



Annual Report 2016



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Introduction

The mission of the Post Polio Support Group is to create awareness and to provide information regarding the late effects of Polio among Polio Survivors, statutory agencies and the wider medical profession, and to ensure that the needs of Polio Survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live with dignity.

The Post Polio Support Group (PPSG) was established for Polio Survivors by Polio Survivors. The Group was formed in 1993 and is run by a voluntary Board of Polio Survivors and volunteers. It is supported by voluntary committees, active members and a small executive staff at the office in Dublin. PPSG is the only organisation in Ireland providing practical support to those unfortunate enough to have contracted Polio. The Group currently has 926 members across the country.

PPSG assists Polio Survivors by providing aids to daily living; stair lifts, callipers, bespoke footwear, electric scooters and wheelchairs. The Group also helps Survivors access Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Respite Breaks, and it provides those who need it with assistance with their heating bills. The Group employs two Service & Information Co-ordinators who provide information, respond to requests for assistance from members and, perhaps most importantly, provide a listening ear to Survivors in need.

PPSG has a network of 22 social support groups around the country and also offers a telephone support service for those members who have difficulty in attending meetings.

The Group works tirelessly to:

- Create awareness of Post Polio Syndrome
- Provide information on Polio and its late effects
- Ensure the needs of Polio Survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live with dignity

Any of the estimated 7,000 Polio Survivors in Ireland can contact the Group for support irrespective of whether they are a member or not.

Funding for the Post Polio Support Group is provided by the Health Service Executive; Department of Environment, Community & Local Government; the Polio Fellowship of Ireland; The National Lottery and various grants from statutory and private bodies and fundraising by members, families and friends.

Organisational Structure



Chairperson's Report



Last year was another busy year in the life of the Post Polio Support Group. The main focus for the Board has been the drawing up of a new Strategic Plan which will cover the 3 years 2017 to 2019. Preparing the plan provided an opportunity for us to review many aspects of our governance and organisational activities. The overwhelming priority of the plan is to sustain the Organisation into the future.

We were required to make some changes to our governing document now called a Constitution. While some of the changes were required by company law it also presented an opportunity to make other changes that we considered necessary for the future sustainability of the Organisation. One of these was that Directors should be elected on a regional basis with the intention that all parts of the country would be represented on the Board. Another was that we create a new category of Board Nominated Director that would enable us to appoint people from outside the Organisation with the skills and experience that we need to meet our responsibilities and continue our work.

Our staffing structure has been configured to fulfil our management and administration duties as well as providing services to individual members and performing other activities to meet the needs of Polio Survivors. We have appointed two new staff members in the past year. They are Sheila Cullinan, Accounting & Administration Support Officer, and Niamh Murphy, Member and Volunteer Recruitment Officer.

Our Audited Accounts for 2016 show that we made a small profit which is a very satisfactory state of affairs for the Group. This has been achieved by good governance and prudent management by our Treasurer, Pat McGillion, and the staff.

The figures reflect on-going stability in our finances for the last few years following the significant reductions in our statutory funding between 2010 and 2014.

However we were very disappointed that our application to the Department of Environment, Community & Local Government for an SSNO grant was unsuccessful. For several years this grant has funded two vital part-time roles for the organisation. The loss of these positions would have been catastrophic for the organisation. Thankfully we were able to agree a temporary funding arrangement with the Polio Fellowship of Ireland/Rehab Group which allowed us to continue these roles for a year. Funding for these positions presents a serious challenge for the organisation in the coming year.

Communicating with our members is vital to our work. In addition to the Survivor magazine, our website and social media we started last year to issue a monthly ezine or electronic newsletter to members and we have also developed a text service which should be very helpful in communicating with members who are not online.

This will be my last annual report as Chairperson as I have almost completed the maximum term allowed for a person to occupy this position. It has been an honour to serve the Organisation in this capacity and I would like to thank all those who have supported me during this time. There are many different roles within this Organisation . no role or individual is more important than any other . it is the coming together of all the various aspects in a spirit of cooperation, mutual respect and good will that makes it possible for us to continue our work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Dowling,".

SUSAN DOWLING
Chairperson

CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Blanchardstown 23rd May 2016

The 2016 Conference and AGM took place on Monday 23rd May, in the Crowne Plaza, Blanchardstown, with over 170 members and guests enjoying the busy agenda as well as meeting up with fellow polio survivors from around Ireland.

The first item of the day was a presentation by Shirley Keane (Business Planning and Development Manager, Primary Care Division) of the HSE, who delivered an overview of Primary Care Management and changes that are coming down the line.

Primary Care which includes GPs, physio and other therapy services, home help and public health nursing is the cornerstone of health policy and Polio Survivors will increasingly depend on primary care services in the community.

