



**Disability Federation of Ireland
Annual Report 2017**

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Pictured on our front cover is Claire Shorten, addressing the Freedom Tech National Assembly, Croke Park, Nov. 2017

15th May 2018

A Letter from our Chairperson



I was honoured to be elected as Chairperson in September 2017. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the huge contribution my predecessor, Pat Clarke, made during his stewardship. His valued experience and advice continues to benefit us.

2017 was an extremely challenging yet exciting year. Our ambitious new Strategic Plan 2017-2020 was launched. We continued to push Government to deliver on its promises to people with disabilities and to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN CRPD.

We also had to make important changes to the way DFI operates. This is vital as we get on with UN CRPD implementation in Ireland. We are all on a new journey to make Ireland an inclusive place for people with disabilities.

Key areas of change over the past year:

- We are supporting our organisations to be ready for the challenges and opportunities of the UN CRPD.
- We have improved our communications and engagement with the public, people with disabilities, our organisations and others.
- We have increased our work at local and community level.
- We now have improved access, meeting and office facilities in Fumbally Court.
- We have invested in staff development to improve how we work as a team.

We are now living in post-recession Ireland. However, this has not had an impact on the daily lives of many of the 643,000 people with disabilities living in this country. Our organisations continue to face funding and service shortfalls carried over since the recession. The need for services and supports keeps increasing. More time and resources are required to provide compliance with standards and regulations. Funding levels have not increased. Some organisations are having difficulty retaining staff because of funding arrangements with the HSE. Meanwhile, all are trying to make ends meet.

The UN CRPD has just been ratified. We must make the most of the opportunities it gives us and make sure that it is implemented. Changes are needed in how DFI and our member organisations work to support the delivery of an inclusive Ireland for people with disabilities. Poverty is increasing and exclusion is a daily reality.

Implementation of the UN CRPD is a big thing for the disability movement. Yet there are still no signs that this is the case at political and public levels. DFI has challenges ahead, as do each of our organisations to change this.

There are many to thank; board members, company members, staff and volunteers and our organisations who have supported us during the year.

I wish to thank the staff for their dedication and commitment in progressing this work over the past year. To my fellow board members I thank each of you for giving your time and expertise during the year. Also thanks to those who served on committees, groups and our many volunteers.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the death of our friend and former colleague John Doyle, whom we lost in 2017, may he rest in peace.

Gary Lee
Chairperson

Disability and Community

Actions work best when local people have participated in planning and implementing them. We practice this in all our community work. Here are some examples of how we are taking strategic action to have real impact on local change:

Supporting people with disabilities in their role as self-advocates

Developing the capacity of people to represent themselves is often the first step towards participation and local representation. We are working towards this through Personal Self Advocacy training. With the building of confidence, and the provision of knowledge, training and information, we are preparing people for engagement and representation on local decision-making structures.

1. Community Participation

DFI is actively involved in urban and rural areas in bringing the disability agenda to a wide range of community structures. We have supported disability representation on Public Participation Networks, PPNs. These are the recognised way for local organisations to elect representatives on local decision-making structures.

We have lead the development of Community Participation Networks, CPNs in the Mid-West and West. These bring together disability organisations, community and voluntary agencies, partnerships, Family Resource Centres and others. Our aim is to influence change and the local delivery of programmes such as; Leader, Social Inclusion and Rapid/Clár.

2 . Working with Local Authorities and Education Training Boards, ETBs

Our role here is as a bridge between local authorities and the disability movement.

Increased contact with the local authorities leads to growing understanding of the issues facing people with disabilities in their communities. In a unique initiative one of DFI's Community Workers spends two days per week with Wicklow County Council providing training and support.

We have signed agreements with the Education and Training Boards in Kerry, Galway, Roscommon, Kildare and Wicklow to fund Personal Self-Advocacy programmes. In these and other counties, we engage with trainers to deliver programmes co-facilitated by people who live with disability.



Paddy Smyth and Joan Brady in publicity shots from our Make Way Day campaign.

3. #MakeWayDay

Following on from work by Dublin City Council and pro bono support from the advertisement agency DDFH&B, DFI worked with some of our member organisations on the follow on #MakeWayDay campaign. It raised awareness on accessibility of public spaces and gathered huge interest.



Joan Brady in a photo used in the national press showing the obstacles faced by people on the streets.



At the launch of Make Way Day Dublin outside the Mansion House with Lord Mayor Brendan Carr, July, 2017



A community team event in our Fumbally offices.

Influencing policy in key areas

We engaged with politicians and policy makers to highlight our key Budget 2018 demands. For example, the urgent need for increased funding for the Personal Assistant, PA service. This allows people with disabilities to participate in education, employment and community life.

