

# MEATH DISABLED PERSONS ORGANISATION

## NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

### NEWS HEADLINES

- **LAUNCH OF MEATH DPO:** A landmark moment for disabled people and their allies in Meath took place in April 2025 when the Meath Disabled Persons Organisation was officially launched at the Knightsbrook Hotel in Trim. The development of the DPO is part of a "Consultation to Co-Creation" project which is a joint initiative between Independent Living Movement Ireland and Inclusion Ireland funded and by the HSE. The launch was well attended - room was packed, the energy was buzzing, and the message was clear: Disabled People in Meath are organising, mobilising and leading. The atmosphere at the event was nothing short of electric. "This is what collective activism looks like," said Tom Morgan, ILMI Community Development Worker for Meath and a founding member of the new DPO.



### OUR PHILOSOPHY:

"NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US"

- **Active involvement:** Disabled people lead and decide, not just consulted.
- **Authentic voice:** We amplify lived experience to inform policy and practice.
- **Shared control:** Meath DPO works with authorities and services in Meath to ensure that decisions made by those authorities and services are shaped by disabled people



- **MEATH DPO AGM:** Meath DPO held it's first AGM in Buvinda House, which is the Meath County Council Building in Johnstown, on the 5th June 2025. At the AGM officers were elected and there was great energy and hope for the future of the group. The meeting elected joint chairs Anne Duffy, and Gillian Stafford, Vice Chair Fiona Weldon, Secretary Tom Morgan, PROs Adam Sharpe and John O'Brien, and Paul Alford Treasurer. Other members of the committee are Suzanne Chalkey, and Aimee Kindillon. The officers and all the other committee members look forward to working collectively to effect positive change for disabled people in Meath.

**CONTACT US:** MEATHDPO@GMAIL.COM

**INFORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP QUERIES:**

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Photo of Meath DPO Committee members at their latest meeting. Adam Sharpe, Fiona Weldon, Nicky Mc Donnell (Guest Speaker), Aimee Kindillon, John O'Brien, Tom Morgan, Gillian Stafford, and Anne Duffy.

- MEATH DPO COMMITTEE MEMBER JOHN O BRIEN IS APPOINTED TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP:** John O'Brien, one of the Public Relations Officers of Meath DPO has been appointed by the Minister for Justice, Home Affairs, and Migration to take a seat on the Local Community Safety Partnership. The aim of the safety partnerships is to prioritise the voice of local people identifying and addressing community safety issues in collaboration with a range of stakeholders in the county. The partnership will focus on concerns identified and prioritised by local people and local communities. Any action taken should then reflect those collective concerns. The partnership will seek to take a collective action approach to ensuring safety within the community.
- INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN) CONFERENCE:** Meath DPO is a member of the Meath Public Participation Network. This network which is facilitated by Nicky McDonnell in Meath County Council, brings together over 800 groups from all across Meath to participate in, and contribute to, decisions affecting life in our county. Every county has a PPN. Member groups of the PPN are placed in one of three pillars of interest. These pillars are 1) Environment, 2) Social Inclusion, and 3) Community and Voluntary. Every year there is a national conference which is attended by PPN staff and volunteers from all across Ireland. This year the conference is hosted by Meath County Council and takes place in the Knightsbrook Hotel in Trim. Meath DPO is honoured to be asked to set up an information stand at the conference to highlight the work that we do, and the way in which we do that work. There was a huge amount of preparation for the conference done by committee members and we look forward to having some really interesting conversations with people from across the country, and to raising the importance of DPO's nationally as groups where disabled people share their lived experience and work collectively to influence disability policy.
- MEATH DPO AS REFERENCE GROUP FOR DISABILITY POLICY DECISIONS IN MEATH:** Meath DPO has been invited to be the reference group for the Meath County Council. Brian Hora who is the Local Community Development Committee Chief Officer at the Council shared with us that the Council "really want to get this right – from the start. Meath DPO are happy to take Brian up on that invitation. Article 4:3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) states that "In the development and implementation of legislation and policies .... and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations". In short it means that DPO's must be at the actively involved in decision making on issues relating to disability. That is entirely in line with "nothing about us without us". This isn't just about consultation; this is about co-creation. We welcome the invitation from Meath County Council and look forward to working as active partners with them.



- **DISABILITY EQUALITY TRAINING:** Meath DPO Committee and group members are invited to a Disability Equality Training workshop on the 13th November from 11.30 to 15.30. The training will be delivered by Fiona Weldon, who is Capacity Officer with the Independent Living Movement of Ireland. Disability Equality Training – delivered by skilled disabled people, is grounded in both the social model of disability and the UNCRPD. It enables participants to understand the many inequalities and discrimination that disabled people face in their everyday lives. It enables participants to critically think about and understand the harmful assumptions and beliefs that society holds about disabled people and how those assumptions prevent us from living ordinary lives in ordinary places.

To register for this workshop please contact Tom Morgan who is the Community Development Officer of Meath DPO either at [tommorgan@ilmi.ie](mailto:tommorgan@ilmi.ie) or give him a call on 087 258 1182.

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## ABOUT MEATH DISABLED PERSONS ORGANISATION

- **OUR AIM**

Meath DPO aims to make our county fully inclusive of Disabled People. We will do this through jointly creating fully accountable and responsive services, structures and systems that will ensure that Disabled People in Meath live full and free lives.

- **OUR VALUES**

Meath DPO has four core values. We use these to communicate who we are and how we conduct our business. Meath DPO will make sure that our values are explicit. This means that the people and groups that we interact with will know what to expect from us and what we expect from them.


Our four core values are 1) Human Rights and Social Justice, 2) Activism and Empowerment, 3) Agency, Autonomy, and Choice, and 4) Equal and Equitable Access.

The Human Rights and Social Justice value means that we take a human rights approach to what we do, that we deeply value diversity and inclusion, and that we have rights simply because we exist as human beings

The Activism and Empowerment value means we believe that Disabled Peoples voices must be heard and this must influence local policy and practice. We bring our individual and collective experiences to the table, and they inform what we do and how we do it. Through collective activism we work as advocates for ourselves and for each other.

The Agency, Autonomy, and Choice value means that we seek to ensure that Disabled People live self-determined lives in Meath, it's about having choice, having control and freedom, and having the confidence to want this for all disabled people in Meath

The Equal and Equitable Access value means that the Social Model of disability is at the core of everything that we strive to achieve. We understand that disabled people are disabled by the man-made structures and systems that prevent us from accessing the same services and amenities as others do. Equity is also about having access to assistive and adaptive devices to enhance our independence.





## HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF MEATH DPO

Any disabled person in Meath, over 18 years of age can become a member of Meath DPO.

Members of Meath DPO will work in a way that is based on the social model of disability, and in a way that is in line with the values and aims of the group.

Meath DPO upholds the social model of disability and adheres to all aspects of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Disability Equality Training (November Date TBC)  
Public Participation Network Meeting - Knightsbrook Hotel,  
Trim (PPN) 16th October at 2pm



# Nothing About Us Without Us



Adam Sharpe on Why I Joined the Meath Disabled Persons Organisation. I joined the Meath Disabled Persons Organisation because I wanted to belong to a community of people who believe in inclusion and equality. The social model of disability helped me realise that my disability isn't the problem, the barriers in society are. Independent living, for me, is about choice and control in everyday life. That's real freedom. In the Meath DPO, our lived experiences lead the conversation. We don't need to be spoken for, we need to be heard, and together we're making sure that happens.

