



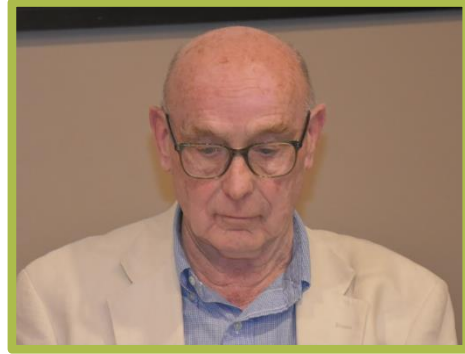
IRISH SENIOR CITIZENS PARLIAMENT

Annual Report 2025



Chairperson's Foreword

I am pleased to present this report, which reflects the commitment, hard work, and shared purpose of everyone involved in our organisation over the past year. This report not only highlights our achievements, but also recognises the challenges we face.



2025 has been marked by continued advocacy on behalf of our members and older people across Ireland. Significant challenges remain, particularly in relation to income adequacy through pension provision both occupational and state, access to healthcare, and suitable housing. The need for a Commissioner for Ageing and Older People remains a key policy issue.

Our work continues to be guided by the voices and experiences of our members. Your engagement, participation, and commitment are central to strengthening our collective influence. On behalf of the Board and Executive, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board and Executive, our staff team and supporters for their ongoing contribution, but mostly to you our members who ensure we can speak with authenticity to the issues experienced by older people.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the members of the Board and Executive Committee and staff for their courtesy to me and for making my task in chairing our meetings so easy. Together, we will continue to work towards a fairer, more inclusive society for all older people.

I commend this report to you and thank you for your continued interest in and support of our work.

Tom Gillen
ISCP President

CEO Report

To our Members, Affiliates, and Friends,

As I reflect on the past twelve months, the word that resonates most is resilience. 2025 was a year of significant challenges for older people in Ireland, but it was also a year where our collective voice grew louder and more unified than ever before. As the "Voice of Older People," the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament has remained steadfast in our mission: to ensure that those who built this country are not left behind in its future.

In 2025, the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament (ISCP) successfully maximised its unique "grassroots voice" where we are no longer seen as a "protest" voice, the ISCP has transitioned into a strategic partner for national policy and representative body at the National Economic Dialogue, on Joint Oireachtas Committee hearings, Ministerial and Departmental subgroups, ensuring that the concerns of you our members are met with actionable solutions rather than just acknowledgement.

We remain focused on protecting the purchasing power of seniors against persistent cost-of-living challenges. As the leading advocate for pension reform, the ISCP campaigned tirelessly for the State Pension to be benchmarked at 34% of average earnings. While Budget 2025/2026 delivered mixed results, our high-profile media presence successfully kept the "invisible" hardships of older people living alone at the forefront of the political agenda. Furthermore, we secured a vital "Digital Floor" by successfully lobbying for the retention of non-digital access points for state services, ensuring the 41% of over-75s who are not online remain protected from "digital-first" disenfranchisement.

We continue our work through the Alliance of Age Sector NGOs, where the Alliance brings strength and unity to cross-party interest in establishing a Commissioner for Older People, a move intended to provide a permanent legal safeguard for our members' interests.

Our mandate for 2026 is driven by robust, first-hand data. We engaged directly with over 500 members through our annual budget and health surveys. These insights are particularly critical given the current deficit in official National and European data regarding those over 65. Representing over 100 affiliated groups, the ISCP remains the primary democratic voice for Ireland's retired population.

Our National Consultation was conducted with Age Action (see next section for more details). This initiative was specifically designed to address the historic fragmentation of the age sector. Our operational goal remains clear: to explore deeper collaboration and organisational alignment to ensure the sector speaks with one undeniable, powerful voice.

The Bottom Line for 2026

As we look towards the coming year, the ISCP is focused on finalising the roadmap for organisational alignment. We are committed to ensuring that the Government keeps the "Older Vote" at the centre of every decision, moving from consultation to concrete, systemic empowerment.

National Consultation on Older People (2025)

Between August and September 2025, a landmark national consultation was conducted to evaluate and strengthen the participation of older people in Ireland's civic and public decision-making. Capturing the voices of 764 contributors, the report highlights a significant desire for systemic change, moving away from tokenistic engagement toward a unified, impactful collective voice.

The consultation took a multi-channel approach to bridge the digital divide and ensure geographic coverage across all 26 counties.

