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Women 'still battle to bridge the gap
with men in the workplace',
Irish Independent, 26th February 2004

AONTAS MISSION

AONTAS is the National Association of Adult Education, a voluntary membership organisation. It exists to promote the development of a learning society through the provision of a quality and comprehensive system of adult education which is accessible to and inclusive of all.

The five objectives of the current AONTAS Strategic Plan, Sustaining Growth and Development 2004-2006, are:

- Ensuring that the importance and value of adult and community education as a key part of lifelong learning are promoted locally, nationally and internationally
- Influencing and participating in the continued development of policy in the areas of adult education, lifelong learning and civil society
- Strengthening and building the capacity of members to operate effectively in the growth and development of the Adult Education Service
- Taking a lead role in supporting the growth and development of community education as a key sector providing access and progression for adult learners
- Developing the capacity of AONTAS as a learning organisation and a model of excellence for the Adult and Community Education sector

Campaigning for Change - Irish Independent

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2004

Women 'still battle to bridge the gap
with men in the workplace',
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29th April 2004.



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FOREWORD

At the end of the first year of my second term as President of AONTAS I am glad to say that I am more optimistic than at the beginning. Following what was a period in which developments had slowed down considerably I was pleased to see that the Budget Estimates announced in December included increases for adult and community education. AONTAS will be working to ensure that investments continue to be made in the Service and will continue to strive for a commitment of 10% of the education budget.

2004 saw some dramatic changes in the VEC sector following the local elections and later in the year the establishment of new VECs many of which now contain community representatives. Our own pre-election campaign was a focal point for the work of the organisation in 2004 and was extremely successful in informing the local candidates about the importance of support for adult and community education and in raising its profile in the local and national media. In particular the accounts of their learning journeys by adult students served to highlight the need for accessible education and training options throughout life. Many of the learners who spoke were pursuing PLC courses which the Department attempted to cap in 2004. This move was strongly opposed by the VEC sector supported by AONTAS.

One major disappointment in 2004 was the lack of any development in the structures to support adult education. Of greatest concern has been the treatment of the National Adult Learning Council. Having effectively suspended it in 2003 the Department reviewed its functions without any consultation with the stakeholders and has not come back with any information on the contents of this review. I, my Officer Board and staff have been unable to get information about the Department's future plans for the Council despite consistent requests. While AONTAS acknowledges that many changes have taken place since the idea of the Council was conceived in 1998, it is the manner in which the Council has been dealt with that is most worrying. Consultative processes have been hard won and the lack of respect for views of stakeholders in the sector is simply not acceptable. I would urge the Department to move quickly to resolve the issue by recalling the Council and putting the outcomes of the review on the table.

With the launch of our third strategic plan in March, once more AONTAS has set itself an ambitious agenda which will be carried out by the staff team supported by the Executive Committee and in collaboration with membership. Two new

members will be recruited to the staff team to strengthen the membership base and to develop a public relations strategy. I would like to thank the Director and the current staff team for their hard work, energy and commitment throughout the year. In particular I would like to thank Niamh Keaveney and Mary Malone, both of whom left the organisation to pursue other career paths in 2004. I would also like to thank the members of the Executive Committee and Officer Board for their work during the year. The Executive Committee met six times during the year and members also worked on various sub-committees and represented AONTAS at many events. As a body of volunteers their work is highly valued by myself and the staff team.

While the job of Officers and Executive members involves keeping a critical eye on the development of the Adult Education Service, nonetheless I would like to acknowledge the interest and commitment of our Minister of State, Ms. Síle DeValera and her Department officials. Our working relationship with them is critical to the successful development of the sector. Finally on a sad note I would like to particularly acknowledge the work of Tony Downes over almost thirty years in the Adult Education Service and to extend our sympathies to his family. Tony's critical analysis as well as his wit and humour will be sadly missed by all of us.

John Ryan, President



OVERVIEW

2004 proved to be yet another busy and eventful year for AONTAS with much of its energies being taken up with keeping adult and community education in the limelight in the context of a slow down in economic growth and in the implementation of the recommendations of the White Paper. There was much dismay at the lack of any significant new funding for the sector in 2004 other than inflation increases. Of particular concern was no announcement of funding for Phase Four of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative which was a huge disappointment to AONTAS as the establishment of a guidance service for adult learners has been a goal of the Association for a long time, and the pilot has been one of the most successful programmes established within the sector. Other issues of concern to AONTAS were the impact of the Review carried out by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs on the work of local community groups and the changes in the eligibility requirements for the Back to Education Allowance implemented by the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

The lack of progress on the establishment of the National Adult Learning Council which has been effectively suspended by the Department of Education and Science since June 2003 is a poor reflection on the commitment to the development of over-arching structures to support and develop the Adult Education Service. Consistent requests from AONTAS for information about the review of the Council undertaken by the Department has yielded no results and is increasingly being seen by many stakeholders as a lack of commitment to adult and community education and a lack of recognition of its importance as a key part of lifelong learning. The move by the Department of Education and Science to cap the numbers doing PLC courses was also a source of concern to the VEC sector members and to the adult learners who use the PLC courses as a locally - based progression route to work and/or higher education options. Right throughout the year there was a sense of slippage of important gains made in the wake of the White Paper and, not for the first time, AONTAS applied its energies to ensuring that adult and community education stayed firmly on the radar screen.

On the positive side the National Adult literacy Programme received increased support from Government and the Back to Education Initiative was successfully established with a second phase now ready for implementation with an increase in funding for 2005. The establishment of the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education was also seen as a positive development towards implementing the recommendations of the McNamara Report (2000) to which

AONTAS had made a significant contribution on behalf of mature students. AONTAS hopes to continue to contribute its expertise in this area to the Advisory Group established to support the National Office. The continuing development of the National Qualifications Framework promises many opportunities for adult learners and AONTAS continues to be involved with its consultative group and with FETAC in implementing its new developments.

It was in this rather mixed context that AONTAS launched its third strategic plan entitled *Sustaining Growth and Development* at its Annual General Meeting on March 24th. The new plan which was drawn up as a result of a series of consultations with the membership, staff, Executive Committee and other stakeholders in the sector outlines an ambitious programme of work for the next three years and concentrates, as the name suggests, on ensuring the gains made by the adult education sector are not just sustained but developed and expanded, with matching investment. The work includes the development of policy under a number of themes which are described in the body of the report.

2004 got off to an energetic start with the celebration in February of almost fifteen years of work with the women's community-based groups and networks which have provided learner-centred education and training programmes for women during that time. The Conference also celebrated the achievements of the STANCE programme which ended in December 2004 and which has led to the establishment of the National Collective of Community-based Women's Networks (NCCWN). The Collective has been successful in securing funding under the dormant accounts fund to enable it to employ a part-time co-ordinator. I was very proud to have been invited to launch its first strategic plan in December.

AONTAS has always championed community education and particularly its women's groups which have spearheaded the development of community education in Ireland for more than twenty years. As a continuation of that support AONTAS was engaged throughout 2004 in the development of a Quality Assurance Framework for women's community education and during 2005 plans to pilot the Framework with a number of member groups. I would like to thank most sincerely the groups who participated in the case study phase of the work. Their energy, commitment and enthusiasm mirrors the quality of the work they are involved in every day.

AONTAS is also charged with the responsibility of providing a training and support programme for the Community Education Facilitators employed by the VECs. The programme which is delivered in collaboration with the local VECs

has proven to be both challenging and informative for the Facilitators and provides a good model of practice for training and support work within the sector. Currently the DES is engaged in discussions with the IVEA about the future development of support services, so it is not yet clear if and how the programme will be integrated into these services. However, as an Agency currently providing such a service AONTAS expects to be consulted about any changes planned for the programme.

