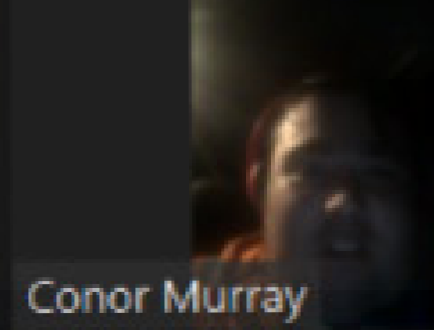


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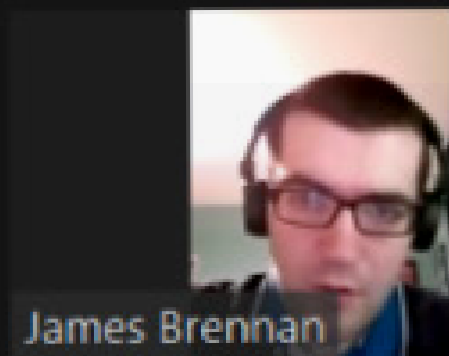
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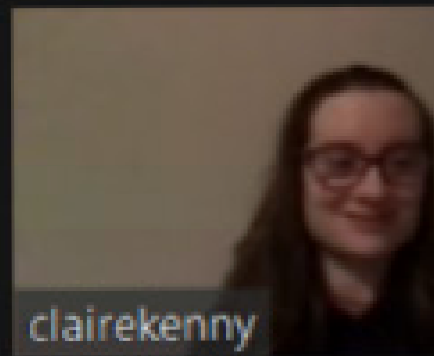
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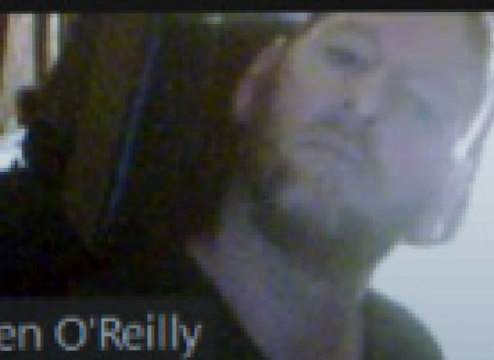
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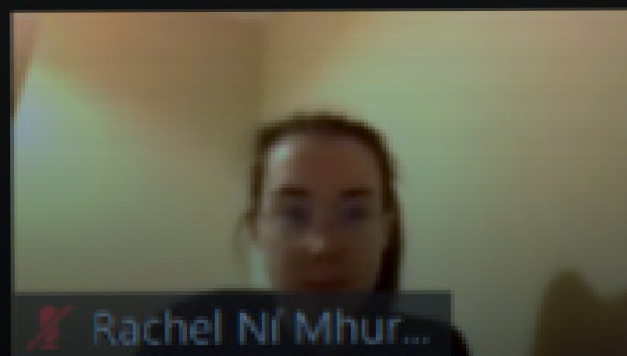
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 Catherine Galla...



Courtney McGrath



 Rachel Ní Mhur...



Derek B.C.D.A.C



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Nothing about
us without us

Our Vision

Our vision is an Ireland where disabled persons have freedom, choice and control over all aspects of their lives and can fully participate in an inclusive society as equals.

Mission

We are working collectively to create an Independent Living Movement in Ireland which is led by disabled people and promotes a rights-based social model of disability, challenging the unacceptable charity / medical model of disability. We are working towards the removal of societal barriers that prevent active equal participation of disabled people, challenging the denial of people's rights and the promotion of the philosophy of independent living.

Core Values

Our core values are underpinned by the philosophy of Independent Living and all activities are aimed towards promoting: Independence, Options, Rights, Empowerment.



Our Principles

We promote the active participation of disabled people in all aspects of the work of ILMI: locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

We are a cross-impairment DPO (disabled persons organisation) formed to ensure that the voice of disabled people will be heard in campaigns, research and policy development.