- **Participation Channels:** 77% responded online, while the remainder engaged via paper surveys, telephone interviews, and community events.
- **Age Profile:** Respondents ranged from 50 to over 90, with 80% falling within the 60–79 age bracket.
- **Gender & Ethnicity:** 68.6% of participants were women. While 96.1% identified as Irish, the report notes a critical need for increased outreach to minority ethnic groups to reflect Ireland's changing demographics.
- **Regional Reach:** Leinster accounted for the majority of responses (52.7%), with Dublin being the most active hub (36.7%).

Despite a high willingness to contribute, a clear disconnect exists between being "consulted" and being "heard."

- **Engagement Levels:** While 59.4% engage in public policy at least "sometimes," only 19.4% feel their voices actually carry weight in public issues.
- **Barriers to Inclusion:** Significant hurdles include digital exclusion, lack of feedback (no "loop" showing how input was used), and a feeling of invisibility within health and social services.
- **Current Affiliations:** Nearly 39% of respondents have no formal organisational affiliation, suggesting a massive "silent" population that relies on local, community-based participation rather than national bodies.

The qualitative feedback pointed toward four pillars for future development:

1. **Unified Representation:** Strong frustration exists regarding the fragmentation of advocacy groups. Participants called for a more collaborative approach to create a more powerful, streamlined lobby.
2. **Structural Advocacy:** A core recommendation is the establishment of a statutory Commissioner for Ageing and Older People to safeguard representation and monitor inclusion.
3. **Accountability:** Implementation of "You Said, We Did" reporting frameworks to ensure transparency and prove that consultation leads to tangible policy action.
4. **Local Centricity:** Meaningful engagement happens best at the local level. Future strategies should explore a focus on regional hubs and face-to-face dialogue to ensure those most marginalised remain included.

Future Outlook - The survey carried out by ISCP (focused on grassroots representation) and Age Action (focused on service delivery and rights) by Mosaic Social Impact, with Community Foundation Ireland funding provides a better understanding of a need for a more cohesive infrastructure that empowers older people to shape the public life of Ireland.

2025 ISCP Staff



Our office team, left to right – Sharon Casey, Pat Mellon, Grace Bergin.

CEO – full-time – Pat Mellon since January 2024

Office Co-ordinator - part-time, 9-5 on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – Grace Bergin since 2019

Membership Development Officer- part-time 9-5 on Tuesday, Wednesday until June 2025 with 4 additional hours per week where feasible. -Sharon Casey since Feb 2025.

We are currently awaiting an update from Pobal on our funding application for the next 3-year cycle, this was submitted in early December 2025. Pobal funding is drawn down after a waiting period, this funding pays staff salaries. We are totally reliant on membership fees and fundraising to pay for Employer PRSI and **ALL OTHER COSTS** as they are not covered by Pobal.

The maximum Pobal funding available for next round was capped at the same level as previous round (i.e. 90K per year). This is despite new mandatory employer contributions from January 2026 for pension auto-enrolment and previously implemented employer liability for statutory sick pay from January 2023.

All staff are on contracts which match a 3-year cycle to match Pobal funding- the current round of funding 2022-2025 was extended by 6 months to 30 June 2026. In effect staff are in a precarious situation while we await an update on funding application. This insecurity and a work load requiring more staff resources than funding allows can force employees to consider moving to more permanent and secure employment and affects who can consider working with us.

In 2025, out of the team of three, there has been one change – Sharon Casey started as MDO in February filling a vacancy.

Executive Summary

This Annual Report provides an overview of the Irish Senior Citizens' Parliament's (ISCP) work and achievements during 2025. It is presented for members to highlight key developments in policy, advocacy, and organisational activity affecting older people in Ireland.

Throughout the year, ISCP continued to advocate for improved supports in areas such as pensions, housing, healthcare, and social inclusion. While some progress has been made through the Programme for Government and Budget 2025 measures, significant gaps remain—particularly in relation to pension adequacy, accessible housing, and meaningful participation of older people in decision-making.

Consultation with members and older people nationwide reinforces the need for stronger representation, better resourcing of services, and policies that reflect the realities of ageing in Ireland today.

ISCP remains committed to working on behalf of its members to influence policy, promote equality, and ensure that older people can live with dignity, independence, and respect.

Key Highlights 2025

- Continued advocacy on pensions, housing, healthcare and Commissioner for Ageing and Older People through our departmental submissions formed from the results of members surveys.
- Active participation from members in consultations and events
- Ongoing collaboration with partner organisations
- Increased visibility of issues affecting older people
- Representation at key national events

This Annual Report outlines the work, priorities, and activities of the Irish Senior Citizens' Parliament (ISCP) during 2025. It is intended to inform members of key developments and to provide a clear account of the organisation's ongoing advocacy with and on behalf of older people.

