

Independent People with Disabilities Ltd.

Westmeath ● Longford ● Roscommon

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We Are Here to Help You !

New Website: <http://www.independentpwd.ie>

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Company Registration Number:

C524496

Charitable Status Number:

20251

Business Advice:

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Current Company Board of Directors

As of (20-09-2022)

- **Mr. Mark Ahern.**
- **Mr. Noel Mulvihill.**
- **Ms. Carol Harrington.**
- **Mr. Larry Quain.**
- **Mr. Joe Faherty.**
- **Mrs. Gene Mulvihill.**
- **Mr. Pádraic Mac Craith.**
- **Mr. Seán Kane.**
- **Mr. Dermot Hope.**

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Dear Member,

It is that time of year again when we the Board of Directors must inform you as members about our activities in the year just gone by. Independent People with Disabilities continue to be part of the community through our involvement in the various activities hosted by Westmeath County Council and other charitable causes in the county.

Independent People with Disabilities continued to be available to everyone who needed assistance relating to disability issues of concern and we have helped a number of people with their enquiries.

The office is running smoothly, we have had telephone enquiries from people looking for their entitlements to be reinstated; people also come in looking for information on different disabilities.

Activities for 2022

We would like to thank the H.S.E. Dublin Mid-Leinster for their continued support given to us and we would also like to thank the general public for their generosity in giving to our charitable collections held in Westmeath.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the kind donations received from the following:-

- ✓ Westmeath County Council,
- ✓ Athlone Credit Union,
- ✓ Mullingar Credit Union,
- ✓ The Knights of St. Columbanus,
- and
- ✓ The Irish Courts Service.

for their continued support to us during the year. We were delighted to receive financial support from the above which meant that we were able to keep the office running. Our meetings with Westmeath County Council and other organisations were conducted online and in-person where possible as most organisations opted for the New Norm after the introduction of online methods of communication brought about by the COVID pandemic.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting for 2022 was held online via Zoom on 18th October, 2022 and all the business of the office was discussed and passed by the Board members present. Michael Mulvey stepped down from the organization as did long serving Member Mrs. Mary Meares who had been the treasurer for the organization from its beginning in 2012 and she had been the minutes secretary of the parent organization (P.W.D.I.). Mark Ahern (Chairperson) gave his chairpersons address. He reported that the organization was going very well and emphasized the importance of having representation on the various organisations we are involved with.

Disabilities Showcase Day 2022

Westmeath Community Development in conjunction with Westmeath County Council and Independent People with Disabilities hosted our annual Disability/ Older Persons Services and Information Day in Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar on Monday 30th May 2022. As this is a very important day in the calendar year for people with disabilities in the county it was great to see an amazing turnout especially after the preceding two years where everything was conducted online.

Mr. Frankie Keena, Cathaoirleach of Westmeath County Council opened the event by welcoming all present and going on to talk briefly about the Age Friendly Strategy for Westmeath.

Mark Ahern, Chairperson of Independent People with Disabilities spoke about disability and how IPwD were committed to raising the different issues affecting the community. He also stated that working from home could potentially transform the lives of people with disabilities with gainful employment.

Furthermore, he also broached the subject of the public sector employing a higher percentage of people with a disability.

There were a lot of different speakers on the day ranging from the Age Friendly, Mental Healty/Alopecia, Support for older people living in our community, Housing assistance for people with disabilities and employment for people with disabilities. Mr. Todd Nugent spoke about his life living with Motor Neuron Disease and how he copes with the various struggles he encounters on a daily basis

We had the valued attendance of County Councillors together with a representative from An Garda Síochána who gave speeches on their chosen topic of information.

Mr. Noel O' Farrell, musician from Mullingar provide light entertaining music at lunchtime.

Mullingar Transportation Study.

IPwD made submissions in relation to the Mullingar Transportation Study. Areas where illegal car parking occurs were highlighted along with places where footpaths need to be improved for wheelchair access.

Representation

The organization continues to have local representation in the various committees such as:

- ✓ Westmeath Public Partnership Network
- ✓ Westmeath Local Community Development Committee,
- ✓ Disability Subgroup of Westmeath Community Development Ltd
- ✓ Westmeath Youth Forum
- ✓ Westmeath Older Peoples Forum

This gives the organization significant influence in the community.

At National level we are represented on the board of Iarnród Éireann and also at meetings with the Department of Social Protection in Dublin. However due to the fact that travel had been restricted during COVID there were no meetings with Iarnród Éireann but we were able to conduct meetings online with the Department of Social Protection through the Webex platform and these meetings proved to be very fruitful.

It is important that people with disabilities are represented at these meetings and that our voices are heard both locally and nationally.

In Conclusion

Larry Quain (Office Manager) would like to thank all of his fellow Directors on the Board for their continued support in fundraising activities which Independent People with Disabilities was involved in throughout the year and he looks forward to working with all of them into the future.

Ends.