

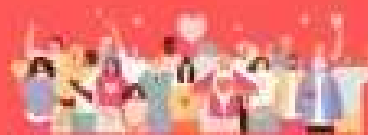
# ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

## 66 MEMBER GROUPS



Over 2000 older people engaged in group activities every week

## VOLUNTEERING



- 26 new volunteers introduced to 12 groups this year
- 18.5% of groups were supported to recruit new volunteers

## GROUP SUPPORT

- 92 visits to member groups took place this year
- 100% of member groups have been contacted and supported

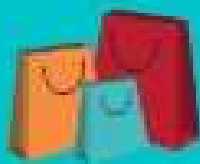


## POSITIVE AGEING



Event in October engaged 200 older people with children from 8 post-primary schools across Newry and Mourne

## OLDER PEOPLES PACKS



200 Positive Ageing information packs, Healthy Ageing Calendars, Magnetic tools, Sensor lights, Aqueous cream, Sim cards, Keep warm packs, Coal, Gift cards, Energy efficient Heaters

## FUNDING APPLICATIONS



56 funding applications submitted with 34 groups securing small grants of £235,959.90

## REFERRALS

39 socially isolated older people referred into our organisation and connected to community support services.

Referrals come from

- Sensory Impairment Team
- MDTs and ICTs
- Families and self referrals
- Mental health teams
- other community organisations



## GOVERNANCE



- 30 Annual governance checklists completed
- 63 funding strategies developed with member groups
- 32 returns to funders - 15 financial reports
- 13 needs assessments - 10 AGMs - 4 Insurance policies
- 3 Constitutional reviews - 3 Charity returns submitted
- 2 Independent examiners reports
- 1 Constitution developed - 1 Charity registration

## **Chairperson's Report**

Southern Age Well Network's main priority in 2022-23 was to respond to the 'cost of living crisis', to ensure our local older people had their basic needs met, such as having enough to buy food and to heat their homes. SAWN did this by highlighting and distributing resources available like Age NI's 'More money in your pocket' and NIE's 'Energy Efficient' booklets, securing funds for energy efficient heaters and distributing keep warm packs. But primarily, staff worked with groups to secure funds to ensure they were strong, equipped, and able to consistently provide a warm, welcoming, safe space for older people to meet each week.

This year we secured £235,959.90 making sure our affiliated groups continue to provide a high quality of service to our local older people. This funding has enabled us to engage and cater for over 2000 older people every week.

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis has been felt by all, staff have been working to reduce the running costs of the organisation by sourcing cheaper providers for telephone and broadband. We would like to thank SHSCT for their ongoing commitment to our organisation, in these times of efficiency savings SHSCT were able to award just under a 4% uplift in this financial period. I want to take this opportunity to thank the two staff Denise and Kathy and our life-long volunteer Mary, for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. I would also like to acknowledge the retirement in October, of our colleague Kathy Dorgan and thank her for 11 years of service to the organisation.

Our active committee continue to represent our organisation on several forums, Moira our vice-chairperson sits on the local community transport partnership and is extremely active in the Daisy Hill SOS campaign. The withdrawal of these services would have a catastrophic impact our older people and wider community. Moira along with Irene and Jennifer sit on our local Older People's Forum campaigning on issues affecting our older people.

As ever the work of SAWN is to improve the Health and Wellbeing of older people across Newry and Mourne. This work is varied but each element results in a better connection with communities, by continuing to receive referrals from agencies supporting older people. Group activity is still making the biggest difference to local older people, and has been a vital lifeline to many, with responses from our members questionnaires highlighting this.

One said 'I just hope my group can continue for many years to come, as it is great to get myself out of the house for at least one day a week'.

Group participation has increased social contact, prevented social isolation and feelings of loneliness and consistently improved health and wellbeing. Ultimately group participation is keeping older people independent, active, stimulated, informed, connected and most importantly at home, out of hospital and care settings for as long as possible.

Terry Ruddy

&

Moira O'Shea

**Chairperson**

**Vice Chairperson**

## **Development Worker's Report**

As always keeping our older people connected to and informed about services has been priority throughout the year. SAWN continues to receive referrals from various organisations including Southern Health & Social Care Trust, Confederation of Community Groups, Belfast Central Mission, Volunteer Now, as well as from families and older people themselves. As the multidisciplinary teams have now appointed most of their staff in all the local GP practices, we have received a record number of enquiries by their staff about our services and how we can support those they refer into us. We have seen a vast increase in the number of self-referrals with individuals wanting to engage and participate more in their community. SAWN met with all those referred into our service and connected them to services such as member groups, Good Morning Scheme, Ability Net, Age NI, Volunteer Now and Older People's Forum. Local older people have been kept connected through information events in South Armagh and an annual positive ageing event. Throughout the year SAWN in partnership with NMDDC, SHSCT and Volunteer Now compiled and distributed 200 information packs and resources, ensuring older people are updated on services available to them. SAWN has had continued involvement in the local Age Friendly Initiative through both the Strategic Alliance and the Older People's Forum. SAWN members who sit on the Older People's Forum have been very active in progressing the 4 goal outcomes of the Age Friendly action plan and are striving to improve services for our local older people.

Securing funding for community services and activities is one of the most important aspects of the work of the organisation. This year has been exceptional, staff obtained the most funds with groups ever. Groups worked through funding strategies to secure £235,959.90 in grants ranging from £100 to over £50,000 for group activities. It was important to get activities up and running again, new groups started, get people out on trips, participating in different activities and recruiting new members. 56 funding applications & proposals were planned and submitted with 34 different groups securing a range of grants, most from UK Trusts and Foundations and the National Lottery. Unsuccessful grant applications were reworked and submitted to different funders to ensure groups get the monies they need to operate. Each group has been supported throughout the funding process with monitoring, evaluation and measuring the impact of the funds on every beneficiary, helping volunteers to assess impact, compile reports and effectively manage these funds is imperative to sustainability of each group.

Staff have continued to develop business plans with men's groups, securing leases for underused land, converting temporary buildings into workshops and social spaces, and developing business plans. This work is time intensive, but the tangible results are transforming communities locally. These essential funds reach around 2000 older people across Newry and Mourne each week, ensuring a high level of participation and engagement. For every pound SAWN is funded by SHSCT we make it £4.62 for our member groups.

Denise & Kathy

**Development Workers**