ISCP remains committed to promoting the rights, wellbeing, and inclusion of older people across Ireland through evidence-based policy engagement, collaboration, and member participation.

Policy and Advocacy

"A PROMISE IS ONLY A PROMISE WHEN IT IS KEPT, OTHERWISE, IT'S A LIE!"

Programme for Government 2025

The Programme for Government includes commitments to:

- Expand home care services and supports
- Improve supports for carers, including payments and respite
- Increase funding for residential care and reduce waiting lists
- Maintain the State Pension age at 66 and gradually increase payments

However, ISCP notes that key gaps remain:

- No commitment to appoint an Independent Commissioner for Older People (despite it being in previous Programmes for Government)
- No clear progress on pension reform or benchmarking of the 34% pension promise.

Budget 2026

Budget 2026 introduced:

- €10 increase in weekly State Pension
- €5 increase in Fuel Allowance
- Additional funding for home care and nursing home places

ISCP considers these measures to be insufficient to meet ongoing cost-of-living pressures and to adequately address long-term pension sustainability

At risk of poverty rate (%) of persons by age group and year

[Download CSV](#) [Print](#)

Search:

Year	18 - 34 years	65 years and over
2025	9.3	14.8
2024	8.8	13.3
2023	8.6	8.3
2022	7.6	20.1
2021	9.5	12.8
2020	13.5	9.1

Housing

Access to suitable, secure, and accessible housing remains a critical issue for older people and a priority concern for ISCP members. Senior Citizens are “talked about” in relation to housing where a better result would be where we are “talked to”.

- Current data collection methods do not capture accessible housing supply
- Older people face increasing challenges in buying or renting suitable homes
- The number of older people in private rental accommodation has significantly increased

With the population aged 65+ projected to rise substantially, ISCP calls for:

- Urgent action to increase supply of appropriate housing
- Improved data collection on housing accessibility
- Implementation of universal design principles

Change in age profile of renters				
Age	2011	2022	% change	
Under 25	41,183	26,062	37% decrease	
25-39	72,296	47,339	34.5% decrease	
30-34	66,186	57,564	13% decrease	
35-39	42,151	54,745	30% increase	
40-44	28,037	45,405	62% increase	
45-49	19,328	32,146	66% increase	
50-54	13,565	23,154	71% increase	
55-59	8,699	16,108	85% increase	
60-64	5,455	11,123	104% increase	
65 plus	8,477	16,986	100% increase	

Home & Community Care

The continued expansion of home care services, community-based supports, and day centres remains a key priority for members.

Residential Care – Fair Deal Scheme

We delivered a number of workshops on The Fair Deal Scheme; the scheme provides financial support for nursing home care based on:

- Care Needs Assessment
- Financial Assessment (income and assets)

The State covers remaining costs after individual contributions.

Healthcare Access

Long waiting lists continue to significantly impact older people's access to timely care. In some cases, alternative options, including cross-border healthcare under EU directives, are being utilised.

Income and Social Protection

Key concerns raised by members include:

- Lack of pension indexation to average earnings
- Rising cost of living impacting fixed incomes
- Need to review means-tested thresholds
- Gaps in supports such as Living Alone Allowance and Fuel Allowance

ISCP continues to advocate for:

- A pension set at 34% of average earnings

We work with a range of other organisations including SIPTU; Age Action to the Pension Promise Campaign

- Increased eligibility and supports for older people, particularly women and carers
- Support for the private Members Bill Industrial Relations Provisions in Respect of Pension Entitlements of Retired Workers Bill 2021.

We have worked tirelessly on campaigning to give retired workers a voice at the table when it comes to any decisions which will affect their pension income. We held a very successful session with TDs in November. This was very encouraging as many spoke to their support for the proposed Bill.



Organisational Activity and Member Engagement

Annual Parliament Meeting 2025

Held in May 2025, the APM brought members together to:

- Discuss key issues affecting older people
- Pass motions on pensions, cost of living, and healthcare
- Engage with guest speakers and stakeholders

Guest Speaker Dr. Nat O'Connor gave an excellent presentation on Ireland's Demographic Transition. He spoke about the reality of an ageing demographic and the need for Government policy to plan and be prepared for this and on the impact of an ageing demographic and the need to see this as a positive development and far from the tsunami of doom, that many referred to it as. Planning is crucial and we need to work to ensure the government are committed to this and can look beyond four years (political term of office) and the next election and truly act in a way that will ensure Ireland is a place that we can all grow old in. All we are seeking is to counteract the ageism we see and work with the government to ensure a rights-based approach.