In the spring of 2004 AONTAS made the most of the opportunities afforded to it by the forthcoming local elections in June. A lobby campaign entitled *Your Education, Your Vote* was launched at the AGM in March and continued through five regional meetings into May. The campaign received nationwide attention from both media and local candidates, and member groups successfully used the lobbying materials produced by AONTAS in their own local campaigns. The campaign used the stories of the learning journeys of adults to great effect and also made people realise that their voices and votes do count. AONTAS will use the lessons learnt to prepare for the run-up to the next General Election which once more will afford an opportunity to ensure that adult and community education is firmly embedded in the political agenda.

The consultations carried out to develop the strategic plan showed a real need to strengthen the membership base of AONTAS. The regional meetings which have been held on an annual basis gave a real opportunity for people involved in adult education as organisers, workers and learners to come together at a local level and share experiences, views and issues. It became clear that members valued these opportunities and would like to see them better developed. In response to this AONTAS, through the work of Niamh Keaveney who was employed as Membership Development Officer to explore how best to make the most of the membership, began to develop a strategy to strengthen the current membership base and expand it to include new groups and agencies.

As a result of Niamh's work AONTAS will employ a full-time Membership Development Officer in 2005. Niamh Keaveney left AONTAS in December 2004 and I would like to thank her for her superb work in developing the groundwork for future strategy. At the end of 2004 Mary Malone who had worked in AONTAS for six years and was Membership Officer also moved on into a new position. Mary will be remembered by members and staff alike for her fine work in supporting members over the years.

Throughout 2004 AONTAS representatives worked consistently to keep adult

and community education on the political agenda both on national fora and in meetings with the Minister of State, Ms. Síle DeValera and her officials in the Department. We also met and worked with a number of agencies engaged in the promotion and delivery of adult education and lifelong learning. In July a budget submission was prepared and presented to the Department of Education and Science and was followed by a meeting with Minister DeValera and her Department officials. We were very pleased to see in the Budget Estimates for 2005 that the Adult Education Service would see increases in investment and in particular that the AEGI would receive funding.

By the end of the year a review of our work has shown that despite the more difficult external environment AONTAS has succeeded in maintaining a good public profile for adult and community education and had been instrumental in bringing about some important developments. These are described in the body of the report. We took it as a welcome sign of renewed commitment by the Department when the Budget Estimates were announced by both Ministers thus sending the message that adult and community education is part of the mainstream. However much remains to be done. In 2005 AONTAS will recruit new staff to strengthen the team and to ensure that the strategic objectives of our plan will be achieved at as high a level as possible. I would like to thank all those who have contributed to our work during 2004 from the Further Education Section of the Department to the Executive Committee, staff team and membership and I look forward with renewed energy to 2005.

Berni Brady, Director

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

2004 brought changes at Ministerial level and AONTAS welcomed the new Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin into the role in October. Minister deValera remains as Minister of State at the Department, with particular responsibility for Adult Education. Throughout the year AONTAS produced a number of policy documents and submissions and engaged in consultations and campaign work designed to ensure the continuing implementation of policy in the area of adult and community education.

AONTAS Pre-budget Submission

The pre-budget submission made in July was concise and focused. Owing to continued strong employment levels, AONTAS called for greater investment in work-based learning opportunities, particularly for those with low levels of qualifications. AONTAS supported the NALA recommendation for a specific workplace basic education measure, and asked for an initial €3million for this purpose in 2005. The pre-budget submission also requested:

- A reversal of the decision to cap the places available on PLC courses
- The abolition of fees for part-time courses in higher education for learners with no previous third level qualifications

2004

Adult Education, Summer

Adult Education, Summer

- A reversal of the extended eligibility period for claiming the Back to Education Allowance (BTEA)
- Further investment in the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)
- Further investment in the Adult Education Guidance Initiative
- Investment in the area of professional development in adult education

The 2005 Budget Estimates were announced by Ministers Hanafin and deValera in November, and the news for adult education was reasonably good. Adult and Further Education received an overall increase of approximately €138million on 2004, with funds being made available for expansions in the BTEI and the Guidance Initiative. Childcare support for VEC schemes was also increased, and a significant injection of resources was allocated to the Adult Literacy Service. AONTAS welcomed the increased budget allocation for 2005 since funding to the Adult education Service had remained relatively static for the past two years and AONTAS had consistently lobbied for increased investment.

HEA Submission

A submission was made to the HEA in July about its review of the targeted initiative schemes in the third level sector. This formed part of the ongoing development of a National Strategy for Access to Higher Education, the template for which was launched at a National Conference in Kilkenny in December. The AONTAS submission emphasised the need for better financial supports to be put in place for adult learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with family commitments. It stated that the issue of fees, in particular part-time fees, should also be tackled. The submission also called upon the HEA to promote the development of partnerships between locally-based adult and community education providers and higher education institutes with a view to opening up progression routes for adult learners.

Community Education Policy Document

The AONTAS Community Education policy document was widely disseminated in 2004. Over 1500 copies are in circulation and being used for discussions and workshops on community education by a variety of statutory and community education providers. The document attempts to provide an understanding of community education and presents some challenges for the development and

delivery of community education in both formal and non-formal settings. In June AONTAS facilitated a round table discussion with a number of key providers of and participants in community education. The discussion highlighted the different understandings of community education and its role in addressing issues of access and social exclusion. The discussion also highlighted the key role played by community education in meeting the needs of particular groups of adults who may not access educational provision through the formal system and the importance of sustained support and resources for this work. The issue of recognition was regarded as of particular importance in the context of the review of the Community Development Support Programme carried out by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Local Election Campaign 2004

The 2004 AONTAS Local Election Campaign was a great success, and received much positive feedback. Local elections are significant for the adult education sector, as local councillors are involved in a variety of structures such as the VECs and City and County Development Boards. AONTAS used the opportunity provided by the June elections to highlight the importance of adult education to local politicians and indeed to the political parties at national level. Campaign materials, including posters and handouts, were developed and sent to all member organisations, many of whom organised their own campaigns and events at local level. The material outlined the important role that adult education plays in developing individuals, communities, citizens and workers in modern Ireland.

The campaign was launched at the AONTAS AGM in March, and continued through five regional meetings in April and May. Local candidates from all parties and political stances were invited to attend the regional meetings and engage in debate about the development of the Adult Education Service. Learners in each region described their personal experiences of the learning journey, and were able to highlight the key supports and deficits at local level. Participants and politicians alike enjoyed the opportunity provided to discuss issues and highlight successes. The work of AONTAS also received a good deal of local media attention during the campaign.

Staff at the AONTAS office followed up on the meetings by mailing information about adult education to all sitting local councillors, and also to staff at political party headquarters. Meetings were arranged with the education spokespersons of the main political parties at the Oireachtas. AONTAS is planning to continue

this momentum in the lead-up towards the next General Election and wishes to thank all of those at local level who supported the campaign.

YES Consultation Process

The previous Minister for Education and Science, Noel Dempsey, organised a series of consultations in early 2004 under the heading *YES – Your Education System*. The broad aim of the consultative process was to gather the views of the general public on the current state of the education system in Ireland, and look at potential ways forward. A series of seventeen public meetings took place, which AONTAS members were encouraged to attend. Many did so, and ensured that the voice of adult and community education was heard during the process. There was however a general consensus that the scale of the meetings made it difficult for all views to be heard and that the process focused almost exclusively on the formal school system. However AONTAS continued to meet with Minister of State, Síle deValera during 2004 and to represent the views and issues of adult learners at national fora and committees, to ensure that adult education is firmly on the agenda.

