

# NEWSLETTER

## UPDATE FROM THE CEO

Welcome to our second newsletter which arrives just as we move into November. The last number of months have been quite busy, particularly with the development and opening of our new residential centre Meadow View. We were delighted to welcome the three boys who will live there into their new home - more on that below.

As well as this exciting development, work continues on the Adult Day Centre in Kilcoole. Recent months have seen some progress with more updates to follow in the next edition once tender processes are complete.

It was great to see so many staff and people we support come together for our annual Summer Event held on the grounds of the EDC - a fun day for all. We also launched our new website and revitalised core values - Compassion, Integrity, Innovation and Dedication. These four values underpin the work we do each day in St Catherine's Association, how we support those in our care and how we engage with each other, our families and all other stakeholders in the course of our work. There will be more on this in the next edition of the newsletter, and I look forward to engaging with you all on this in coming months.

On a sad note, we marked the untimely passing of Darragh Fitzgerald who spent many happy years with St. Catherine's in both the school and in Haughton House where his Mam, Orla, is a member of the team. Darragh will be remembered for his bright, inquisitive nature - he loved nothing more than being part of the conversation and will be deeply missed by all in St. Catherine's.

*Michael*



MEADOW VIEW UPDATE

SUMMER EVENT

STAFF NEWS

OPERATIONS  
UPDATES

## RECENT CHANGES TO SERVICE PROVISION

As you are no doubt aware, an individual in receipt of residential services was due to transfer to an alternative provider for their adult residential placement at the beginning of October 2024. Unfortunately, that provider could not progress the transfer and we were due to return the resident's home to the landlord following termination of our lease.

We actively engaged with our colleagues in the Health Service Executive, Community Healthcare East, and other relevant agencies in an effort to secure an alternative placement. Unfortunately, there was no capacity immediately available to provide the support. In that regard, the HSE as our funding agency decided that St. Catherine's Association must suspend respite care in a designated centre until an alternative placement is available.

In the four weeks since respite services closed in Brambles, the Management Team has been actively engaged with the Health Service Executive in an effort to mitigate the impact on the children and families supported via Brambles to the greatest extent possible. Some contingency plans have been agreed and are in the process of being implemented while others are still being explored, both internally across our own services and with alternative providers.

The situation in which we now find ourselves is unprecedented. We are acutely aware of how much our respite services mean to the children and families we support and deeply regret the impact such a closure is likely to have.

It must be noted that the reaction from the teams at all locations affected by this change has been nothing but compassionate and person-centred, with all staff committed to mitigating the impact on others supported to the greatest extent possible. St. Catherine's Association are incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated team of people, ready to step up and do what is needed in the interests of those we support.

The Management Team continues to engage with all relevant parties on the implementation of contingency plans for those affected by this change in service provision, while also working to ensure a resolution is achieved as soon as reasonably possible.

## *Meadow View is now open!*

We are proud to announce the opening of Meadow View Residential Centre, a new facility designed to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for three young boys with complex needs. Meadow View aims to help the boys to thrive in a safe, structured, and home-like setting. Staffed by a dedicated team of professionals, the centre opened on August 30 and the boys are settling in and getting comfortable in their new surroundings. Staff are committed to helping each of the boys enjoy their new home and help them with the challenge that this presents.

The centre underpins St. Catherine's commitment to enhancing the quality of life for children with disabilities, ensuring they have the opportunities and support needed to reach their full potential. Meadow View represents a new chapter for the boys that live there and for our service, and we are excited to see the positive impact it will have on the lives of these children and their families.

Work is well underway with the staff team to help the last of the three boys to complete their move-in and settle in to Meadow View!