We recognise and promote equality within our members, in terms of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, marital status, socio-economic status and impairment.

We will actively promote an understanding of disability as an interaction between a person's impairment and the societal and environmental barriers that disable people's participation in society – and actively lobby to remove these barriers to participation and challenge the unacceptable medical / charity model of disability.

We are committed that ILMI continue to develop new innovative models to achieve equality of outcome, recognising that people have a variety of abilities, needs and wants.



DES KENNY



DCYA - Miesian PI

Chairperson's Review

We have all come through a tough year remarkable for the stress and strain put on our personal lives by Covid-19: We have found individual and collective resilience to survive the worst effects of the lockdowns, the loneliness and the palpable realisation that some of us were at more risk than we would have credited from being infected by this virus - but I would like you to think and believe that you were not and are not alone, we are all part of an ILMI family which has taken on new dimensions of caring and sharing in 2020 in our new virtual world of being connected through hundreds and hundreds of hours of imparting information and participating in meaningful conversations.

ILMI staff created a new world of engagement with us by exploiting the possibilities in technology which has a whole new future going forward for connectivity, employment and homeworking for disabled people. The ILMI working day was expanded into late evenings in order to facilitate member participation in a huge menu of subjects and topics feeding into and creating new interest groups.

On behalf of the board of ILIM, I want to thank the staff for going that extra mile for us this year. Led by Damien, all staff have contributed individually and differently to the making of our togetherness in this year about to close. I also want to acknowledge the significant contribution of all ILMI members for your work for us in 2020.

Des Kenny, ILMI Chair

Chief Executive's Review

2020 was a hugely challenging year for everyone due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but was also a year of exceptional growth for ILMI as a collective. Facing the challenges due to an unprecedented public health crisis, as a Movement we responded by creating and maintaining vibrant online spaces for discussion, learning and connection that will sustain us beyond 2020.

Before the Covid19 pandemic, ILMI planned for the 2020 general election in January and February by organising hustings for disabled people to hear how candidates would advance disability rights if elected. Successful events took place in Cork, Letterkenny, Galway City, Loughrea, Ennis and Dublin. Coupled with ILMI's election manifesto and our Submission to the development of a Programme for Government we ensured that politicians heard the voice of disabled people.

Over the course of 2018 and 2019, we had begun to use Zoom to support member participation in our work to supplement face-to-face meetings, so when COVID-19 struck, ILMI was better placed than most NGOs to respond positively to continue to engage disabled people.

The creativity of our staff meant that from March onwards, we created a multitude of online spaces. Our ONSIDE cross-border project led the charge, shifting all social and inclusion and digital skills training online. Our staff showed enormous resilience and proved to our partner organisations that ONSIDE not only could face the challenges of Covid19, but grow by adapting and delivering all aspects of the project online. ONSIDE continues into its second year as a model of best practice in building online social inclusion for disabled people. The model of developing county platforms for the ONSIDE areas was hugely successful in connecting disabled people online, so it was adapted successfully in Longford, Galway, Clare and Offaly. In 2021 we hope to expand this approach in many other areas.

Right from the start of the first lockdown, we spoke to as many of our members as possible on the phone and made sure they were aware of our plans to move operations online. Responding to people's needs we created online workshops in the following topics: photography, art, yoga, mindfulness, Spanish classes, creative writing, nutrition and keep fit classes.

We were also able to continue providing training for people leading their Personal Assistance Service. Some of these activities were made possible from Covid19 funding made available from the Community Foundation of Ireland, Leitrim County Council, Longford County Council and Galway City Council. In September we began a series of social nights, which have brought in a range of fascinating guest speakers for music, wit and wisdom as a way of bringing an element of fun into the Movement, and given their success, we will continue with these next year.

One of our most successful spaces happened early in lockdown, when we created an ILMI film club. It was clear from these discussions that there was a huge appetite to share the stories that connected disabled activists across the decades.

