



**ACTIVE
RETIREMENT**

SUPPORT BOOKLET

LOCAL COMMITTEES

RUNNING AN ARA.

Introduction

The purpose of Active Retirement Ireland is to enable retired people to enjoy a full and active life and to advocate for them.

Active Retirement Associations (ARA) were established to ensure people who retired had opportunities to remain healthy and active through engaging with their peers within their own community.

The main aim of local ARAs is to arrange social events, educational options and activities which encourage and support retired people to remain as active participants within their group and community.

Many ARA members are also involved in other organisations locally, providing much needed volunteers in a variety of activities.

ARA Committee

To enable local ARAs to run smoothly and effectively, members elect a Committee to organise events on their behalf. This booklet outlines the various roles associated with these committees. This Booklet is part of the ongoing support that is available to each ARA committee through support and training from the Regional Committee and Regional Development Officer in conjunction with the Central Support Office.

The contents of the Booklet cover the following topics:

- Committee Roles
- Role of the Chairperson
- Agenda items

- Role of the Vice chairperson
- Role of the Secretary
- Role of the Treasurer
- Role of the P.R.O.
- Role of sub Committees.

Attached as Appendices are

- Sample Constitution
- Information on the Charities Act
- Sample Affiliation Form

COMMITTEE ROLES

Roles of Committee

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Officer



The Chairperson

The Chairperson has a particular role in ensuring that everybody is encouraged and supported to participate.

Chair in a way that encourages participation of all committee members, particularly newer members

The Chairperson should be able to conduct meetings with impartiality and in a pleasant and tactful way.

Likewise, he/she should be able to think objectively and hear all opinions.

The Chair should also be able to arrange delegation so that as many members as possible are involved and gain vital experience for the future.

A Chairperson may act as spokesperson or representative for the ARA, with the prior agreement of the members. As they are representing the views of the ARA and not speaking as an individual, it is important that the Chair hears the differing views of the Committee members and seeks agreement for any public statement.

A Chairperson must be thoroughly familiar with the matters of procedure and the rules of the ARA/Regional Committee.

Before the meeting

The Chairperson will:

Consult and work with the Secretary to ensure that:-

Suitable premises and facilities have been arranged for the meeting.

The agenda is prepared.

Anyone who is to report to the meeting is aware of the fact.

Be familiar with issues that are likely to be discussed.

Likewise, look over all the actions taken in previous meetings and be familiar with these.

At the Meeting

Arrive in good time before the meeting and start on time.

Ensure there is quorum present according to the rules, without a quorum no decisions can be taken.

Clearly and distinctly declare the meeting open. Receive apologies from those who are absent and sign the minutes of the last meeting.

Only If necessary, sum up clearly and concisely the points members are making for and against a motion.

When a proposal has been voted upon, ensure that the secretary has recorded the decision.

Remember that above all else, the Chairperson is there to guide the meeting and to enable all members of the Committee to work harmoniously and purposefully as a team.

TIPS FOR CHAIRPERSONS

DO's

Work with a pleasant and friendly manner.
Treat everyone the same way.
Listen attentively and impartially.
Be sensitive to the general feeling of the meeting.
Start on time.
End at a reasonable time



DON'Ts

Don't be long-winded.
Short succinct summaries are perfect.
Don't appear disinterested.
Don't fidget.

And finally, a Chairperson really needs...

A friendly disposition and a sense of humor!

The Vice-Chairperson

A Vice-Chairperson's role is to assist the Chairperson in the execution of duties and to fill in as chair when the Chairperson is absent.

A Vice-Chairperson should be equally as pleasant, tactful and humorous as the Chairperson and should be able to think objectively and act impartially.

The Vice-Chairperson of a group should also be thoroughly familiar with matters of procedure and group rules.

The Secretary

Like the Chairperson, the Secretary should have certain characteristics:

- Attention to detail. An orderly mind and a methodical way of working;
- Recognition of the importance of dealing promptly with correspondence;
- An ability to phrase different type of correspondence suitably; and to absorb information and summarise it in written form and at meetings.

The **Minutes** are the official record of the meeting. They need to record what was discussed, what decisions were taken and who is to carry out the decision. They do not need to go into detail of what everybody said at the meeting but should summarise the discussion that took place and major differences of opinion.

