
POLIO SURVIVORS IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



For Polio Survivors By Polio Survivors since 1993

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Introduction

The Mission

The mission of Polio Survivors Ireland is to create awareness and to provide information regarding the Late Effects of Polio among polio survivors, statutory agencies, and the wider medical profession. We seek to ensure that the needs of polio survivors relating to their condition are met to enable them to live as independently as possible, and with dignity.



The Organisation

Polio Survivors Ireland was established for polio survivors by polio survivors. The organisation was formed in 1993 and is run by a voluntary Board of polio survivors and volunteers. We are supported by voluntary committees, active members, and a small executive staff at the office in Dublin. Our organisation is the only one in Ireland providing practical support to those unfortunate enough to have contracted polio as babies and young children. At the end of 2023 we had 1009 members across the country.

What we've accomplished so far

We assist polio survivors by providing aids to daily living such as stairlifts, callipers, bespoke footwear, electric scooters, and wheelchairs. We also help survivors access Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Respite Breaks, and provide those who need it with assistance with their heating bills. We employ two Service and 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.

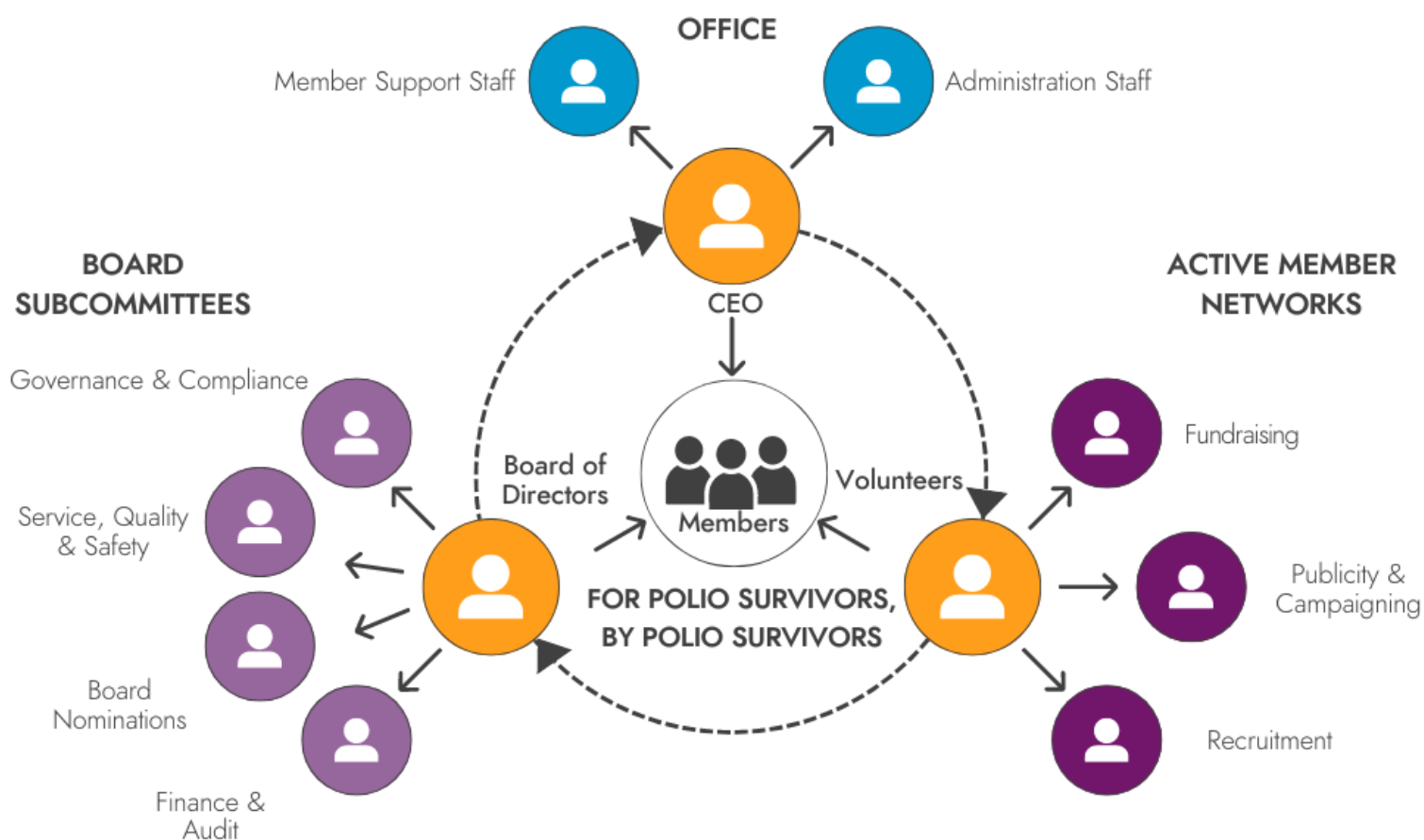
The organisation has a network of Social Support Groups around the country and offers a Telephone Support Service for those members who have difficulty in attending meetings. We have recruited two Member Engagement Officers who travel around the country to hold Area Meetings and reinvigorate member activity.

Any of the estimated 5,000 polio survivors in Ireland can contact us for support irrespective of whether they are a member or not. Funding for Polio Survivors Ireland is provided by the Health Service Executive, the National Lottery, and various grants from statutory bodies.



Leadership and Governance

POLIO SURVIVORS IRELAND GOVERNANCE



Board

The Officers on the Board were:

Macrina Clancy (Cathaoirleach), Frank Mitchell (Deputy), Fintan Foy (Company Sec), Miriam Kavanagh (Treasurer), Mary Byrne (Minutes Sec)

Other Directors who served on the Board in 2023 were:

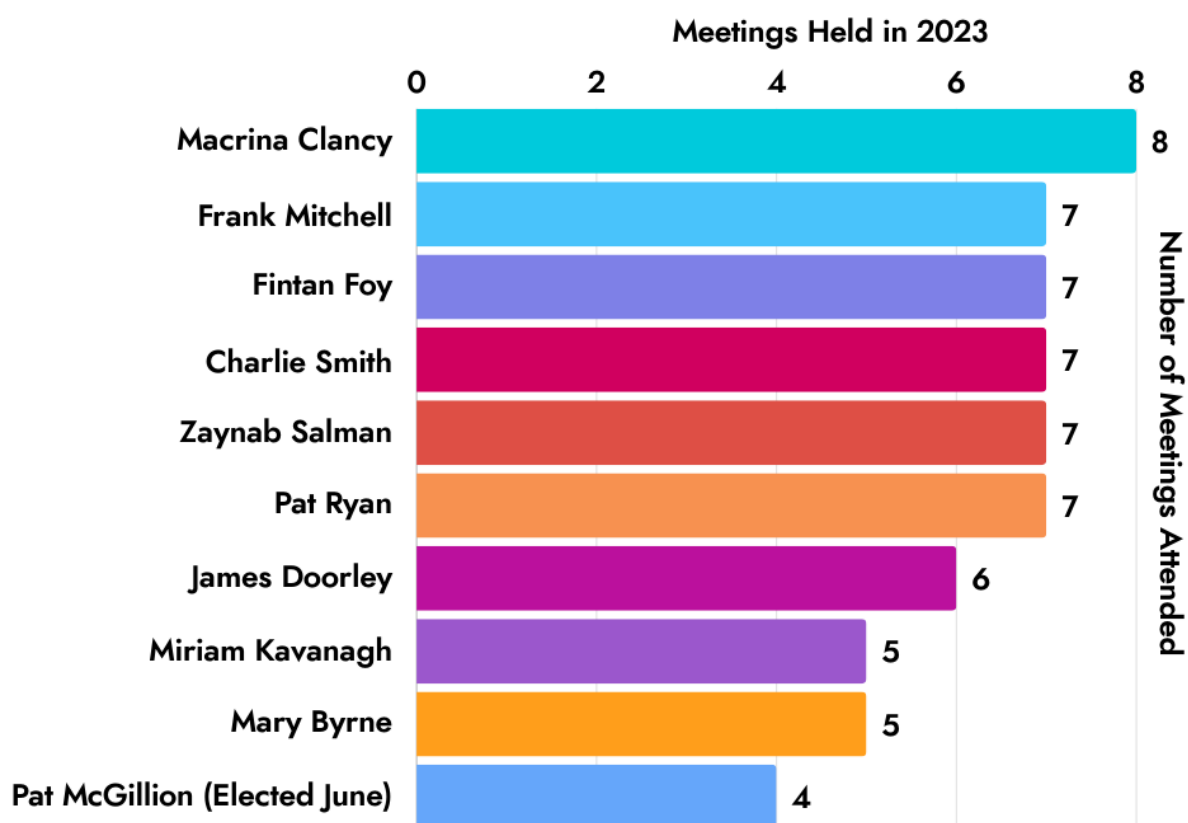
James Doorley, Charlie Smith, Zaynab Salman, Pat Ryan, Pat McGillion



The Board of Directors met 8 times over the last year, on the following dates:

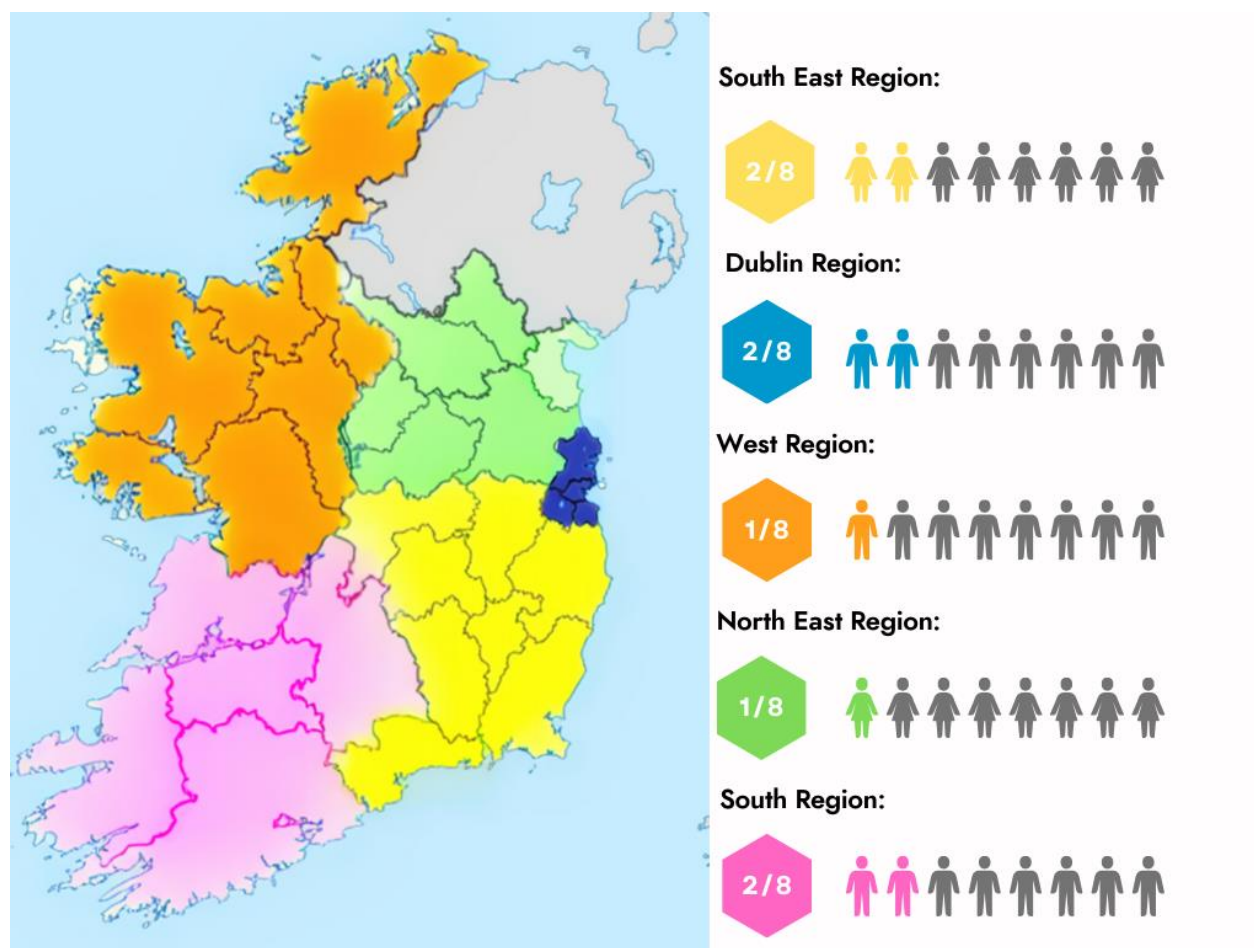


The number of Board Meetings each Director attended is outlined below:



Board Composition

In accordance with its constitution, there are up to 8 Elected Directors on the Board and up to 5 Board Nominated Directors. The 8 Elected Directors are elected in 5 regions. Regions have either 1 or 2 seats on the Board depending on the number of members in the region. The number of seats per region is as follows:



Elected Directors are elected at each Annual General Meeting (AGM). Elected Directors must be a member of the organisation for at least one year. All members are entitled to vote either by postal ballot or by attending the AGM. 50% of Elected Directors are required to step down each year, but may stand again for election up to a maximum of 6 years.

Board Appointed Directors are appointed to the Board on a recommendation from the Board Nominations Committee. Board Nominated Directors are recruited externally from the organisation to supplement the mix of skills on the Board. The Board Nominations Committee drafts a list of



requirements for new Board Appointed Directors and seeks candidates in accordance with these requirements. The Committee meets with candidates before recommending them to the Board. If the Board proceeds with the appointment, the Board Nominated Director joins the Board but must be ratified by a ballot of the members at the next AGM. Board Nominated Directors serve for a three-year term, but this may be renewed for another three-year term by the Board subject to the approval of the membership at an AGM.

Conflict of Interest

The Organisation has a Conflict of Interest policy, and, at the time of their appointment, each new Director is asked to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration. Information on this Declaration is then entered onto the Conflict of Interest Register. The Governance & Compliance Sub-committee reviews the Conflict of Interest Register from time to time and advises the Board of any issues arising. The Board reviews the Conflict of Interest Register once a year. At each Board meeting Directors present are asked to declare any possible Conflict of Interest that might arise in respect of any item on the meeting's agenda.

Risk Management

The Organisation has a Risk Policy and maintains a Risk Register. The Risk Register has the following risk categories: *Financial, Governance, Operational, People, Reputational, Service, Strategic*.

Each Board Sub-committee monitors risks in its area of responsibility. If a Sub-committee identifies a new risk, it will consider mitigation actions and refer the matter to the Governance & Compliance committee. This committee reviews the risk and advises the Board if it believes the risk and its accompanying mitigation actions should be added to the Risk Register. The Governance & Compliance Sub-committee monitors progress on implementation of the mitigation actions. The Risk Register is reviewed in its entirety by the Board each year.



BOARD SUBCOMMITTEES 2023

Service, Quality & Safety

Remit: The committee oversees service, quality, and safety on behalf of the Board. The Committee endeavours to ensure that all services and supports provided to polio survivors are in accordance with the highest ethical, quality and safety standards.

Frank Mitchell (Chair)
Joyce Henderson
Roisin Nolan
Susan Dowling
Mary Byrne
Zaynab Salman

Board Nomination

Remit: To ensure that the Board, and its duly appointed Sub-Committees, have access to persons with the necessary qualifications, skills, expertise, and experience to guide the organisation in achieving its mission, and to ensure good governance. The Committee considers, evaluates, and recommends to the Board the nomination of suitably skilled and qualified people as Board Nominated Directors.

Macrina Clancy (Chair)
Fintan Foy
James Doorley
Frank Mitchell

Finance & Audit

Remit: To oversee the effective financial management including financial risk management of Polio Survivors Ireland, to oversee the external audit and to audit the company's internal financial controls and their effectiveness. The Committee agrees policies, procedures and reporting mechanisms relating to financial matters to make sure there is compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, monitors compliance with the terms and conditions of public or private grants and ensures that financial reports comply with all statutory requirements and meet current best practice.

Miriam Kavanagh (Chair)
Charlie Smith
Marie Hyland
Pat Ryan

Governance & Compliance

Remit: The Committee devises policies and procedures for approval by the Board and monitors their implementation. It also reviews all external factors affecting the organisation or with the potential to affect the organisation, including proposed, new, or changed legislation, new or changed relationships between the organisation and other bodies, including funding bodies.

Fintan Foy (Chair)
Pat McGillion
Ankita Ahluwalia
Fran Brennan (CEO)
James Doorley
Jim Connolly



Polio Survivors in Ireland – 30 years of “For Polio Survivors, By Polio Survivors

Polio was one of the most terrifying infectious diseases to invade Ireland. It killed some but crippled many more, until its eventual eradication in Ireland, due to the vaccine, discovered by Dr Jonas Salk in 1955.

At the time our members contracted polio, life was difficult, and money was scarce. Many areas of the country had neither running water nor electricity. People worked hard and had few luxuries; it took all their efforts to make ends meet. It was a devastating blow for a family to have a child affected by polio – not just to see a healthy child struck down, but where was the money going to come from to enable them to make long and frequent journeys to doctors, hospitals and physiotherapists? Few people had cars and public transport was scarce. Who would look after the other children at home? How were they to get the physical aids and appliances needed? The future must have looked bleak indeed!



Yet they survived and surprised

Polio survivors have overcome some of the greatest obstacles that could face children, from iron lungs, to callipers, to missed schooling – and the most heart-breaking – time away from family and home.

Many polio survivors had wonderful careers, raised families, travelled, have been creative, had fun, made friends, and lived as normal a life as possible.

However, in a cruel twist of fate, Post Polio Syndrome and Late Effects of Polio came calling.

With the resilience and tenacity of those who have faced great battles in their lives, survivors met it head on, setting up their own support group to help face this new challenge.

In the beginning – Joan and Rosaleen

The (then named) Post Polio Support Group was the result of two ladies, Joan Bradley and Rosaleen Gallagher, who had polio, attending the same swimming club at Belvedere College, Dublin. Joan noted that she was getting weaker and had pain and that there must be some explanation. She had attended a number of doctors, but they could see nothing wrong and had



brushed her off. Rosaleen had just been in the USA and had learned of a condition affecting polio survivors years after they had contracted polio — the late effects of it — Post Polio Syndrome or Post Polio Myelitic Syndrome. She had brought home literature. This information, revealing all the symptoms described, exactly matched what they were experiencing. Looking around, these ladies could see their fellow survivors suffering through lack of information and could not leave them in ignorance.