From this we interviewed twelve disabled activists, and the resulting podcasts give a voice to some of the history of disability activism in Ireland, called Conversations About Activism and Change.

ILMI created a number of vibrant peer-led spaces over the course of 2020: a peer space for discussions on PAS, an ILMI youth collective and an ILMI women's group. We also worked with Full Spectrum to promote the first online space for LGBT+ disabled people, which was a huge success.

Zoom allowed disabled people to be fully involved in many policy discussions over 2021, including a Submission to the Committee on Covid-19 and the Disability Matters Committee as well as our PAS group directly feeding into HSE responses to Covid19. We also created a space to develop a submission to the Dying with Dignity Bill which will be submitted in the New Year.

We also continued to meet with elected representatives and work with members to have motions in support of a right to Personal Assistance passed at local authorities to keep momentum building on our #PASNOW campaign.

On the 3rd of December we supported members in Galway, Longford, Offaly and Cork to engage with elected representatives to ensure that disabled people continue to have their voices heard. One of our last online seminars in 2020 had a panel discussion of Suzy Byrne, Steve Daunt and Mik Scarlet and MC Ellis Palmer lead into the development of an ILMI paper on the representation of disabled people in the media. Zoom also allowed ILMI to hold a successful online AGM and board elections in October and also an EGM in November to ratify a new constitution.

ILMI secured funding from Rethink Ireland and IHREC to run two exciting new initiatives: “Strategies for Change” and “Making Inclusion a Reality”. These projects will allow ILMI to continue to be at the forefront of developing exciting new models for change in 2021. They are two of the many exciting projects we will work on over the course of next year, which also includes ILMI being actively part of the DPO coalition as we work collectively to develop a shadow report to the State’s report to the CRPD committee. One of our last events of 2020 was to launch the steering groups of local DPOs in Leitrim and Donegal, with a hugely successful online launch. This exciting initiative was based on a partnership approach with Leitrim Development Company which we will continue to support over the course of 2021.

I want to use this opportunity to recognise to thank everyone who has participated and contributed to the work of the organisation at every level. I especially want to acknowledge the huge amount of work that the board has put in over the course over this year.

On a personal level, I want to recognise the support and guidance that Des Kenny gives as chairperson of ILMI. I also want to recognise the work of Selina Bonnie (Vice Chair), Sarah Fitzgerald (Secretary), Gordon Ryan (Treasurer), Audrey Brodigan, Jacqui Browne, Brian Dalton, Ann Marie Flanagan, Seònaid Ó Murchadha, Sinead Murtagh, Dr John Roche, as well as recognising the contributions of Dermot Hayes, Michael Nestor and Marion Maloney who all stepped down from the board over the course of 2020.

We are extremely fortunate to have such skilled, creative and committed staff members that bring so much to the organisation. I want to acknowledge the work of the staff team: Orla Beirne, Fiona Brennan, Susan O’Brien, Nina Byrne, Dr James Casey, James Cawley, Angela Coleman, Shelly Gaynor, Edel McGinley, Peter Kearns, Clive Lowry, Maryam Madani, Mark McCollum, Fiona Weldon and Audrey Wilson. As CEO I want to thank them all for their dedication, expertise and passion they bring to their roles and their work as a team. I want to thank Molly Mc Gee, who gave her time to ILMI as a volunteer. I would specifically like to thank Maryam, who finished up with us in December 2020 for her work with us as policy and communication assistant over the last 18 months and wish her well for the future.

And finally, but most importantly, I want to acknowledge the huge contribution made by disabled people who have been involved in the work of ILMI in so many different ways. Despite the challenges we have collectively faced, ILMI has become a stronger DPO that has connected disabled people across Ireland. We have embraced technology as a means to bring people together, to grow together, to discuss and analyse and campaign for inclusion as a vibrant, grassroots-led Movement.