We engaged with the HSE on a wide range of issues at national and local level. We also supported the implementation of the 'Make Work Pay' report that was published by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Below are some key policy areas we focused on:

UN CRPD

Throughout 2017 the government continued to delay UN CRPD ratification. DFI put pressure on Government for their failure to deliver on its promise to people with disabilities.

We made submissions to influence the drafting of legislation including the Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016. We also organised information events and seminars to help people understand changes to disability law, policy and services.

Younger People with Disabilities living in Nursing Homes

We spotlighted the issue of people with disabilities aged under-65 years living in nursing homes/residential centres.

Through media exposure, we highlighted the circumstances of some younger people living in nursing homes. People like Michael McGealy and Shane Rothwell who felt trapped and want desperately to live independently.

- We raised this issue in the Oireachtas and at the Joint Committee on Health.
- DFI is supporting research in this area to better understand how young people with disabilities end up being placed in nursing homes for older people.

FreedomTech

The first National Assembly on FreedomTech was held in Aviva Stadium with over 180 attendees. The Assembly promoted the need to include Assistive Technology in an organised way and to seek the introduction of an Assistive Technology passport.



Diane Kingston, Rhoda Garland and Karen Hall at Conference on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, May 2017, Croke Park.



Shane Rothwell appeared on TV3's Pat Kenny Show where he put his case to Minister Finian McGrath, pictured here with the host.



HSE Disability Services 'Confidential Recipient' Leigh Gagh speaking with Professor Desmond Fitzgerald and Dr Ann Ledwith of the University of Limerick at SOLA Symposium 2017.

Support to member organisations

We worked in a number of ways to support our member organisations to respond to the many challenges and opportunities that surround them. Here are some examples of that support:

Quality and Governance

We helped over 40 organisations to implement PQASSO and through SOLA provided courses in:

- Innovation Management
- Quality Management
- Problem Solving using Six Sigma
- Project Management

We are developing our SOLA Alumni. A key resource for the Alumni will be a library / repository where graduating students' assignments will be kept and made available to SOLA researchers and students in the future.



DFI outlined its triple local policy on UN CRPD in 2017.

Workshop for Chairs on Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act

You told us you wanted more information sessions on governance and the responsibilities of board members in community, voluntary and disability organisations. As a result, DFI, via SOLA, took the following actions.

- We organised an information session for Chairs of member organisations on the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015.
- We developed a new programme 'Corporate Governance Training for Board Members' which is now available to all DFI members.



DFI CEO, Sen. John Dolan

Developed Peer Support Networks 2017

We recognised a need for a peer support network for senior managers, again through SOLA we developing a series of leadership workshops. These workshops were for CEOs and senior managers. There were a series of five workshops. Our ambition for the future is to have a 'Peer to Peer Leadership Support Network'. This is now being tested by eight member organisation's in the North West region.

Trailblazer – Valerie Moran, CEO of Longford CIL

SOLA student Valerie Moran, was awarded the first ever Certificate in 'Service Quality and Outcome Development in the Community and Voluntary Sector'. This Certificate was awarded by the University of Limerick to Valerie, on her successful completion of 3 SOLA QQI Level 8 Modules in 'Quality Management', 'Innovation Management' and 'Problem Solving using Six Sigma'.



Dr John Noonan UL , Valerie Moran, Longford CIL and Dermot O'Donnell SOLA Development Manager after receiving her award.

Corporate Developments

DFI Premises

In a one-off development we agreed to take additional space in Fumbally Court. We now have more space for DFI and our member organisations to hold meetings and we have greatly improved accessibility levels.



The newly renovated boardroom at DFI headquarters.

HR / Staff Development

“Wholestory” helped us over the year to improve our ability to work as a team. As part of this all staff have had Belbin profiles completed. This is the biggest investment in staff development that DFI has made to date.

We recruited a new community worker during the year. We are also thankful to have had a number of interns and volunteers working with us.

Communications and ICT

Our communications work continued to strengthen and our new website launched. This site sets out the range of work that we do in the community, in policy and representation, research, and in supporting our member organisations.

We placed a range of disability related stories in the mainstream media addressing issues such as employment, transport and housing.

Planning

Eustace Patterson Limited met with staff, board members and strategic general members over the year to assist with the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2017-2020. Progress reports were submitted every four months by the Board, to the strategic general members as part of Operational Plan 2017-2018 implementation.

PQASSO

We have fully met five of the twelve PQASSO’s Quality Areas. The remainder, are currently under consideration.



Paddy Smyth promotes Make Way Day.