### **Collette Connolly 30 years in SCA!**



**Collette started as a bus escort in February 1994 and then worked for 5 ½ years in St Catherine's School as an SNA. Collette returned to college to study Intellectual Disability Nursing (RNID) and continued to work for Respite Services. When Collette qualified she returned to work in St Catherine's Early Services where she remained and later managed until reconfiguration to the CDNT.**

**"I have been so lucky to work alongside the most amazing clinicians and staff, I made many friends for life however, the families and children are the reason I am still working in this area after 30 years. I was often the first point of contact for families on a journey they were not expecting however, I enjoyed every moment as I knew we as a team were supporting families and children at a very difficult time.**

**I have very happy memories of volunteering to bring children away on activity weekends with Baltinglass Outdoor Adventure and a trip to Bolton in England as part of an exchange trip. This was all voluntary at the time but it allowed us to provide amazing experiences for the children and much needed respite for the parents. A huge achievement was overseeing the move to Wicklow Primary Healthcare Centre which was officially opened by the then Minister for Health Simon Harris in July 2016. I continue to work across the Wicklow and Arklow CDNT as a Specialist Nurse supporting young babies and families."**

**SCA would like to take this opportunity to thank Collette for her 30 years of exemplary service!**



# SCA Summer Event 2024

What a great day, filled with fun, food & laughter!! Thanks to everyone who attended. A special thank you to all our raffle sponsors - Delightfully Delicious, Críoch Catering, Fishers, Adrian Dunne Pharmacy, Glenview Hotel, Parkview Hotel, Red Eye Coffee & Salon H and also to Newtown GAA Club & our local Fire Service for their visit.

See you all next year!



## Potter Club Summer Camp

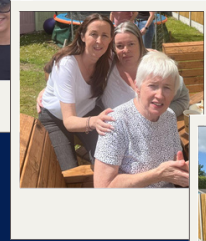
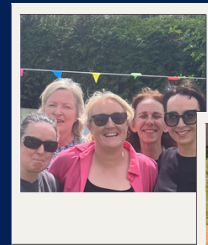
Potter Club enjoyed a great summer with lots of different activities, the biggest day out being Ablefest, it was thoroughly enjoyed by staff and the individuals we support, there was lots of things to see and do. Everyone enjoyed listening to music or taking part in the drumming or céilí sessions. Other places visited include, Avondale, Glenroe Farm, Explorium, Bowling, Baking, Music with Chiara, Walk's in kilmacurragh, Well's House, Kia Ora Farm and trips to Mc Donalds and Burger King.



## *Brambles Coffee Morning*

**Brambles held a coffee morning on 4th July. Brambles families, staff and friends all turned out to see the lovely new house following recent refurbishment works.**

**It was lovely for all of the staff and the families to catch up with each other and to meet with other SCA teams on a lovely Summer day.**



## *QCO Introduction – Eoin Buckley*

Eoin Buckley joined the QCT Team SCA in July 2024 and is providing cover for Adrienne while she is off on maternity leave. Eoin has worked for over 20 years in the intellectual disability area between frontline services, volunteer coordinator and Quality, Compliance & Training. He is also involved with St. Vincent De Paul in residential camps for Children. Originally from Dublin, Eoin once won the Arklow Maritime Weekend Canoeing race back in 1993 – something he is secretly very proud of! Eoin plays music in a covers band and they perform as often as they can. He lives in Rathnew with his family and the most recent addition to the family, a dog called “Stella”.



## *Fundraising Events*

### **A Big Thank You.....**

John Hunt completed a walk from Wicklow to Dublin and raised a total of €5,980 for a Sensory Garden for Haughton House

Ellen O'Connor fundraised for a Summer Party in Fairwinds and raised €1,116 for this event

Susan Langrell raised €6,210 for Brambles by completing a Skydive in memory of her brother who attended Brambles

If you would like to fundraise, please contact Lorcan Claffey for more details

## *Staff News & Updates*

### **A warm welcome**

We would like to welcome the following people to St. Catherine's Association, Eoin Buckley (QCT), Emma Duffy (Birdhill), Eric Olohan (Adult Day Services), Uchenna Dike (Glenview Heights), Ciara Healy (Adult Day Services), Shannon Doran (Birdhill), Rachel Redmond (Ballylusk), Lorraine Moran (Ballylusk), Natasha Bradley Byrne (Woodbeg), Lucy Malone (Potters Club), Stuart Porter (Ballylusk), Lavena Doyle (Haughton House). Wishing you all the best in your new roles!!