Rosaleen and Joan began meeting in Rosaleen's home. It was 1992/93 and in essence these were the first committee meetings of the organisation. They had no idea how many survivors were still in Ireland, so they wrote a letter to all the papers they could find, and asked survivors to get in touch, to quantify the number still living. The letter described the symptoms and asked polio survivors if they recognised them, but they took care not to scare them. They put a notice in 26 papers and waited. They were overcome by replies — survivors from all over Ireland, some saying, *'Thank goodness someone is taking notice'*.

They were getting the 'push over' by the medical profession too. The doctors then, of course, probably knew as little as they did about the condition. The need for information was great.

From Support Group to National Organisation

That year Jim Costello (pictured left) joined them, having been contacted by Joan Bradley (pictured right) while in Cherry Orchard Hospital and asked if he would be interested in getting involved in a Support Group to assist polio survivors. Jim agreed with only a few people involved at that stage. Jim helped with setting up a registered Voluntary Organisation, called the *Post Polio Support Group. They decided on the name "Post Polio Support Group", as they felt it covered both their condition (Polio) and their work (Support). A constitution was drawn up and signed by Joan Bradley (Secretary), Rosaleen Gallagher, Fr Paddy Lewis, Ciaran Nicholson, Aideen Kelly (Treasurer), Vera Roche and Jim Costello as Chairman. They had no finance, so they funded it initially themselves, with the help of a few sympathetic survivors and others.



All of the administration work emanated from either Joan's flat in the Iveagh Trust or from Jim's desk in his room in COH, and this was the position for the first few years. Jim was elected the first



Chairperson of the Committee that was formed at the time, and there were seven of them involved.



In 1994, the Spiritian Community generously allowed the Committee to hold their monthly meetings in Kimmage Manor, where Fr. Paddy Lewis gave the benefit of his wide experience and played an active role in committee affairs.

The committee learned that Dr Marinos Dalakas (left) from the USA, who had specialised in the Late Effects of Polio, was coming to Ireland in 1994. They asked if he'd speak while in Ireland at a Polio Conference they planned. Their first grant, from the Polio Fellowship of Ireland, was used for this. It was a packed-out affair

and there they met Dr Orla Hardiman (below right) who also spoke at the Conference and had worked with Doctor Dalakas in the USA. She was interested in setting up a Polio Clinic in Ireland, which later came to fruition in Beaumont Hospital, still running today under the direction of (now) Professor Hardiman.

The next need was for information to be distributed to survivors, doctors, health services and the Government. A programme was begun of lobbying, seeking media coverage, contacting health services and informing survivors and everyone they could find, who might have a part to play in assisting them.



There were many people who had input to the Group in the very early days to whom our organisation is extremely grateful to. They had many struggles and sourcing funding became a daily task.

(Jim was the last of our founding members, passing away in July 2022).

**The name was changed in 2017 to Polio Survivors Ireland, to reflect all polio survivors in Ireland regardless of whether they have Post Polio Syndrome or not.*



Conference & AGM 2023 – 30th Anniversary

This year's Conference and AGM was a very special one, as Polio Survivors Ireland marked its 30th year, in the Mount Wolseley Hotel on Thursday 22nd June.

Joan Bradley Memorial Address

We were delighted to be joined by Prof. Frans Nollet of the Netherlands. Prof. Nollet is the Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine of the Academic Medical Center, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and Head of the Post-Polio Expert Center. Since 2015 he is also director of MOVE Research Institute Amsterdam, of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, which conducts translational research in rehabilitation, sports, and musculoskeletal regenerative medicine.

Professor Nollet gave the Joan Bradley Memorial Address with a presentation on Ageing with Polio, talking about how to preserve physical functioning and different aspects of ageing with polio/post-polio syndrome. He reported on long term studies on muscle function in polio, noting that walking performance declined in both studies by 6% (10 years) and 10% (15 years). Loss of muscle tissue, for various reasons, increases the risk of falling. Professor Nollet noted that Osteoarthritis is more common in polio survivors, with careful rehabilitation required following any treatment. Osteoporosis is also more common, with bone density measurement being very important (DEXA scan) as well as preventative measures such as Vitamin D, Calcium, weight bearing exercise and limited alcohol.



Ageing and (lifestyle) chronic diseases are further issues for survivors, with mention of comorbidities and weight gain as issues. Declining function can prevent polio survivors from participating in their usual activities, meaning psychological supports are needed.

Professor Nollet recommended trying to do exercise that would help cardio fitness, strengthening exercises and weight bearing exercise, which of course must be done according to the abilities of the individual.

A lively Q&A followed, with some members wondering if they could visit The Netherlands and avail of Professor Nollet's excellent rehabilitation programme!



Jim Costello Polio Hero Award

The late Jim Costello was the last of our founder members and made an untold contribution to the development and success of our organisation. Jim passed away in July 2022 and to honour his memory, we have developed an annual Award called the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award, to be presented to a worthy recipient at the Annual Conference. The inaugural award was due to be presented by retired RTÉ Presenter, Eileen Dunne. Unfortunately, Eileen was unable to join us.

However, member Anne Shanahan, stepped in and spoke of how Jim was the embodiment of a polio survivor - independent, determined, and selfless in the time and efforts he devoted to the running of the organisation for many years, still helping up to his passing. We were thrilled to have Jim's wife Delia, still a member and stalwart supporter, at the Conference with Jim's godchild, Niamh. Both ladies assisted in presenting the Jim Costello Polio Hero Award to our worthy winner.



The winner of the Polio Hero Award 2023 is Anne Burns. Anne has been a constant and reliable support to the organisation and is always available to provide background history to incoming staff or volunteers. She helps us with events and makes sure that people wanting to be active members of Polio Survivors Ireland have the opportunity to do so, while tirelessly working to support the development of the organisation, in the same spirit that Jim had done.



Anne has also represented the charity in the media countless times, helping to raise awareness of polio survivors and Post Polio Syndrome. A hero is someone admired for their courage, outstanding achievements, or noble qualities. Anne Burns was presented the inaugural Jim Costello Polio Hero Award 2023 for dedication and tenacity in improving the lives of polio survivors.

Congratulations Anne!

We are very grateful to Delia and Niamh for assisting in the presentation of the award to Anne and for Delia's lovely tribute to Jim. He continues to be missed.



AGM 2023

Cathaoirleach's Report



The AGM was opened by our Chair, Macrina Clancy. Macrina highlighted some key figures from last year. The organisation recorded a loss, reflecting increasing costs coming out of Covid. She quoted the number of people who sought help from the office in 2022, for a variety of services and supports such as Aids & Appliances and our Winter Heating Grant. With the threat from Covid receding, the Chair was delighted to report that most social support groups resumed in-person meetings and events.

A major milestone for 2022 was securing funding from Pobal under the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) programme for 2 ½ years. This funding is supporting the appointment of two part-time Member Engagement Officers and a part-time Advocacy Officer.

Macrina also read from a letter which we were honoured to receive from the President of Ireland, congratulating the organisation on 30 years of service.

Treasurer's Report



The Treasurer, Miriam Kavanagh, presented a series of slides summarising key data from the Financial Statements for 2022. These included the income for the year, a breakdown of the main sources of income and the overall loss recorded for 2022. On the expenditure side, the Treasurer's slides contained graphs illustrating expenditure across all the main headings in the accounts and then provided a breakdown of expenditure within these headings, with a particular focus on service

delivery expenditure.

Finally, Miriam displayed a chart on income and expenditure trends that showed how income increased in 2022 for the first time in many years, reflecting the securing of the SSNO grant.



Company Secretary Report



Fintan advised the meeting that James Doorley had completed his three-year term as a Board Nominated Director, but that the Board had nominated him for a further three-year term subject to ratification by this AGM.

He also described how, in accordance with the constitution, Zaynab Salman, Charlie Smith and Macrina Clancy were stepping down from the Board at this year's AGM but were offering themselves for re-election. Pat Ryan was co-opted by the Board during the previous year and is standing for election to the Board along with former Board Director Pat McGillion. As the number of vacancies was greater than the number of nominations for Elected Director places, Fintan declared all these candidates duly elected. He then announced the Board Directors and Elected Directors for the year ahead.

Finally, Fintan explained that the Charities Regulator had asked the organisation to make some changes to clauses in its constitution to bring it more in line with the Regulator's guidelines. All the changes concern the Memorandum of Association. They have asked that we add new clauses to the Constitution on areas such as the powers of the organisation to employ staff and offer benefits to such staff. Other changes involve clarification of existing clauses to make them clearer and more comprehensive.

The Board recommended approval of these amendments to the constitution by the members. The Company Secretary's Report was then adopted on a proposal by Susan Dowling, seconded by Mary Byrne.

Treasurer's Report Q&A

Peter Barron asked why the presentation was in graphs and asked could there not be a slide showing all the expenditure in a list as they would appear in the accounts. Miriam asked the CEO, Fran Brennan, to respond. Fran explained that all the members received a set of accounts in the post and there were further copies available at the conference. Therefore, there did not appear to be any need to repeat this format in the presentation and the use of charts and graphics was purely to make the figures more user friendly. However, he agreed that such a slide could be included next year if there was a demand for it. The



Treasurer's report was then adopted by the meeting on a proposal by Peter Barron, seconded by Pat Skehan.

Resolutions

The Chair then introduced the four resolutions to be considered. She advised delegates that a significant number of proxy votes had been received by post and would be added to those cast by members present and those online.