DFI Board 2017

Gary Lee – Chairperson	(re-elected 20/07/2017)
Barbara O’Connell – Vice Chairperson	(resigned 29/01/2018)
Elaine Howley – Vice Chairperson	—
Don Bailey	(re-elected 20/07/2017)
Fran Brennan – Vice Chairperson	(elected vice chairperson 12/04/2018)
Pat Clarke	—
Michael Doyle	—
Olga Estridge	(co/opted 02/10/2017)
Alison McCallion	(elected 20/07/2017)
Sean Megahey	(retired 20/07/2017)
Gráinne O’Leary	(elected 20/07/2017)
Kathleen O’Meara	—
John O’Sullivan	—

Company Secretary
John Dolan

 **FreedomTech**
A Passport to Inclusion

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

EVERYBODY COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING
EFFECTIVE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)
SERVICE IN IRELAND

www.FreedomTech.ie

 @FreedomTech_Irl
#assistivetechology

JAMES BROSINAN

I've been using Assistive Technology
since I was a toddler.

LG

James Brosnan on screen at the Freedom Tech National
Assembly, Croke Park November 2017.

DFI Affiliate and Associate Organisations 2017

Affiliates with Nominating Body Status

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

Affiliates

Ability West	Childvision (formerly St Joseph's Centre for the Visually Impaired)
ACTS (Accessible Community Transport Southside)	Co-Action West Cork
AHEAD	Cork Deaf Association
Áiseanna Tacaíochta	Crosscare Cedar Programme
Anne Sullivan Centre	Diabetes Federation of Ireland Southern Region
Arklow Disability Action Group	Dyspraxia Association of Ireland
Autism Spectrum Disorder Initiatives (ASDI)	Family Carers Ireland
Bluestack Special Needs Foundation	Féach
Camphill Communities of Ireland	Fibromyalgia Support Group (Midlands)
Catholic Institute for Deaf People (CIDP)	F.I.C.T.A. - Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Associations
Care Alliance Ireland	GROW
Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups	Heart Children Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Carlow	ICARE (Inishowen Children's Autism Related Education)
Centre for Independent Living Cork	Irish Electromagnetic Radiation Victims Network
Centre for Independent Living Donegal	Irish Hard of Hearing Association
Centre for Independent Living Galway	Lakers Social and Recreation Club
Centre for Independent Living Greater Dublin	Lucan Disability Action Group
Centre for Independent Living Kilkenny	Lucan Disability Action Group
Centre for Independent Living Longford	Mental Health Reform
Centre for Independent Living Offaly	Mid West Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association
Centre for Independent Living Sligo	Migraine Association of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Waterford	Move4Parkinson's
Centre for Independent Living West Limerick	Neurological Alliance of Ireland
Centre for Independent Living Wexford	North Tipperary Disability Support Service Limited
Children in Hospital Ireland	North West Parents & Friends Association
	North West Stroke Group
	Out and About Association

Extract from 2017 financial statement

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

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating Income and Expenditure) for the year ended 31 December 2017

	Restricted funds 2017 €	Unrestricted funds 2017 €	Total funds 2017 €	Total funds 2016 €
Income from:				
Charitable activities generating funds	227,294	1,507,111	1,734,405	1,804,028
Investments	-	101	101	12,438
Donations and legacies	634	107,762	108,396	75,134
Other trading activities	30,267	8,267	38,534	38,390
Total income	258,195	1,623,241	1,881,436	1,929,990
Resources expended				
Charitable activities	262,242	1,558,784	1,821,026	1,746,074
Governance costs	-	69,435	69,435	88,975
Total expenditure	262,242	1,628,219	1,890,461	1,835,049
Net movement in funds	(4,047)	(4,978)	(9,025)	94,941
Total funds at 1 January 2017	-	1,455,631	1,455,631	1,360,690
Total funds at 31 December 2017	(4,047)	1,450,653	1,446,606	1,455,631

All activities relate to continuing operations.

Disability Federation of Ireland

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2017

	€	2017 €	€	2016 €
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets		196,320		10,911
Current assets				
Debtors	298,013		198,086	
Cash at bank and in hand	1,472,852		1,618,585	
		1,770,865		1,816,671
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(520,579)		(371,951)	
Net current assets		1,250,286		1,444,720
Total assets less current liabilities		1,446,606		1,455,631
Charity funds				
Restricted funds		(4,047)		
Unrestricted funds		1,450,653		1,455,631
Total Funds		1,446,606		1,455,631

The financial statements were approved by the directors on 10th of May 2018
and signed on their behalf, by:

Don Bailey
Director

Gary Lee
Director

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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