Policy Themes

Under its current strategic plan, AONTAS is developing its policy work in four broad thematic areas: Accreditation, Learner Supports, Adults and Higher Education and Adult Education and Citizenship. Progress was made in all four areas during 2004:

Accreditation

2004 was again a busy year in the accreditation field, following the launch in late 2003 of the new National Framework of Qualifications. AONTAS continued to take part in a number of consultations organised by the Further Education and Training Awards Council, FETAC, in relation to its awards. Staff engaged with FETAC around the development of a Quality Assurance model for the Further Education sector. Of particular concern was whether or not smaller adult education providers would be able to administer a new Quality Assurance model with current resource levels. This and other issues are being highlighted to FETAC on an ongoing basis through a Quality Assurance consultative group.

FETAC also established a Standards Forum in January 2004, which AONTAS was invited to join. This Forum brings together a range of stakeholders to advise and assist FETAC in setting the overall standards of its awards. AONTAS also nominated a member to participate in a group, which is developing the new Levels 1 & 2 of the Qualifications Framework. Work on these areas is due for completion during 2005.

Learner Supports

During 2004, AONTAS continued to lobby for better learner supports in the Adult Education sector. Throughout the year AONTAS lobbied for expansion of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative, which got little attention in the 2004 budget and continued to operate on a pilot basis. The need for a comprehensive guidance service was one of the areas highlighted in the local election campaign, and also in the AONTAS pre-budget submission. Throughout 2004 the AONTAS Director, Berni Brady participated actively in the work of the AEGI Advisory Group consistently raising the issue of adequate funding for the Initiative. AONTAS therefore welcomed the additional funding allocated to the Adult Guidance Initiative in the 2005 budget estimates.

AONTAS continued to lobby on other support issues during the year, two examples being childcare and allowances for adult learners. These issues were highlighted during the local election campaign, and also in the pre-budget work with the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Finance. Again AONTAS acknowledged the increase (7.3%) in childcare spending for VEC adult education schemes in 2005 which was announced in November. The eligibility period for claiming the Back to Education Allowance was also reduced from fifteen to twelve months. However AONTAS will continue to lobby for a return to the six month period as the change has caused unnecessary hardship for many adult learners.

Adults and Higher Education

In 2004 AONTAS prioritised the area of Higher Education within its work, and succeeded in building stronger connections to the sector. Staff established links with the newly established National Office for Equity of Access based within the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and highlighted a number of concerns with regard to access issues for mature students. Staff also met with a newly established group, the Network of Irish Mature Student Officers (NIMSO), with a view

to working closely together in future on mature student issues.

In July AONTAS made a submission to the HEA in relation to targeted access initiatives, again highlighting the particular concerns of adult learners. The submission also underlined the importance of expanding and supporting partnership approaches between Higher Education institutes and community-based providers in order to develop progression routes for adult learners. In December, the National Office for Equity of Access launched its first Action Plan at a major conference in Kilkenny. Staff and members of AONTAS attended the conference to engage with the debate and ensure that adult and mature learners were also part of the agenda. AONTAS continued to be concerned that the Advisory Committee established by the then Minister of Education and Science, Mr. Noel Dempsey to support the work of the National Office did not include a voice for mature students. AONTAS requested a meeting with the current Minister, Ms. Hanafin to address this issue. AONTAS has since been invited to participate in the Advisory Committee and will endeavour to represent the views and issues of adult learners.

Adult Education and Citizenship

The important role of adult education in developing and promoting active citizenship and civil society was identified by members as an important objective of the current AONTAS strategic plan. In 2004, a real effort to promote this agenda was made with the local election campaign playing a central role. The campaign in itself of course promoted the active citizenship agenda, encouraging providers and learners alike to engage with local politicians and campaign for their own issues. Members were also encouraged to follow up on the campaign by developing relationships with local councillors and by exploring the possibility of joining the new local VECs and other bodies.

During the summer it became known that 2005 would be designated by the Council of Europe as *European Year of Citizenship through Education*, providing a further opportunity to promote the citizenship agenda. The AONTAS Director and Policy Officer attended a conference on citizenship education in Santiago de Compostela in September to get an overview of plans for the year and to make useful contacts. Planning for a national Conference in 2005 to mark the year began in Autumn, and staff have also since become involved in a Citizenship Education Network in Ireland with a view to sharing information and ideas for the Year 2005. AONTAS will also be working with its members to promote the

year through their own activities.

Representation

AONTAS plays an important role in representing the voice and issues of adult learners at national fora as well as to Government Departments, officials and public representatives

Educational Disadvantage Committee (EDC)

The Educational Disadvantage Committee was established by the Minister of Education and Science in 2002 under the terms of Section 32 of the Education Act, 1998, and its purpose is to advise the Minister on policies and strategies to identify and correct educational disadvantage. The Committee comprises twenty one members who have particular insights and expertise in tackling educational disadvantage at all levels, appointed by the Minister. The Director of AONTAS brings the voice and issues of adult learners to the attention of the Committee. During 2004 the EDC met on ten occasions and presented a submission entitled, *Priority Areas for Action within the Adult and Community Education Sector*, to the Minister in March 2004. The Paper which was developed by the Director in collaboration with the Director of NALA identifies recommended priority areas for action within the Further, Adult and Community Education Sector, in the context of the White Paper on Adult Education, *Learning for Life*.

AONTAS and NALA also jointly organised a forum which concentrated on the specific area of Adult and Community Education for the Committee in February 2004. This forum was attended by eleven adult learners who were invited to recount and share their experiences of basic and second chance education. The Minister of State, Ms. Síle DeValera attended the forum throughout and listened with great interest to the stories of the learning journeys made by the adult learners present. The forum was also attended by senior officials of the Department of Education and Science as well as some members of the Committee. This discussion space highlighted in real and personal terms the importance of tackling educational disadvantage within a lifelong learning perspective and not only confining actions to the formal school system.

In particular it demonstrated the influence of parental learning on the educational motivation of the child, an issue which AONTAS has raised on many occa-

sions. The Committee's first term of office is due to end in March 2005 so its current work is focused on producing a final report and organising a final National Forum.

Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI)

The Director of AONTAS is a member of the Advisory Group established to support the AEGI. The Advisory Group meets four times per year. Established in 2002 the Initiative currently consists of twenty five projects throughout the country which aim to provide a quality educational guidance service for adults. The Initiative reached its third phase of development in 2003 and would have expected a fourth phase of development during 2004. However no phase four funding was allocated which was a considerable concern to members of the Advisory Group and particularly to AONTAS which has for a long time lobbied for a comprehensive adult guidance service.

An evaluation of the Initiative has been conducted and has shown the success of the Initiative as well as barriers to access which still remain stubbornly present despite improvements in investment. The three main barriers identified in the evaluation are lack of finance, childcare provision and transport which have consistently emerged as issues for adult learners for many years. The evaluation also revealed gaps in provision and a lack of progression routes for adult learners. However the establishment of initiatives such as the BTEI is already beginning to address some of these issues and it is hoped that as it becomes embedded in the system it will provide greater access for adult learners. As the AEGI develops, human resources and professionalisation issues for the Service are beginning to be addressed.

During 2004 AONTAS lobbied hard for the growth and development of the AEGI and was therefore pleased to note the allocation of €800,000 in the 2005 Budget Estimates for its next phase. However the Initiative did lose out because of lack of new funding in 2004 and AONTAS feels that it is imperative that the Government continue to invest in and expand the Initiative. While the Initiative set out to prioritise target groups including literacy learners, VTOS participants and other learners in the adult and community education sector, its success has led to an increasing demand from a range of other potential learners. This is an issue which is currently being discussed by the Advisory Group in preparation for the development of the next phase of work.