Secretary –General Duties

Be responsible for the administration of the group. Keep an up-to-date list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of all the group's members.

Keep careful, orderly records of the group's work, including:

Writing the Minutes in the minutes book.

Filing all correspondence received and copies of replies sent in order of date.

Filing reports received and made.

Compile lists of any names and addresses that may be useful to the group.

Keep a record of past activities and decisions of the group and to keep a diary of future events.

Prepare a report of the group's activities for the year, to be given at the Annual General Meeting.

Secretary –Before the Meeting

- Collect together all the business of the meeting and consult with the Chairperson on the order of business and on how all business will be dealt with on the agenda.
- Ensure that the notice of the meeting has been given, that a suitable venue has been arranged and that copies of the agenda have been prepared. Write the minutes from the last meeting in the Minute Book and ensure they are available.
- Make sure that any reports or information requested at the previous meeting is available.

Secretary –At the Meeting

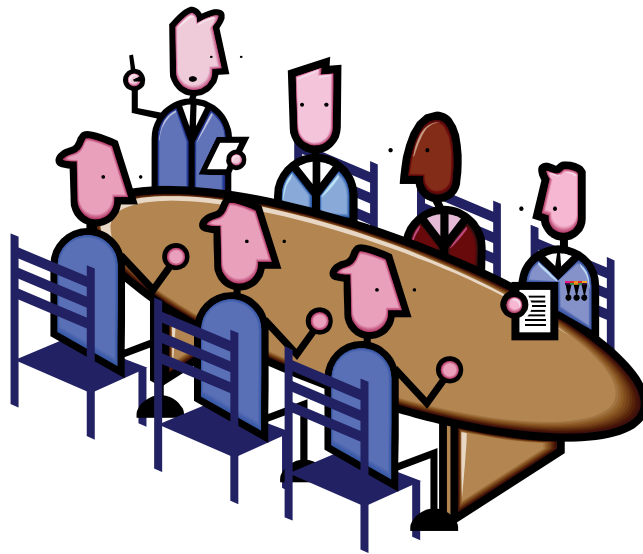
- Arrive in good time before the meeting, with the Minute Book and all relevant correspondence and business matters for
- the meeting arranged in good order.
- Record the names of those present and convey and record the apologies of anyone absent.
- Read the minutes of the previous meeting and get the Chair person's signature.
- Report on any action or matters arising from the minutes.
- Read all correspondence from Central Support Office and summarise all other correspondence.
- Take notes of the meeting for the minutes.

Secretary –After the Meeting

- Prepare a draft of the minutes and consult with the Chair person before entering them into the Minute Book.
- Send a notice of reminder to any person required to carry out any action for the group.
- Send all correspondence, as decided by the group, promptly
- Keep a record of all telephone, postage and stationary expenditure and present it regularly.
- Write up the minutes and deal with all correspondence as soon after the meeting as possible.
- Keep a checklist of everything needed for the next meeting.

The Agenda

- Items on the Agenda
- Apologies
- Minutes
- Matters Arising
- Correspondence
- Chairperson's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Items of Main Business
- Any Other Business
- Date of the Next Meeting



The Treasurer

All groups must have up-to-date records for a number of reasons. Groups must have the latest available information on their financial situation.

They must be able to provide financial accountability to their members and to all bodies from which the ARA has received funding through Grants or fundraising activities.

Written records of all income and expenditure must be kept.

It is good practice to have a set of procedures for dealing with money, which all committee members are aware of.

Duties of a Treasurer

Present a record of the current financial state of the ARA to members at meetings as agreed and prepare a Statement of Accounts at the Annual General Meeting.

Act as one of the signatories for group cheques.

File all receipts, monies and Statements of Accounts in order of date paid.

The Treasurer –Fundamental Rules

Always give receipts and retain duplicates for all money received – however small the amount.

All money received must be lodged in the Bank, post office or Credit Union lodgment slip receipted and lodgment recorded in Cash Book.

All expenses, including drawings for Petty Cash, must be by cheque –this can then be recorded easily.

Obtain a receipted invoice or voucher or Petty Cash document for all cash paid out –no matter how small the amount.

