

LADIES IN LARNE MEET TO DISCUSS "MY AREA – MY LIFE"

Over 100 women from Larne and surrounding rural areas came together on 6th May in Drumalis Retreat Centre, Larne to discuss and share their experiences of living in a rural area.

The event was organised by Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network to ensure that the voices of older women are heard and taken into account by decision makers. This is particularly relevant now when there is such a need to look community development within an anti-poverty framework which will enhance the lives of rural people. NIRWN as a regional organisation is working closely with DARD to ensure that the voices of those most excluded is heard by decision makers in all government departments.



Staff from NIRWN with speakers at the event

Dame Joan Harbison Older People's Advocate for Northern Ireland was present to provide an overview of her role and also to hear first hand the concerns that rural older dwellers are experiencing in the North East area.

One of the main issues that came out of the day was the lack of accessible transport in rural areas. Women in rural areas have access to limited public transport services and rely more heavily on car travel and the impact of not having access to a car is greater in rural areas. Those without cars suffer from mobility poverty. This has a knock on affect in accessing childcare, education, health services,

employment and issues around social exclusion for rural women. Women with disabilities, women with young families, older women and the problems associated with social exclusion are more prevalent for rural women. Also women's trips are more likely to relate to caring and family responsibilities, while men are more likely to travel for business and leisure.

Siobhan Doherty, Director of NIRWN commented 'The Northern Ireland Executive is currently carrying out a review that will lead to the development of a Rural White Paper. The issues that we have heard today, will be highlighted to the necessary government departments as part of this review process. It is essential that rural circumstances are considered when delivering services such as transport and health'.

Speakers included local Councillor Rachael Rea MBE, who has lived in a rural setting all of her life. Councillor Rea also highlighted the need for government departments to recognise the needs of rural communities.

A number of information stands from organisations such as Help the Aged/Age Concern, PSNI, Handy Van, Larne Borough Council and Access to Benefits were represented at the event, providing information on the types of services that are available for older dwellers to improve their quality of life.

QUALITY MARK FOR NIRWN
NIRWN was delighted to recently achieve ISO9001 certification for its services around supporting rural communities.

David Acheson, Quality Management Consultant, told us 'NIRWN wished to further improve its already high quality of service to rural women's organisations throughout Northern Ireland and took on board a very challenging and demanding task to achieve ISO 9001 - the world wide standard for quality management. The standard sets a demanding set of requirements which an organisation must meet to demonstrate it is continually improving its processes and customer satisfaction. David continued 'The success of the project lay in the excellent commitment from the Board of Directors and especially from the staff at NIRWN. Although the pace was hectic at times, this was one of the most satisfying assignments I have undertaken in twenty five years as a quality management consultant.'

This is a standard which requires continuous commitment to quality improvement and NIRWN are prepared to commit to this process.



Siobhan Doherty NIRWN receiving the ISO 9001 Certificate from John Stewart of British Standards Institute

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (ICE)

We all carry our mobile phones with names & numbers stored in the memory. If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but wouldn't know who to call.

In case of emergency (ICE) is a programme that enables first responders, such as paramedics, firefighters and police officers, to identify victims and contact their next of kin to obtain important medical information.



As mobile phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the name 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency). The idea was thought up by a British paramedic Bob Brothie who found that paramedics didn't know which number to call when arriving on the scene of an accident.

In an emergency situation, Emergency Service personnel and hospital Staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialling the number you have stored as 'ICE'. For more than one contact name simply enter ICE1, ICE2 and ICE3 etc

PUBLIC APPOINTMENT - NI LIBRARY AUTHORITY

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is seeking to appoint members to the Board of the Northern Ireland Library Authority. Board members will require a commitment of at least 15 days per year, though more may be required in the first year of operation of the Authority. They will receive payment of £3,000 per annum, plus travel and subsistence allowance. The appointment will be for a maximum term of 4 years.

For further information and an application pack:-
Tel : 02890515157
Email: governancesupport@dcalni.gov.uk

Completed forms should be returned by 5pm on Friday 12 June 2009. CVs not accepted.

OPENING AND CLOSING DATES FOR THE SOAR LOCAL ACTION GROUP

SOAR is the Joint Committee and Local Action Group for the Craigavon, Armagh and Newry & Mourne Council areas responsible for the administration of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 (NIRDP) within the rural areas of Craigavon, Armagh and Newry.

Measure 3.1 Diversification into agricultural activities
Measure 3.2 Business creation and development
Measure 3.3 Encouragement of tourism activities, will open as follows:

2nd August 2009 - 13th September 2009

Measures 3.4 Village Renewal
Measure 3.5 Basic Services
Measure 3.6 Rural Heritage, will open as follows:

4th October 2009 - 1st November 2009

For further details contact:

Elaine Cullen (Rural Development Manager)
Craigavon Borough Council (Lead Council)
Civic & Conference Centre
Lakeview Road
Craigavon BT64 1AL
Tel: 028 38312588 Email: craigavon@soarni.org

MILLENNIUM VOLUNTEERS

Millennium Volunteers is a national programme designed to promote and recognise sustained volunteering among young people aged between 16 to 24. It is funded by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland.

It encourages organisations to provide innovative, flexible voluntary opportunities for young people that match their interests and provides tangible benefits to the young person and their community.

The new worker for the SELB area is Lynne Harvey. If you'd like more info about what's happening locally or how to become involved either as a volunteer or as a placement agency for volunteers, or if you'd like her to come out and talk to your group, please feel free to contact her.

Tel: 4066 2509

or Email: lynneharveymv@googlemail.com

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