



**Disability
Federation
of Ireland**

Annual Report 2019



On the 6th December 2019 DFI achieved the Improving Quality, IQ, Mark at Foundation Level. This is an assurance award that addresses all the essential areas necessary for the effective management and governance of a charity.

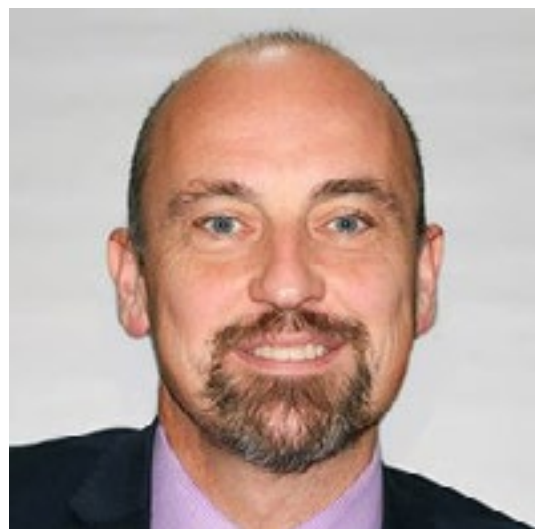
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Front cover image:

Disability activist and #PurpleLights founder Gary Kearney, in front of a Dublin Bus coloured purple in honour of December 3rd, UN International Day of Persons with disabilities.

Letter from our Chairperson



Writing this address in May I cannot ignore the COVID-19 emergency that we find ourselves in. All has changed so quickly into our 'new normal'. Our nation works together to valiantly respond and start to rebuild.

I am mindful of the impact on those with disabilities who are trying to live in the community, many of whom already had inadequate access to in-home, Personal Assistant and other services that they needed. Those under 65 who have no choice, due to a lack of community supports, but to move into a nursing home found themselves in the eye of this pandemic. These examples, alone, highlight the need for the new Government to strongly step up its implementation of the UN CRPD in its programme and to make sure that the needs of people with disabilities do not again get lost in this nation's recovery programme.

2019 was a hugely challenging year for DFI. In February, our main funder, without warning, unilaterally, and retrospectively, cut our funding by 20%. This created an immediate and serious difficulty for us as an organisation and ended with us losing some very valued members of staff. The response to this financial crisis by staff was phenomenal. It caused us to reflect on the work we do, how we do it and some new approaches were developed. Work was redistributed and re-focused.

It is a testament to the commitment and skill of our staff that we continued to provide a high level of service and made significant progress in terms of our strategic plan. Our work in 2019 is set out in this review for your consideration.

I would like to sincerely thank all our staff for their considerable efforts in 2019, in particular to pay tribute to the senior management team who have led, and continue to lead, through very difficult and unprecedented times.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the work and support of my fellow board members, committee members, volunteers and our member organisations. The environment that we all work and live in has become more difficult and challenging for people with disabilities and our organisations.

Gary Lee
Chairperson

Disability and community

The vast majority of the 643,131 people with disabilities in Ireland, live in the community. Often with support from DFI's member organisations:

DFI's community team, work with;

- our members,
- the HSE,
- local authorities,
- Public Participation Networks, PPN's,
- Local Development Companies,
- Education and Training Boards, ETB's,
- Family Resource Centres,
- community and social inclusion groups,
- and key local decision-makers.

We are also working with over 30 **universal access groups** across the country, building their capacity and supporting them to connect with local community structures.

In advance of the **Local and European Elections**, we worked with access groups, member organisations and Public Participation Network's or PPN's to host "meet your candidates" events.

2019 saw an increase in demand for our expertise in **training and access audits**. DFI delivered programs to a range of agencies including the Department of Social Protection, local authorities and schools.

DFI facilitated campaigns to raise awareness of the issues people with disabilities identified as a priority. **#MakeWayDay** built on the success of previous years and was supported by 25 local authorities. The **#PurpleLights** campaign saw iconic landmarks around the country 'light up purple'. Both received significant media coverage.



Assistant Gardai Commissioner Dave Sheahan promotes #MakeWayDay with disability activists Karen Smith, Robert Thompspon and his guide dog with DFI CEO John Dolan.

DFI works with **Local Development Companies**, LDCs, on implementing the Social Inclusion Community Activation Program, SICAP. Work with LEADER, continues to develop. In May, DFI met with the National Coordinator for SICAP to discuss how the program can better engage people with disabilities. Locally, we have been working with LDC's to deliver Practical Self Advocacy training to people with disabilities.

Local Authorities and **PPN's** also continued to be key stakeholders in the work we are doing at community level. DFI's partnership with Wicklow County Council continued into 2019. In Kerry, DFI worked with the PPN to host consultations across the county and publish "Access for All: A Report into Accessibility in Kerry".