### **And a fond farewell...**

Since June, we have said goodbye to Bobby Kavanagh (Granitefield), Tracey Rowan (RSM, Birdhill & Woodbeg), Saragh Ward (School), Debby Kluczenko (RSM, Fairwinds & Glenview Heights) Siobhan Bradshaw (Relief), Nikki Langrell (Potters Club), Alina Sadio (Relief), Amy Hayward (RSM, Granitefield & Meadow View), and Bernie Cronin (Meadow View). We wish them all the best for the future.

### **Baby News**

Congratulations to Adrienne O'Connor (QCT) who gave birth to a baby boy Paidí in July, Chris McEvoy (Woodbeg) on the birth of his baby boy Killian in August, Derek Guerin (Woodbeg) on the birth of his baby girl Ada in September and Paul Kelleher (Ballylusk) on the birth of his baby boy Daniel in October. Wishing all the best to the new arrivals.

### **Ballylusk**

In August we celebrated Ballylusk operating for the last 18 years. Well done to all the team that work or have worked in Ballylusk. Here's to another 18 years to come!

### **Welcome Back**

Aisling Delaney returned from her maternity leave in June managing two new locations, Birdhill and Woodbeg. In September Aisling was successfully appointed as RSM in these locations.

### **Promotions/New Appointments**

Aisling Delaney is the new RSM in Woodbeg and Birdhill. Paul Kenneally is the new RSM in Fairwinds and Glenview Heights. Gloria Pence is temporarily Deputy RSM in Fairwinds and Michelle Fitzgerald is temporarily Deputy RSM in Woodbeg. Bryan Kenna is the Acting RSM in Meadow View

### **Sad news**

Sadly, Darragh Fitzgerald who spent many years in Haughton House and whose Mam, Orla, continues to work there passed away recently. Darragh never failed to brighten the room with his presence and his smile and warmth will be long remembered as will his love for Mrs. Brown's Boys, one of his favourite pastimes in Haughton.





### Adult Safeguarding Day 2024 Fri 8th November

Adult Safeguarding Day is an annual initiative of Safeguarding Ireland, supported by the HSE. The aim is to raise a greater understanding of safeguarding and adult abuse – and the emphasis this year is on preventing Financial Abuse. For more information, please visit - [www.safeguardingday.ie](http://www.safeguardingday.ie)

### Softworks Update



Softworks is currently being trialed in ADS and Brambles location. Admin Users and the Managers of these locations are working through the system together with the HR team to identify any issues before it is rolled out to other locations.

### Social Media

Please follow SCA on our Socials:

If there is any content you would like shared on our Social Media please contact Laurissa on [socialmedia@stcatherines.ie](mailto:socialmedia@stcatherines.ie)



### Culture Health & Wellbeing Walk

The Culture Health and Wellbeing group enjoyed a walk in beautiful walk in Glendalough.

Keep an eye on your emails for details on the next walk.



### Bernie Cronin Retires



“To our Queen Bee Bernie,

She deserves admiration and respect for all the 33 years that she has worked in St Catherine’s Association. Her job title throughout the years has changed considerably and have included; teacher, cleaner, bus escort, swimming teacher, vice principal, chief food taster, classroom assistant, deputy house leader and general dogs body. Bernie is a little ray of sunshine and always full of positivity. Bernie cared for so many children over the years. She is so kind but she is also one of a kind. Bernie would always have your back. We are going to really miss her and wish her a happy retirement.

Best wishes for happiness and relaxation.

Enjoy your freedom and don’t forget to keep in touch.

Love, the Lodge xx”.



