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National Platform of
Self Advocates


Hearing Our Voices - Making Change Happen

CORK NETWORK MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025



An Bliain Leantú, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Léimhárriochta agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



RETHINK
IRELAND



**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



Brian Hayes
Chairperson



Joe McGrath
Vice Chairperson



David Fraughen
Board Member



Mairéad Forde
Board Member



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lámháiríochta agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



**RETHINK
IRELAND**

Mairead

Welcome & Introductions

We would like to welcome you all here today.

My name is Mairead Forde.

I'm from Cork too.



**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



Brian Carroll
Board Member



Dermot Lowndes
Board Member



**RETHINK
IRELAND**

What we will talk about today



What the Platform does
How working together as a Network we can make change happen.
Hear about how we have made change happen
We will have time to talk - Have tea/coffee
Meet new people
The Platform's training courses

Mairead

Our Plan for the today's meeting

We will talk about what the Platform does and how working together as a Network can make change happen.

We will hear about how we have made change happen by talking to Government and other Organisations

We will learn about joining the Platform

**We will have time to talk – and have Tea or coffee
We will meet new people**

Brian Hayes will now talk about the Platform and our work



**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



**My rights
My decisions**

**We started the Platform because
we wanted to be listened to.**

**We work for the rights of people
with intellectual disabilities.**

**Make sure that we are included in
decisions made about our lives**

Brian Hayes

The National Platform works for the rights of people with intellectual disabilities to make sure that we are involved in making decisions about our lives, and issues affecting our lives. We talk to people in government about our rights, we ask them to listen, and hear about what we need to make our lives better and for our supporters. Here is a video about our work so far.

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**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



Our Network Meetings

**Meet with other people and groups to
talk about linking with local groups
around Ireland**

**To support people to have their issues
heard**



Brian:

In 2024 we got funding from Rethink Ireland and the government to meet with other people and talk about our work and joining local groups and networks across Ireland to support people to talk about their rights.

We have had meetings in Cork, Waterford, Athlone, Sligo, Tralee and Dublin and Limerick.

We have a national conference organised for the 26th of March. Minister Hildegard Naughton is speaking at the conference.



**National Platform of
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So what is a network?

- A network is when people join together to have their voices heard.
- People listen to what networks have to say!!!



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Brian:


What is a Network?

A network is when people or groups join together because they care about the same issues.

Instead of one group or one person speaking up, there are lots of groups or people speaking up about the same issue.

Why is a network important?

- The more people who speak up the better. There is strength in numbers!
- The more people who join together the louder our voice.
- We can learn from each other and share information, ideas, and resources.



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Brian:

Networks are important because

We can work together to plan projects and campaigns to make change happen.

- **The more people join together the louder our voice.**
- **We have support in getting issues heard about things that are important to us.**
- **It can lead to good opportunities, funding and projects.**
- **We can learn from each other and share our information, experiences and ideas.**

We are going to hear from Fiona and Mairead about the work of St. Joseph's Foundation Self Advocacy Group

Some of the reasons to become part of the National Platform Network:

- **We talk about things that are important** to us like jobs, housing, rights, accessible transport, health, and more.
- Join **together** with other groups to support each other and speak out about the issues.
- Share information and learn from other groups



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Brian:

The Platform is a place where you can:

**Talk about things that matter to you, such as:
jobs, housing, rights, transport, health and more.**

**You can get support to set up your own local self-advocacy network
or if you are already part of a group you can give your group a
chance to link with others**



If you want to join as a member of the Platform

There are people here today that will help you sign up as a member of the Platform.



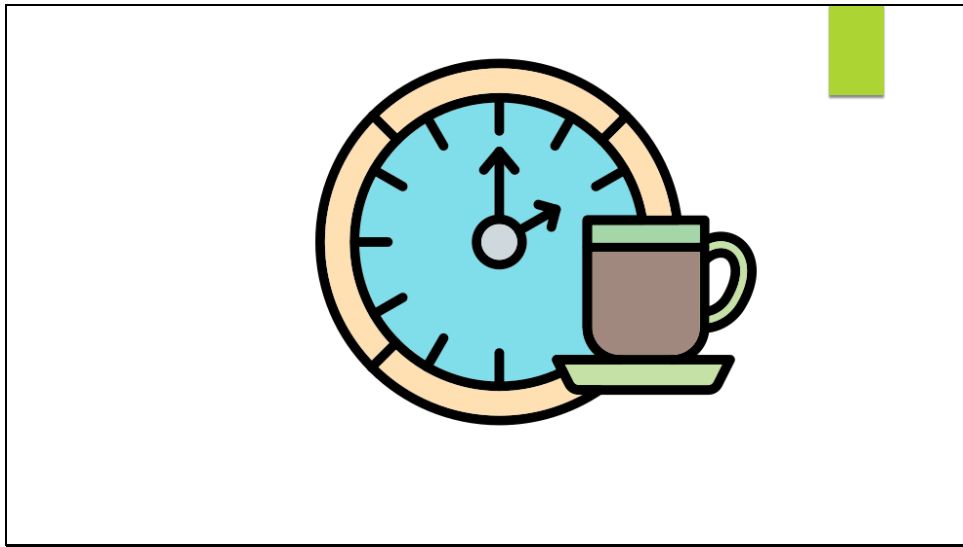
Joe

If you want you can join the National Platform today and we can set you up on our online Advocacy course.

We will talk about the online training after our break.

To make it as easy as possible we have people here today that will help you sign up as a member of the Platform.

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David

Its now time for a tea and coffee break

Please be back in 20 minutes



So, how do we make change happen?

One way is to take part in Consultations

Telling people what needs to happen to make our lives better



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Brian:

Welcome back

So, how do we make change happen?

