Season of Mists and Mellow Fruitfulness...

A warm welcome to the Care and Repair programme’s Summer into Autumn newsletter. As ever, the aim of the e-newsletter is to inform, enlighten and amuse. We want to share information about the programme and give an idea of what’s happening around the country. Most of all, we’d like to encourage contributions from those involved in the programme such as Community Partners, volunteers and clients. If you have any news to share, please let us know!

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How are we doing?

We’ve all been working hard to provide a great quality Care and Repair service to older people in our local communities, and we’ve had a busy year so far. At the end of August, we’d completed 13,880 services.

We’re also working to establish new community partnerships nationwide, and will be launching new programmes of work in Donegal and Mayo later in the year. Watch this space...

Age Action Care and Repair Teams

Dublin Team Coordinator - A Volunteer Role

John Sullivan in his St John Ambulance uniform

John Sullivan joined the Dublin team a couple of months ago. He has an interesting volunteer role outside Age Action- we thought you might like to hear a bit more.

John says, “I have been involved with the St John Ambulance for the last 6 years; I joined because I loved the idea of volunteering and I always like to help people in need. It’s quite a commitment, but very worthwhile. I attend a weekly meeting for 2 hours which would involve training in all aspects of first aid to ambulance work, so my skills are kept well up to date.”
Every so often we attend a large training exercise which involves the Ambulance Service, the Fire Service and the Gardaí. For example, it could be a mock bus crash or we may be practising to assist at a large public gathering.

We often train in dealing with specific injuries, and have to assess exactly what form of first aid is required quite quickly. An example would be in the use of a spinal board, which is used to take people with a back injury out of a car, or off the ground if they have fallen and possibly injured their neck. We often train in the use of technical ambulance equipment as we provide a backup to the ambulance service.

We were very much on call to provide support in the heavy snowfalls of 2010/2011. Another example of a training night would be in the use of CPR - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. This emergency procedure is performed when someone is unable to breathe normally - for example, in the case of cardiac arrest. It’s important that we are fully practised and able to respond fast. We also have training sessions in how to use a splint in case of a fractured arm or leg, and there’s plenty of scope to take on further responsibilities. For example, I am hoping to train in the near future as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician), which would be the next step in my volunteer career.

I’m also one of the drivers with in the St John’s, both in my division and at headquarters. While not all ambulance calls require blue lights and sirens, there are the times that you would have to use them. It’s certainly not as simple as putting them on and driving fast - you still have to obey the rules of the road. While you get to go through red lights you have to proceed with extreme caution and have your wits about you!”

**Promotional Campaign Brings Record Client Numbers to Cork and Galway**

An extensive promotional campaign was undertaken in Cork and Galway over the summer with the aim of raising awareness of the Care & Repair service among older people and bringing new clients into the programme.

A detailed database of community groups, health professionals and retail outlets that older people tend frequent was prepared. Each group was then contacted by phone and provided with flyers to distribute to their clients and/or place on notice boards. A press release was issued to the local newspapers, magazines, free-sheet papers and parish newsletters encouraging older people to call us for help with gardening work during the summer months. In addition we called all of our existing Care & Repair clients who had not contacted us for more than six months to remind them about the service.

The campaign was a huge success with record numbers of calls to Care & Repair in Cork and Galway throughout the summer months. It was particularly satisfying to see the high number of calls from older people who had not previously been aware of the service.

The campaign has greatly increased the profile of Care & Repair in Cork and Galway and it could be replicated throughout the country. If any Care & Repair groups would like further details of the groups we contacted and how the campaign was run please contact me on 021-4536554.
Nationwide News

There’s been a lot of C&R activity nationwide over the Summer- here is a brief roundup of news. Please don’t forget- if there is anything you would like to share in these pages, to pass it on to Claire or John. And if you have photos, the more the merrier!

Belcamp Darndale Golden Years Centre- a Busy Summer!

Belcamp Darndale Village Centre in North Dublin is one of Care and Repair’s longest-serving community partners. The Golden Years centre- a project long in the planning-opened its doors in May, and has brought all of Darndale’s services for older people under the same roof. Linda Hayden, the CEO of the Village Centre, talks about Golden years in a video released in the summer. You can watch it here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyxLgH3j-2o

The Ladies of the Golden Years centre had a trip to Gorey in August and obviously had a great day! Check out their Facebook album here:
https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.701987323228298.1073741856.214164292010606&type=1

WALK and Community Regeneration Projects

WALK, who, as a Care and Repair community partner, provide a comprehensive gardening service in South Dublin, recently embarked on an exciting project to support the local community and to establish a greater spirit of inclusiveness through the regeneration of a derelict building at Walkinstown Green

A social enterprise hub is being set up in Walkinstown Green to manage and run a multi-functional Community Resource Centre. Complete with Community Café and Garden Centre, it will provide training and employment opportunities to people with intellectual disabilities and people from other disadvantaged groups who have been removed from education, training and employment. The café, gardens, workshop and training rooms will provide training as well as meaningful practical work
experience. This is part of a larger enterprise that will offer maintenance and gardening services in the community mainly to older and vulnerable people who for whatever reason can’t do the work themselves.

The project started in February 2012 to fill the employment needs of people with a disability, and future plans include establishing a gardening, repairs and maintenance service. Statistics show that more than half of people with disabilities will not have a formal qualification or paid employment in their lifetime. For people with intellectual disabilities this figure rises to more than 80%.

WALK’s research has shown that no organisation in Ireland is providing training and employment opportunities similar to those proposed for Walkinstown Green social enterprise. 15% of the population have a disability and in Walkinstown the percentage is above national average at 22%. WALK’s objective is to create pathways to employment. Youth Groups, Community Garda and The Men's Shed are all supporting the initiative, and the Walkinstown Green Project will be a major resource to the local community. WALK believes that the centre will be a focal point to rejuvenate a spirit of community in the area.