Never make cash payments from cash received –all monies received must be lodged and recorded; expenses must be recorded and paid out.

Annual Statement of Accounts

This must be submitted to members once a year at the Annual General Meeting.

These accounts must be checked and found correct by a person other than the Treasurer, preferably a member of the group who does not sit on the committee.

All account books must be available for general inspection at the Annual General Meeting.

At regional level, the Accounts must be forwarded to the Central Support Office for presentation to the Board on a quarterly basis. These reports are then included in the Annual audit of Active Retirement Ireland.

Documentation

- Receipt Book
- Cheque Payments Book
- Voucher of Petty Cash
- Cash Book
- Bank Lodgements' Book
- Bank Statements



The Public Relations Officer

The PRO's duties can cover three very different, very important functions.

The first is to maintain good internal communications between the people who are directly linked with the group, e.g. making contacts, attracting new members.

The second is keeping local people up to date with the activities of the group, e.g. writing notices of events in local newspapers, hanging posters in shops etc.

Third, the PRO should keep a wider external audience informed through the media –web, broadcast and print. This means maintaining a public image of the organisation.

The PRO –General Characteristics

A PRO should be contactable (at agreed times) in the day-time or early evening, either by landline or mobile phone.

PROs should have good language skills and the ability to communicate well through written pieces such as press releases.

A PRO should be a good verbal communicator and should be confident enough to appear as the 'public face' of the group on occasion.

Computer literacy is a highly desirable skill among PROs, as much communication takes place via e-mail.





Sub Committees

Committee members can sometimes become frustrated or anxious because they feel they are expected to know and do too much;

When an ARA is small and just beginning, everyone on the committee can be involved in every decision. But when the ARA becomes larger or more complex it is unreasonable to expect everyone on the committee to be an expert in all aspects of the ARA management. One way to get around this problem is to set up sub-committees to deal with specific areas of interest.

Sub-committees can be permanent and cover areas of ongoing work such as finance, premises, outings or publicity. They can also be formed to do specific short-term pieces of work and may be called Working Groups. These can be formed to organise events.

Sub-committees and Working Groups can draw on the expertise of people who are not on the Committee. They can also be used as a way of getting ARA members involved in the Committee at a later date.

Sub-committees should have a clear Terms of Reference setting out what areas it covers, the decision making powers of the sub-committee, who its members are and who it reports to and how often.

Sub-committees are not independent of the ARA and can be represented on the actual ARA committee. Any monies raised through the activities of the sub-committee are property of the ARA and will be held in the ARA accounts. Activity reports from the sub-committees should be presented to the ARA committee.

Remember...

Much of what is discussed in a Committee setting should remain in the group setting. Some information, such as funding or other sensitive issues, must remain confidential. It is important that all Committee members are loyal to this confidence. The group is a social entity, people join to enjoy themselves.

Always remember that each member is there to have fun!

Appendix 1



SAMPLE DOCUMENT

Constitution and Rules of

.....Active Retirement Association

As ratified at the General Meeting held on:

Signed (1).....(Chairperson)

Signed (2).....(Secretary)

Title and Objectives

1. The Name of the Association shall be Active Retirement Association hereinafter called “the Association”.

2. The Objectives of the Association shall be:

a) To provide a focal point for active people, of both sexes who are retired or semi-retired from paid or unpaid work, to meet and engage in educational, cultural, sporting and social activities.

b) To promote the spirit of self-help and independence and to encourage members to use their energy, talents, skills, knowledge and experience to benefit each other and the community.

c) To encourage a positive attitude to ageing and retirement.

3. The Association shall be non-party political and non-denominational.

Membership

4. Membership shall be open to active retired people living in the general area of

5. An Annual subscription shall be decided by the annual General Meeting and shall be payable in advance not later than.....each year. A receipt for the subscription shall be issued as evidence of membership.

6. The Association year for the purposes of membership and administration shall be from.....to.....

7. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fix charges for services if necessary.

Executive Committee

8. There shall be an executive Committee to carry out the policy of the association and to provide for its administration, management and control.

It shall ideally consist of a Chairperson, vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and not less than 3 or more than 7 ordinary members.