One way is to take part in

Consultations

Consultation means telling people who ask what needs to happen to make our lives better



**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



**Lots of organisations and government
are now asking for opinions on the
needs of people with intellectual
disability.**

**The Platform have talked to
Government about lots of things like
housing, transport and jobs.**



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Mhóimnais, Leanaí/leitheolaí agus Oige
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Brian

After many years lots of organisations and government are now asking for our opinion on the needs of people with intellectual disability.

The Platform have talked to Government about lots of issues like housing, transport and jobs.

 **National Platform of Self Advocates**

Why it important to tell others about our issues:

- Let the government know about the things that are working and the things that are not working.
- Share our knowledge and lived experience of disability.
- **We are the EXPERTS on our own lives!**



Brian

Why is it important to tell others about our issues:

- **You can let the government know about the things that are working and the things that are not working.**
- **You can share your knowledge and lived experience of disability.**
- **Make life better for yourself and for others including your supporters like your family, friends and community.**
- **We are the EXPERTS! It is our lived experience of disability that can inform government and others about the change that is needed to make our lives better.**



National Platform of Self Advocates

The ways to take part in consultation



Go on the Radio



Join a group



Meet and Speak to Government



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Joe:

Some of the ways to take part in consultations




Join with other groups to have a louder voice.

- **Sit on networks, committees and advisory groups.**
- **Meet with politicians.**
- **Talk to people who work for the government and who make the decisions.**
- **Go on the radio.**
- **Write letters to the newspaper.**
- **Speak at conferences and forums.**
- **Hold your own forum.**
- **Make a video.**
- **Joe to say a bit about his work over the years in taking part in consultations**

Now my colleagues will talk about the consultations that they have taken part in.

First Step in taking part in Consultations:
Pick the top two issues you would like to change.

We have a survey on our website. We will go around to you all to help you fill it out

 Better public transport <input type="checkbox"/>	 More jobs <input type="checkbox"/>	 Information in ways I can understand <input type="checkbox"/>	 The supports I need to communicate <input type="checkbox"/>
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Brian

The first step in a consultation is to pick the issues that you want to talk about.

We are going to do a little bit of that today.

So we are going to show you how to fill out our survey. It will give you a chance to say what issues are important to you.

This is a very important step as it is the beginning of saying what you want to change to make our lives better.

You have 20 mins to talk about this and talk to each other

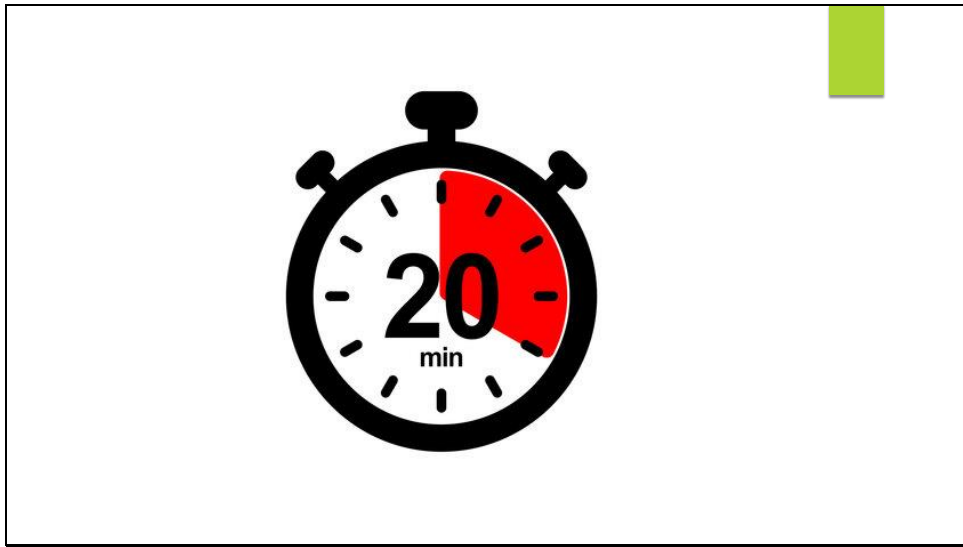
After that we will listen to each other about the issues you have named and discuss what needs to change




**Time to tell your
story**



**A chance to
listen to each
other**









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- Whenever you get the chance you should tell your story.
- Your story is important and has **power!**
- When you tell your story, **people listen.**
- Telling your story is a good way to explain to people about the issues that are important to you and the changes that need to happen.



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Brian:

Some things that we have learnt today in listening to each other

- **Whenever you get the chance you should tell your story.**
- **Your story is important and has power!**
- **When you tell your story, people listen.**
- **Telling your story is a good way to explain to people about the issues that are important to you and the changes that need to happen.**



**National Platform of
Self Advocates**



- 1. Membership**
- 2. Training: Register**

- Taking part in Consultations
- Inclusive IT
- Human Rights
- Advocacy
- Leadership



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Míchumais, Láimháltóireachta agus Oige
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Brian:

So what is next?

You can become a member of the network and get information and support like Fiona talked about today in getting your voice heard on all sorts of issues some that you named today

You can also that part in our training

- **Taking part in Consultation**
- **Inclusive IT – Using It for Advocacy**
- **Human Rights**
- **Advocacy**
- **Leadership**



JOE:

Before you go to lunch there is time to join the platform if you want to Martina is here to help you with that – just give her your name and email to do our online courses.

We have an evaluation survey that asks you if you thought today was good or not so good. We'll help you to do the survey. It is on our website.

David

Thank you everyone for coming.

We hope you learnt about our work and how you can be involved and how we can help you.

Lunch will be in 10 mins. Bye.