Damien Walshe, ILMI CEO

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives for ILMI 2019 to 2021

Governance, Accountability & Transparency

Promotion of Equality & Accessing Human Rights

Leadership & Representation

Political Campaigning & Strategic Policy Development

Governance, Accountability & Transparency

What we aim to do: We will maintain the highest standards of Governance, accountability and transparency to our members and funders and will develop a funding strategy to secure the sustainability of the organisation.

The ILMI board of management met nine times over the course of 2020 and the following people served as board members over the course of 2020.

DES KENNY - Chairperson

SELINA BONNIE
Elected as Vice Chair in October 2020

DERMOT HAYES
Vice Chair, stepped down at AGM in September

MICHAEL NESTOR - Stepped down in July 2020

GORDON RYAN - Treasurer

SARAH FITZGERALD - Secretary

AUDREY BRODIGAN

JOHN ROCHE

SELINA BONNIE

SINEAD MURTAGH

JACQUI BROWN
Co-opted in July 2020

SEÒNAID Ó MURCHADHA
Casual vacancy in July 2020, elected at AGM in Sep

BRIAN DALTON
Casual vacancy in July 2020, elected at AGM in Sep

ANN MARIE FLANAGAN
Elected at AGM in September

MARIAN MALONEY
Stepped down in February 2020

AGM & EGM 2020

In October we held our AGM online, with an online election held using the Election Buddy system. 60% of full members voted using this system and elected three new board members: Brian Dalton, Ann Marie Flanagan and Seonaid O' Murchada.

ILMI also held an EGM to adopt a new Constitution to meet all of our requirements under the Charity Act. This was based on work developed over the course of 2019 and 2020 with pro bono support from Arthur Cox under the Public Interest Litigation Association (PILA).

In order that ILMI is transparent with all its work, we send a biweekly eBulletin to an email mailing list of 400 contacts, which includes all ILMI members. These are also uploaded onto our ILMI website eBulletin section <https://ilmi.ie/ebulletins/>

ILMI uses social media to increase our profile and ensure transparency in our work. By the end of 2020 we had 4,250 total Likes on our Facebook page. We have 1,558 followers on Twitter at the end of 2020, an increase of 439.

Staff

The following people were employed by ILMI in 2019:

Orla Beirne ONSIDE Community Navigator

Fiona Brennan ONSIDE Community Navigator (from March 2020)

Susan O'Brien Development Worker

Nina Byrne Communications Officer (returned from maternity leave from September 2020)

Dr James Casey ONSIDE health and housing officer

James Cawley Policy Officer

Angela Coleman ONSIDE administrator

Shelly Gaynor Peer Mentoring Worker (from January 2020)

Edel McGinley ONSIDE Community Navigator (Maternity leave from October 2020)

Peter Kearns ONSIDE Project coordinator

Clive Lowry ONSIDE Community Navigator (from August 2020)

Maryam Madani ILMI Policy and Communications Assistant (finished December 2020)

Mark McCollum ONSIDE Community Navigator (from August 2020)

Fiona Weldon (Strategies for Change Coordinator from November 2020)

Audrey Wilson ONSIDE Community Navigator (Maternity Cover from November 2020)

Damien Walshe CEO

Staff meet biweekly to ensure collective coordination of its work. The CEO provides direct support and supervision to all staff on a structured basis every six weeks to ensure accountability of projects within the strategic objectives.



Leadership & Representation

What we aim to do: Independent Living Movement Ireland's work will continue to be led and represented by disabled people at all levels. ILMI will create structures to generate evidence-based policies and expertise based on lived experience.

Responding to the Covid-19 restrictions, from March 2020 ILMI moved all of our work online. Based on the energy and expertise of staff and members, we created a dynamic, online spaces, which were a mixture of policy and campaign spaces, peer support, development and education and Movement building.

Specific spaces include the ILMI women's group, ILMI peer space for people using Personal Assistance and our youth collective. We also ran a series of workshops based on identified needs of our members on a range of topics such as arts spaces, health and nutrition, mindfulness, photography, creative writing, fitness, yoga, drama and film making.