9. The Executive Committee shall be elected by the registered members at the Annual General Meeting.

10. No Officer may hold the same office for more than three consecutive years.

11. The Executive Committee may appoint from amongst its members, such other honorary Officers as it may determine from time to time. It shall have power also to co-opt to fill vacancies and establish sub-committees.

12. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once each quarter. Four members shall constitute a quorum for the Executive.

13. The Executive Committee and the sub-committees shall hold office until the following Annual General Meeting.

General Meetings

14. Not less than 14 days notice of General Meetings, Annual or Special, shall be given to members.

15. The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held in the month of

All motions, nominations and amendments must be in the hands of the Secretary not less than 7 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting. Nominations for the Executive, including Officers posts, shall be made in writing by two current members, having received consent from the nominee.

16. The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall include.

- a) Minutes of the previous A.G.M.
- b) Annual report submitted by the Secretary.
- c) Financial report submitted by the Treasurer.
- d) Election of Officers and members of the Executive Committee.
- e) Motions
- f) Any other urgent business.

17. A Special Meeting shall be convened by the Secretary within 14 days, if directed by the Executive Committee or demanded in writing by not less than 20

current members, who in their requisition shall state the purpose of the meeting. No other business shall be transacted at that special meeting.

18.current members shall constitute a quorum at the General Meeting of the association.

Finance

19. The personal property of the Association shall vest in the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer for the time being of the Association, who shall hold such property in trust for the Association.

20. The Executive shall open a Bank Account on behalf of the Association and all cheques drawn on the said account shall be signed by the Treasurer and also by the Chairperson and/or the Secretary.

21. Correct accounts and books shall be kept showing financial affairs and receipts and disbursements of the Association.

Alteration of the Constitution

22. Alterations and additions to this Constitution may be made at any Annual General Meeting or at a special General Meeting, by a motion supported by at least two thirds of the members present and voting.

Interpretation

23. The Executive Committee shall, subject to the authority of a General Meeting, be the authority for the interpretation of the Constitution and shall have full power to decide on any matter not provided for in this Constitution.

Affiliation

24. By affiliating to Active Retirement Ireland (ARI) the Association, its Officers and Members agree to accept the constitution, rules and bylaws of ARI.

APPENDIX 2

Charities Act 2009

The Bill was signed by President Mary McAleese on Saturday 28th February 2009. The text of the Charities Act 2009 is available to download from

<http://www.attorneygeneral.ie/eAct/2009/a609.pdf>

This is a very welcomed piece of legislation in the charities sector, as there has been no regulation since the foundation of the State. This Act will mean that an integrated system of mandatory registration and proportionate regulation and supervision of the charities sector will be introduced for the first time in Ireland. There is also a statutory definition of what a charity is.

The approach adopted in the Act recognises that:

- it is important to underpin civil society
- charities deserve a statutory framework in keeping with the modern world at the start of the twenty-first century
- regulatory requirements should be proportionate in parallel with the statutory framework,
- self-regulatory initiatives such as agreed Codes of Practice should be encouraged.

Purpose of the Act

The purpose of the Charities Act 2009 is to enact a reform of the law relating to charities in order to ensure accountability and to protect against abuse of charitable status and fraud. It will also enhance public trust and

confidence in charities and increase transparency in the sector. The Charities Act 2009, together with the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973, and the Street and House to House Collections Act 1962, will provide for a composite regulatory framework for charities through a combination of new legislative provisions and retention of existing charities legislation with updating, where appropriate.

Key aspects of the Act include

- Definition of “charitable purpose” for the first time in primary legislation
- A new Charities Regulatory Authority to be established to secure compliance by charities with their legal obligations and also to encourage better administration of charities;
- A Register of Charities on which all charities operating in the State must be entered;
- Any organisation in receipt of charitable tax exemptions from the Revenue Commissioners on the establishment day is to be automatically deemed to be registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority;
- Any unregistered organisation that acts in a manner that would lead the public to reasonably believe it is a charity, shall to be guilty of an offence.
- A requirement for charities to submit annual activity reports to the new Authority;
- Updating of the law relating to fundraising, particularly in relation to collections by way of direct debits and sale of ‘tokens’;
- The establishment of a Charity Appeals Tribunal;