While the information wasn't specifically tailored for Polio Survivors it gave insights into key developments that are planned for services. Additionally, the process of seeking a speaker in this area, has opened up new channels of communication between PPSG and the HSE which should assist us in the future in terms of information and advocacy.

After lunch the Annual General Meeting began, with reports presented by the Chairperson, Company Secretary and Treasurer, followed by Q&A. At the end of the AGM, newly elected Senator, and PPSG member, John Dolan spoke. He welcomed the development of our new Networks, particularly our Publicity & Campaigning Network and commented that disability organisations need to be doing more of this type of campaigning.

After John's warmly welcomed address, we had a pre-recorded message from Patrick Cockburn, journalist and Polio Survivor. Patrick was to be with us on the day but due to his occupation as a foreign correspondent, he was called away . so instead he sent a heartfelt message to members, talking briefly about his own Polio experiences, via Skype.



Arrival at the Conference



Senator John Dolan

We then launched the new website, with an overview of the homepage and other important areas on the site, from Emma Clarke Conway, Development Officer.

Emma explained that we needed a site that could be consistently updated and we now have a format that can be changed from the office as opposed to having to go back and forth to a designer, making it more efficient and useful.



Kerrie Donegan, Pauline Keyes and Hugh McHugh

After the website launch was a presentation from Peadar Ward, Regional Development Officer on the new Networks and how this process is progressing.

Following the Networks update, Swords Support Group member Tony O'Connor, a Sean Mac Diarmada enthusiast, spoke about the life of the 1916 signatory, also a Polio Survivor.

To round off the afternoon, Dublin City Rambler, singer and musician, Sean McGuinness gave a rousing mini ballad session, including *Grace* and a DCR stalwart, *Rare Auld Times* to end what was a bumper packed and informative afternoon.

A big thank you to all of our speakers and helpers . including stewards, Liam, Ger and Richard as well as Terry and Anne for running the book stand.

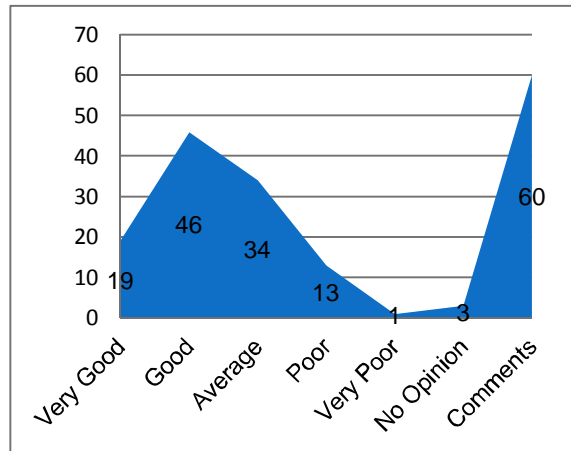
Thanks also to the Crowne Plaza Hotel for a very accommodating and well-run venue and of course to all those who were able to attend.



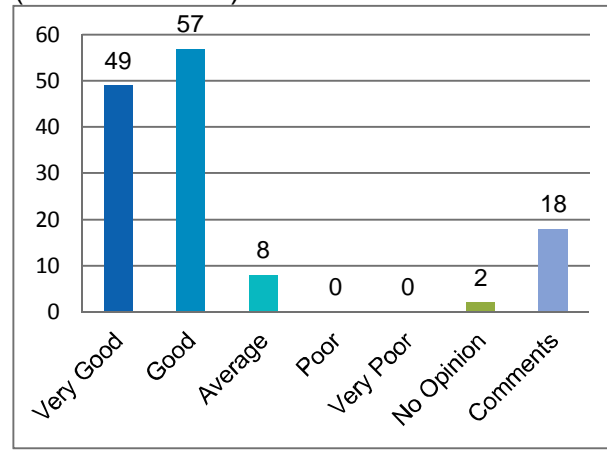
Sean McGuinness of the Dublin City Ramblers

Conference Evaluation

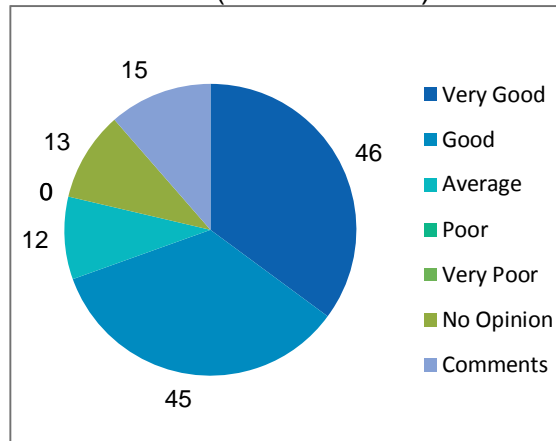
Q.1 How would you rate the Primary Care Presentation?