National Adult Learning Council

The National Adult Learning Council last met in June 2003. The Department of Education and Science instituted a review of the Council in the latter half of 2003 but no information has been released on this review.

University College Dublin, Governing Authority

The Governing Authority of the University is charged with overseeing the policy and procedures at the University. The AONTAS Director has just completed two terms comprising eight years service as a member of the Authority. During her terms of office she endeavoured to contribute her experience and expertise in the areas of adult and community education to the policies and planning undertaken by UCD. In particular she highlighted issues of access and progression for adult learners. In January 2004 UCD inaugurated its new President, Dr. Hugh Brady who throughout 2004 led the development of a new and radical strategic plan for the university. Participating as a member of the Authority provided a valuable opportunity to learn about the complexities of Higher Education and examine from another perspective the supports needed to enable adult learners to participate in it. The President of AONTAS, Mr. John Ryan is set to become a member of the Authority having been elected by the General Council of County Councils for the new term of office.

Education Equality Initiative Phase II, 2004-2006

The Education Equality Initiative (EEI) is funded by the Further Education Section of the Department of Education and Science through the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000-2006. The overall goals of the EEI are to ensure that the learning and good practice generated by the projects are identified, documented, analysed and disseminated with the ultimate aim of embedding the lessons in policy and practice and improving provision for educationally disadvantaged adults. Phase II commenced in January 2004 when ten projects were selected for funding.

The projects address the educational disadvantage experienced by the following groups:

- Adults in isolated rural communities especially men
- Adults with disabilities

- Traveller parents
- Parents wishing to engage in education
- Roma community

Issues addressed through the EEI include;

- Research
- Improving language skills for people with a hearing disability
- Arts for adults with an intellectual disability
- Access programmes for isolated adults
- Increasing awareness in education of schizophrenia

The ten projects are supported by Leargas and a representative working group oversees the EEI. The key challenge for the projects and the working group in Phase II will be to ensure that the good practice of the work and the overall initiative is documented and disseminated to policy makers. Maureen Kavanagh, Co-ordinator of the CEF Training and Support Programme represents AONTAS on the Working Group.

National Womens Council In from the Margins Advisory Group

The IFM Project, funded under the Equality for Women Measure ran for three years from 2002 until 2004. Niamh Keaveney represented AONTAS on the Advisory Group. The role of the Advisory Group was to provide advice and expertise to the project team. The project worked with women's groups across Ireland and aimed to link them to policy in three main areas i.e. anti- racism, poverty and health.

The project held seven regional focus groups and seven regional seminars focusing on one of the policy areas and involved over 830 women from 300 community groups. A national conference was held in October to highlight at a national level, the issues raised in the project and to bring together women's groups, community groups and policy makers. The project had a number of positive outcomes but was particularly innovative in grounding the policy work of N.W.C.I. in the lived experience of disadvantaged women. It now remains for the

N.W.C.I. to pursue this collective policy agenda.

EAEA

In November 2004, in Metz, France, AONTAS consolidated its active role in European adult and community education, with the re-election of Brid Connolly, Hon. Secretary of the Executive Committee to the board of the European network, the EAEA. The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) is a European-wide NGO, founded in 1953, to provide a network of support for all kinds of organisations directly involved in every level of adult education and lifelong learning.

Today the association is made up of some 110 organisations in 30 countries. The key objective of EAEA is to work for the creation of a learning society. 2005 has been designated, *The Year of Active Citizenship through Education*, and this will be the central focus of the work of the Association throughout the year, culminating in the Grundtvig Prize in November 2005.

EAEA supports the key messages of the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, published by the European Commission, in 2000. These messages include:

- Basic skills for all
- Innovations in teaching and learning
- Valuing Learning
- Investment in human resources
- Bringing learning closer to home

It does this by identifying projects that will further these key messages, encouraging marginal groups to identify their learning needs, and support providers in meeting those needs. It aims to work on policy issues for adult education, at local, national and transnational levels.

The President of EAEA is Janos sz Toth, from Hungary. Board members come from all over Europe, including Norway, The Netherlands, Bulgaria, Finland, England, France, Germany, Lithuania, Spain and Belgium. As the Irish representative, Brid brings the experience from her work with community groups, particularly with unemployed adults and women's community education, to EAEA, and brings her learning from colleagues from all over Europe, back to local and national arenas in Ireland.



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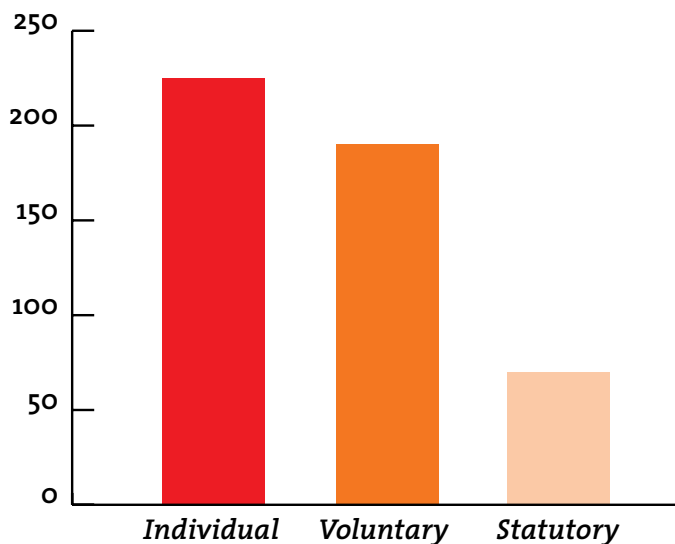
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The work of the EAEA involves board meetings in Europe every two months, and bi-monthly teleconferences, a General Meeting annually, and whatever the demands of the project work. Currently, Brid contributes to the communications strategies, including the newsletter, available on the web page, and represents EAEA on the Editorial Board of LLine, an electronic journal on lifelong learning.

Meetings and Networking



Throughout the year AONTAS met formally with the Minister of State, Síle DeValera and her Department officials on two occasions as well as informally through invitations to seminars, conferences and press launches. Meetings also took place regularly with the Principal Officer of the Further Education Section, Pauline Gildea and her staff. During the pre-election campaign meetings were held with education spokespeople of opposition political parties as well as local councillors. AONTAS also met with the IVEA, IBEC, NALA and other organisations to discuss issues of mutual interest and explore ways of working together to promote lifelong learning.

AONTAS MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

AONTAS Membership

As of 31st December 2004 the AONTAS membership totalled four hundred and ninety two members. A full membership list is included in this report (p.49)

AONTAS Membership December 2004

Statutory/Corporate	76
Voluntary/Corporate	192
Individual members	224
<i>Total Membership</i>	<i>492</i>

In March 2004 at its Annual General Meeting AONTAS launched its third Strategic Plan *Sustaining Growth and Development* which will underpin the work of the organisation until the end of 2006. The plan was developed in consultation with members, the Executive Committee and staff team. It was unanimously adopted and subsequently disseminated to all members following the meeting.

Developing and Supporting Membership

Objective Three of the strategic plan focuses on membership and seeks to strengthen and build its capacity to operate effectively in the growth and development of the Adult Education Service. During 2004 AONTAS set about identifying better ways of strengthening the AONTAS membership as an active resource. Niamh Keaveney was employed on a part time basis in April as Membership Development Support Officer to lead the research into the future development of AONTAS membership. She carried out an extensive review of AONTAS literature to assess the current membership and determine the level of information available to AONTAS on its members.

It was clear from this exercise that AONTAS represented a broad range of adult education providers and interest groups across the country including VECs, local community groups, higher education providers, trade unions and voluntary organisations as well as substantial numbers of individual adult education workers and learners. An Advisory Committee comprising a number of representatives from the AONTAS Executive was established in June 2004 to support the work.

