €298,800 and it brings the total amount allocated under this scheme since 2001 to €4,507,125. A record number of grants were processed and allocated to groups in all 26 counties by a sub-committee established by the Go for Life Steering Committee. There were 1,023 grants allocated in 2014 and they will be used to purchase equipment and pursue activity programmes. Grant allocations were announced by Minister Michael Ring, Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, at the beginning of December. An evaluation of the impact of the scheme is conducted annually. The grant scheme will benefit approximately 27,000 people, and so this represents an investment of €11 per person. Furthermore, previous evaluations suggest that this investment will be subsidised by the vast majority of the participants themselves.

Leadership Programme

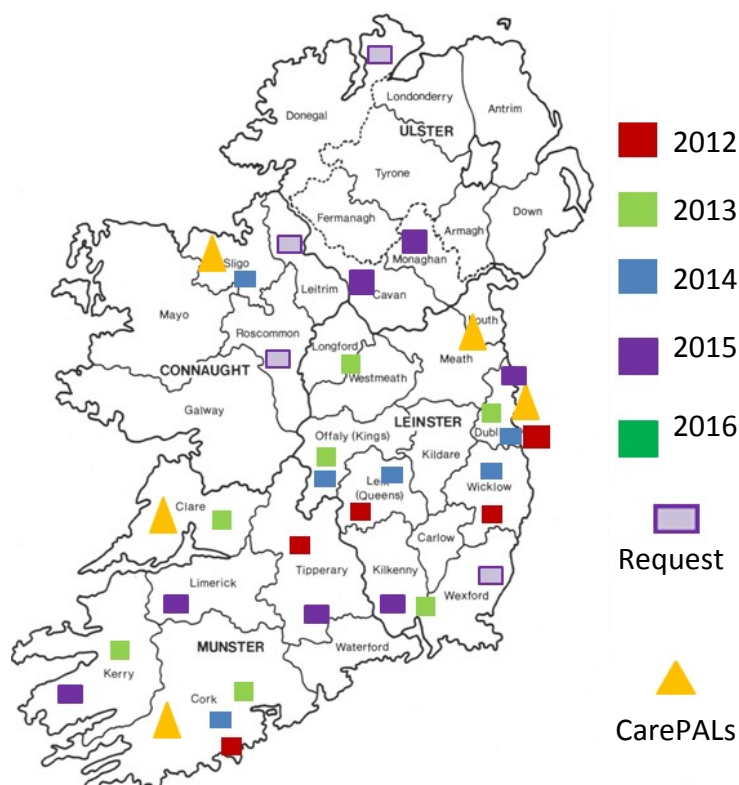
Under Go for Life's model of peer leadership/active citizenship, approximately 2,150 Physical Activity Leaders (PALs) have been trained over the last 14 years and at end of 2014 there are 930 active PALs of whom over 800 are leading their peers in physical activity on a regular basis with the remainder organising physical activity in other ways. There are trainers and tutors nationwide supporting these leaders and their groups. During 2014, there were 52 workshops for PALs (including training for new PALs and refresher workshops for existing PALs). Following a pilot session held in April 2014, four CarePALs workshops were delivered in Cork and Clare in November. This is a new initiative offered to people working

in a care or residential setting to enable them to lead physical activity with older people in their care. Go for Life also supported five Sportsfests and twenty local Games initiatives.

These figures represent our direct interactions with older people and do not take into account Go for Life-inspired activities organised by local agencies such as Sportsfests, Games events and older adult programmes organised by Local Sports Partnerships, HSE and Local Authorities.

In September 2014, we carried out a survey of all the PALs currently registered on our database. The last survey was done in 2010. The purpose of this survey was to ascertain how many of those listed on our database are currently leading and/or organising physical activity on a regular basis. 2,700 contacts were targeted for this survey. There was a 40% response rate i.e. 1,088 individual responses. In the survey, 72% i.e. 718 PALs (of the 986 who answered this question) confirmed that they have regularly led physical activity sessions since doing the workshops. Of those who hadn't led activity sessions, a third quoted lack of opportunity as being the main reason for not doing so. A total of 112 respondents who said they are not actively leading physical activity, said they promote physical activity in other ways e.g. applying for grants or sourcing equipment for their groups.