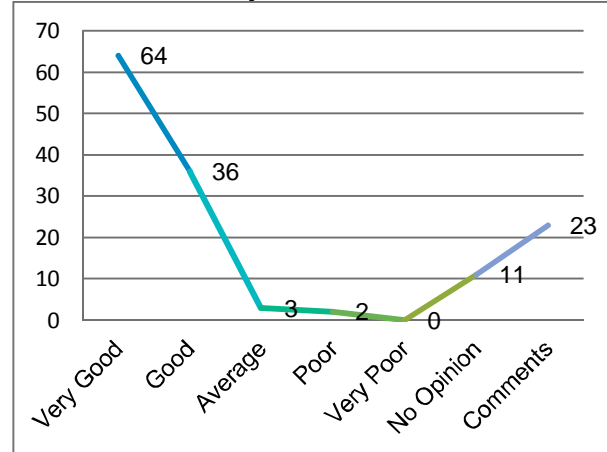
Q. 2 How would you rate the AGM (formal session)?



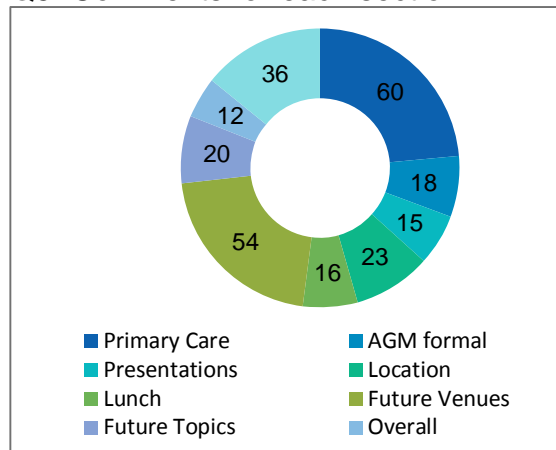
Q. 3 How would you rate the After AGM Session (Presentations)?



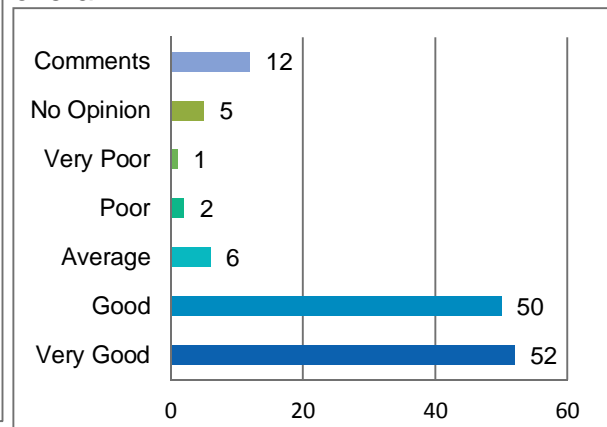
Q. 4 How would you rate the location?



Q5. Comments for each section



Q.6 How would you rate the event overall?



Board Update

Two Directors stood down from the Board of the PPSG at the AGM:

Evelyn Wainwright



Evelyn Wainwright

Evelyn Wainwright joined the Board in January 2006. She had already established herself as a committed volunteer with the organisation in the south of the country as Convenor of the Cork Social Support Group, a position that she continues to occupy.

During her time as a Director, Evelyn became a member of the Social Support Committee where she was a great contributor to the discussions. She also became a member of the Fundraising Committee, organising a number of events in the Cork area. With her 10 years experience, it is hoped that Evelyn will continue to play an active role in the

work of Organisation.

Pat Guy

Pat Guy was elected as a Director at the AGM in 2011. Pat was already well known to the membership as Convenor of the Social Support Group in Dublin South West and as a Leader with the Telephone Support Service.

He joined the Social Support Committee where he was a dedicated contributor and played an active part in the discussions on the future structures of our Organisation. It is hoped that Pat will continue to contribute to the work of the PPSG in the years ahead.



Pat Guy

New Board Elected 2016 - 2017

In accordance with the organisations Memorandum & Articles of Association one third of the directors are required to stand down each year. As Evelyn Wainwright and Pat Guy were retiring from the Board only one out-going Board member, Joyce Henderson, was required to stand down and seek re-election. As only two other candidates were nominated for the Board there were three candidates seeking three vacancies and therefore all three candidates were deemed elected. The newly elected members of the Board were Pat McGillion and Macrina Clancy.