ILMI also created biweekly social nights from September to create informal spaces for disabled people to connect on a range of topics, featuring interviews with film maker Paddy Slattery, musician Rory Gallagher, fashionista Clara

Holmes, playwright Christian O'Reilly and chef Gary O' Hanlon.

One of our last online seminars in 2020 was "Our Lives, Our Voices: Reclaiming the Narrative: The representation of disabled people's lives in the Media" which was a hugely successful event attended by over 60 disabled activists. It featured a panel discussion of Suzy Byrne, Steve Daunt and Mik Scarlet and MC Ellis Palmer. Facilitated breakout rooms on Zoom allowed activists to respond to the panel discussion and work collectively on the development of an ILMI paper on the representation of disabled people in the media.

ILMI was successful under the Rethink Ireland Innovate Together fund for our online activism course "Strategies for Change". The outline of the programme was developed in late 2020 with an aim to start the programme in January 2021.

Representation by ILMI over 2020:

Members of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland, Community Work Ireland (CWI), National Women's Council, Irish Network Against Racism, Community Platform, Coalition Against Hate Crime.

ILMI is also represented on the Oireachtas Disability Group (ODG), Taxi Advisory Committee the IHREC Disability Advisory Committee (DAC), the Housing Agency subgroup on disability and housing and presented to the Department of Justice discussion on hate crime legislation.

ILMI actively participates in the CWI subgroups on Community work responses to Covid19 and Mental Health Network, NWC subgroup on disability and women and Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) steering group on disabled people in Prisons. ILMI participated in the Ombudsman discussion on young people in nursing homes.

Direct meetings with officials from the HSE (including the National Disability Services Quality Improvement Office),

the Department of Rural and Community Development, National Transport Authority and Department of Social Protection and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. ILMI has also had meetings with Ministers O Gorman and Minister Rabbitte from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and politicians on a cross-party basis. ILMI also joined the newly formed Disability Participation and Consultation Network.

ILMI also held discussions with the INTO, Hack Access, ALONE, NDA, NUIG CDLP and made presentations at the PILA at their 10 year anniversary conference, the Galway Community Network discussion on the implementation of the Public Sector Duty and the HSE National Sharing Day.

ILMI is an active member of the Coalition of Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) working to develop a collective shadow report on the UNCRPD in 2021.

Promotion of Equality & Accessing Human Rights

What we aim to do: Independent Living Movement Ireland's work will be grounded in equality and a rights-based approach, working towards an inclusive Irish Society.

ONside

The Outreach and Navigation for Social Inclusion and Digital Engagement project (ONside) is a dynamic and exciting creative venture that is co-ordinated by ILMI in the Republic of Ireland and by our partners in Northern Ireland, Disability Action Northern Ireland; Supporting Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Started in summer 2019, in 2020 ONside expanded by bringing two additional staff members to carry out the project across counties of Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo, Donegal, Monaghan and Louth.

From March ONside moved all of its work online, which proved hugely successful. In July, ILMI expanded its programme and brought two new staff members to work as community navigators. ONside continues into its second year as a model of best practice in building online social inclusion for disabled people. The model of developing county platforms for the ONside areas was hugely successful in connecting disabled people online, so it was adapted successfully in Longford, Galway, Clare and Offaly. In 2021 we hope to expand this approach in many other areas.

By end of 2020, ILMI had 282 participants complete their 8 week social inclusion and digital skills training, which includes inputs from Local ETBs, FRCs and MABS services.

Conversations About Activism & Change

Over the summer, ILMI held an interactive Zoom where disabled activists spoke about the experiences that shaped them and their views on building a Disability Rights Movement in the 21st Century. These interviews were recorded and developed into podcasts (<https://ilmi.ie/ilmi-podcasts/>)

Making Inclusion a Reality

ILMI's was successful under the IHREC Human Rights and Equality fund 2020 "Making Inclusion a Reality" which is in partnership with South Dublin County Council, which over the course of 2021 will develop a model of best practice for supporting disabled people on Housing Disability Steering Groups.