Resolution 1. Approval of 2022 Accounts.

Resolution 2. Appointment of BMOL Accountants as Auditors for 2023.

Resolution 3. Ratification of James Doorley as a Board Nominated Director for another 3-year term.

Resolution 4. Amendments to Constitution in accordance with guidance from the Charities Regulator.

The Chair then declared all the resolutions adopted and thanked all the members who voted.

Any Other Business

The Chair asked the members present and online if anyone wished to raise anything under Any Other Business. Susan Dowling asked for a few minutes to update members on the Justice for Polio Survivors campaign. She explained that the campaign was receiving pro bono legal advice and was preparing a complaint to be submitted to the Charities Regulator. She asked any members who wished to help the campaign to speak to her in the foyer after the AGM.

Anne Shanahan welcomed the appointment of new staff in recent months and asked these staff members to stand up and introduce themselves to the members. The staff then all did so. As no other matters were raised, the Chair declared the meeting closed and thanked all those who attended in person and online and those who voted by proxy.



Reflections on 30 Years – John Dolan

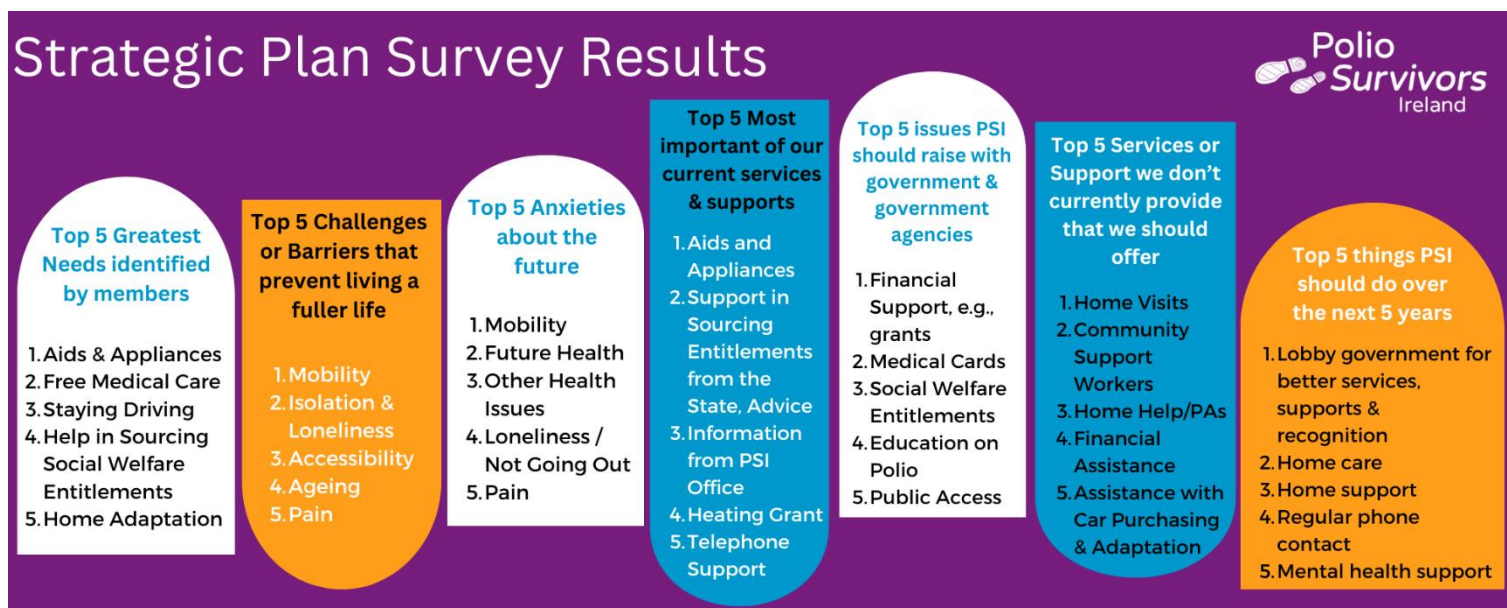


Polio Survivors Ireland member and CEO of the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI), John Dolan spoke of his memories down the years and the development of the organisation. John fondly remembered Joan Bradley (as a mother figure), Jim Costello (always on the ball), Rosaleen Gallagher and many others who significantly contributed to the work that started from Joan's kitchen table and Jim's hospital room, which Anne Shanahan recalled was like his office.

John's address brought back many memories and some laughs from the audience and was a fitting way to celebrate our 30th anniversary.

Strategic Plan Survey Results

Fran Brennan, CEO, concluded the Conference with a short presentation on the recent Strategic Plan Survey Results. Every member was sent a Members' Needs Questionnaire last autumn and based on this data we selected a representative sample of members for the survey. This was based on Age, Level of Disability, Income, Gender, and Migrant Status. Here is an overview of the results:



Greatest needs identified by members:

Top 5: Aids and Appliances, Free Medical Care, Staying Driving, Help in Sourcing Social Welfare Entitlements and Home Adaptation.

Challenges/Barriers that prevent living a fuller life:

Top 5: Mobility, Isolation and Loneliness, Accessibility, Ageing and Pain.

Anxieties about the future:

Top 5: Mobility, Future Health, Other Health Issues, Loneliness/Not Going Out and Pain.

Most important of our current services and supports:

Top 5: Aids and Appliances, Support in Sourcing Entitlements from the State, Advice and Information from the Office, Heating Grant and Telephone Support.

Issues the organisation should raise with the government and government agencies:

Top 5: Financial Support e.g., grants, Medical Cards, Social Welfare Entitlements, Education on Polio, and Public Access.

Service or support we don't currently provide that we should offer:

Top 5: Home Visits, Community Support Workers, Home Helps/PAs, Financial Assistance and Assistance with Car Purchasing and Adaptation.

One thing the organisation should do over the next 5 years:

Top 5: Lobby government for better services, supports and better recognition, home care and home support, regular phone contact, mental health support.

Next steps: Now that a survey of members has been undertaken and is, as of Summer 2023, being analysed with further research via workshops to take place, this will help identify the needs and priorities of polio survivors for the next number of years. CEO Fran Brennan said that workshops of members, staff and the Board will consider the findings of the survey before work begins on finalising the strategic plan itself.

The Conference concluded with the distribution of the last of our raffle prizes.

Huge thanks to all involved, particularly the volunteers who helped us – greeters, fundraising table helpers, stewards, presenters, and anyone who played a hand in ensuring that the day ran smoothly.



Highlights of 2023

European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities

Our Cathaoirleach, Macrina Clancy, visited Brussels as part of the Irish delegation to the Fifth European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities (EPPD). The theme for the event was "Building an inclusive future for persons with disabilities in the EU." The 13-strong Irish delegation emphasised that disability rights are everyone's concern. We are so proud of Macrina for representing Polio Survivors Ireland in the famous hemicycle of the European Parliament! Many thanks to the European Disability Forum and Disability Federation of Ireland for coordinating the delegation throughout the visit.



At the President's Garden Party

While President Michael D. Higgins was unable to join us at our 30th Anniversary Conference, he did send us a kind message to congratulate us on 30 years of Polio Survivors Ireland. Later, we were invited to attend a Community Heritage Day Garden Party at Áras an Uachtaráin on Sunday 2nd July.

Board members Charlie Smith, Zaynab Salman and Cathaoirleach Macrina Clancy attended, alongside members Anne Shanahan, Anne Burns and staff member, Emma Clarke Conway. On arriving at the Áras, guests were greeted most graciously by Sabina Higgins and thanks to Macrina, we stole an opportunity to nab a photo!

Passing through the various reception rooms of the Áras felt like a stroll through history, with tour guides on hand to answer questions. Although the weather was a little uncertain, the rain held off while guests took in the endless lawns, stunning flowers, and assorted entertainment. What a wonderful honour for our organisation to be invited to such a prestigious event.



New Office

Polio Survivors Ireland moved to a new home over the summer! After a long time in the surroundings of Capel Building, we have moved to Coleraine House on Coleraine Street, Dublin 7.



Coleraine House is part of the Carmichael Centre which many of our members may recall was our original home before we moved to Capel Street. We will benefit from the Centre's shared services there, and it will be wonderful to be in the same location as other charities who are doing such similar work. Hopefully, we can all learn from each other.

Cork Lord Mayor's Community & Voluntary Awards 2023

We were enormously proud of the Cork Social Support Group who won the Health & Wellbeing Category of the Cork Lord Mayor's Community & Voluntary Awards 2023. Huge congratulations to all members, past and present, of the Cork group for this deserved honour.

Particular thanks go to Cork Convenor, Evelyn Wainwright, who attended the awards ceremony in Cork City Hall and received the award on behalf of the Cork Social Support Group. As Convenor Evelyn organises the meetings and events which mean so much to our members around Cork. Thank you for all your hard work, Evelyn, and for representing Polio Survivors Ireland so proudly in Cork!



Fundraising 2023

In 2023 we sought out several grants with the goal of once again providing our Winter Heating Grant to members in need. We were very grateful to many members who appealed to their local credit unions for donations on our behalf.

Hospital Saturday Fund



At a Special Reception in Dublin, twenty-eight Irish charities received donations from the Hospital Saturday Fund. In total, €136,000 was donated to the medical charities and organisations at the event, which was hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Caroline Conroy. Our Communications & Development Officer, Emma Clarke Conway, was delighted to be on hand to receive a cheque from HSF Charity's CEO Paul Jackson and the Lord Mayor. Polio

Survivors Ireland is thrilled to once again be a beneficiary of this wonderful fund which will enable us to provide heating support to members who most need it.