New Board 2016

Following the Conference/AGM the Board elected the following officers for the year:

Chairperson: Susan Dowling

Deputy Chairperson: Joyce Henderson

Treasurer: Pat McGillion

Company Secretary: Anne Shanahan

Minutes Secretary: Roisin Nolan

Other Board Members: Joan Bradley

Jim Barrett

Macrina Clancy

Board Sub-Committee Chairpersons appointed for the year were:

Social Support: Jim Barrett

Quality, Safety & Compliance: Anne Shanahan

Ethics & Benefits: Roisin Nolan

Highlights of 2016

World Polio Day



Pictured are Fran Brennan, CEO, Pat McGillion and Joyce Henderson, Board members and Polio Survivors with (then) Minister for Social Protection, Mr Leo Varadkar, at Aras Mhic Diarmada to mark World Polio Day, October 2016.

World Polio Day, October 24th, is marked by Polio Support organisations throughout the world, including the European Polio Union, the Rotarian Action Group and many polio survivor associations.

World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis.

Buildings Go Blue!

On World Polio Day, 24th October, to highlight the legacy of Polio in Ireland, iconic buildings in Ireland lit up blue . the Post Polio Support Group colours . to show support to the 7,000 Polio Survivors in Ireland, who continue to live with disabilities caused by the disease.

Cork City Hall and the Clock Tower lit up, along with Kilkenny Castle. In Dublin, City Hall and Christchurch Cathedral were up lit, as well as An Táin Arts Centre in Dundalk.



A lit up Cork City Hall, 2016

Scooter Scramble at Mondello Park for World Polio Day!



Rally Drivers and Polio Survivors at Mondello for our Scooter Scramble

Mondello played host to the first ever World Polio Day Scooter Scramble, on Sunday 23rd October, during the lunch hour of the Irish Rallycross Championship on the Straight at Mondello Park.

It is not often that Rallycross drivers are pitched against Mobility Scooter drivers . but we did it, with hilarious results. The Rally driver heat was won by European Champion Derek Tohill, adding Scooter Scrambler to his winning titles.

We were doubly thrilled to have special guests Ciaran Kilkenny and James McCarthy of the Dublin football team and the much revered *Sam Maguire* to Mondello . with the Dubs taking part in the final heat of the Scooter Scramble.

To add to the success of the day our intrepid volunteers circulated the crowd collecting funds which will assist with our Winter Heating Grant for those polio survivors who struggle with the high cost of heating bills every winter.

The fantastic amount " 476.50 was raised at Mondello, with thanks to all our volunteers, the staff and the spectators who were so generous.



Bridget Quigley O'Brien powering ahead

We were very grateful to Dublin GAA players Ciaran and James, the Rallycross Drivers and our members and supporters.

These include Lifestyle Mobility and Beechfield Healthcare and Mondello Park, Declan, Phillip, Keith, Leo and Sharon, who helped us with the running of this event.



Paul Sinclair centre, with Dubs Ciaran Kilkenny (left) & James McCarthy (right)

Mansion House Visit



Members of PPSG were thrilled to be invited to a tour of the Mansion House, Dublin, by the Lord Mayor, Ms Criona Ní Dhálaigh.

Pictured spotting the finer points of the house, along with the Lord Mayor, are CEO Fran Brennan and members Lorraine Harte, Jimmy Andrews, Joseph Flynn, Joan Bradley, Pat McGillion and Johnny O' Sullivan.

New Staff Appointments in 2016

New Member and Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO)

The recruitment of new members and volunteers is essential if we are to sustain our activities. In November we appointed Niamh Murphy to the new position of Member and Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO) to drive this work forward. Niamh is a valuable addition to organisation.



Niamh Murphy

New Accounting & Administration Support Officer



Sheila Cullinan

Sheila Cullinan joined the organisation in August with responsibility for book keeping and day to day administration.

Shelia has much experience in the commercial and non-profit sectors and on the Board of her local Credit Union. We were delighted to welcome Sheila to the organisation.

Selection of Social Support Groups Events 2016

Cork Social Support Group BBQ

The Cork Social Support Group held their Summer Barbeque on Sunday 5th June in the Vienna Woods Hotel, Cork attended by about 30 members, with music by Jim Ahern and a wonderful sing along to cap off an enjoyable occasion. The hotel kindly moved the BBQ indoors to avoid members getting cold in our changeable climate.



Jim O Donoghue & Tom Lane at the Cork BBQ

Finglas Social Support Group trip to Galway



Pictured l to r: Finglas Social Support Group members, Peter Baron, Anastasia McNamara, Pat Guy, Michael MacNamara, Jimmy Furlong, Bernie Clare, Bridget Quigley O'Brien, Martin, Bridget O'Brien, Maire Walsh and Paul Sinclair in Galway where they stayed in the Connaught Hotel.