Work underway at the Walkinstown Green Project

Community Partners’ Meetings

Following the community partners’ regional meetings, we've now updated and distributed the Operations Manual, “Toolkit” pack and all training materials. These have been given to community partners to assist with the delivery of the programme nationwide. If you need more information on the packs, or to arrange a training meeting, please contact John or Claire.
News from Age Action

“Hands Off Our Travel Passes” Campaign- Success!

In June, you may remember that Age Action launched a campaign to highlight the importance of the travel pass scheme and to rally political support for its protection, in the light of the terms of reference of a major review which was underway into the scheme. The Government committed to protect the travel pass scheme.

“We are happy to wind down the campaign following the Government’s commitment to the ‘full retention’ of the scheme, contained in the statement of its priorities for 2014-16,” Age Action spokesperson Eamon Timmins said.

Thanks to everyone who took part in our surveys, wrote letters, participated in our Glor groups and helped to add their voice to this campaign- it worked!

Guess Who’s Coming to Tea?

Age Action and the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind are teaming up with a group of celebrities this October to organise hundreds of fundraising tea parties across Ireland.

The Guess Who’s Coming to Tea event is a fundraiser with a twist, in that anyone who organises and registers a tea party will be in with a chance of having one of the celebrities of their choice drop in on the day for a cuppa.

The celebrities supporting the fundraiser are broadcasters Jimmy Magee and Martin King, hurling star Donal Og Cusack, sports legend Ronnie Delaney and celebrity solicitor Gerald Kean. There is also a surprise celebrity who will not be named before the event takes place.

“We are really excited that two national charities are linking for the Guess Who’s Coming to Tea event,” Age Action chief executive Robin Webster said. “Our target is
to organise 500 tea parties in homes, schools and workplaces across Ireland to help raise €100,000 to fund the vital working done by the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind and Age Action.”

“If the event is to be successful, we will need the help of all our members and friends around the country,” Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind chief executive Padraig Mallon said. “We are urging the supporters of both charities to organise a tea party in their community and to encourage family members to do likewise in their localities and workplaces.”

The tea parties will be held as part of Age Action’s Positive Ageing Week, which runs from October 1 (UN International Day of the Older Person) to October 9 (World Sight Day). It is hoped that the Guess Who’s Coming To Tea event will raise public awareness of blindness and vision impairment as a major national public health issue. The event is proudly sponsored by Bluebird Care.

To register your tea party, vote for your celebrity guest and get your party pack to help celebrate the day visit www.guesswhoscomingtotea.ie or phone 01-4756989.

Please look out for www.guesswhoscomingtotea.ie or telephone Fundraising at 01 4756989 for your pack.

**Silver Surfer Awards 2014**

Google and Age Action have joined forces once again to search for Ireland’s top Silver Surfers. The Awards celebrate and showcase older peoples’ use of the internet and technology.

This year we are looking for enthusiastic people over the age of 50 who have an interesting story to share about how they use their computer and the internet and who will become a role model to inspire more older people to embrace technology.

We are calling on people across Ireland to nominate a friend, neighbour or relative who uses technology for pleasure or as a way to enhance the quality of their life. This is the sixth year of the awards and there are five award categories as follows:

- The public can nominate someone for an award by filling in a form online at www.ageaction.ie/silversurfer or by phoning Anne-Marie on 01 475 6989. I have
also attached a nomination form that can be printed off. The closing date for nominations is Sunday 5th October 2014. The five award categories are:

**Google Silver Surfer Award**
An older person who embraces the Internet or technology with a sense of fun and adventure

**New to IT Award**
A person over the age of 50 who is new to technology and has overcome challenges to become an IT user

**Hobbies on the Net Award**
An older person who uses the Internet to pursue their passion or hobby or who uses IT for communication and social networking

**IT Tutor(s) of the Year**
An individual or group of any age who provides voluntary support to older learners

**Golden IT Award**
An individual over the age of 80 who uses technology to enhance their life

**Great Prizes!**
Winners of each award will receive a Chrome Book.

**Saving the most exciting news til last...**

**Christmas FM chooses Age Action as its 2014 Charity Partner!**

Christmas FM is Ireland’s temporary-licensed radio station which celebrates all things Christmassy. They’ve been broadcasting since 2008, and each year select a charity partner for whom they raise funds. We’re delighted to tell you that Age Action has been selected as the charity partner for Christmas FM’s 2014 broadcasts. There’s more information on Christmas FM here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_FM as well as on their own website and Facebook page (which are quiet when the station is off air!)

In order to make a real success of the partnership- by raising funds but also by raising awareness of our Care and Repair service nationwide- Christmas FM and Age
Action are going to hold a recording session on **Saturday 27th September in Dublin**. The purpose of the event will be to record brief interviews with volunteers, staff and critically-older people who make use of the service for broadcast when the station is on air in November and December. We need at least 30 participants to record interviews for the station.

So – if you, your team members, and especially Care and Repair clients would like to be involved in the recordings (we’ll make it easy by scripting some of the interviews, which are intended to be short, sweet and informative) on the day, I’d be grateful if you’d let me know.

More details of the location, time etc. will be available soon, but we’ll be in a Dublin city centre hotel and light refreshments will be provided. At this stage, I’d just like you to consider whether you would like to be involved in this brilliant opportunity to raise funds and awareness for Care and Repair.

(Now our apologies for using the C-word in September 😊)

**And Finally...**

May the end of summer be less excruciating for you than it is for teachers.

[Someecards](https://www.someecards.com)