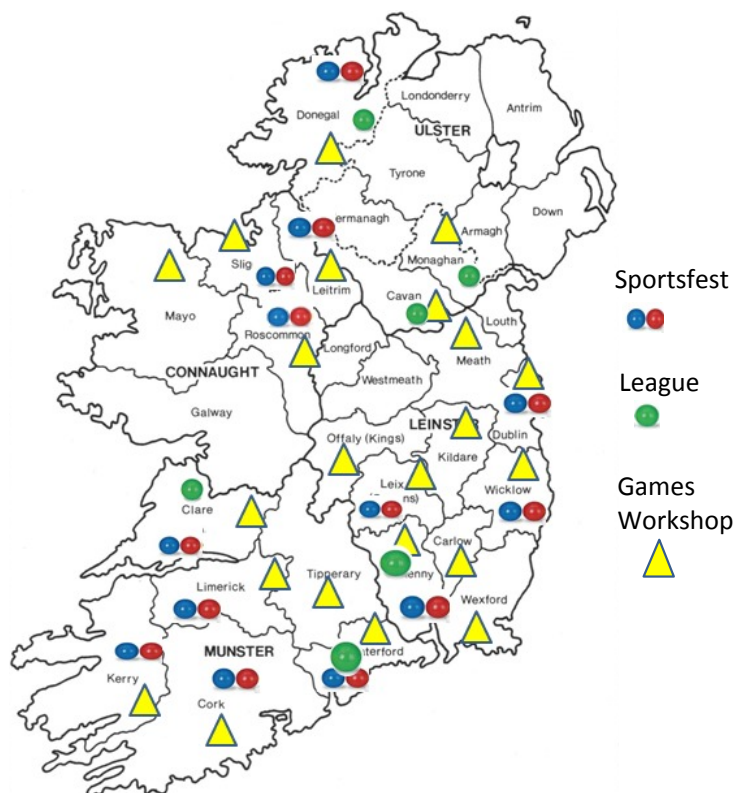
Workshops delivered / scheduled 2012 - 2016



Go for Life Games

The third Go for Life Games was held in DCU in June 2014 hosting a total of 255 players, with 17 different counties represented on the day. Each county had a team of 15 people, playing 3 different devised sports. Many of the teams were selected locally from Sportsfests or leagues which many older people's groups regularly take part in. In 2014, two regional events took place. Sligo hosted teams from Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim. In Limerick, neighbouring counties North Tipperary, Clare and Kerry came together for a day of sports and activity. Go for Life supported 20 local / regional Games initiatives. In 2015, leagues are to be run in Donegal, Waterford, Cavan, Monaghan, Kilkenny and Clare, with the fourth National Games event happening in DCU in June, with 29 counties expected to send a team. By 2016, we plan to have every county represented at the Games.

Go for Life Games 2012 - 2016



Fitline

Through the Go for Life Targeted Initiatives Programme, Age & Opportunity continues to target older adults who are not members of social groups or who are at risk of social isolation. This includes the Fitline project, which aims to support individuals who are not members of groups to get more active, using telephone support. At the end of 2014, there were 60 people receiving calls on a fortnightly basis from 16 active mentors in two Dublin centres with all calls logged on a dedicated CRM system.

CarePALs Programme

In April 2014, Go for Life piloted a new programme entitled CarePALs. This programme was developed due to the increasing demand from those working in day and residential care settings to do our core PALs workshops. CarePALs is an adaptation of the core PALs workshops and aims to empower those working in care settings to lead suitable physical activities with older people in their care. The leadership model developed by Go for Life means that physical activity sessions can be delivered by staff and, therefore, included as part of the daily or weekly routine without cost to the care setting. Cork and Clare were selected for the first CarePALs two-day workshops; these counties expressed a strong demand from care workers for this type of training. There is a second course scheduled for both counties in February 2015 as we were unable to accommodate all in the first round. The Cork workshops were funded by HSE Lottery funding and further Lottery funding has been secured to run CarePALs in Dublin North East in 2015.

Awareness and Research

A tender process was initiated by Go for Life for the fourth survey examining behaviour and attitudes of older people to sport and physical activity. Perceptive Insight won this tender and, following consultation with Go for Life and the Irish Sports Council, carried out field research in November 2014. This research report will be published in 2015 and Go for Life will host a seminar for stakeholders to discuss the findings.

In September, Go for Life presented at a CARDI seminar relating to the publication of a data mining research project published in 2014 and

examining the relationship between physical activity and health status in older adults in Ireland, north and south.

Go for Life made a presentation at the first Senior Activity and Fitness Conference in Nottingham Conference Centre in June, and made a poster presentation at the Institute of Public Health Conference in October in Belfast.

Stakeholders

The Go for Life Steering Committee includes representatives of other organisations in the age-sector as well as academics and medical / technical practitioners in the field of sport and physical activity. Go for Life also works closely with a range of partners especially within the Health Service Executive and the network of Local Sports Partnerships who are crucial to the programme's development and delivery.

Partnerships have been established at national and local level with funding partners as well as general collaborators, which enable the delivery of the Go for Life programme nationally and locally.