Clare Group Coole Park Trip

The Clare Group made a trip to Coole Park during Heritage Week, enjoying a meal in the Café, before viewing the Audio Visual of the life of Lady Gregory, followed by a look at the museum and a stroll out to the walled garden where the famous autograph tree is situated. The tour lasted thirty minutes. It was very wheelchair accessible and we were allowed to take as many photos as we wished, including the guide taking a photo of the group.

Fundraising Activities

PPSG members, supporters and staff engaged in a wide range of fundraising activities throughout the year. There are too many to mention all here, this is just a selection that demonstrate the variety and national reach of our fundraising activities

Survivors Sweepstake Members Draw

The Survivors Sweepstakes Member Draw took place 3 times in 2016, with a profit of " 3,908.93 over the year and between 150 and 200 entries in each draw. There were no winners of the " 1,000 prize fund in the first two draws, however at the Christmas draw we ran a random number generator draw to ensure that at least one person would win the " 1,000 prize draw guaranteed. The winner was Christine O'Connor.

A Nation Rises

To acknowledge a special link between polio survivors and the 1916 signatory, Sean Mac Diarmada, the Post Polio Support Group were delighted to be presented with a painting of Sean Mac Diarmada, by the artist Carol Quinn Wallace.

The presentation was made at Ms Quinn Wallace's exhibition "A Nation Rises", a collection celebrating the key participants in the 1916 Rising, at The National Maritime Museum of Ireland, in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The painting was auctioned later in the year, raising " 170.



Board members Anne Shanahan & Macrina Clancy with artist Carol Quinn Wallace

Hospital Saturday Fund



PPSG was granted " 2,700 towards our Winter Heating Grant, by the Hospital Saturday Fund (HSF).

Pictured are CEO Fran Brennan, Heart Children Ireland's CEO Margaret Rogers (committee representative HSF) and Board member Joan Bradley, being presented with the HSF cheque.

Louth Fundraising

Brendan Moore, one of our stalwart active members, established a fundraising committee in Louth, building a bank of six to seven volunteers to help at Church gate Collections, football match collections or to organise other events in the area.

In March a pub quiz was organised in Hamill's Bar, Ardee, raising " 200, despite clashes with a major football game.

Taste of Summer Drogheda

A Taste of Summer barbecue at Tuite's Butchers in Drogheda, on Saturday the 4th June raised " 400.22, organised by Brendan Moore and Mairead Matthews with thanks to Eddie Tuite.

Church Gate Collections

Our Louth church gate collections raised a total of " 573, organised by Mairead Matthews and Brendan Moore. With thanks to Irene and Tom Farrell, Sean Nellie and John Sampson, Pat Keenan, Jackie Minnock and family and Maureen Black, sister of member, Margaret.



Anne Shanahan, Anne Burns, Brendan Moore, Maureen and Margaret Black

Kilkenny Social Support Group

We received a cheque for " 300 from the Tesco Community Fund in Clonmel, organised by Joan Anne Walsh, member of the Kilkenny Social Support Group. The Kilkenny Social Support Group also held a successful table quiz in the Aspel Hotel, Kilkenny.

Dublin Mini Marathon 2016

Pictured (right) are Pamela Brennan and her crew, who took part in the 2016 VHI Women's Mini Marathon in Dublin in June, on our behalf. Thanks also to Gemma, Rachel and Kelly Nolan.

Karaoke & Raffle Winnings!

Our Finglas Social Support Group held a Karaoke Night, on Thursday 26th May, at the Handball Club, Croke Park.

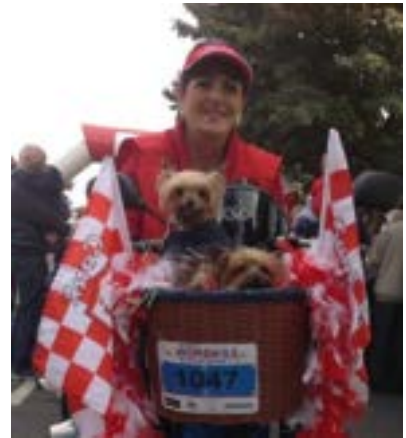
Additionally a draw in support of the event took place at the PPSG AGM. The event total raised was " 1,005.



Cork Mini Marathon 2016

Cork member Rose Russell O'Donovan won her category in the Cork Mini Marathon in the autumn.

Rose was supported by her two little helpers, Gucci and Louis, pictured right, in their 7th marathon appearance in support of PPSG.



Rose Russell O'Donovan, Gucci and Louis

Gaelforce West



Pictured in action is John Clogher, Co. Roscommon, who took part in Gaelforce West this year raising vital funds for the Post Polio Support in the process.

