

## VHI Women's Mini Marathon

The VHI Women's Mini Marathon will take place on bank holiday Monday 1st June at 2pm. Have you registered yet? Why not run, walk or jog in aid of ALONE? Last year we were delighted to have over 40 women participate in aid of ALONE, helping to raise much needed awareness and funds.

This year we would love to have even more amazing women take part and support our cause to help older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. Please help spread the word and encourage, friends, family and colleagues to take part. Don't forget to register directly with the VHI Women's Mini Marathon to guarantee your place.



**Run for older people in need**

Run or walk for ALONE in the VHI Women's Mini-Marathon and support older people in real need.

Contact us on 01 679 1032, email [fundraising@alone.ie](mailto:fundraising@alone.ie) or visit [www.alone.ie](http://www.alone.ie) to find out how.

**ALONE**  
Helping older people in need

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Log on [www.vhiwomensminimarathon.ie](http://www.vhiwomensminimarathon.ie) or register through the official entry form which will appear in The Herald every Wednesday and Saturday. Please contact Kathleen in the fundraising team on 01 6791032 or email [kathleen.f@alone.ie](mailto:kathleen.f@alone.ie) for a fundraising pack.



### LISA LAMBE

A huge thank you to Lisa Lambe who has released her debut single 'Heaven' last February, with all the proceeds going to ALONE. We would like to wish the singer and actress all the best with her debut album and thank everyone who has bought 'Heaven'. It is available on iTunes and all good music stores if you want to support ALONE.

### THANK YOU

Our sincere thanks to Accenture, DubCo and all individuals, companies, schools and groups who have generously contributed to ALONE recently. Without your support we would not be able to continue our day-to-day work with older people in need.



**ALONE**

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Helping older people in need

**NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2015**

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Thank you to all our generous contributors for your recent support.

ALONE is an independent charity that works with older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. We provide Supportive Housing, Befriending, Community Response and Campaigning Services to hundreds of people every week.



## Loneliness is a serious Health Issue

Loneliness is proven to be as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. In Ireland 1 in 3 older people live on their own and almost 10% of older people suffer from chronic loneliness. In ALONE we believe that loneliness is a very serious health issue that needs to be addressed on a national level.

We recently hosted a meeting to begin discussion on the issue with a number of befriending services from across the country who work specifically with older people. The meeting was also attended by Sandra Browne, Befriending Networks Scotland where she shared the Scottish experience with us. This meeting was the culmination of over two years work in developing a National Directory of Befriending Services for Older People, a Befriending Service Guidebook for Befriending Coordinators and the development of training for new and existing Befriending

organisations. This training is now available throughout the country. We also hope to establish a National Befriending Network where we can work together to develop quality standards for Befriending organisations throughout the country.

ALONE's Sean Moynihan said "It is vitally important that we maintain strong links with our local community as we age. Older people need good services of a consistent quality, to ensure that they don't slip through the cracks and become isolated from other people. We are calling on anyone who is interested in finding out more about our Befriending Service and the supports we offer to get in touch."

For those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in the community please contact us.

# ALONE Friendship Week

Our volunteers and older people celebrated ALONE's Friendship Week in early February by talking to us about their experience of the ALONE Befriending Service.

Katy visits Patricia on a Monday morning and during that time they usually go for a coffee and weather permitting, a nice walk somewhere. Patricia looks forward to Katy visiting every week saying "Her company is nice to have. She helps me a lot - if I need anything done she'll do it for me".



Through ALONE David began visiting Jorgen every Tuesday, a tradition which has been going on for over a year now. They both look forward to David's visit each week with Jorgen admitting to often eating half a fruit cake with a cup of tea or coffee as he chats away to his volunteer. The pair also watch football together or go out for walks around the local area.



Craig has been visiting Barbara for the last few months. Barbara says "this service has given me a feeling of not being alone anymore. There is someone at the end of the phone, where before I didn't have that". Craig volunteered with ALONE after seeing the care ALONE gives to older people and says "This can happen to anyone, if your family passes away or you come from a small family or if your family has moved away". He also explains there is as much benefit for the volunteer "I am feeling more positive about myself. It is nice to be able to help someone, I look forward to it every week".



If you are interested in volunteering as a Befriending volunteer please contact [maoiliosa.k@alone.ie](mailto:maoiliosa.k@alone.ie) as our next induction for new volunteers is taking place at the end of April 2015.

## NEW RESIDENTS

We welcomed four new residents into ALONE housing since Christmas. The first two are a couple in their 70's who were living in overcrowded accommodation and on the verge of becoming homeless. A single man in his 80's also joined us. The man was also about to become homeless having rented in private accommodation which was being sold.

Finally a single women in her 60's was also welcomed to ALONE. She was living in private rented accommodation that she was no longer able to afford.

All of our new residents expressed huge relief in getting a place to call home after a hugely stressful time in their lives. We would like to welcome them all and hope they are very happy in their new homes with us.

## FAIR DEAL CRISIS

ALONE have been leading the call to remove the cap on the Fair Deal Scheme. The budget for the Fair Deal Scheme has changed from €998 million in 2013 to €950million in 2015 despite our dramatically ageing population.

Our CEO Sean Moynihan says "We believe that the Fair Deal scheme should be designed to respond to the needs of the older people who will need it, and vulnerable older people shouldn't be punished simply because the scheme was significantly underfunded to begin with."

ALONE recently submitted a proposal for to the Department of Health as part of the Fair Deal Review that is due shortly. One of the key recommendations we made included using the Fair Deal money to support older people to age in their own homes. We believe the Government needs to focus on providing sufficient home care packages for older people who would rather stay living in the community.

As it stands the Minister is considering removing the cap however real action has yet to take place. ALONE will continue campaigning to ensure the cap is removed and a fairer, more efficient and more sustainable Fair Deal scheme comes into effect. We are also currently campaigning around the lack of an independent complaints process for individuals within private nursing homes. This is an area of serious concern for us given that 80% of nursing homes are privately run.

We are currently calling on the Government ensure a comprehensive independent complaints process is in place for all nursing home residents.

## SPRING DINNER DANCE

It was another fantastic night in the Fingallians GAA club house as we celebrated our Spring Dinner Dance.



Over 130 ALONE residents, volunteers, and friends were in attendance on the night. It was a superb night of singing, dancing, and catching up with friends well into the night.

The dinner dance wouldn't have been made possible without the help of all our volunteers on the night, for whom we are very grateful.