Saoirse Connolly and Patricia O'Mahony from IMPACTE Society, Inclusion and Motivation for Promoting Access to Community Transformation and Engagement, NUI Galway, and Galway City Mayor Cllr Mike Cubbard.



One group of Make Way Day campaigners in Galway city.

Influencing policy in key areas

DFI work to influence government policy to make Ireland a better country for people with disabilities. DFI carried out our policy work through;

- 16 formal submissions,
- over 120 committees at local, national and European levels,
- engaging with politicians, government departments, public bodies and the HSE,
- monitoring UN CRPD implementation,
- promoting people with disabilities' voices,
- the Oireachtas Disability Group,
- and seminars, roundtables and platforms.

DFI engaged with **Local and European election** candidates and parties in our **#DisabilityVotesCount** campaign. Our 'Contact Your Candidate' email tool allowed people to engage with candidates easily.

DFI produced a **Budget 2020** submission and responded to the disappointing Budget with a strong statement. We analysed the disability measures in the Budget and HSE Service Plan for our members and the public.

DFI engaged with Cabinet members and secretary generals as a member of the **Oireachtas Disability Group**, ODG, a cross-party group of Dáil TDs, senators and community & voluntary representatives. The ODG pre-budget submission was launched at Leinster House.

DFI monitored the implementation of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, UN CRPD. DFI's review of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy addressed issues such as its lack of ambition, concrete targets and deadlines. We delivered UN CRPD training to 14 local authorities and over 100 staff in the Department of Health.

DFI continued to engage with the **HSE**, representing disability on over 40 structures nationally and locally.



Don Bailey is interviewed by Justin McCarthy from RTE radio 1 about polling station accessibility during our #DisabilityVotesCount campaign for the EU and local elections 2019.

DFI provided feedback to the **Independent Review Group** examining the relationship between the State and Voluntary Bodies. The Report provided welcome recommendations. DFI sits on the Dialogue Forum established as a result of the recommendations. We developed our policy positions through a mix of research and engaging with our members and people with disabilities. We held **seminars, roundtables, and platforms** to inform members and hear their views.



James Cawley of Independent Living Movement Ireland, ILMI, Robert Murtagh of Inclusion Ireland, Alison Hartnett of National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers and DFI's Dr Joanne McCarthy at the launch of the Pre-Budget Submission from the ODG.



Left to right, Laura Magahy , Executive Director, Sláintecare and Aileen O'Meara our discussion moderator at the Sláintecare event at 2019's AGM.

DFI 2019 in numbers...



120

committees where DFI represents the disability interest at local, national, and European levels



20%

cut to our funding by the HSE



40

Universal Access Groups supported to network



37

Organisations supported through Improving Quality, IQ



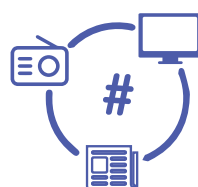
121

DFI member organisations



40

HSE structures on which DFI represent disability



3

media campaigns, #MakeWayDay, #PurpleLights, #DisabilityVotesCount



16

formal submissions made on issues including education, health, transport



24

participants in SOLA training courses on innovation



25

Local Authorities committed to #MakeWayDay



277

took part in Community Hub for Assistive Technology, CHAT



14

Local Authorities that we trained in UN CRPD



1350

candidates contacted for our #DisabilityVotesCount campaign



28

info sessions for members, e.g. insurance, HIQUA and Service Arrangements



7

European Disability Forum and European Disability Service Providers events attended



6

Education and Training Boards, ETBs with DFI reps appointed

10,000+

followers on our social media platforms



Support to member organisations

In 2019 our focus lay with improving our supports to our **121 member organisations**.

We expanded the pilot of the **Chief Officers Network** in the North-West to a second network on the East-Coast. Those taking part found these networks to be great peer to peer support for CEOs and Managers.

We have continued to deliver **DFI Regional Platforms**. These platforms provide a valuable networking space for members. They facilitate feedback between members, DFI and the various committees we represent the disability interest on.



Dermot O'Donnell of SOLA and DFI with Catherine Harrington of UL.

We continued to work with member organisations in relation to **Oireachtas subcommittee presentations**.

SOLA offered two QQI Level 8 modules in 2019. A total of twenty-four students successfully completed the 'Project Management' and 'Innovation Towards the Management of Change' module.



DFI staff members; Dermot O'Donnell, Deidre Fahey, PJ Cleere, India Sacre, Allen Dunne, Martina Schwab and Claire Gallery, UL, at the SOLA Symposium.

In collaboration with Adare HR Management we held two **webinars** in 2019 on Employment Law challenges and benchmarking on HR practices for the Not-For-Profit sector.