Go for Life was represented in 2014 on the Dublin City Sports Network and the Get Ireland Walking Steering Group.

	Number of Events	Total Participants
Trained PALs	2150	
Estimate active	930	
Each PAL works in an ongoing way with an average of 10 people		9300
TOTAL		9300

GRANT SCHEME	Number of Grants	Total Participants
New PALs	1025	28000

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME	Number of Events	Total Participants
New PALs	52	144
Existing PALs – Dance workshops	5	139
CarePALs	4	96
Refresher	2	37
SportsFests supported by GFL	5	353
Games Workshops	8	243
Local Games Event	16	507
GFL Games Support	4	250
GFL Training	1	8
GFL Games Final	1	255
TOTAL	98	2032

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME	Number of Events	Total Participants
FitLine workshops	5	40
FitLine Active Mentors		16
FitLine Active Participants		60
Public Awareness Events	7	
TOTAL	12	116

Arts and Culture

In the arts and culture programme, our mission is to foster and inspire creativity among older people and to promote the skills, experiences and exposure that can lead to a rich creative life for all older people. It is also about supporting the arts community to continue to work and to inspire and train other artists to engage in the area of creative ageing and intergenerational creativity.

It is encouraging to see the reference to the importance of the arts, including Bealtaine, in the recently published Joint Oireachtas Committee report on 'Utilising the Arts in Combating Disadvantage'. The first recommendation is to "Adopt a national policy by which the arts will be recognised as a fundamental means of combating social exclusion and promoting the well-being and inclusion of disadvantaged groups within local communities and at a national level. Give strong consideration to including the level of engagement in the arts as a National Indicator of well-being". This is a ringing endorsement of the work we do collaboratively and individually in promoting meaningful arts participation among older people and, often, among other generations also.

Bealtaine festival

Over the last nineteen years, we have encouraged and facilitated arts organisations to provide increased access and participation to older audiences while also encouraging older people to create performances, art, music, film and literature, sometimes for the first time.

The Bealtaine festival in 2014 had 647 participating partners who organised 3,217 events that were attended by over 119,000 people.

After eight highly successful years as Artistic Director, Dominic Campbell left Bealtaine at the end of the 2013 cycle. A curatorial team replaced him, focusing on three art forms: Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Literature.

We were very fortunate in engaging Michelle Browne to curate the visual arts programme, Liz Kelly to curate the performing arts and literature programmes and Lian Bell as Project Manager of Wandering Methods, the project we have run for three years in partnership with the OPW.

As well as appointing a new curatorial team, we also established a new Arts & Culture Steering Group to give direction and guidance to the overall arts and culture programme at Age & Opportunity.

Collaborations

We partnered with the Dublin Dance Festival and presented 'Please be Gentle' and 'Stay with Me', two pieces by Cypriot choreographer Alexis Vasillou.

With Dublin Writer's Week, we presented 'Bealtaine in Conversation' with two offerings: 'Life is for Living' with actor Eamon Morrissey, musician Paddy Moloney and writer Mary Russell in conversation with archivist and commentator Catriona Crowe and US novelist Philipp Meyer and poet Philip Schultz in conversation at Smock Alley in Dublin. We also brought Bealtaine to the Listowel Writers Week in Kerry with Hugo Hamilton and Jim Crace in conversation with Molly McCloskey, on memoir writing and reading.

For 'The Crank Set', a group of older cyclists performed in the Phoenix Park to celebrate the Giro d'Italia as part of the Dublin City Arts Office programme. The Crank Set continues to meet for relaxed cycling events. We also partnered with the Coiscéim 'Love, Song and Dance' project that was part of the Dublin City Bealtaine programme. It culminated in a performance at the Irish Museum of Modern Art. We were delighted to be part of the first Choral Conference, organised by the Association of Irish Choirs, which took place in Limerick. We hosted Ghislaine Morgan, an international vocal expert who gave a workshop on developing vocal health in older age.

The Given Note

This was a one-day workshop to celebrate the 10,000 people who sing in choirs across Ireland each week. Choir conductors and singers joined renowned composer Elaine Agnew and choral practitioner Anne Barry in the National Concert Hall to hone their skills on music construction and vocal technique.

Dawn Chorus

The Dawn Chorus enjoyed its sixth year in 2014. Partners in a number of European countries organised their own Dawn Choruses and, this year, we saw the first ever Bealtaine Dawn Chorus in New York City at the New York Irish Center, a community centre in Long Island City in Queens used by different generations of Irish people living in New York.