Site Visits

The Membership Development Support Officer and other staff members made a number of site visits to a range of AONTAS members from the voluntary and statutory sectors. The members visited reflected a cross section of the overall membership and were chosen on the basis of geographical location, adult education focus, new members, active / non-active members. A wide range of ideas and learning emerged from these meetings. The views of individual members were sought via a questionnaire and a workshop held during the General Meeting.

The purpose of these visits was to connect with members on a personal level, develop a greater insight into their work and to explore ways in which AONTAS staff could best support the work of members and assist them to strengthen their involvement within AONTAS.

Staff input into the process was an essential element of the research. A series of individual interviews was carried out with staff as well as a number of group discussions designed to capture their ideas and experience and to discuss possible areas of future work with members. Recognising the value of learning from others, the Membership Development Support Officer also visited a

number of national membership organisations to assess the models they use in supporting membership. These visits proved very useful in demonstrating the variety of ways of working with members employed by other groups. Regular progress reports were made in the membership development section of the AONTAS website as well as through the AONTAS Quarterly Newsletter. Members of the AONTAS Executive were briefed on progress at their September meeting and encouraged to contribute their ideas.

General Meeting

The General Meeting on November 10th focused on the theme *Making Membership Matter* and was designed as an opportunity to communicate to members progress to date and to provide another forum for highlighting any further issues. Niamh Keaveney, Membership Development Support Officer gave members an overview of the process to date. She also outlined four key areas of membership development; outreach, networking, profile & promotion and policy & representation.

Three representatives of member groups made presentations on their involvement as members of AONTAS; Bairbre Fleming from UCD, Jennifer Flynn from the Shanty Education and Training Centre and Marian Duffy, AEO Co. Carlow VEC. Five workshops which were facilitated by staff and Executive Committee members were designed to enable members to contribute their ideas to the membership development of AONTAS. A workshop was also held specifically for individual members in order to ascertain as broad a range of views as possible. The General Meeting was very well attended and there was a great sense of enthusiasm and commitment to the ideas raised and a positive sense of moving forward. A report on these workshops was subsequently disseminated to all AONTAS members.

Research Outcomes

The research identified four major areas where AONTAS could develop particular initiatives aimed at strengthening membership base. These are outreach, networking, promotion, policy and representation. Much work is already being done on these areas within the organisation and indeed it was interesting to note that the objectives and issues identified within the current strategic plan were largely similar. However the current work needs to be built upon and expanded if AONTAS is to make the most of its membership base. In particular members cited the value of site visits which connected them to staff and provided an opportunity for staff members to gain a much deeper insight into the range and variety of provision at a local level. The development of a range of communication systems was deemed as essential including email phone contact, regular membership awareness bulletins and personal visits.

Greater networking between members will have a significant contribution to the overall policy and promotion of adult education. This can be developed through open discussion meetings at local and regional levels. The AONTAS regional meetings held during the life of the last strategic plan proved to be highly successful and members felt these could be further developed around specific themes relevant to members' own work and expertise.

Themes identified by members through the work of the Membership development Officer include those which have already been outlined in the Policy Officer's report and others which arose in the course of the visits. These include the needs of migrant workers and teenage parents as well as the development of professionalisation within the Adult Education Service.

The need for training was identified by members as a means of developing their capacity in the delivery and promotion of the Adult Education Service. Particular areas of training included use of the media, promotion strategies, lobbying and advocacy, policy development and representation. As a result of the work of the Membership Development Officer, AONTAS will recruit a full-time Membership Development Officer and a Communications Officer with a view to developing a strategy to strengthen the membership base and to promoting and profiling adult and community education much more visibly at local and national levels.

Conference

Women Learning: An Era of Change

Since 1992 AONTAS has played a major role in supporting the development of women's community education and developing its capacity to becoming an active player in the lifelong learning agenda. AONTAS has implemented four major projects which have worked with individual women, women's groups and women's networks as follows:-

- New Opportunities for Women (N.O.W.) Projects 1992 – 1994, 1996 – 1998
- Women's Education Networks Development Initiative (W.E.N.D.I.) 1998 – 2000
- Strategies To Advance Networks Collective Empowerment (S.T.A.N.C.E.) 2000 – 2003

To demonstrate the importance and impact of women's community education, on women themselves and on the development of communities all over Ireland AONTAS held a conference in February 2004 entitled *Women Learning – An Era of Change*. The aims of the conference were to:

- demonstrate the rationale for AONTAS support of the women's community education groups
- show the empowerment of individual women, women's groups and the women's networks
- describe the impact of this at local, regional, national and international levels
- demonstrate the importance of resourcing women's community education
- identify the issues effecting the future development of women's community education
- highlight the importance of putting women's education on the political agenda at national and European levels

The Conference also marked the end of the STANCE programme. The keynote



address was given by Professor Kathleen Lynch, Chair of Equality Studies, University College Dublin who explored women's citizenship and how it is defined. She argued for the need to challenge the neo-liberal view of citizenship and explore a care giving model which addresses the issue of equality of condition for everyone.

Other speakers included the Minister of State at the Department of education and Science, Ms. Síle DeValera, Mr. Sean Gorman, Assistant Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Ms. Monike Oels, EU Directorate General of Education and Culture. A drama presentation written and performed by members of the women's groups highlighted the impact of women's community education, and the need for political support and resources to sustain its development as part of the lifelong learning agenda. A listening and learning space was created to provide a platform for participants from the AONTAS projects to share their personal experience and learning. The conference was a great success and the atmosphere of the day reflected the energy, enthusiasm and empowerment that is women's community education in Ireland. It also demonstrated that women's community education provided a really effective model of education for citizenship, for equality, for care giving and for access and progression for women.

AONTAS INFORMATION SERVICE

The AONTAS Information Service is delivered by the Information Officer, Frances Killeen and the Information Support Officer, Geraldine Pollard. They provide information to the staff, Executive Committee, members and general public and work towards achieving the strategic objectives of the organisation through the maintenance and development of the existing Information Services and the introduction of new initiatives, aimed at making the Service as effective as possible.

Website

In 2004 the AONTAS website, an important information tool was redeveloped. As a result of the redevelopment many new features have been added to the website, including a new section, entitled *Information*.

This new section provides up-to-date information for adult education providers and learners, together with recent figures on participation in adult education. The Information section also contains a *Case Studies* subsection – a space for adult learners to share their stories with visitors to the site. In addition, the section houses details of the organisation's *Media and Promotional Strategy* which outlines details of the organisation's work towards promoting adult and community education at local, regional and national level, together with press releases issued by AONTAS during 2004.

During 2004 the average monthly hits on the AONTAS website was approximately 52,000, with the most frequently visited section of the site being *Publications and Links*. It is hoped that throughout 2005 members will use the website as a means of exchanging information and promoting adult education.

Members' E-bulletin

Research conducted in the latter half of 2004 by the Membership Development Support Officer highlighted the potential for an AONTAS members' e-bulletin. In response to this research the Information Service started a monthly members' e-bulletin to those with e-mail access. This new service, aimed at supporting membership, provides a space for members to exchange details of projects in which they are involved, news about their organisations, and an opportunity to promote events, training or employment opportunities. While postal mailouts,

including the quarterly newsheet, continue to be sent out to members, the e-bulletin is also used to inform members of the latest policy documents and any other relevant information.

Library

The AONTAS library continues to house recent and relevant reports and publications. The library is used to inform the work of the staff team and from time-to-time members of the public come in and use its resources. The Executive Committee and members also request information from the library on an ad hoc basis. New publications added to the library are regularly catalogued in a tailored, library database.

