

PALs Newsletter

Summer 2025

As summer draws to a close, we would like to provide an update to all our PALs about the developments in Age & Opportunity over the past four months. We have been pleased to welcome new PALs into the Age & Opportunity Active family. We trust that you have all enjoyed a great summer filled with community, family and well-being, and that you have successfully applied the knowledge gained from our workshops. We have a variety of exciting workshops planned for the autumn and winter seasons, and we look forward to welcoming new members to participate in these events.

PALs

Our PALs initiative has experienced a great year so far. We have concluded our workshops in Cork, Clare and Meath, and most recently, we completed a PALs series in Dublin Fingal, all resulting in an additional 63 new PALs so far this year. We hope all our new PALs have enjoyed their experience and have gone on to lead out many successful activity sessions. We have upcoming PALs workshops scheduled in Tipperary starting in September, Carlow beginning in October,

and Sligo also commencing in October. We are eager to expand our PALs network to ensure that an increasing number of older adults can enjoy the benefits and have access to the programme.



Dublin Fingal PALs with our trainers Barbara and Colette.

If you would like any further information on our next three PAL workshops coming up after the summer, please contact Máire at maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie

Introduction to PALs Workshop

The Introduction to PALs is a new one-day workshop 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 workshop series.

We held an Introduction to PALs workshop in Waterford in June and due to the success of this workshop we will be running a full series of PALs in Waterford next year.



PALs Introduction Day Waterford with trainers Bridget and Margaret.

CarePALs

Our CarePALs initiative, aimed at individuals working or volunteering in care environments, was delivered in five more counties: Westmeath, Tipperary, Roscommon, Dublin and Donegal. There has been a great turnout at all our CarePALs workshops this year resulting in a total number of 124 new CarePALs. leading activities in care settings nationwide. Further training sessions are scheduled to take place in Waterford, Kerry, Clare, Kildare, Galway and Dublin South. Contact details for further information at the base of newsletter.



Westmeath CarePALs with trainers Fiona and Alan.



Roscommon CarePALs with trainers Fiona and Bridget.



Donegal CarePALs with trainers Laura and Fiona.



Dublin North CarePALS.



Tipperary CarePALS with trainers Bridget and Margaret.

Sports Fest

We held our first Sports fest day in Bantry, West Cork in June. It was a fun and interactive day with over 40 people attending and a fantastic turn out of local CarePALS and PALS. Those who attended got to try out several different activities which included Chair Pilates, Walking Football, line dancing, socialisers and our Go for Life games.

Sports fest days allow older adults to try activities they otherwise might not feel confident to try. More than anything,

sports fests bring people together, building camaraderie, boosting mood, and create lasting memories, all of which support physical and mental health and well-being. It's a celebration of sport and what we *can* do, at any age.



Having Fun in the Sun at Bantry Sports Fest with Trainers Ber and Kathleen.

Sofa to Saddle

We're delighted to share the success of our recent Sofa to Saddle initiatives, led by Active Trainer, Paul McCabe in partnership with Fingal Active Travel. These cycling sessions took place in St Catherine's Park and Newbridge House; both located in Dublin. A total of 15 participants took part across the two initiatives, gaining confidence and skills to get back on their bikes.



The Cycle Warriors Group enjoying an ice cream in the sun with trainer Paul McCabe.

If you would like any further information on our Sofa to Saddle initiative, please contact active@ageandopportunity.ie or call 01 9133943.

Fit Line

FitLine is a free telephone support service and is for anyone aged 50 years and above who would like regular phone calls offering a friendly chat about how you can move a bit more in your daily life. You can also apply to be a FitLine Volunteer mentor. The role involves calling participants from home every fortnight. We provide a FitLine phone, training, and supervision to our volunteers.

To chat to us more about either getting support from FitLine to get more physically active or Volunteering, please call 087 621 1767 or email FitLine@ageandopportunity.ie. 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 e-mail maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie or call 019133946.

Final Thoughts

Exercise is one of the most accessible, safe and effective strategies to improve well-being and independence in older age. It benefits every domain, physical function, mental health, cognition, longevity, with lasting results. Regular exercise helps preserve mobility, balance, and coordination, which reduces the risk of falls, the leading cause of injury in older adults.

Staying strong means being able to perform daily activities (e.g., climbing stairs, carrying groceries) and living independently longer. It's wonderful to see our network of PALs growing, not only benefiting from what they've learned, but also passing that knowledge on as they lead others in physical activity.

Our Newsletter

If you wish to keep receiving our newsletter via postal mail, please reach out to Máire Murphy at maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie. Otherwise, we will discontinue sending the newsletter by post, and it will only be distributed through email in the future. It can also be viewed on our website, www.ageandopportunity.ie

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