In December the **SOLA Symposium** was held again at the University of Limerick. North West Parents and Friends shared their journey towards the '**Improving Quality**' Standard (**IQ**) at the Symposium.

In the end they received their accreditation alongside DFI at the Symposium.

SOLA has been supporting DFI members to use the IQ standard as an assurance format in meeting the requirements of the Charities Governance Code. This code will be a mandatory annual requirement for all charities from 2020 onwards. Since the IQ Standard was introduced in November 2018, use of DFIs implementation support service has grown rapidly.



Marion Maloney, Master of Ceremonies at the SOLA Symposium in University of Limerick.

Corporate developments

HSE Funding Cut

DFI had an unprecedented 20% cut to HSE funding in 2019. Responding to this dominated our corporate work. A voluntary **redundancy package** was prepared which resulted in the loss of four staff members. We invested time in seeking ways to diversify DFI's income and developed an 'Income Diversification Policy'.

HR/Staff Development

DFI experienced considerable staff changes in 2019 as a result of voluntary redundancies, cost containment and resignations. The resulting loss of a large amount of knowledge and experience required fundamental change in how we go about our work. Work plans and priorities were re-organised to make best use of the valuable resources we have.

2019 did see some positive HR developments. A **paid internship** began in September and a **Senior Policy Advocate** was appointed in the final days of 2019.

We continued to work on improving our ability to work as a team. 'Wholestory' facilitated a Belbin refresher workshop for staff in November.

Communications and ICT

We began **live streaming** our Strategic General Meetings, so those who cannot travel can attend.

We campaigned to make disability an issue in the local and European elections with #DisabilityVotesCount and developed and shared an email tool to contact candidates.

Premises

Our newly **refurbished** meeting rooms were booked for meetings/ events on a frequent basis by various organisations. We continue to promote and advertise these facilities.

Improving Quality

In December DFI **received Improving Quality accreditation**. The recommendations from this work provide guidance on how we can improve our capacity to deliver our strategic objectives.



India Sacre, John Wilson of IQ and Allen Dunne accepting DFI's IQ certification.



John Murphy, CEO of Epilpesy Ireland, Dr Joanne McCarthy, DFI, Grainne O'Leary, Arthritis Ireland.



Left to right at the DFI AGM, Fran Brennan, Anne Griffin, Gary Lee, Alison McCallion, Julie Sharp, Olga Estridge, Gráinne O'Leary.

DFI affiliate and associate organisations 2019

Affiliates with Nominating Body Status

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland	Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association
Alzheimer Society of Ireland	Irish Society for Autism
Arthritis Ireland	Irish Wheelchair Association
ASPIRE – Asperger Syndrome Association	KARE
AWARE	Leitrim Association of People with Disabilities
BRÍ – Acquired Brain Injury Association	Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland
CASA, Caring and Sharing Association	Muscular Dystrophy Ireland
Central Remedial Clinic	National Council for the Blind of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Blanchardstown	National Federation of Arch Clubs
Centre for Independent Living Mayo	Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Tipperary	North West MS Therapy Centre
Cheeverstown House Ltd	Parkinson's Association of Ireland
COPE Foundation	Polio Survivors Ireland (formerly Post Polio Support Group)
County Roscommon Support Group for People with Disabilities	Rare Diseases Ireland (formally Genetic & Rare Disorders Organisation)
Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland	Reach Ireland
CHIME (formally DeafHear)	Rehab Group
D.E.B.R.A. Ireland	Sophia Housing Association Ltd
Disabled Drivers Association	Special Olympics Ireland
Down Syndrome Ireland	Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland
Dyslexia Association of Ireland	Spinal Injuries Ireland
Enable Ireland	St Catherine's Association
Epilepsy Ireland (formerly Brainwave)	St Gabriel's School and Centre
Fighting Blindness	St Michael's House
HAIL, Housing Association for Integrated Living	Vantastic Ltd
Headway Ireland	WALK (formerly Walkinstown Association)
Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland	Western Care Association
Irish Deaf Society	
Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind	
Irish Haeomophilia Society	
Irish Kidney Association	