Summer Seminars

Bealtaine developed a number of events for the arts community: in the 'Summer Seminar' series we invited Robert Ballagh, Brian Maguire and Margaretta d'Arcy as older artists to talk about their social engagement in 'Ageing Agitators: Social and Political Engagement in Older Artist' and in 'Labour of Love: On the Working Life of Older Artists' we invited Dr Tom Turner and Dr Martha Doyle to describe the working lives of older artists and artists Pauline Cummins and Geraldine O'Reilly to talk about and reflect on their practice as they age.

Catch the He(Art)

Catch the He(Art), a travelling residency with four artists, Patricia Hurl, Thierry Ruddin, James King and Mary Kelly, had public engagement events in Kilkenny, Wicklow and Galway in which the four reflected on life as an older artist. Older artists and cultural workers in the audience were inspired by the drive of the artists in the residency and there was good feedback about the discussions and the works that dealt with issues relating to the lives of older people:

"From death to birth and back again, the Catch the He(art) residency proved for me that being an artist liberates you from society's temporal constructs: we're born, we work, we retire, we die. As the wheel of time turns for the artist, those wants and ambitions never fade. In the presence of artists who have stayed the creative course into older age you cannot but question the source of their sustained creativity... Are Hurl, Kelly, King and Rudin the lucky few to have realised enough amateur dreams and professional ambitions to keep them bobbing above cynicism and defeat? Or is hope the creative buoy? What became clear in the four artists' espousals of the artistic life is that careers are short-lived, while being an artist lasts as long as the life given. The persistent creativity of these artists – with over 100 years of art-making between them – testifies to that"

James Merrigan is an artist and art critic at billionjournal.com

Small Plastic Wars

This show toured in eleven counties during Bealtaine 2014 in association with Bigger Picture Projects. Pat McGrath brought the tale of Joe, a man who, when his job in social care falls apart, starts to find a place in the arcane world of building models. The show was deservedly chosen as a highlight of the year in the Sunday Independent.

Fuss on the Bus

We partnered with Carnation Theatre to develop this new show depicting a journey through the lives of two best friends, with a ritual; they take the 33B bus to Balbriggan (or another appropriate location depending on the county where it was performed). 'Fuss on the Bus' was performed in libraries, care settings and nursing homes in seven counties during Bealtaine.

Be Not Afraid of Greatness

We partnered with the Abbey Theatre, BeLonG To, (a national LGBT youth organisation) and some older members of the LGBT community to explore Shakespeare's thoughts about love. The series of workshops culminated in a performance on the Abbey stage: there was a strong intergenerational aspect to the project and we hope to develop this work. The Abbey Theatre has also been a strong supporter of the Cultural Companions programme.

Bealtaine Participation	Totals
Number of participants	119426
Number of events	3217
Number of organisers	647
Number of counties represented	26

Azure

Azure brings together the Butler Gallery in Kilkenny, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, The Alzheimer's Society of Ireland and Age & Opportunity to create inclusive events for people with dementia and their carers. Art-viewing events were piloted to great success in 2012 and followed up by an international symposium hosted by IMMA. We continue to meet and plan for greater roll-out of this work in 2015, including hosting a training programme delivered by New York's MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) for gallery/ museum staff and artists in Ireland to develop and support a pool of expertise in this country.

Cultural Companions

This programme is for people who would like "someone to go with" to cultural events. Members receive a two-monthly programme of events to

which they can come, they also receive a members directory to facilitate them in making their own arrangements with other like-minded people. We organised 36 events during 2014.

Samhain

Samhain began in 2012 to explore the darker side of ageing through the arts. From the beginning, it was conceived as a partner project between Age & Opportunity, the National Museum of Ireland and Poetry Ireland. In 2014, Samhain expanded beyond Age & Opportunity, the National Museum of Ireland and Poetry Ireland, to include organisations and locations in the west of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and providing more opportunities to creatively use Museum artefacts and archaeological sites to explore the themes. This expansion was made possible by funding received from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's Co-operation with Northern Ireland funding scheme.

Samhain was funded in 2014 by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; the National Museum of Ireland; Age & Opportunity; Poetry Ireland; Mayo County Council and supported by the Ulster Museum and Music Network.

All of the work coming out of these encounters formed the basis for an exhibition entitled 'Samhain: shadows, sounds & stories' which was launched on 19 November by Minister Heather Humphreys and ran in the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology until 7th December 2014. A total of 28 events took place both North and South of the border.

A recorded 1,372 people visited the 'Samhain: shadows, sounds and stories' exhibition in November. Included in this number were students and tutors from Dun Laoghaire Further Education Institute who conducted interviews with Museum staff about the Samhain exhibition and the overall project. These were third level media students who were doing a piece on Museums 'Going beyond Stereotypes' and on their relevance in contemporary society.