During 2004 the Information Officer created a new section entitled *AONTAS Members' Information* in the library. Initially members were invited to send in information about their group / organisation to inform the work of the Membership Development Support Officer in developing a plan to strengthen the capacity of members. In response to this invitation members sent in a wide range of documents, from information leaflets to project reports. Staff members have recognised the significance of this resource in informing their work and the Information staff will continue to develop this new library resource on an ongoing basis.

Events

During the year the Information Staff assisted in the organisation of a number of AONTAS events such as the *Women Learning – an Era of Change* seminar and the regional meetings, which were used to promote the *Your Education Your Vote* campaign. They were involved in compiling agendas for the events, organising speakers, promoting the events and collecting and disseminating information before and after the events.

AONTAS information stands were exhibited at various conferences throughout the year, including the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis, The Institute of Guidance Counsellor's annual conference and the National Women's Council *In From the Margins* launch. The Information staff attended various Adult Learner Exhibitions and Information Evenings organised by VECs nationwide.

Study visits

From time to time AONTAS is contacted by various international groups visiting Ireland, interested in learning more about adult education in Ireland. These groups are generally working or studying in this area in their home countries. This year, the Information Officer was contacted by groups from Denmark, Finland, Lithuania and Italy working in the area of adult education and a group of French students studying adult education. The Information Officer and other staff members met with these groups and presented them with an overview of adult and community education in Ireland.

Provision of Information

When providing information to various groups the Service aims to ensure the information is relevant and up-to-date. This requires updating existing information sources such as the AONTAS Funding Document and the Information Referral Pack on an ongoing basis. It also involves sourcing new information on a regular basis and keeping up-to-date with new resources.

Community Education Facilitators (CEFs)

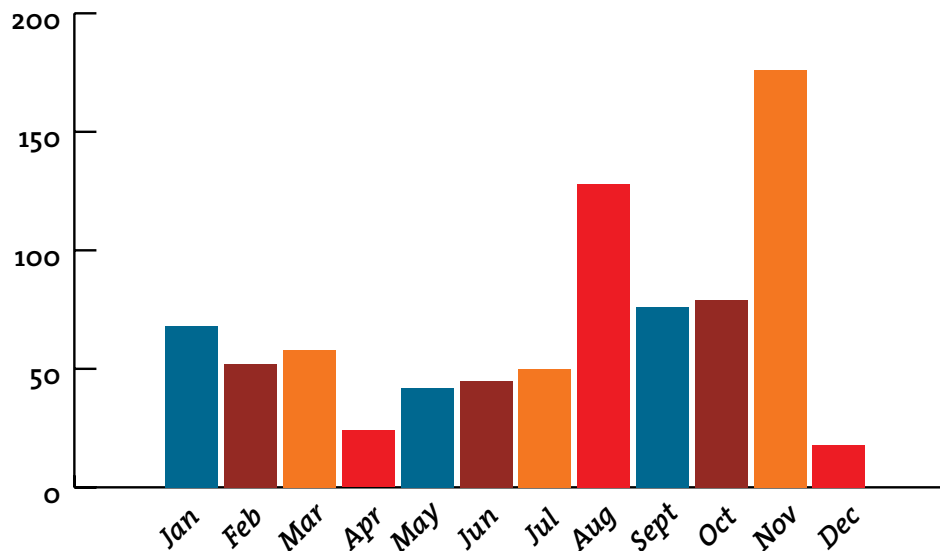
The Information Team continue to provide information support to the Community Education Facilitators through answering queries, attendance at national training and the sourcing of publications. A regular postal mailout is also sent out to CEFs containing information about adult guidance, literacy, accreditation, community education and education disadvantage.

Information Referral Service

During 2004 the AONTAS Information Referral Service dealt with queries from 707 individuals. In the last couple of years we have seen a decrease in the number of queries coming into the Service. This decrease can be attributed to a number of factors such as the widespread availability of information from other sources, in particular the Adult Guidance Service currently being piloted in twenty five areas nationwide and an increased number of visitors to the AONTAS website.

The Information Referral Service was mentioned in a number of adult education supplements in national newspapers during August 2004. As a result of this, there was an increase in queries making August the busiest month for the Information Referral Service, with a total of 128 people contacting the service. As

is traditionally the case, January and September were also busy times for the



Service as many courses begin at these times and there is also a great deal of advertising in relation to courses.

Over three quarters of the individuals who contacted the Information Referral Service did so by telephone. A total of 115 people contacted the service by email, representing a significant increase in the number of email queries on last year's figure. Members of the public can submit email queries to the service from our website. When people were asked about where they had heard about AONTAS the phone book and word-of-mouth were the most popular answers. Other agencies, publications and third level institutions were also responsible for informing individuals about the Information Referral Service.

The Service was contacted by individuals, Citizen Information Centres, community groups, libraries and a range of other groups / organisations. Seventy five per cent 75% of those who contacted the service were female. While 707 individuals contacted the Service, many of these individuals had more than one query. Forty five per cent 45% of the actual queries were from individuals / groups looking for AONTAS publications while a further 34% of the queries were from individuals seeking to access specific courses. Inquiries in relation to funding accounted for 9% of the total number of queries while 12% of queries fell into an 'other' category. The 'other' category encompassed a broad range of queries including how to go about working in the sector and individuals / groups seeking information about AONTAS or general policy issues.

In response to queries, publications were sent out as requested. Very often those requesting publications were looking for more than one. A total of 164 Information Referral Packs were sent out in response to queries from adult learners or potential adult learners. Thirty six percent 36% of those who contacted the Service were referred on to Adult Education Organisers, guidance projects, third level institutions, professional bodies, community groups or other support agencies.

Feedback on the AONTAS Information Referral Pack is very positive and during 2005 AONTAS will endeavour to continue providing up-to-date information to those who contact the Service.

Information Queries by Month

Media & Promotional Strategy for Adult Education

The AONTAS Strategic Plan 2004-2006, *Sustaining Growth and Development*, recognises the importance of promoting adult and community education at local, national and international level and sets this out as one of its objectives. During 2004 the staff team worked on developing and implementing a media and promotional strategy to achieve this objective, an ongoing task in a changing environment.

Throughout 2004 AONTAS used a number of methodologies to promote adult and community education including:

- The organisation of events such as *Women Learning – An Era of Change Conference*, Community Education roundtable, regional meetings, general meeting and annual general meeting
- Lobby campaigns such as the local election campaign – *Your Education Your Vote* and the Pre Budget Submission campaign
- Provision of information on topical issues



CAMPAIGN

EDUCATION

- AONTAS website
- Raising the AONTAS profile in local and national media

Providing a Voice for Adult Learners

At various events throughout the year AONTAS invited adult learners to speak about their own personal experiences as learners. At the conference women spoke about the invaluable contribution which community education had made to their lives. During the local election campaign, adult learners spoke at regional meetings about how adult education had transformed their lives. These learners highlighted the importance of keeping adult education on the political agenda. At the AONTAS general meeting, AONTAS members spoke of the benefits of being a member and described how they would like to see membership develop in the future.

AONTAS supported the adult learners who spoke at some of the various events by providing media training. Prior to and following these events, members of the staff team and adult learners conducted a number of radio interviews with local, regional and national radio stations. The events also attracted a great deal of coverage from local and national newspapers.

Providing Information for Adult Learners

The AONTAS information pack and website continue to act as promotional tools through the provision of information for potential adult learners. During August and September, a time when many adults are considering returning to education, AONTAS circulated a great deal of information on the options and supports available to adult learners. Much of this information appeared in the adult education supplements of national newspapers. A number of local radio stations also invited representatives from the staff team to conduct interviews, aimed at informing potential adult learners about how to go about returning to education.