Affiliates

Ability West	Crosscare Cedar Programme
ACTS (Accessible Community Transport Southside)	Diabetes Federation of Ireland Southern Region
AHEAD	Dyspraxia Association of Ireland
Áiseanna Tacaíochta	Family Carers Ireland
Anne Sullivan Centre	Féach
Arklow Disability Action Group	Fibromyalgia Support Group (Midlands)
Arts & Disability Ireland	FICTA Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Association
Athlone Access Awareness	Galway Autism Partnership
Autism Spectrum Disorder Initiatives (ASDI)	GROW
Bluestack Special Needs Foundation	Heart Children Ireland
Catholic Institute for Deaf People (CIDP)	ICARE (Inishowen Children's Autism Related Education)
Care Alliance Ireland	Irish Electromagnetic Radiation Victims Network
Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups	Lakers Social and Recreation Club
Centre for Independent Living Carlow	Lucan Disability Action Group
Centre for Independent Living Cork	Mental Health Reform
Centre for Independent Living Donegal	Mid West Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association
Centre for Independent Living Galway	Migraine Association of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Greater Dublin	Move4Parkinson's
Centre for Independent Living Kilkenny	Neurological Alliance of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Longford	North Tipperary Disability Support Service Limited
Centre for Independent Living Offaly	North West Parents & Friends Association
Centre for Independent Living Sligo	Out and About Association
Centre for Independent Living Waterford	Peacehaven Trust
Centre for Independent Living West Limerick	Prader Willi Syndrome Association Ireland (PWSAI)
Centre for Independent Living Wexford	S.T.E.E.R.
Children in Hospital Ireland	Saint Hilda's Services
Childvision (formerly St Joseph's Centre for the Visually Impaired)	Saint Mary's Centre Telford'
Co-Action West Cork	Sharing the Journey
Cork Deaf Association	

Associates

Alcohol Forum
Bloomfield Health Services
Fionnathan Productions Limited
Homefelt Private Nursing Services
Livability Ireland
Plan Ireland
Positive Futures: Achieving Dreams. Transforming Lives
Respond!
Voluntary Service International

DFI Board 2019

- Gary Lee – Chairperson
- Fran Brennan – Vice Chairperson
- Alison McCallion – Vice Chairperson
- Don Bailey (resigned 13.02.2019)
- Pat Clarke
- Iulia Crisan (appointed 14.03.2019)
- Michael Doyle
- Olga Estridge
- Anne Griffin (appointed 13.02.2019)
- Kevin Kelly
- Siobhán Long (appointed 23.09.2019)
- Gráinne O’Leary
- Julie Sharp (appointed 14.03.2019)

Company Secretary - Niall Keane (appointed 10.01.2019)
Deputy Company Secretary – John Dolan (appointed 10.01.2019)



Mary Sullivan finds her way blocked on our Cork photoshoot for #MakeWayDay 2019.



Ben Coughlan on our Cork city photo shoot for #MakeWayDay.

Extract from 2019 financial statement

Full financial details available on our website www.disability-federation.ie

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating Income & Expenditure) for the year ended 31 December 2019

	Restricted funds 2019 €	Unrestricted funds 2019 €	Total funds 2019 €	Total funds 2018 €
Income from:				
Charitable activities generating funds	296,470	1,216,112	1,512,582	1,743,577
Donations and legacies	-	92,688	92,688	89,812
Other income	99,303	13,304	112,607	123,295
Total income	395,773	1,322,104	1,717,877	1,956,684
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	155,454	1,648,887	1,804,341	1,920,041
Governance costs	63,375	-	63,375	74,998
Total expenditure	218,829	1,648,887	1,867,716	1,995,039
Net surplus (deficit) before other recognised				
Gains and losses	176,944	(326,783)	(149,839)	(38,355)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	47,682	1,360,569	1,408,251	1,446,606
Total funds carried forward	224,626	1,033,786	1,258,412	1,408,251

Disability Federation of Ireland

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2019 (A Company Limited by Guarantee) Registered number: 140948

	2019 €	€	2018 €	€
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	172,276		212,156	
		172,276		212,156
Current assets				
Debtors	122,586		191,818	
Cash at bank and in hand	1,043,913		1,356,997	
	1,166,499		1,548,815	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(80,363)		(352,720)	
Net current assets		1,086,136		1,196,095
Net assets		1,258,412		1,408,251
Charity funds				
Restricted funds		224,626		47,682
Unrestricted funds		1,033,786		1,360,569
Total Funds		1,258,412		1,408,251

The company's financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.
The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the directors on 9th July 2020 and signed on their behalf, by:

Fran Brennan
Director

Gary Lee
Director



#AllowUsLearn

Allow Us Learn Campaign Outside of Bushwells. Left to right; Mark O'Connor of Inclusion Ireland, Ben Hendriksen of AONTAS, Clare Cronin of DFI, Ciaran Costello, National Learning Network, Joan Carthy of IWA and Conor Dillon of CRC.

DFI is about making Ireland fairer for people with disabilities.

We work to create an Ireland where everyone can thrive, where everyone is equally valued.

We do this by supporting people with disabilities and strengthening the disability movement.

There are over 120 member organisations in DFI. We also work with a growing number of other organisations that have a significant interest in people with disabilities.

DFI provides: Information | Training and Support |
Networking | Advocacy and Representation | Research,
Policy Development and Implementation | Organisation and
Management Development

Disability is a societal issue and DFI works with Government, and across all the social and economic strands and interests of society.



www.disability-federation.ie

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