John's mother Marian is a member and we are very grateful to John for raising " 470!

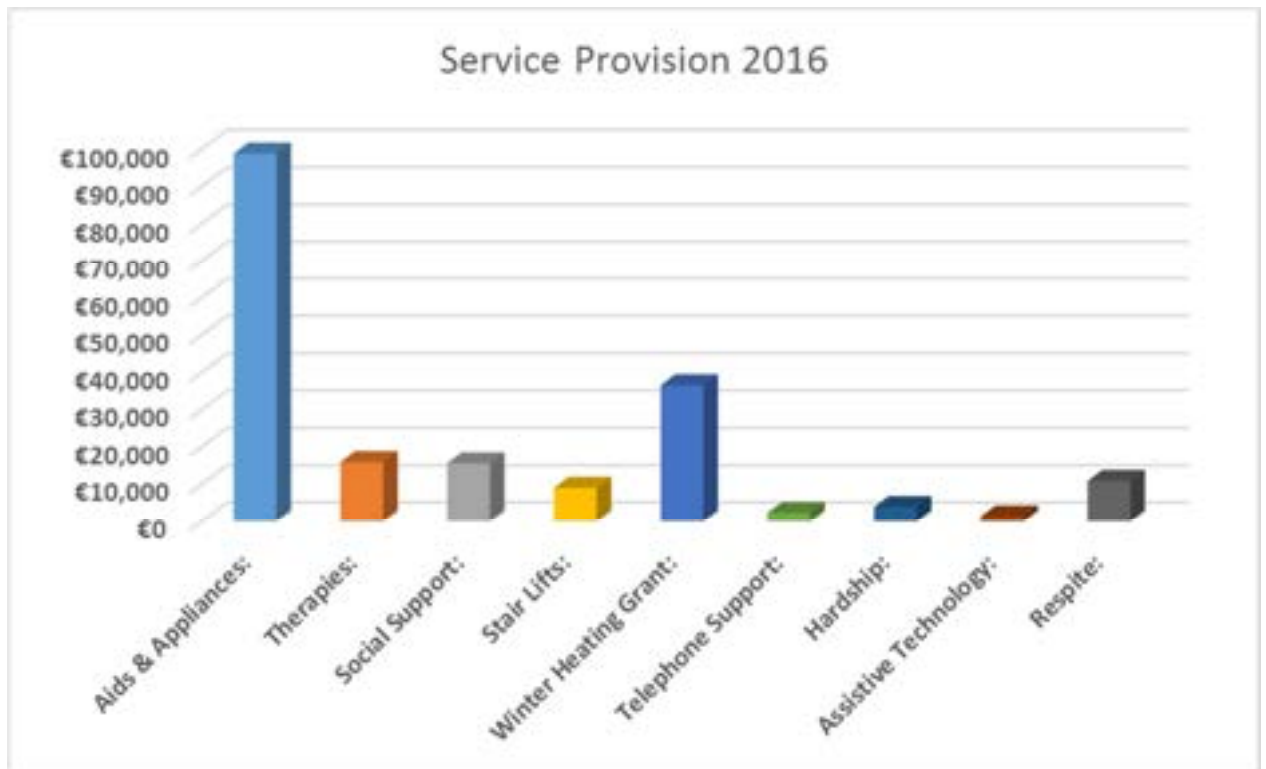
Service Provision 2016

The Post Polio Support Group provides a range of services to Polio Survivors. These include information, support with aids and appliances, a variety of therapies, respite, stairlifts and heating grants. These supports are administered by the Service and Information Co-ordinator (SIC) Lillian McElvaney and the Assistant SIC, Kerrie Donegan. The Post Polio Support Group would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the HSE in particular, a variety of other grant making trusts and our fundraisers who make this invaluable support to our members possible.

Membership of the Group stood at 926 people at the end of 2016 The PPSG carries out a number of interventions with Polio Survivors each addressing an aspect of the deterioration in their functional abilities, in so far as is practicable. Each intervention provides incremental redress of the loss of functional ability. The intervention originates with formal self-assessment by the Polio Survivor followed by contact assessment from an SIC.

In addition the Group provides supports to those with needs arising from unforeseen circumstances and responds appropriately. The Services and Information Co-ordinators work cooperatively with HSE frontline staff and other professionals to ensure that the intervention is appropriate to the individual Polio Survivor and arranges supply of the required supports as promptly as possible.

Figures for supports provided during the year are as follows:



85 Polio survivors received aids & appliances during the year with a total expenditure of " 98,806.

3 members were assisted in the installation of Stair Lifts at a cost in the year of " 9,095.