Samhain held a specialist seminar: 'Reflections on landscapes, objects & death' addressed historical and contemporaneous experiences of dying, death and loss, which was attended by the Samhain groups from Dublin, Belfast and Mayo and included talks by artist Marie Brett and Prof. Gabriel Cooney, School of Archaeology UCD. There was also a field trip King's Stables and Navan Fort in Co. Armagh, where participants explored and photographed these landscapes and places of archaeological significance.

Active Citizenship & Lifelong Learning

The aim of Age & Opportunity in our Active Citizenship and Lifelong Learning work, is to provide innovative learning opportunities to older people and to agencies delivering services to older people. Our primary focus is on facilitated learning experiences in areas such as community participation, age friendly environments and accredited vocational training.

During 2014, we continued to focus on developing skills in education, training and consultancy to continue to meet the needs of older people as well as ensuring that the work was sustainable. This capitalises on existing Age & Opportunity courses and initiatives and on the experience gained of working with different partners and audiences. This strategy was supported by the start-up of Get Engaged, Age & Opportunity's three-year project funded by Atlantic Philanthropies. In addition, we piloted a new programme - Ageing with Confidence for people with intellectual disabilities as well as further developing our one-day pre- and post-retirement workshop Next Phase.

Our applications for programme validation from QQI were successful:

- Training and Development, leads to a QQI Special Purpose Award at level 6 (2 components)
- Group Facilitation Skills
- Assessing Learning, leads to Assessment Practice
- CarePALs (with Go for Life) leads to a component award also at level 6

Continuous professional development for facilitators

A series of meetings were held with facilitators during 2014, This process has resulted, so far, in:

- Initiation of a new and revised contractual process between Age & Opportunity and individual facilitators to ensure quality assurance of training delivery
- Development and communication of Age & Opportunity's Adult Protection Policy to facilitators

- Establishment of Garda Clearance procedures
- Creation of a panel of Age & Opportunity-approved facilitators who have the relevant experience, skills and expertise to deliver programmes
- Development of a Quality Assurance process to assist recruitment of appropriate facilitators into the future
- Development of a programme in Group Facilitation Skills accredited at QQI Level 6 to enable facilitators to acquire appropriate training and certification for the future
- Communication to local providers of new arrangements for facilitator training

Get Engaged

Get Engaged is funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies to the end of 2016. The aim of the project is to build capacity for civic engagement among older people primarily in counties working closely with Age Friendly Ireland and Active Ageing Partnership, over a three-year period.

The objectives are:

- To increase the number of older people skilled and interested in playing leadership roles in Older People's councils (OPCs) and other local structures
- To diversify the older people's voices at the table locally
- To ensure that older people's direct interests and concerns can be articulated and reflected in Age Friendly Ireland as the programme is mainstreamed

In 2014, Age & Opportunity worked with Carlow, Dublin (City Council North West and North Central areas), Fingal, Galway, Mayo and Meath. Based on the needs analysis carried out with older people's groups and networks, the Local Authority personnel and the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Development Consultant, appropriate training, consultancy and support interventions were carried out.

The Atlantic Philanthropies' funded Get Vocal programme a re-granting programme to support local civic engagement which was run by Age & Opportunity) also concluded in 2014. A final Get Vocal event was held in The Mansion House to help celebrate and encourage an ongoing relationship with grant recipients into the future. The event also saw the launch of "Finding our Voices, Making a Difference – Participants from Age & Opportunity's Get Vocal programme have their say". Apart from the launch for the book, there were two meetings of Get Vocal projects, in April and November, where attendees networked and heard presentations on various developments in the age sector that they could engage with.

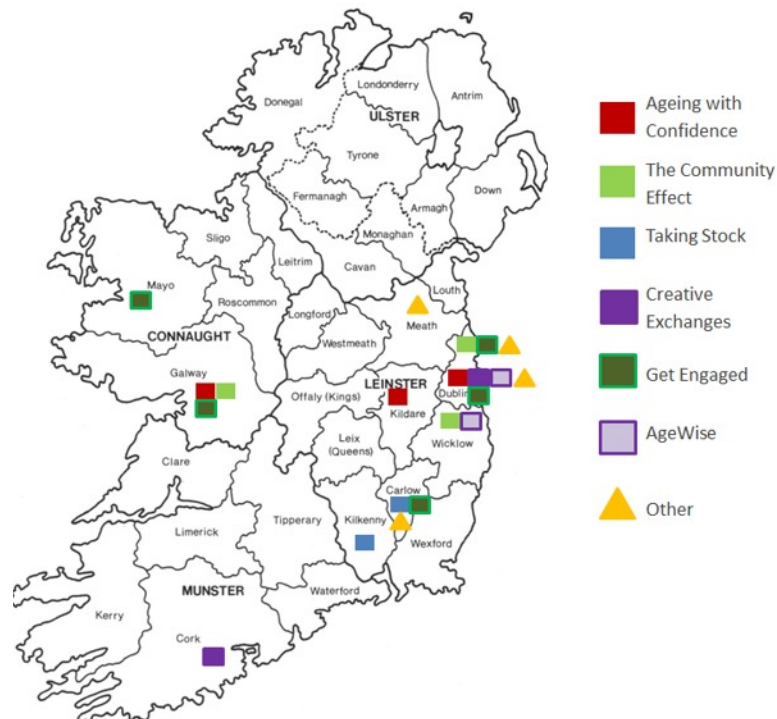
COURSES DELIVERED	Courses delivered	Total Participants
Ageing with Confidence	5	55
The Community Effect	4	46
Taking Stock	3	29
Creative Exchanges	3	38
Get Engaged	12	128
AgeWise	4	36
Other **	9	123
	40	455