PROMOTING AND PROFILING AONTAS AND ADULT EDUCATION

In March 2004 Montague Communications presented a one day media training session for AONTAS staff. This training session provided the staff with an overview of the Irish media and strategies for dealing with the media.

Throughout the year AONTAS issued a number of press releases and conducted radio interviews, responding to and promoting developments in adult education, consequently raising the profile of the organisation and adult education. AONTAS also used local and national newspapers to advertise events and to promote the importance of adult education. Members are consistently kept up-to-date with information about the latest developments in adult and community education.

At the end of 2004 an AONTAS members e-bulletin was introduced and this initiative provides the staff, Executive Committee and members with an opportunity to promote adult education at all levels. The AONTAS website, which was redeveloped in 2004, is an invaluable promotional tool which provides a space for learners to tell their stories, highlights various issues and facilitates the provision of information.

Newspaper Headlines

The following headlines were the result of AONTAS articles provided to media in 2004:

***Women 'still battle to bridge the gap with men in the workplace',
Irish Independent, 26th February 2004.***

An adult approach to learning, Irish Times, 26th March 2004.

***Cap on student places 'must be an election issue', Irish Independent,
26th April 2004.***

***Adult education – major issues in local elections, Limerick Post,
May 2004.***

Your education – Your vote campaign, Limerick Post, May 2004.

AONTAS, the National Association of Adult Education brings its local

election campaign to Donegal, Donegal Democrat, 29th April 2004.

AONTAS brings its local election campaign to Dublin, Evening Herald, 6th May 2004.

AONTAS meeting in Heritage today, Laois Nationalist, 13th May 2004.

Lack of adult education resources to be issue in election campaign, Laois Nationalist, 19th May 2004.

Lack of adult education resources highlighted, Carlow People, 20th May 2004.

Lessons for adult learning group, Sunday Times, 20th June 2004.

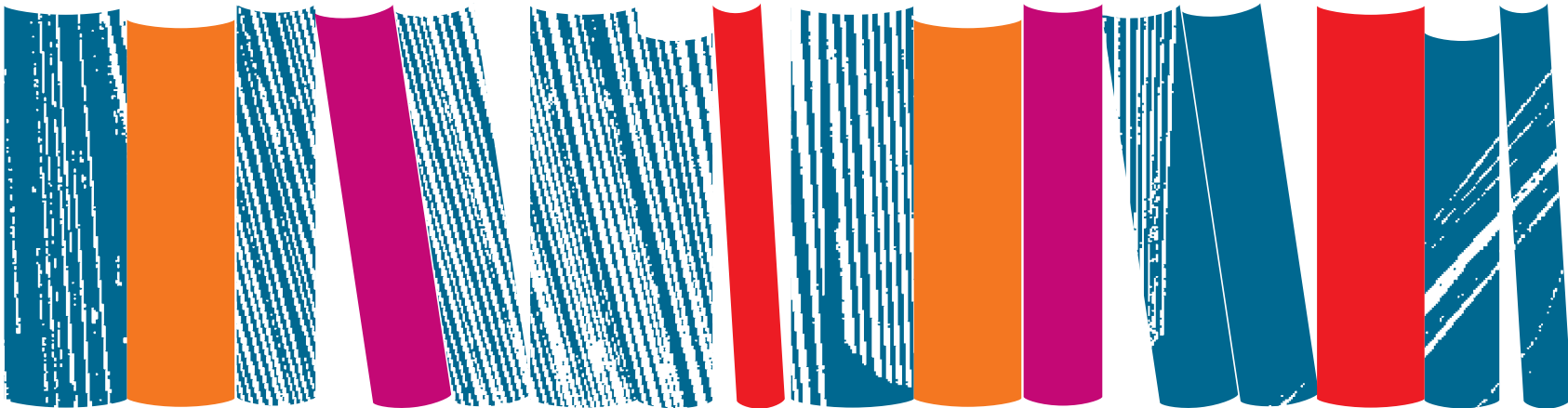
Never too Late to Learn, Evening Herald, 12th August 2004.

Brushing up on all of life's skills, Irish Times, 24th August 2004.

Returning to Education, The Star, 26th August 2004.

Investment in adult education, The Star, 26th August 2004.





AONTAS – the voice of adult learners, Sunday Business Post, 29th August 2004.

AONTAS – Paving the way for adult learners, Irish Independent, 2nd September 2004.

Campaigning for Change, Irish Independent, 2nd September 2004.

Profiles in educational achievement, Irish Independent, 2nd September 2004.

Get back on course, Inside Cork, 2nd September 2004.

AONTAS urges Government to invest in adult education, Sunday Tribune, 31st October 2004.

Radio Interviews

Adult Learners and AONTAS staff conducted interviews with the following radio stations during 2004:

106 FM

Q102 FM

Near FM

Tipp FM

Radio Kerry

Connemara Community Radio

Galway Bay FM

Clare FM

WIRED FM

Inishowen Community Radio

Highland radio

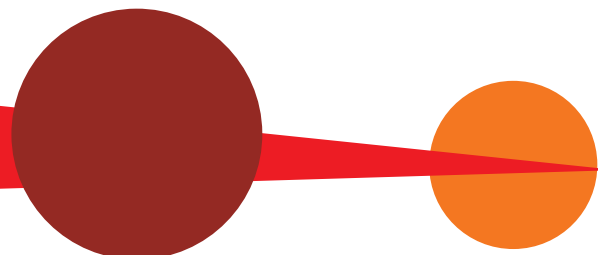
Northwest Radio

Midlands 103

KCLR FM

INN

Anna Livia Radio



RESEARCH

Quality Assurance Framework

During 2004 AONTAS continued with its research into the development of a Quality Assurance Framework for Women's Community Education. AONTAS is involved in this research in order to heighten the visibility of the important work engaged in by its women's groups, to support them to demonstrate the uniqueness of their work and to provide a quality benchmark for it. The need for such a development was identified through an evaluation of the STANCE programme which highlighted the difficulties experienced by women's groups in making a case for women specific education in the current climate.

AONTAS engaged the services of Eleanor Mc. Clorey who has led the work in consultation with four case study groups from Donegal, Longford, Dublin and Wexford. Eleanor's work is supported by an Advisory Group consisting of AONTAS and Executive Committee members. During 2004 Eleanor worked with the four case study groups to identify in detail not just the rationale for their work but also the principles on which it is based and its specific dimensions and elements. She also researched a wide range of literature and compiled discussion papers for the Advisory Group.

In October a residential seminar was held in Dublin to which the case study groups were invited and where the draft material was reviewed, discussed, analysed and redrafted. There was an extremely high level of participation and enthusiasm from all the women who attended. Following the seminar, a draft Quality Assurance Framework was written up by Eleanor and presented to the Advisory Group. The next phase of the project will involve information sharing about the QAF among all the AONTAS women's groups and identifying a number of groups who will commit to testing the Framework during a pilot phase in

2005. Already the draft Framework has managed to capture the essence of the services to women provided by the women's groups and it is hoped that the use of the Framework will strengthen and sustain Women's Community Education into the future.

RAACE Research Association in Adult and Community Education

In late 2003, work began on developing a research network in the adult education sector which has been built upon during 2004. The work has been led by the Research Officer with NALA, and supported by AONTAS staff members, researchers from NUI Maynooth and UCD, and independent researchers working in the adult and community education sector. A Development Committee was formed, which has been working on aims and objectives for the group, and devising an initial work plan. A wide range of individual researchers and practitioners have also expressed interest in the network and have been added to an initial email list to keep them up to date with developments.