2025 ISCP Board & Executive Committee

Board Members

President	Tom Gillen	(SIPTU RMS Region 5)
V President	Steve Petherbridge	(DCU AF)
Treasurer	Mick Casey	(ESB RMA – Lanesboro)
Hon Sec	Margaret Cooney	(SIPTU RMS National Committee)
Trustee	Mick O'Reilly	(Dublin Council of Trade Unions)

Committee Members

Anne Duffy	(DCU AF)
Pat Daly	Incoming (SIPTU RMS)
Sean Fahy	(Retired Nurses Eastern Branch)
Anne Flynn	(SIPTU RMS)
John Graham	(ESB RSA Dublin Region)
Joe Little	(RTE RSA)
Danny McConnell	Incoming (SIPTU RMS)
John McTiernan	(SIPTU RMS)
Seamus Murray	(SIPTU RMS)
Pat O'Flynn	Incoming (SIPTU RMS)
Martin Ryan	(ESB RSA – Waterford)
Tom Ryan	(INMO Retired Member)
Ann T Winters	(INMO Retired Member)

2024-2025 Out Going members

Imelda Browne (INMO Retired Member)

President 2022 – 2025

Vice President 2020-2021

Treasurer 2017 – 2020

Executive Committee since 2014

Bríd Carr (SIPTU Retired Member Section Region 3)

Executive Committee Member 2024 – 2025

Larry Duggan (SIPTU Retired Member Section Region 4)

Executive Committee Member 2014 – 2025

Gerry Foley (Alliance of Retired Public Servants)

Executive Committee Member 2023 – 2025

Mary Leslie (DCU Age Friendly University)

Executive Committee Member 2021 – 2025

Paddy Philpott (ESB RSA - Dublin Region)

Executive Committee Member 2012 – 2025

Ann Walsh (Alliance of Retired Public Servants)

Executive Committee Member 2023 – 2025

We wish to thank the outgoing committee members for their work and commitment to the work of Irish Senior Citizens Parliament.

Update on 2025 Motions

Taking on board findings of National Survey we outline the key actions undertaken on each motion.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

1. Living Alone Allowance

- Included in pre-Budget submission to Department of Social Protection (DSP).
- Raised by MDO at break-out room at pre-Budget Forum.
- Raised by MDO at 2025 Social Inclusion Forum in Croke Park
- Raised anomalies affecting Class D PRSI contributors at C & V Pillar annual think-in

2. Cost of Living

- Included in pre-budget submission to DSP
- Raised at pre-Budget Forum

- Attendance of staff and ISCP Executive members at Affordable Ireland Campaign, supporting fellow C&V Pillar members Disability Federation of Ireland, culminating in CEO being asked to speak at National Protest on 28th February and attendance of affiliated group members representing their own groups.
- Wrote directly to Minister Calleary on Fuel Allowance following his remarks to Dáil on 28th January 26 asking for details of steps being taken to raise awareness of Fuel Allowance and specifically on changes made from 2023 which bring more people into scope of qualifying for allowance.

3. Pensions

- Included in pre-budget submission to DSP
- Raised at pre-Budget Forum

4. Property Tax

- Included in pre-budget submission to DSP
- Raised at pre-Budget Forum

5. Pension promise campaign

- Included in pre-budget submission to DSP
- Raised at pre-Budget Forum
- Networking amongst C&V pillar group members, building solidarity with representatives of other sectors.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

6. Health Care for Older People – Waiting lists

7. Shingles Vaccine

- Amplified fellow Alliance of Age Sector NGO Members Campaign on the issue.

GENERAL MOTIONS

8. Commissioner for Older People

- Main point of presentations to Member Groups and potential Member group.
- Networking amongst C&V pillar group members, building solidarity with representatives of other sectors including those who engage with Ombudsman for Children.
- MDO attended meeting organised by NFPA where NI Commissioner for Older People made presentation on their role.
- Raised at Joint Oireachtas Committee on AI and Older people

9. Extreme Weather Events – Readiness

- MDO working with Executive members to encourage their participation in Older Peoples Councils in their local authority area.