Castle Vintage Club

Huge thanks to the Castle Vintage Club, Taghmon, Co. Wexford, who raise monies by organising tractor runs all over the south of Ireland every year. Tony secured a very generous donation of €1,000, as presented in the photo. We are very grateful to Tony and to the members of Castle Vintage Club for their efforts. All funds raised go to supporting polio survivors who need our help.



Pictured are David Maher, Secretary, Castle Vintage Club, Taghmon, Co. Wexford, Pat Monaghan, Chairman, and Polio Survivors Ireland member, Tony Jeffers, Wexford.



A selection of other key grants we received in 2023 came from:

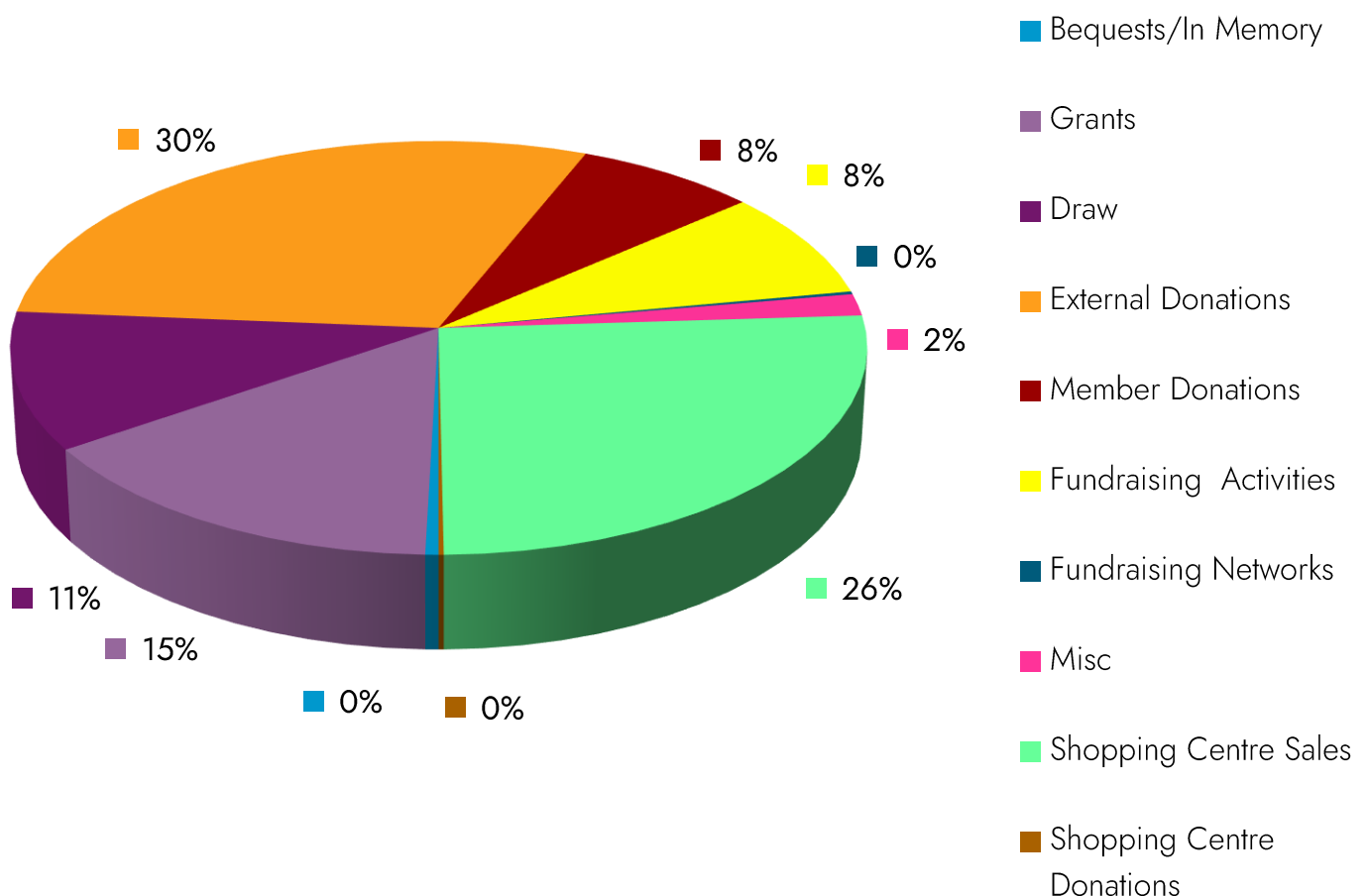
- ❖ SICAP Cork City Council Partnership
- ❖ Aldi Community Grant
- ❖ Monkstown Hospital Foundation
- ❖ Tesco Community Fund
- ❖ Mansion House Fuel Fund
- ❖ Dundalk Credit Union

These grants all played an important role in maintaining our services and helping to ensure the future of the organisation.

The total income from Fundraising was €90,716. This income came from the following sources:

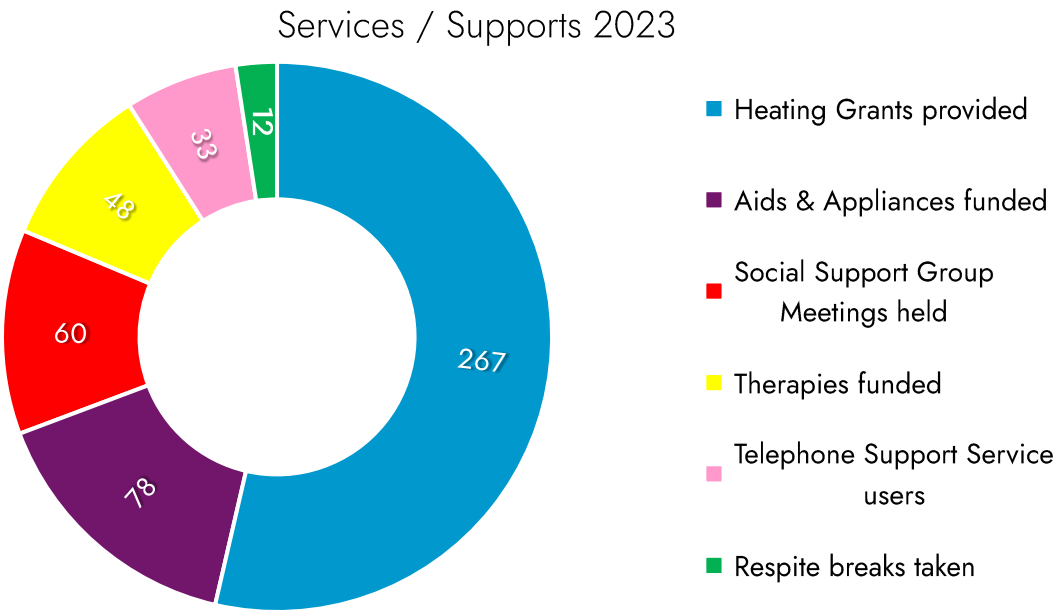
Overall Fundraising Income 2023

Fundraising Income Total: €90,716



Service Provision Report

Polio Survivors Ireland directly provides services and supports to a significant proportion of its members each year, while the remainder receive news and helpful information through our Survivor magazine and our regular ezine. The number of members stood at 1009 at the end of 2023. In addition, another 19 polio survivors joined the Polio Register, meaning that 455 survivors have signed the register since it was launched. We recruited 35 new members in 2023, and 9 members volunteered for active roles within the organisation during the year.



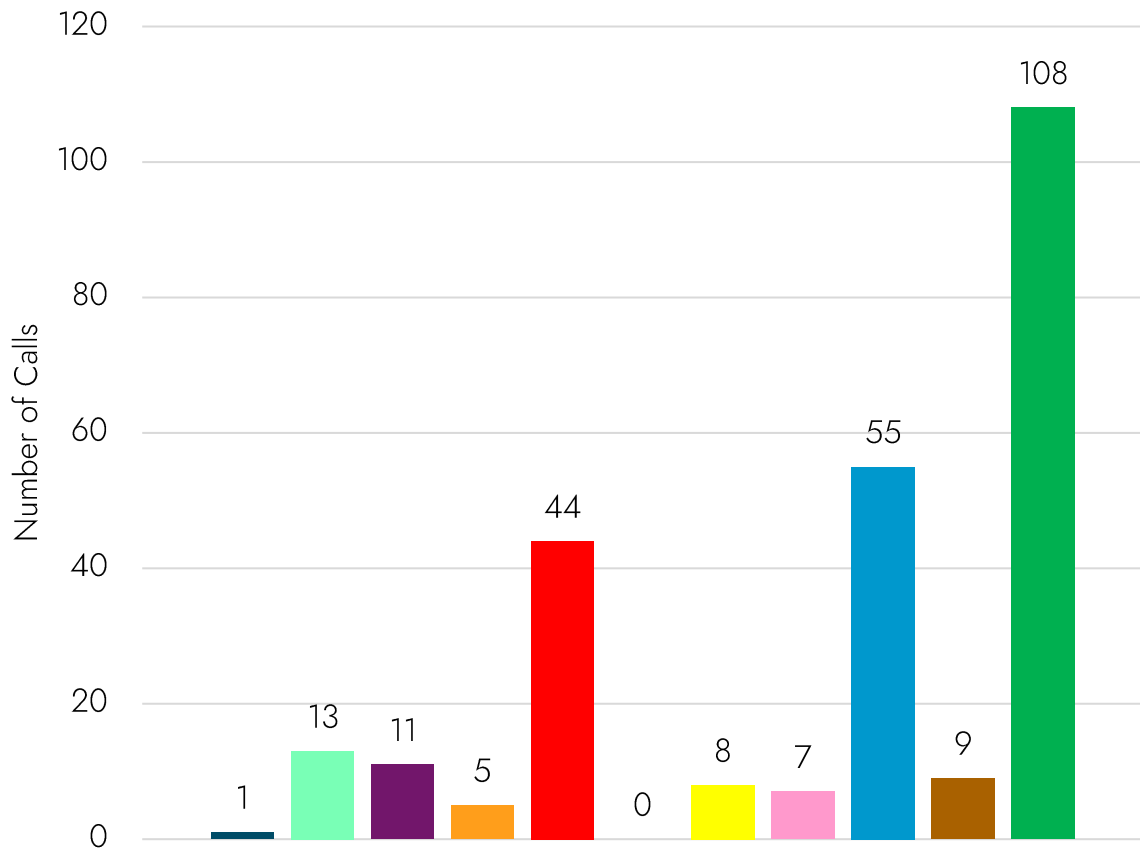
In 2023 we were able to provide 267 Heating Grants of €125 to those most in need. We were also able to assist with the funding of 78 Aids and Appliances. We funded a variety of therapies for 48 members.