** Other education events were Consultation, Governance, Pre-Retirement, Success in Planning, and some general interest courses

Creative Exchanges

Creative Exchanges is a course for people leading creative activities with older people in care settings, to develop the skills needed to plan and facilitate arts activities for older people in either residential or day care settings. Creative Exchanges was delivered twice in 2014. In May / June in the Crawford and Glucksman in Cork and in September / October in IMMA in Dublin. A total of 27 learners completed the programme. Two awards ceremonies were held for graduates of the programme: one in IMMA in February and a second in the Crawford in October, with Minister Kathleen Lynch awarding the certificates in both cases.

Workshops delivered



In September, Creative Exchanges itself was awarded the Allianz Community Art Prize at the Allianz Business to Arts Awards. Age & Opportunity and graduates from the course were on hand to accept the award from President Michael D Higgins at an event in the National Concert Hall. The award will provide a bursary for part-payment of fees for a number of future applicants of Creative Exchanges who wish to do the course but, due to the costs, are unable to attend.

Policy

AGE Platform Europe is a European network of more than 150 organisations of and for people aged fifty and over. Its purpose is to voice and promote the interests of the 190 million inhabitants aged 50+ in the EU and to raise awareness of the issues that concern them most.

Helen Campbell, Head of Policy & Active Citizenship is a Vice-President of AGE Platform Europe. Age & Opportunity Papers were presented at conferences in the following areas:

- Capacity building with older peoples' groups as part of the Age Friendly Ireland Initiative (Wales)
- Learning from European projects on positive ageing (Brussels)

- Issues relating to ICTs and older people (Brussels)
- Human Rights in long term care settings (Brussels)
- European Forum on Social innovations for Healthy and Active Life Expectancy – ‘Long term care in motion’ - InnovAge project (Riga) -
- Linking Generations Northern Ireland made a joint presentation with Age Action and Age Friendly Ireland (Belfast)
- Active member of AGE Task Force 11 – Dignified Ageing and AGE Task Force 3 – Human Rights/ Age Discrimination
- Attended Joint Council of Europe/ European Commission DG Employment/ AGE Platform Europe seminar on ‘Human Rights for older persons in in Europe- Who cares?’ (Brussels)
- Attended joint meeting of Task Force 3 and Task Force 11
- Attended conference on Integrated Care hosted by the Committee of the Regions (Brussels)
- Meeting with MEPs in European Parliament as part of successful AGE Platform lobby for the re-establishment of the Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity (Brussels)

Another significant piece of policy work was running two focus groups of Activities Coordinators working in residential care settings in order to formulate a response to call for inputs on updating the HIQA Draft National Quality Standards for Residential Care for older people.

Age & Opportunity, along with our colleagues in Active Retirement Ireland, continues to play an dynamic role in Active Senior Citizens for Europe (ASCE). ASCE aims to support civil society organisations and older citizens to participate in and influence the EU political agenda and guide them to become key actors in decision-making at local, national and EU levels. More precisely, the project gives older people the chance to learn more about the EU and to interact with EU policy makers in order to achieve an more age-friendly EU and to foster a greater sense of ownership of the EU among older citizens.

Corporate & Public Affairs

Funding and Sustainability

Future sustainability has been identified as the principal risk facing the organisation in the coming two years. This is particularly important in the light of the departure of the Atlantic Philanthropies, one of our major funders in recent years, from funding in Ireland in 2017. Age & Opportunity is committed to securing other dependable sustainable sources of funding in order to continue our work in developing quality of life for Ireland's diverse older populations. In May of 2014, in advance of the development of the organisations Strategic Plan, a sustainability project was developed to focus on new ways of controlling costs and generating income.