89 Polio survivors benefitted from services such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Chiropody and Respite at a total cost of " 26,972.

290 members received the Winter Heating Grant at a cost of " 32,463. This grant is offered to those members who are assessed as having difficulty in meeting their fuel bills. All the money for the heating grant is sourced from fundraising. We are very grateful to those organisations and individuals who supported us in providing this much needed grant.

The organisation has a small hardship fund for those members in acute need. " 3,944 was spent from this fund in 2016 while " 1,393 was spent on assistive technology for Polio survivors.

Social Support

The PPSG runs 22 social support groups around the country in the following locations:

Athlone, Co Westmeath; Bray, Co Wicklow; Castleblayney, Co Monaghan; Carlow; Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim; Ennis, Co. Clare; Cork, Finglas, Swords, Clontarf and Tallaght in Dublin; Donegal; Enniscorthy, Co Wexford; Galway; Kilkenny; Limerick; Navan, Co Meath; Kildare; Castlebar, Co Mayo; Portlaoise, Co Laois; Sligo; and Kerry.

Around 200 members benefitted from attending social support group meetings and events in 2016. The cost of the Social Support service in the year was " 15,671.

Telephone Support

PPSG's Telephone Support Service is a peer service provided from home to home by and for Polio Survivors across the Republic through our RingRing and PhoneChat services.

- RingRing is a one to one peer support service where a volunteer polio survivor calls a fellow survivor who may have difficulties attending PPSG events or even leaving the house. Typically each volunteer has three regular survivors who they phone each month. At the end of 2016 there were 18 leaders calling 59 fellow polio survivors.
- PhoneChat is a fortnightly group conference call . a volunteer Polio Survivor and member facilitates a conversation with 3 to 4 fellow Polio Survivors. At the end of the year there were 3 active Phonechat groups with 9 participants.

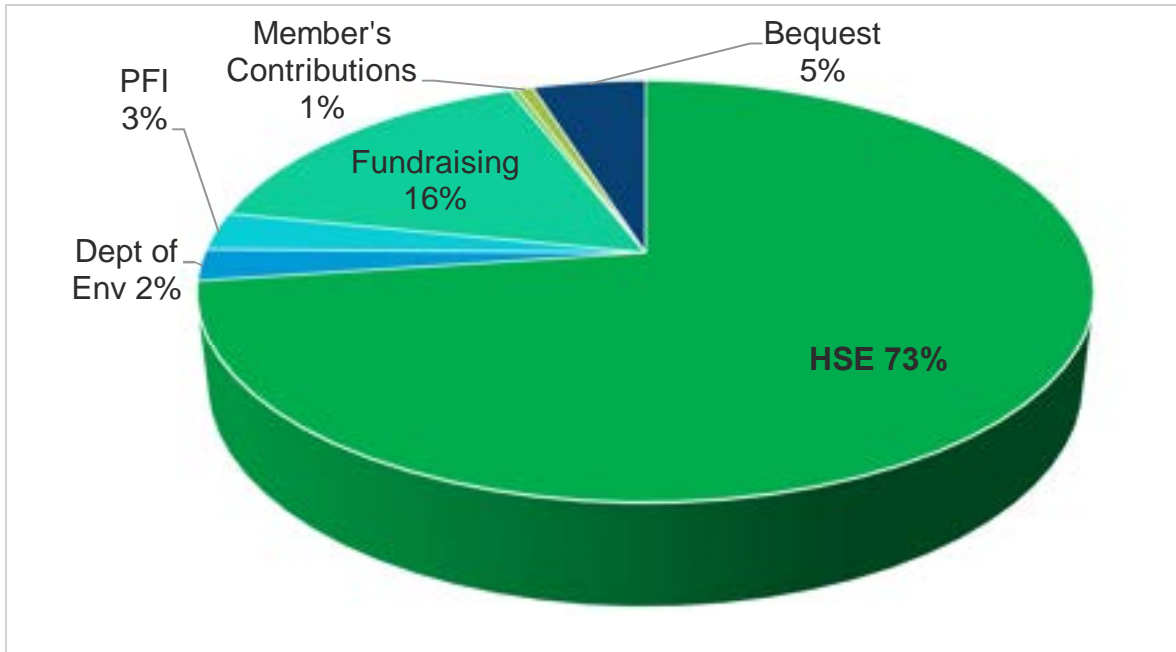
" 2,364 was spent on Telephone Support service in 2016.