The Services and Information Coordinators reported that the number of enquiries regarding Housing almost doubled from 28 in 2022 to 44 in 2023. This reflects the ongoing housing crisis.

Please see the chart below for a more detailed listing of member enquiries.



Member Enquiries 2023



Subject of Enquiry	Number of Enquiries
Polio Register	1
Membership	13
Information Pack	11
Counselling	5
Housing	44
Disability Allowance	0
Social Welfare	8
Disabled Drivers/ Parking/Travel	7
Wellbeing	55
Neurologist Details	9
Other	108

Complaints

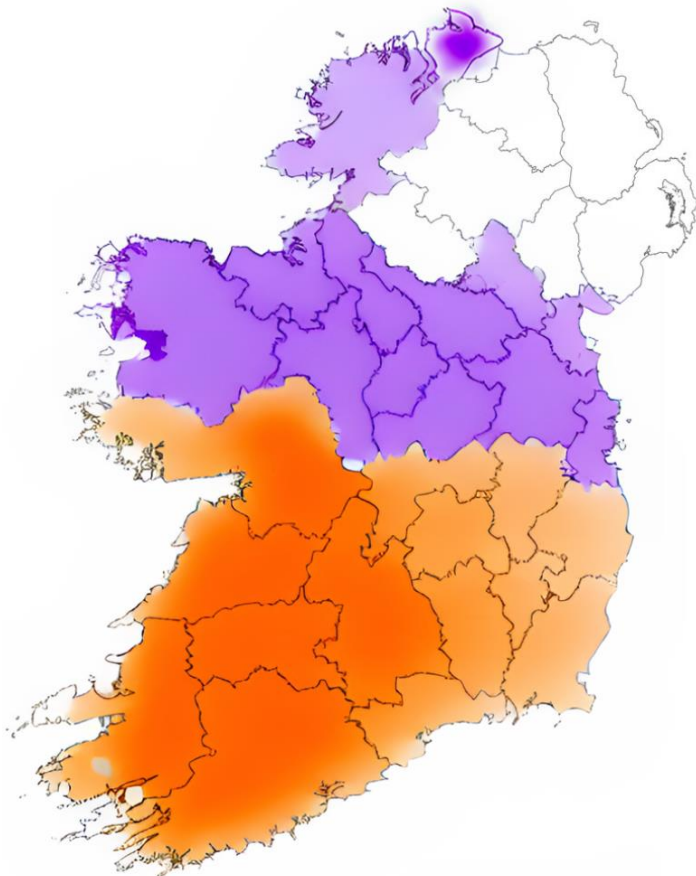
Polio Survivors Ireland has a complaints procedure and maintains a register of all complaints and actions arising from them. No complaints were recorded in 2023.



Social Support

Member Engagement Officers (MEO's)

Our new MEO's, Nuala McLaughlin & Órna Maddock supported social support groups to get back on their feet again after the Covid break. The number of meetings held in 2023 has doubled compared to 2022. They also worked to re-establish the Dublin Swords, Limerick, Galway, Clare, Navan and Louth groups. They created a new group in Cavan/Monaghan. In addition, the MEOs held area meetings with members in Arklow, Athlone, Cavan, Drogheda, Galway, Portlaoise, Mallow, Navan & Nenagh.



Nuala is Member Engagement Officer for:

Dublin, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim & Longford, Louth, Westmeath, Roscommon, Sligo, Mayo, Donegal.

Órna is Member Engagement Officer for:

Galway, Clare, Limerick, Kerry, Cork, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly, Kildare.



Advocacy

Advocacy and Policy Officer (APO)

The new Advocacy and Policy Officer Ciara Power worked on a number of issues on behalf of our members in 2023. She made a submission to the National Disability Authority on the poor provision of therapies such as physio in the community. She also attended the DFI Policy Forum.

Ciara also prepared and issued a pre-budget statement calling for improved supports to meet the cost of home heating. She has also raised the issue of people with disabilities moving to old age pensions at 66 and losing disability entitlements and has issued guidance to members on how to raise accessibility issues with their local council.



Financial Summary

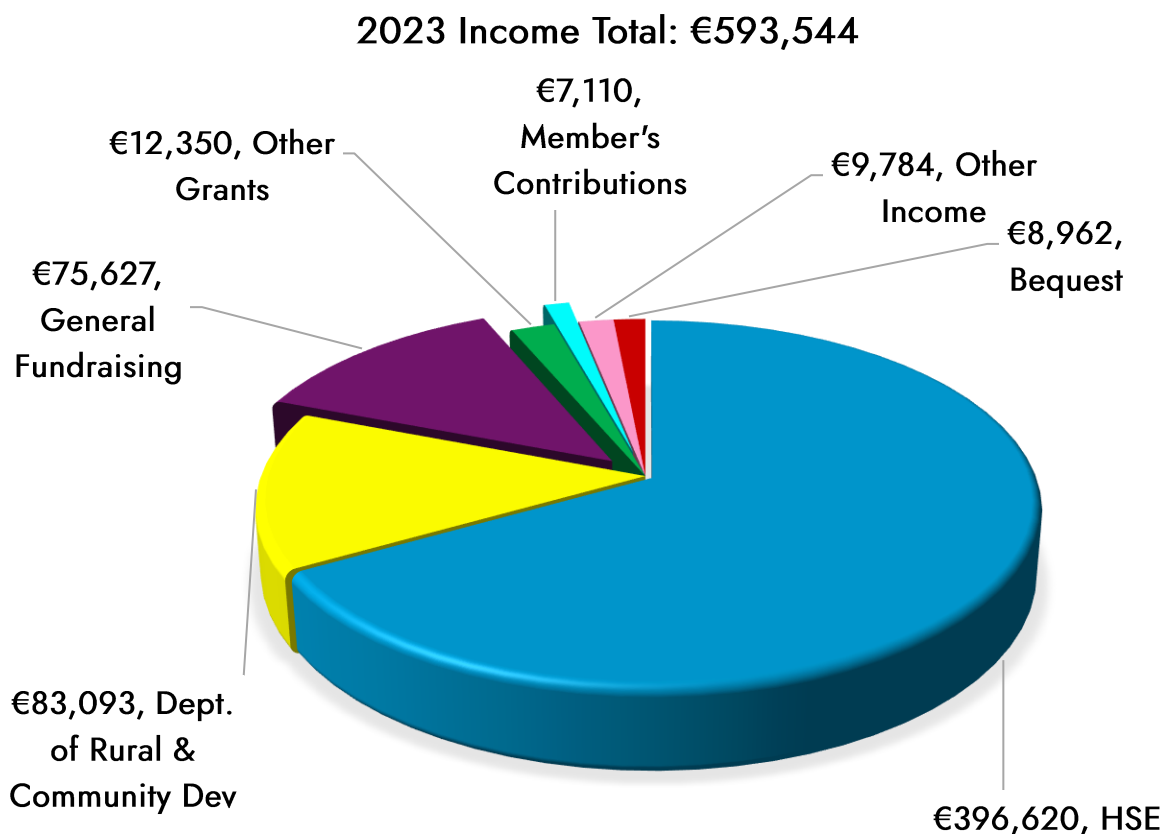
Income in 2023

Total income in 2023 was €593,544 compared to €484,855 in 2022. This is a 22% increase, which is largely due to the securing of an SSNO grant from the Department of Rural & Community Development via Pobal.

Members contributions refer to members' annual affiliations and contributions made towards the cost of events. Other income includes deposit interest, advertising in the Survivor magazine and VAT refunds.

The organisation receives <50% of its funding from the Exchequer.

Below is a detailed breakdown of the overall income in 2023.