The organisation continued to focus on discovering & submitting relevant grant applications and was successful in a number of areas. In particular, the Allianz- Business to Arts Award grant award for Creative Exchanges was a significant boost in establishing Age & Opportunity as a provider of innovative arts programming among key players in the area of arts focused corporate philanthropy.

There were also successful HSE Lottery applications for areas such as a roll out of CarePals workshop pilots in Cork and Clare, supporting the delivery of Creative Exchanges.

EU working group

Throughout 2014, Age & Opportunity took part in an Atlantic Philanthropies funded European capacity building initiative. This initiative resulted in a successful grant application to Atlantic for funding towards a dedicated resource to assist organisations work through an EU grant application process and has the potential to be highly significant for Age & Opportunity across the next number of years. Work has already begun on a number of potential EU projects that will support Age & Opportunity's mission and we intend to apply for new EU funding streams in 2015. Age & Opportunity has invested heavily in building our network in the European age sector, specifically through our membership of AGE Platform Europe.

E-Commerce

In 2014, Age & Opportunity piloted a number of projects that required an online transaction. From what we have learned, work has begun on developing an e-Commerce infrastructure which will facilitate direct sales of courses, events, products such as books, prints etc. This e-commerce infrastructure will support all programme areas in event planning and project management. It will also be an asset to the management information reporting capacity of the organisation. The initial focus will be on an appropriate CRM and Event management system.

Communications & Public Affairs

The principal public affairs events for 2014 were:

Minister for Primary Care, Mental Health and Disability, Kathleen Lynch presided over both of our graduation ceremonies for Creative Exchanges, in Dublin and Cork, in 2014. The presence of the Minister and her support for the course and the work of the participants, who provide creative activities in care settings, was an important endorsement of the importance of their role and the difference that they make.

Life is for Living, inspirational stories from some of Ireland's best-known older people, was launched on 8 May. With contributions from well-known people, the book reveals the events and ideas that have shaped the contributors as well as their dreams of a better future for Ireland. The book launch at Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin became a celebration of Age & Opportunity's 25 Years.

Also, to mark the 25th anniversary, Age & Opportunity awarded the Life is for Living and VoltAge bursaries. The Life is for Living bursary was awarded to Catherine Brophy, a retired audiologist to travel to Zambia to provide audiology equipment and to train people in Zambia to carry out hearing tests in geographical areas where testing is not available. The VoltAge bursary was awarded to the Fatima intergenerational arts group to create a knitted model of the Fatima flats in their 'Stitch and Bitch' group.

The Get Vocal final event also launched a book of stories. This time, it was reflections from people who participated in Get Vocal projects around the country. 'Finding our Voices, Making a Difference' was launched in the Mansion House by Tom Costello of the Atlantic Philanthropies. The book contains interviews with participants and community development / NGO

workers who engaged with Get Vocal. The publication aims to act as an example of what can be achieved when people move beyond conventional ideas of what community programmes for older people should be about and provide more of a focus on directly engage older people in the planning, development and running of these projects. This year also saw the publication of the Simon Communities of Ireland's Get Vocal funded research 'Homelessness, Ageing and Dying: Exploratory research looking at the needs of older people, who are homeless, as they age, and are faced with the serious issues of ill health and dying'. Launched by Minister Lynch in Cork, this challenging research is one of the first of its kind in Ireland, giving voice to older people who are homeless, some of whom became homeless in later life.

Age & Opportunity was delighted to speak or be represented at a number events during the year such as the National Positive Ageing Summit in Dublin, the Institute of Public Health Conference in Belfast, the Annual Conference of the British Society of Gerontology in Southampton, Active Retirement Ireland's Annual Trade Show in Galway, as well as giving talks to the Irish Feminist Network, Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board and Tallaght Hospital.

Public Affairs also supported significant annual events during the year, such as Bealtaine 2014 events, the Go for Life Games, the Irish Sports Council / Go for Life Small Grant Scheme, Samhain and created print materials to support the work of the organisation, including the development of handouts for people with intellectual disabilities taking part in the first Ageing with Confidence course specifically for people intellectual disabilities living in residential services.

Communication	Totals
Print articles (excluding Bealtaine)	70
Print articles on Bealtaine	661
Broadcast interviews	64
Posts on Age & Opportunity Facebook	731
Age & Opportunity Facebook Follows	1170
Age & Opportunity Website page views	172943
Articles on other websites	301
Age & Opportunity Twitter Follows	495
EngAge eNewsletters delivered	19787

Governance

Age & Opportunity held 11 Board Meetings during 2014, with an 85% attendance rate from Board members. We also held 6 meetings of the Finance Committee with an 81% attendance rate.

Age & Opportunity welcomed two new board members in 2014: John O'Brien and Shane McQuillan.