EXECUTIVE MOTIONS

10. Industrial Relations Pension Bill

- Topic of numerous public events including AV room in Dáil on 4th November.
- Building awareness amongst C & V Pillar members

11. Review – Effective Implementation of Older person policy – update outlined in CEO report.

Membership

Membership contributions remain vital to sustaining ISCP operations. Our MDO has been actively engaging with many of our members and affiliated groups and we would like to thank group contacts for their engagement. There remain some groups who we have not yet been able to contact, our renewal process for 2026 will ask groups to give details of a second contact for their group which will hopefully assist in this. The intention is to complete this outreach piece in coming months. Members are encouraged to maintain active participation and engagement in ISCP activities.

Engagement with Members

Workshops and information sessions are ongoing, topics and themes chosen by members and their groups. The most popular workshop topics for 2025 were Fair Deal, Think Ahead using tools and pack developed by Irish Hospice Foundation, introduction to Decision Support Service and updates to setting up Enduring Power of Attorney.

We were invited to Joint Oireachtas Committee on AI and Older Persons. Our presentation was developed in conjunction with members.

Collaboration

Along with the National Consultation in conjunction with Age Action the ISCP continues to work in partnership with the Alliance of Age Sector NGO members and Community and Voluntary Pillar members to strengthen advocacy and policy influence.

Campaigns and Initiatives

- Intergenerational Week 2025 to promote inclusion and reduce ageism
- Pre-Budget submissions to key government departments
- Workshops on planning ahead, digital inclusion, and future care
- Engagement with policymakers and stakeholders

Health and Wellbeing

2025 brought partnership with Meaghers Pharmacy



Meaghers Pharmacy deserves immense credit for their steadfast support of the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament, a partnership that underscores a genuine commitment to the wellbeing of Ireland's older generations.

By championing preventative health care, Meaghers is doing far more than filling prescriptions; they are empowering seniors to take a proactive lead in their own wellness through accessible screenings and expert advice.

It is refreshing to see a community pillar treat health as a lifelong journey of prevention rather than just a reactive measure. Their dedication ensures that seniors aren't just supported in times of illness, but are equipped with the resources to lead vibrant, healthy, and independent lives.

Digital Inclusion and Technology

Digital exclusion remains a major concern. Many older people lack access or confidence with technology in a world climate which has increasing reliance on digital services, older people can be at risks of exclusion.

The collaboration between the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament and Age Friendly AI aims to provide a vital bridge across the digital divide. This synergy ensures that AI tools are designed with seniors rather than just for them, fostering a more inclusive society where technology serves as an accessible gateway to connection and essential services rather than a barrier.

Fundraising and Support

The annual raffle has been the primary fundraising activity. Member support is essential to sustain advocacy efforts, however based on an overall low response from members over the past few years, the decision was made to have no annual raffle in 2026, but to focus efforts on other fundraising options. We would like to thank the dedicated members who support the raffle every year and two individuals in particular who have made huge efforts in fundraising for our annual draws, namely Bernard C Byrne up to 2025 and Larry Duggan who was involved up to 2024 and to the staff who worked hard through the years on this initiative.

We extend a heartfelt thanks to all who supported the Raffle in 2025.

The list of winners:

1st Prize	M McComish	Coolock D5
2nd Prize	P Yeats	Donaghmede D13
3rd Prize	T Somers	Dublin 11
4th Prize	A Crowe	Donaghmede D13

A big **Thank You** to those who sponsored prizes and to the following Shopping Centres who facilitated us with Sales Days. We are extremely grateful for your support.

Omni Shopping Centre Santry, Dublin 9

Donaghmede Shopping Centre, Dublin 13

Looking Ahead

ISCP will continue to place members at the centre of its work, ensuring that their voices inform policy positions and advocacy priorities.

Ireland's ageing population presents both challenges and opportunities. ISCP will continue to:

- Advocate for fair and sustainable pensions
- Promote accessible housing and healthcare
- Strengthen the voice and participation of older people
- Work towards an inclusive, age-friendly society
- Work towards a sustainable income for the ISCP

Remembering

We extend our sympathy to the family, friends and fellow group members of former members who passed away in 2025 who were active as committee members on ISCP.

Conclusion

Looking to the year ahead our mission remains unchanged, to ensure that Ireland becomes a truly inclusive society where ageing is met with opportunity rather than isolation. Together with our affiliated organisations members, our dedicated volunteers, and our corporate partner whose support makes this vital work possible we will continue to lobby, represent, and empower, ensuring that the lived experience of every senior citizen is not only heard but acts as a catalyst for meaningful national policy.

We acknowledge and appreciate the ongoing support of funding from POBAL and Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht – Community and Voluntary Pillar



*An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail*