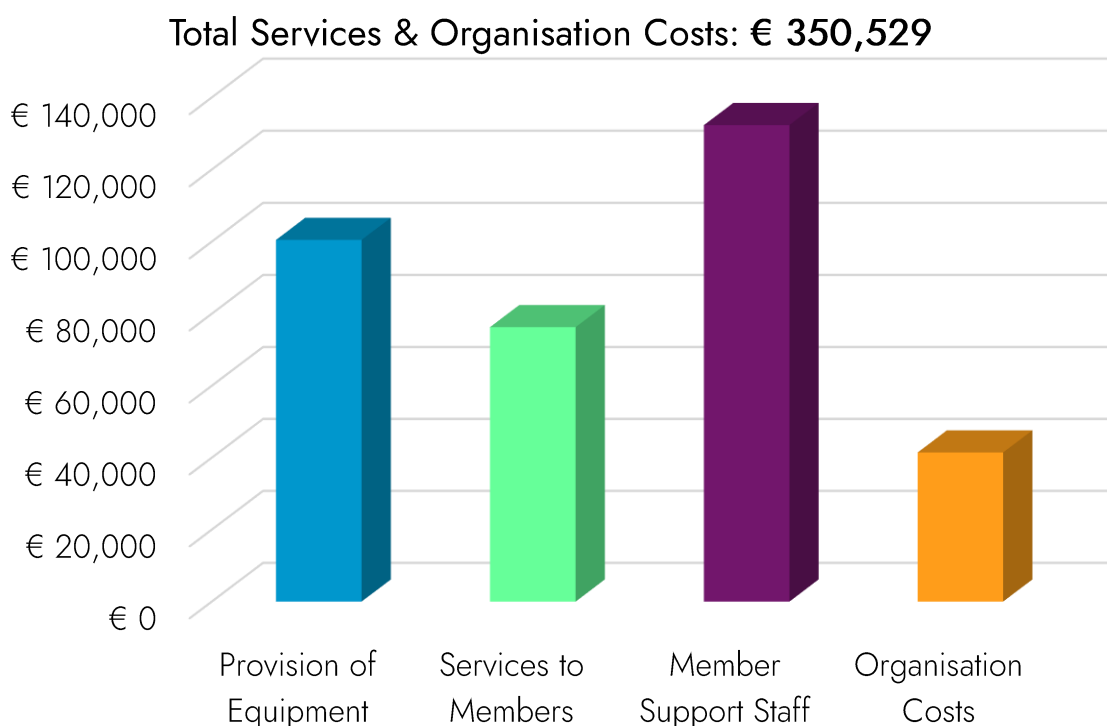


Expenditure in 2023

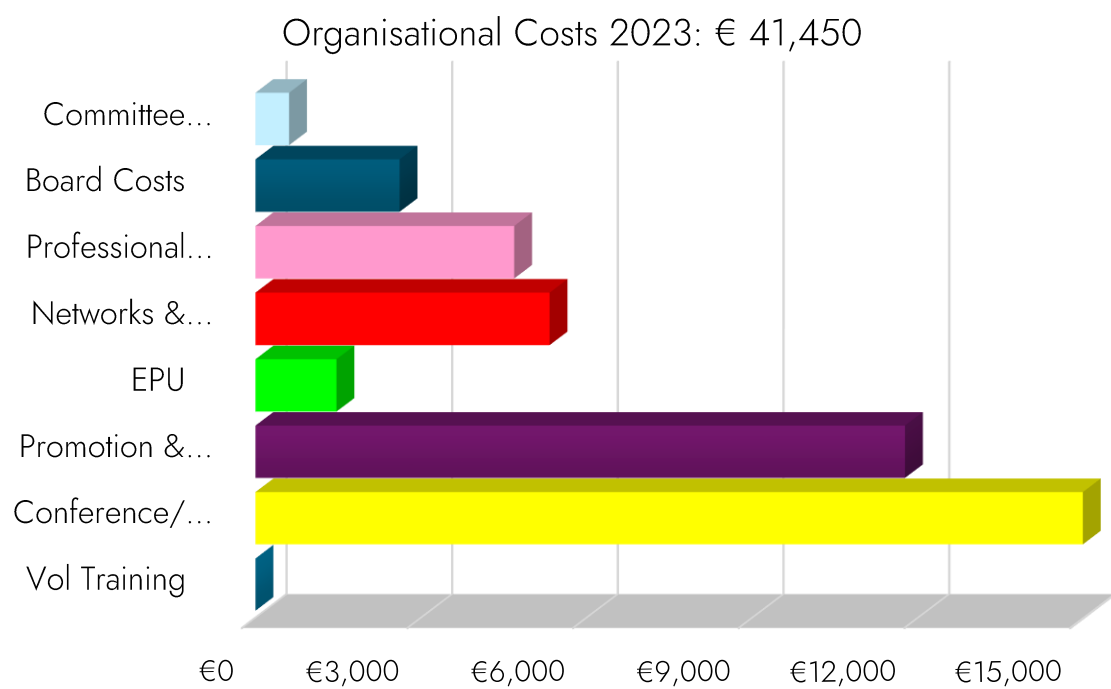
The total expenditure in 2023 was €599,239 in comparison to €497,928 in 2022. The 20% increase in expenditure was primarily due to increased expenditure on member engagement and advocacy arising from the SSNO grant. However, there were some unexpected organisational costs, such as the necessity of holding an EGM due to the need for members to approve a new firm of auditors, and costs incurred in moving from the Capel Buildings to our new location in Coleraine House. The organisation recorded a total loss of €5,695 in 2023, an improvement compared to the loss of €13,073 in 2022. Below is a detailed breakdown of the overall expenditure in 2023:

Service & Organisation Costs

Organisational costs are those costs relating to the governance and operations of a national membership organisation. When combined with Service Provision costs this expenditure was €350,529 in 2023.

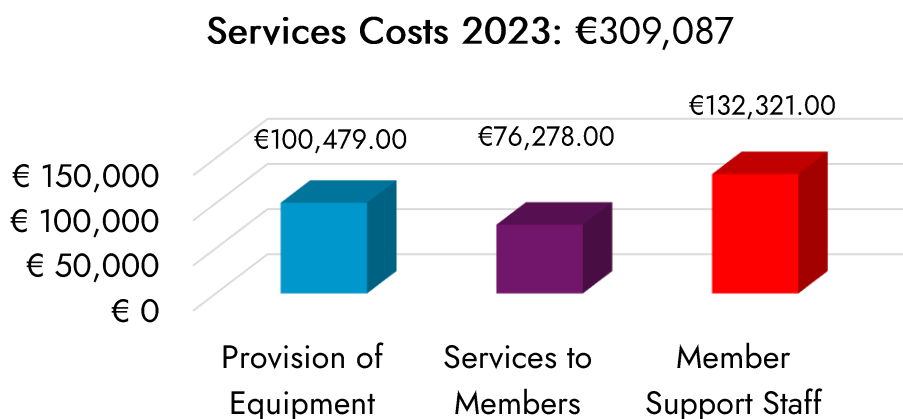


Organisation costs show an increase from €33,575 in 2022. This increase of €7,876 can be attributed to the cost of the Office Move and EGM. Professional Services refer to HR, strategic and consultancy support costs. The costs incurred in 2023 are illustrated below:

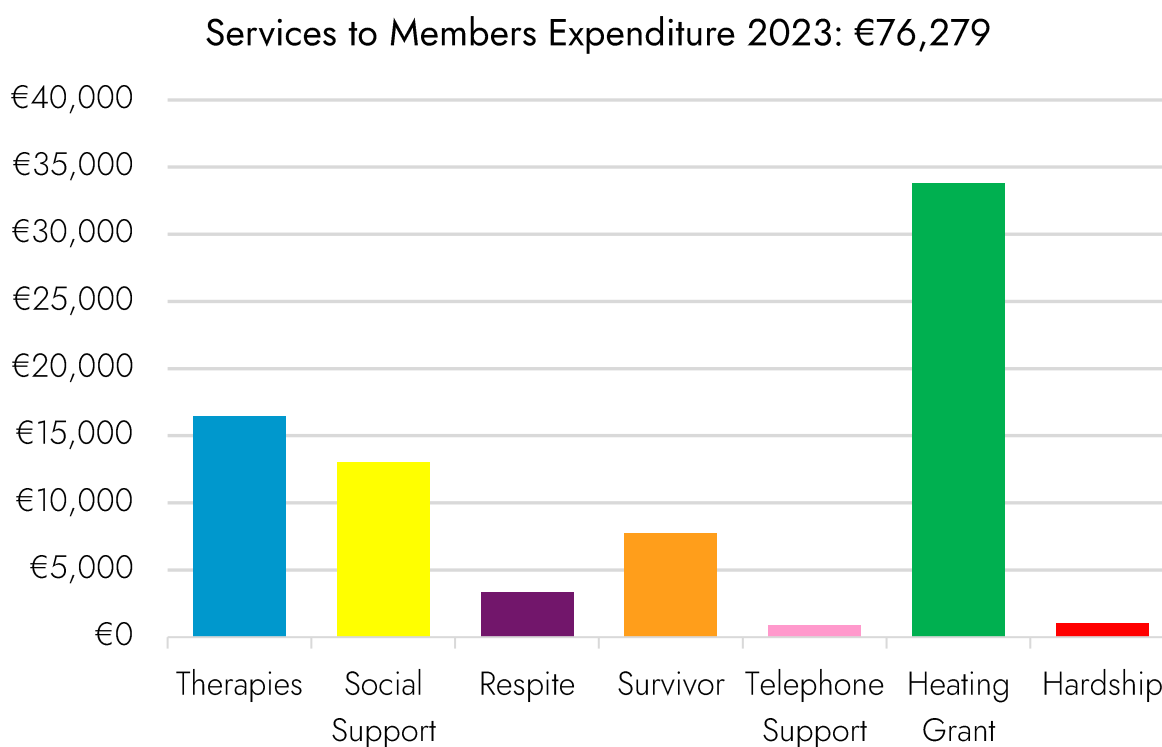


Services to Members

Total expenditure on Service Provision costs is outlined in the graph below. Due to the hiring of 2 new Member Engagement Officers using the Pobal funding, expenditure on Member Support Staff has increased in 2023.