### Employee Referral Scheme

Would you like a €500 voucher? Do you have a friend or family member who shares our culture and values and has the right qualifications and skills to apply for any of our exciting opportunities? If you do, then please let HR know and we will be happy to reward you if your referral is successful in joining the SCA team (T’s & C’s apply).

### Breast Cancer Awareness

We held our first Breast Cancer Awareness Day in June and another event in September in Brambles. These presentations provide information and awareness to staff about this disease.



### Adult Day Service Update

Adult Day Services have been busy in both our locations during the summer. Our individuals in Hillview attended the Dinos Alive Exhibit in Dublin, the guys saw dozens of life sized animated dinosaurs! This was a great experience that they thoroughly enjoyed.



Patrick has been busy developing his travel training skills when taking Dublin Bus – Patrick has really enjoyed getting the bus into the community and loves going shopping afterwards.



## *Walker Family Introduction*



The Walker family have a long history with St. Catherine's Association with three generations supporting the children and young people in our organisation. Their stories are all different as to how they started with SCA but their common goal is the same, to provide the best care for the individuals who they support.

Therese started with the organisation in 2003 as Bus Escort. She then worked as a Class Room Assistant and went back to study in college where she achieved her Level 8 in Social Care. Therese worked her way up to Manager and managed 3 different locations over the years and also worked in a wide range of locations. Therese loves to see how a child changes when they initially join our services and how they grow and develop. A treasured memory that Therese has from her time with SCA is that of a young child who had many challenges that she supported to grow and flourish. This child is now an adult and lives independently with two pet dogs and she feels proud to have supported this person in their journey to adulthood. She has enjoyed her time with SCA and made many memories and friends along the way working with an amazing team.

Peter (husband of Therese) also known as "Hunter" started with us in 2008, working in Cherrybrook on night shifts for a year and then moved to a residential home in Arklow supporting two siblings. He worked in this location for three years with a great team until the siblings moved on. He moved to Ballylusk from Arklow where he has worked for the last few years. From his time in SCA, he has seen a lot of changes and challenges and enjoys building up a rapport with the individuals we support. He feels that his own personal development has been enhanced through the friends he has met along the way. One of his treasured memories is when a little boy came into emergency respite, he had a lot of obstacles and challenges and the little boy found it hard to settle. Peter worked with him and helped him trust again and supported him until he moved to a full time placement and still keeps in contact with him. Peter still enjoys working in SCA.

Tara (daughter of Therese and Peter) joined SCA in January 2011 after she completed a Health Care Assistant course. She previously worked as a hairdresser for eight years. Tara enjoyed looking after her elderly customers and found that caring for people was something that she felt strongly about. Her first role with SCA was in a residential home in Arklow supporting two young teenagers. She then moved onto Newtown and then to Cherrybrook where she supported four young boys. Through her time in these locations she learned and gained knowledge in how to support individuals. Tara enjoys actively learning in her role. A standout memory for her is where she moved from a children's residence to the first adult residence with the same person. She has continued to support this young man in her current location. Tara also feels very thankful to SCA for the support that they have given to her with her own son with Autism and is looking forward to working with SCA for many more years.

Eimear (grandchild of Therese & Peter) joined in April 2019, she explains that as a child she was introduced to children with disabilities from a very young age. She often spent time with her grandmother in Ballylusk when she came to collect her and that they would often have to wait as she was always late (still is now)!! Back then she was able to go in and wait for her to finish work! This is where Eimear's love and interest developed for this field of work. Eimear completed a level 5 in Social Studies and Community Care in 2018 and completed her work placement in St. Catherine's Special School. She then worked in Fairwinds and Haughton Lodge and continued her studies and achieved her degree in Applied Social Care in 2023. She has been part of individuals' transition from children to young adults and moving from school into adult day services. She works in Fairwinds and has great relationships with her team and the young men she supports. Her most treasured memory is during Covid 19 where she created TikTok videos with the young men and staff team to lighten up the mood during that unpredictable and unprecedented time.

We would like to thank the Walker Family for their continued hard work for the people we support.