Political Campaigning & Strategic Policy Development

What we will do: ILMI will empower members to be active agents of social change by participating in collective strategic campaigns to promote independent living and ensure effective policy development and implementation.

General Election 2020

In preparation for the general election 2020, ILMI developed a manifesto in December 2019 which it circulated to all political parties. In early 2020 we distributed a designed version based on three core themes of Personal Assistance, Participation and Housing to disabled people to lobby election candidates. We created a series of election hustings in advance of General Election 2020 for disabled people to hear from their local candidates on how they would advance these issues and others. Successful events took place in Cork, Letterkenny, Galway City, Loughrea, Ennis and Dublin. ILMI later made observations on the programme for Government. On the 3rd of December we supported members in Galway, Longford, Offaly and Cork to engage with elected representatives to ensure that disabled people continue to have their voices heard in politics.

Seanad Election 2020

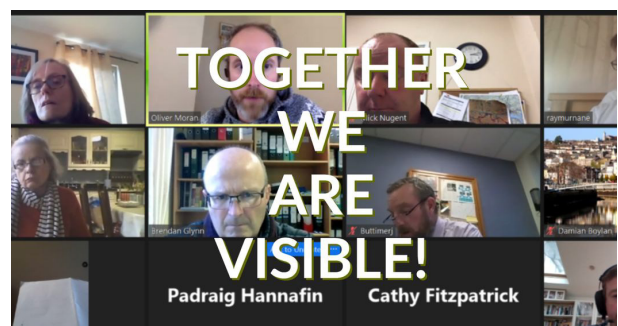
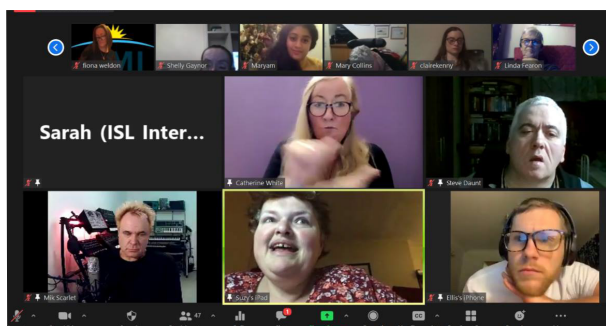
ILMI, as an independent nominating body for the Seanad Administrative Panel, invited members to put their names forward to receive ILMI's nomination to run as an independent candidate to seek election to the Seanad. Expressions of interest were received and a subgroup of the board nominated Ann Marie Flanagan to receive ILMI's nomination. Ann Marie ran a very strong independent campaign based post her nomination by ILMI. Ann Marie polled a high number of first preferences but it was telling that no independent was elected in the administration panel.

ILMI Submissions

Using Zoom, ILMI connected disabled people for collective policy analysis and development of submissions. These included "Enabling the City to Return to Work Interim Mobility Intervention Programme for Dublin City", a submission to the National Council on Special Education (NCSE) and the newly formed Joint Committee on Disability Matters. In October, ILMI created a space to Discuss the proposed Dying with Dignity Bill to ensure the voice of disabled people would be included in this vital debate.

During Covid, ILMI made regular contact with politicians, the Department of Health and NPHET to ensure the concerns of disabled people in the pandemic were heard. ILMI also brought together a consultation for members to feed into the Special Committee on Covid-19 Response titled "The Impact of Covid-19 on Disabled People's Lives: Challenges faced, Opportunities Created".

The political impasse caused by the general election and formation of a coalition government and a new programme for Government and the impact of Covid-19 restrictions meant that the ILMI #PASNOW campaign was paused for most of 2020. However, once local authorities began to meet again virtually we worked with disabled activists to continue with our aim to have each local authority pass a motion in support to the right to Personal Assistance in Ireland. ILMI also reached out to politicians to advance a motion in the Seanad to support the right to Personal Assistance in 2021.



Nothing about us without us

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