Complaints

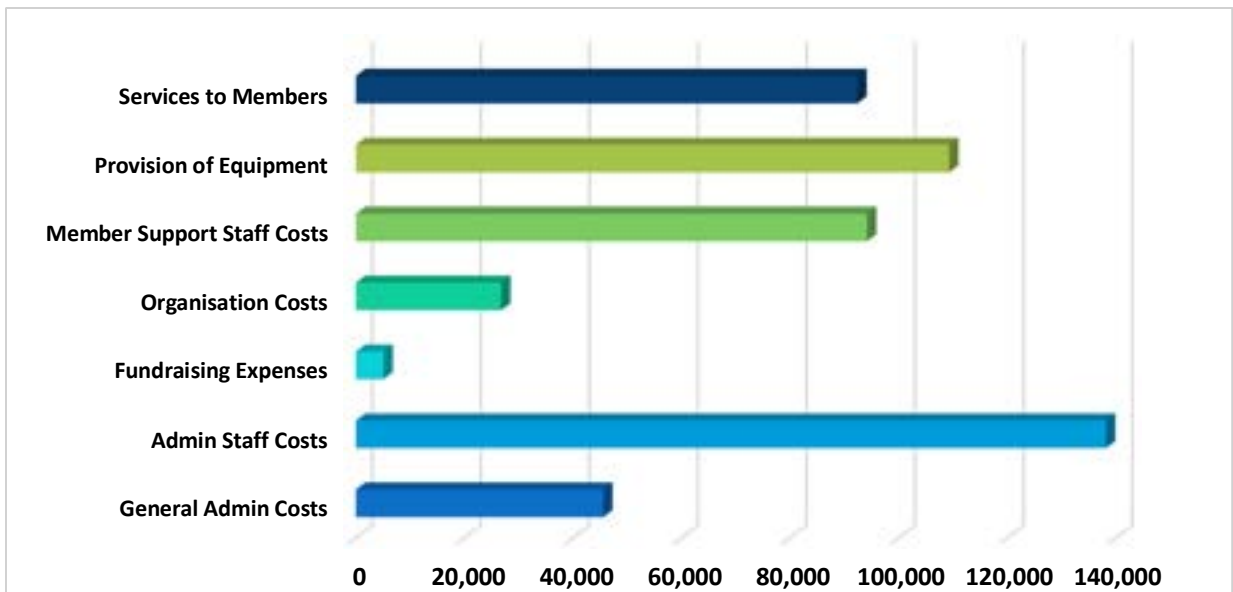
The Group has a complaints procedure and the Company Secretary maintains a register of all complaints and actions arising. No complaints were registered in 2016.

Financial Summary 2016

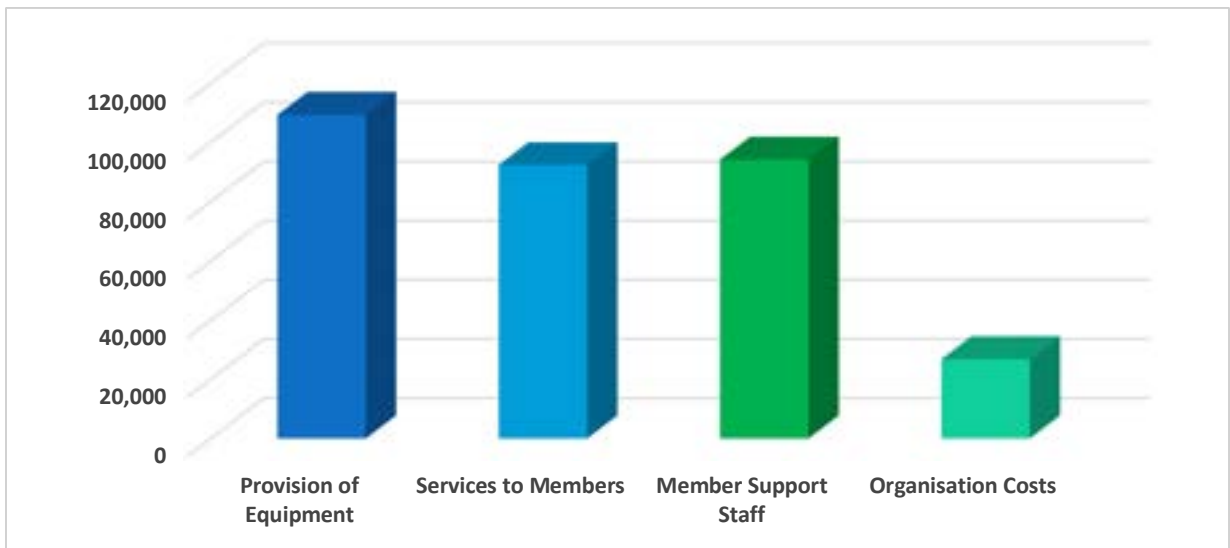
Income 513,405



Expenditure 511,414



Service & Organisation Costs 322,564



Administration Expenditure 188,850

