

PALs Newsletter

Spring 2025

We are delighted to be back with our first PALs newsletter of 2025. Our PALs are going strong all over the country and as our numbers increase it is great to see and hear about all the wonderful things the different groups are doing. In every corner of our beautiful country, we see the power of community and the spirit of those who are embracing new opportunities with enthusiasm and curiosity. We really enjoy seeing our PALs trying something new, revisiting a long-loved hobby, or simply enjoying the company of good friends, and know that your energy and positivity are leading others to do the same.

PALs

To start off 2025, we have commenced PALs workshops in Clare, Meath, and Cork, resulting in an additional 52 new PALs. The participants displayed remarkable enthusiasm, and all attendees were eager and energetic. We have a further PALs workshop coming up in Dublin prior to the summer. If you would like any further information, please contact Máire Murphy: maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie



Meath PALs with trainers Margaret and Barbara



Clare PALs with trainers Fiona and Margaret



West Cork PALs with trainers Margaret and Bernadette



Leitrim CarePALs with trainers Laura and Fiona

CarePALs

Our CarePALs initiative, aimed at people who work or volunteer in care settings, has been delivered in Dublin, Cork and Leitrim so far this year. There was a great turn out to all 3 series with a total of 57 new CarePALs. We have training coming up in Westmeath, Tipperary, North Dublin, Roscommon and Donegal prior to the summer. If you would like further information on any of the upcoming workshops or would like to register for to attend please e-mail maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie



Dublin PALs at Respond with trainers Laura and Colette

FitLine

Now that the days are getting longer and we are coming into Spring, it's a great time to start getting more physically active. If you or someone you know, would like a volunteer mentor who will ring you every fortnight and chat to you about how you could fit more physical activity into your life, please call FitLine on 1800 303 545. You also get resources in the post on how to move more at home once you sign up to FitLine. The support is free and for anyone aged 50 or above. We look forward to hearing from you.



Cork CarePALs with trainers Kathleen and Bernadette

PALs Introduction Day

We are providing a new one-day introductory workshop throughout the country that allows groups to come along and get a feel for what the PALs initiative is all about. It's a fun way for groups to try out some of the activities we cover in the full series of workshops.

We had a very successful first workshop in Mayo this April. Everyone that attended the workshop registered interest in attending the full series of PALs workshops so we will be rolling out a PALs series in Mayo early next year. We are hosting another workshop in Waterford after the summer. If you are interested in attending, please do not hesitate to contact the PALs Coordinator Máire Murphy at maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie



Introduction to PALs in Mayo with trainers Bridget and Fiona

Trainer Day Dublin



Active Team and Trainers

We had our annual Active Trainer Day meet up in Dublin on the 17th of January. It is a day for our panel of Active Trainers, who are spread throughout the country, to come together and discuss ideas and plans for the year. They are the backbone of all our workshops and their input is always so important. We now have 10 trainers, namely Fiona Ward, Barbara Murphy, Kathleen Tonge, Paul McCabe, Bernadette O Connor, Laura McGoran, Colette Harte, Margaret O'Keefe, Bridget O'Dwyer and Alan Roycroft. We are lucky to have such an amazing team, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for all their hard work and commitment to the Active Programme and workshop delivery.

Active National Grant Launch 2025

We had a very successful Active National Grant Launch at the Sport Ireland Campus on the 10th of April. The National Grant Scheme is a combined initiative from Age & Opportunity and Sport Ireland. This year we provided €300,000 to support sport and physical activities run by 988 groups and organisations. Grants were awarded to 188 Irish Countrywomen's Associations, 243 Active Retirement Groups, 64 Men's Sheds, 30 Women's Sheds and 81 care settings along with many more groups and clubs.

We had a great day at the Sport Ireland Campus with groups in attendance trying out Walking Handball, led out by Caroline Nerbas and João Ferreira, part of Olympic Handball Federation of Ireland. Groups in attendance also got to try out our Go for Life Games of Malaí, Scidils and Flisk led out by our Active Trainers. We had inspiring speeches from Norman Farragher of Naas Men's Shed and John Guckian from Grange Woodbine in Dublin, and Cliona Maughan the Senior Grants and Fundraising Officer at Respond. We also heard from Sue Guildea and Dr Una May the Chief Executive Officer of Sport Ireland.

Every year approximately 32,000 older people take part in physical activity funded by the National Grant Scheme. Activities include pickleball, aqua aerobics, rowing, dancing, cycling, walking hockey and many more. We want to thank everyone who came along to our grant launch, and we hope you all have a wonderful year of activities ahead.



Naas Mens Shed making moves at the Grant launch



Dr Una May CEO of Sport Ireland and Sue Guildea, Active Programme Manager, Age & Opportunity

If you would like further information on our programmes, you can visit our website, www.ageandopportunity.ie. If you would like any further information on any of the initiatives above please e-mail maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie or call 019133946

**Best Wishes,
Máire Murphy, Active Programme PALs
Coordinator.**