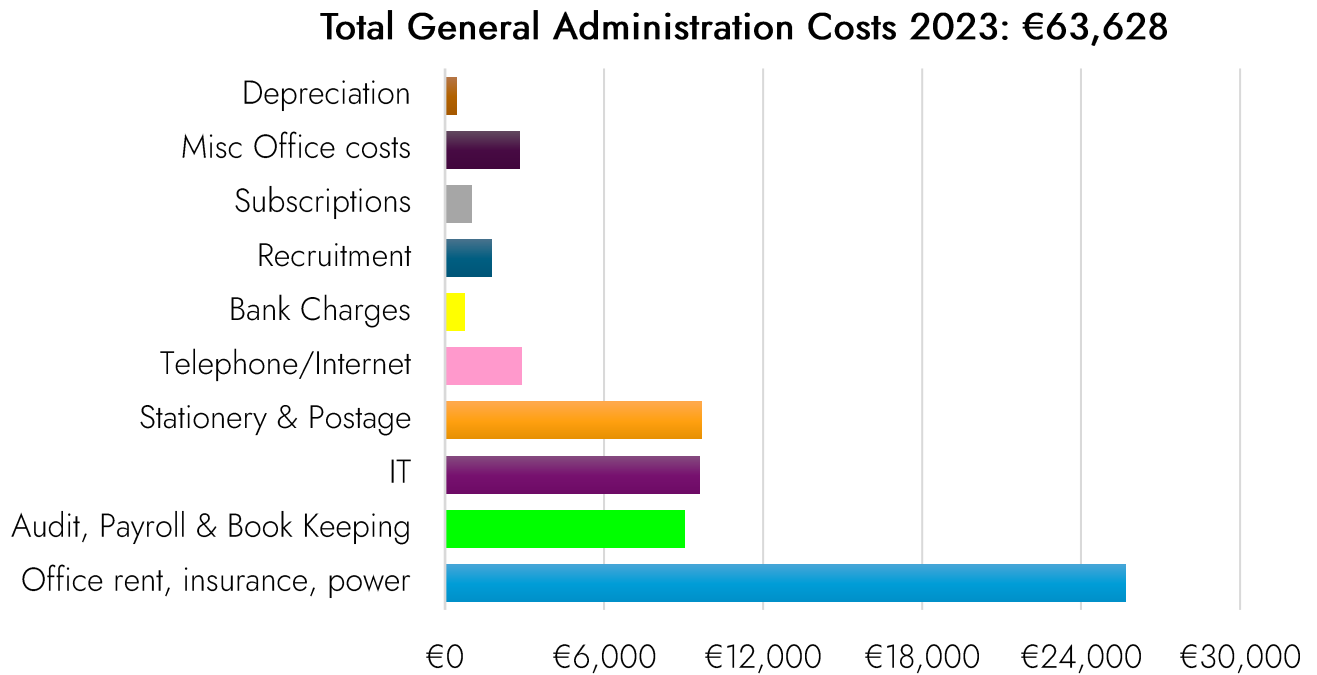


The chart below illustrates the expenditure across the range of Services to Members, apart from Provision of Equipment. Expenditure on Provision of Equipment was €100,479 in 2023, in comparison to €78,968 in 2022.



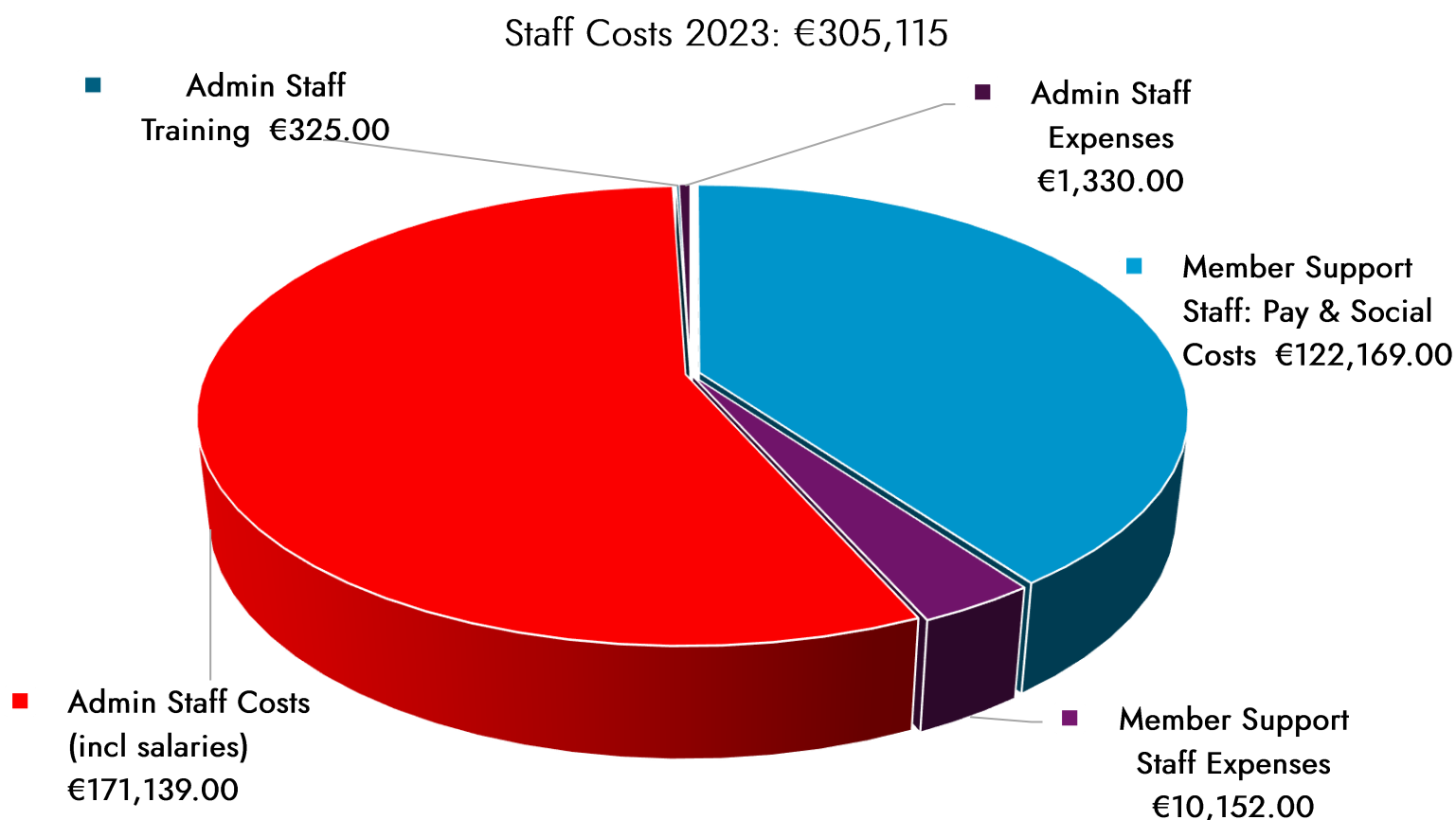
Administration Costs

Administration Costs can be broken down into General Administration Costs, Expenditure on Staff and Fundraising Expenses. The impact of Depreciation was negligible. Please see the chart below for a detailed breakdown of the General Administration costs for 2023.



Expenditure on Staff

Staffing costs fall into two categories, Member Support Staff and Administration staff. The chart below illustrates expenditure on staff in 2023.



Member Support Staff:

- Service & Information Co-ordinator (SIC), and Assistant Service & Information Co-ordinator (ASIC) who directly support members through the provision of aids and appliances, therapies, respite, and the winter heating grant, along with supporting members with information, advice, and individual advocacy.
- Membership & Volunteer Recruitment Officer (MVRO) supports the recruitment of new members, the recruitment of active members and external volunteers and the training and support of these active members/volunteers.



- **Member Engagement Officers (MEO's)** travel around the country ensuring that polio survivors can connect with their peers and are being reached by the organisation.

Administration Staff

- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** responsible for the overall management of the organisation
- **Communications & Development Officer (CDO)** undertakes communications, promotional activities, and fundraising.
- **Communications & Fundraising Assistant (CFA)** assists the CDO.
- **Administration Officer (AO)** is responsible for general administration including financial administration, reporting to funders, and developing and maintaining policies and procedures.
- **Advocacy & Policy Officer (APO)** is responsible for research on key issues affecting the quality of life of survivors, developing policy proposals and advocating and campaigning for changes to public policy and improved State supports.

Fundraising Expenditure

Fundraising expenses were €12,288 in 2023 compared to €15,235 in 2022.

Reserves

Net Current Assets less current liabilities at the end of 2023 were €74,572. This compares with €89,226 at the end of the previous year.



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