John O'Brien is a healthcare consultant at Adaptive HVM Ltd. John has enjoyed a long career in the health services, working in the HSE as a National Director, having been involved in Change Management and reconfiguration work in the organisation. He has also served as CEO of Mount Carmel Private Hospital.

Shane McQuillan is a partner with Crowe Horwath. He leads the Consulting Services team and has 28 years of consultancy experience. Shane's principal area of expertise is the management of change, particularly in the development and implementation of a sharper business focus, with enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and economy. He has extensive experience of working with NGOs.

Age & Opportunity has signed up to the 'The Governance Code: a Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland' with the aim of being fully compliant by 2015. We have implemented a new Adult Protection Policy, an updated Safety Statement and Flexible Working Time Policy during 2014. It also carried out a review of its Operational Manual for staff, introducing new procedures.

Board Member	Meetings	Attended
Fionnuala Hanrahan	11	7
John Hynes	11	10
Helen O'Donoghue	11	8
Mary Kelly	11	11
Ita Mangan (Chair)	11	10
Catherine Marshall	11	11
Shane McQuillan	1	1
Paul Murray	11	9
John O'Brien	4	3

Audit, Finance, Governance and HR Committee Member	Meetings	Attended
John Hynes (Chair)	6	4
Mary Kelly	6	6
Ita Mangan	6	5
John O'Brien	3	2

Appendices

Appendix 1

Board and Staff

Board Members

Ita Mangan(Chair)

Fionnuala Hanrahan

John Hynes

Mary Kelly

Catherine Marshall

Paul Murray

Shane McQuillan (joined in December 2014)

John O'Brien (joined in July 2014)

Helen O'Donoghue

Staff Members

Full-time Staff

Catherine Rose: CEO (retired May 2014)

Karen Smyth: CEO (joined in July 2014)

Seán Dillon: Head of Operations

Joyce Dunne: Enterprise and Development Coordinator

Michael Foley: Head of Evaluation & Public Affairs

Ciarán McKinney: Head of Arts & Culture

Margaret Roe: PA to the Chief Executive/Office Manager/HR Manager

Sabina Wasik: Administrator

Part-time Staff

Danielle Byrne: Senior Administrator

Helen Campbell: Head of Policy & Active Citizenship

Kim Chew: Administrator

Ciara Dawson: Go for Life Administrator

Richard Farrell: Go for Life National Development Officer (retired June 2014)

Sue Guildea: Assistant Manager, Go for life

Mary Harkin: Head of Go for Life

Fiona Holohan: Active Citizenship & Lifelong Learning Coordinator

Rebecca McLaughlin: Arts Officer and Bealtaine Coordinator (left in March 2014)

Lasarine O'Carroll: Financial Controller

Aleksandra Szymbara: PR Coordinator

Appendix 2

Committees

Go for Life Steering Committee

Robert Grier: Chairperson

Dr Ailis Brosnan: HSE Representative

Emma Jane Clarke: Programme Executive, Irish Sports Council

Owen Curran: Executive Committee Member, Irish Senior Citizens Parliament (passed away May 2014)

Arthur Dempsey: Active Retirement Ireland (from July 2014)

John Hynes: Chairperson, Age & Opportunity

John Kerrane: Former lecturer, School of Health & Human Performance, DCU

Dr Mick Loftus: GP and former President of the GAA

Tony McCarthy: Independent (previously Active Retirement Ireland to June 2014)

Catherine Rose: CEO, Age & Opportunity (retired May 2014)

Karen Smyth: CEO, Age & Opportunity (appointed July 2014)

Arts & Culture Steering Committee

Catherine Marshall: Chairperson

Lorraine Comer: Head of Education, National Museum of Ireland

Patrick Fox: Independent (previously Director of Create to July 2014)

Anne McCarthy: Mayo County Council Arts Office

Ciarán McKinney: Programme Manager, Arts & Culture, Age & Opportunity

Helen O'Donoghue: Senior Curator & Head of Education & Community Programmes, Irish Museum of Modern Art

Catherine Rose: CEO, Age & Opportunity (retired May 2014)

Karen Smyth: CEO, Age & Opportunity (appointed July 2014)

Helen Walsh: County Librarian, Clare County Library Services

Appendix 3

Committees

Executive Council Member/Vice-President, AGE Platform Europe

Human Rights Working Group, Active Ageing Partnership

Building Capacity for EU Funds, Immigrant Council of Ireland

Community Foundation Grants Panel, Community Foundation for Ireland

Dublin City Sports Network, Dublin City Council

Fingal Age Friendly Alliance, Fingal County Council

Get Ireland Walking, ISC National Trails Office

NGO Forum, Age Friendly Ireland



Age & Opportunity

Life is for
Living.

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