- The dissolution of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland (CCDB) upon establishment of the new Authority, and the transfer at that stage of its functions to the Authority;
- The transfer to the Authority of all jurisdictions previously vested in the Attorney General by statute or common law in relation to charities;
- Provision for administrative co-operation by the Authority with statutory bodies on relevant regulatory and law enforcement matters, both inside and outside the State;
- The payment of remuneration to charity trustees for non trustee duties subject to certain conditions
- Provisions for relief from personal liability for charity trustees in respect of any losses accruing to the charity where the trustee has acted in good faith;
- The establishment of consultative panels to assist the Authority in its work and to ensure effective consultation with stakeholders;
- The sale of a Mass card, without an arrangement with the Catholic Church being in place, to be an offence.

For a comprehensive explanation of the key points contained within the Act, please refer to the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs website, which hosts a synopsis of the main features of the Act as well as an FAQ section: www.pobail.ie

Implementation of the Act

The enactment of the Bill does not in itself immediately bring the Act into force. It is only when the Minister commences individual provisions sections of the Bill that charities will find themselves with new legal responsibilities. There is a considerable body of work to be undertaken in preparation for statutory regulation. Some provisions in the Act have already commenced; including regulation of the sale of mass cards. In a Dáil Debate in May 2010, The Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, Pat Carey reported to the Dáil on the progress of the Charities Act, 2009 (Dáil Éireann, Debates, 11th May 2010, 455-7). He indicated that he expected the new Charities Regulatory Authority to be put in place by the end of 2011. If you wish to be notified of any developments in the implementation of the Charities Act 2009, you can subscribe to Pobail's mailing list by sending your email address to cmacdonncha@pobail.ie.

The Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising

The Fundraising Principles are a set of overarching principles and guidelines for fundraising in Ireland, applying to charities that fundraise from the public. They were established in 2008 following a feasibility study that explored how the operational aspects of charitable fundraising could be regulated through Codes of Practice in Ireland. The Irish Charities Tax Research Group Ltd was charged by the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs with the task of developing Fundraising Principles and has conducted extensive consultation with the Charities Sector in this regard.

By autumn 2010, an Independent Monitoring Group will be established to pro-actively monitor the usage and adherence to the Fundraising Principles and to deal with complaints made by members of the public. For further information, please visit www.charitytaxreform.com



APPENDIX 3

Active Retirement Ireland

124 The Capel Building
St. Mary's Abbey
Dublin 7
Phone: 01-8733836
Fax: 01-8733986
Email: info@activeirl.ie
Web: www.activeirl.ie
Charity Number CHY 15090

NEW ASSOCIATIONS' AFFILIATION FORM

1. Name: _____ Active Retirement Association
2. Area Served: _____
3. Total number of Members: _____ Men _____ Women
4. Venue of meetings: _____
5. Frequency of meetings: _____

Chairperson: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Secretary: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Treasurer: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Delegate to the Council: _____

Address: _____

Signed on Behalf of Association: _____

Date: _____

The Fee to affiliate to Active Retirement Ireland is €19.00 (nineteen Euro) per Association for the first year and thereafter €5.00 (five Euro) per Member per annum based on the average number of Members in the Association during the previous year.

Revised and Corrected by PR 04 March 2010

APPENDIX 4



Active Retirement Ireland

Suite 124, The Capel Building,
St. Mary's Abbey,
Dublin 7
Tel: 01 8733836
Email: info@activeirl.ie
Web: www.activeirl.ie
Charity Number CHY 15090

Change of Officer Form

1. Name: _____ **Active Retirement Association**
 2. Area Served: _____
 3. Total number of Members: _____ **Men** _____ **Women** _____
 4. Venue of meetings: _____
 5. Frequency of meetings: _____
- Chairperson: _____
Address: _____
_____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____
- Secretary: _____
Address: _____
_____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____
- Treasurer: _____
Address: _____
_____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____
- Delegate to the Council: _____
Address: _____

- Signed on Behalf of Association: _____
Date: _____

If there is any change of Officer since renewal of your Associations Affiliation Fee Please forward details to Head Office to update the database.



Active Retirement Ireland
124, The Capel Building
Mary's Abbey
Dublin 7

01-8733836

info@activeirl.ie

© Active Retirement Ireland 2010. All rights reserved.