The overall aim of the network, which provisionally has the name RAACE, Research Association in Adult and Community Education, will be to provide a forum for analysis, discussion and development of adult education research for policy and practice in Ireland. Although much research exists, there is currently a gap in the collation and promotion of this work, and we would see the research network as very much filling that gap. When the practicalities for developing the network are arranged by the Committee, it will then be officially launched. We anticipate that this will happen during 2005.

OTHER PROGRAMMES

Community Development Consultancy Course

June 2004 saw the completion of the Community Development Consultancy Course which was funded under the Equality for Women Measure and which was delivered in partnership with CAN (Community Action Network) and Meitheal over a period of two years. The Course was designed to train women consultants in the area of Community Development with a view to providing a much needed training resource to the Sector. The trainees would subsequently establish their own consultancies so the Course also addressed the issue of setting up a business. Eighteen women participated in the course which was run over seven three day residential modules and fourteen completed it and received their certificates. An evaluation of the course was completed by the end of 2004 and will be available on the AONTAS website in 2005.

Training and Support Programme for the Community Education Facilitators

AONTAS hosts the Community Education Facilitators Training and Support Programme on behalf of the Department of Education and Science. This Programme is designed to bring the 36 Community Education Facilitators together nationally and regionally for information, training and support. Its aims are as follows: -

- to provide induction and on-going training to the Community Education Facilitators
- to provide a forum for networking of Community Education Facilitators at national level
- to enable the Community Education Facilitators to share information and models of good practice
- to keep the Community Education Facilitators informed on developments relevant to their work
- to support the Community Education Facilitators on an ongoing basis through continued contact, information and research

The Training and Support Programme is supported by a Steering Group whose membership consists of:

Berni Brady	Director, AONTAS
Des O' Loughlin	Department of Education and Science
Pauline Gildea	Department of Education and Science
Fred Goulding	A.E.O.A.
Leonora O'Reilly	A.E.O.A.
John Ryan	I.V.E.A.
Fiona Hartley	I.V.E.A.
Bernie Judge	Further Education Development Unit
Maureen Kavanagh	National Co-ordinator, Training/Support Programme
Bernie McDonnell	ADM Ltd.

The Terms of Reference of the Steering Group are:

- to oversee the work programme of the National Training/Support Programme Co-ordinator for Community Education Facilitators (CEFs)
- to approve the training/support programme for CEFs and guide its implementation

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Officers

Mr. John Ryan – President, City of Limerick VEC

Mr. Tom Hussey – Vice President, County Galway VEC/IVEA

Mr. Patrick Nolan – Honorary Treasurer, County Wexford VEC

Ms. Brid Connolly – Honorary Secretary, Department of Adult & Community Education, N.U.I. Maynooth

Ordinary Members

Ms. Marietta Herraghty – Mevagh Resource Centre, Donegal

Mr. Deiniol Jones – National Youth Council of Ireland

Ms. Leonora O'Reilly – Adult Education Organiser's Association

Ms. Ruth Smith – National Collective of Community-based Women's Networks

Ms. Margaret Murphy – Cork Adult Education Council

Ms. Jan Lewis – Second Chance Education Programme for Women, Donegal

Ms Valerie O'Carroll – Clondalkin Women's Network

Ms. Loretta O' Brien – St. Munchins Family Resource Centre, Limerick

Mr. Sean O'Connor – County Cork VEC

Individual Members

Ms. Anna Dangerfield

Mr. Denis Barrett

STAFF

Ms. Berni Brady – Director

Ms. Jacinta Cuthbert – Officer Manager

Ms. Maureen Kavanagh – National Co-ordinator of Training/Support Programme for Community Education Facilitators

Ms. Finola McDonnell – Policy Officer

Ms. Frances Killeen – Information Officer

Ms. Geraldine Pollard – Information Assistant

Ms. Maria McMullen – Receptionist/Clerical Officer

Ms. Aileen O’Mahoney – CEF Programme Administrator

Ms. Niamh Keaveney – Membership Development Officer

Ms. Mary Malone – Membership Officer

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Corporate Statutory

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna
Association of Secondary Teachers
in Ireland
Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
Canal Communities Partnership
Centre for Adult & Community
Education, Maynooth
City of Cork VEC
City of Dublin VEC
City of Limerick VEC
City of Waterford VEC
Clare Co. Library
Co. Carlow VEC
Co. Cavan VEC
Co. Clare VEC
Co. Cork VEC
Co. Donegal VEC, Donegal Town
Co. Dublin VEC
Co. Galway VEC
Co. Kildare VEC
Co. Kilkenny VEC
Co. Laois VEC
Co. Leitrim VEC
Co. Limerick VEC
Co. Longford VEC
Co. Louth VEC
Co. Offaly VEC
Co. Roscommon VEC
Co. Tipperary VEC (NTH)
Co. Tipperary VEC (STH)
Co. Waterford VEC
Co. Westmeath VEC
Co. Wexford Partnership Limited
Co. Wexford VEC
Co. Donegal VEC, Letterkenny
County Carlow Adult Educational
Guidance Service
DCU/Centre for Lifelong Learning
Development Studies Centre
Donegal Adult Learner Guidance
Service
Dublin City Council
Dublin City Development Board
Dublin Corporation Public Libraries
Dublin Institute of Technology
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art,
Design & Technology
Fáilte Ireland
FÁS
Finglas Cabra Partnership
Foroige
Galway City Partnership
Higher Education Training Awards
Council (HETAC)
I.C.A.
I.N.T.O.
I.V.E.A.

Institute of Public Administration
(IPA)
Institute of Technology, Sligo
Irish Centre for Continuing
Pharmaceutical Education
Irish Coach Institute
Kerry Education Service
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Limerick Senior College
Macra na Feirme
National College of Ireland
National Training and Development
Institute
NUI Galway
OSCAIL – The National Distance
Education Centre
Public Service Executive Union
R.T.E.
School of Practical Child Care
Teachers' Union of Ireland
The Milltown Institute of Theology
& Philosophy
The Open University in Ireland
Tipperary Institute
Udaras na Gaeltachta
University College Cork
University College Dublin
Western Health Board
Womens Studies Centre
WRC Social & Economic Consultants
Ltd

Corporate Voluntary Members

A.L.P.S.
ACCEPT Counselling Association of Ireland
Access 2000 Wexford Ltd.
AEO'S Association
Age and Opportunity
Ait Na Ndaoine CDP
An Comhchoiste Reamhscolaiochta
Aonad Family Resource Centre
Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools
B.A.S.E.
Ballyhoura Development Ltd.
Ballymun Men's Centre
Ballyphenane/Togher C.D.P.
Banulacht
Bawnogue Women's Development Group
Borrisokane Area Network Development
Brackenstown Adult Scene Of Education (BASE)
Brainwave, The Irish Epilepsy Association
Cahir Ladies & District Club
CANDO
Carlow Youth Training
Castlemaine Family Resource Centre
Catholic Youth Care
CELT (Centre for Environmental Living and Training)
CEO'S Association
Clare Women's Network
Clondalkin Women's Network
Co. Kildare Centre for the Unemployed
Community Action Network (CAN)
Community and Family Training Agency (CAFTA)
Community Awareness of Drugs (C.A.D.)
Connolly Information Centre for the Unemployed
Cooneal/Ballysakeery Womens Group
Corduff Community Development Project Ltd.
CORI Education Office
Cork Adult Education Council
CREATE
D.A.T.E. – Dundrum Adult Training and Education
Darndale Belcamp Discovery Centre
Deonach
DOCHAS for Women
Donegal Local Development Co Ltd
Donegal Town Women's Group
Donegal Travellers Project
Donegal Women's Network
Doras Bui – A Parents Alone Resource Centre

Douglas Community School	Iveragh Information Technology Training Ltd.
Dr. Steven's Centre	Joint Managerial Body
DRAIOCHT	KAIES
Drogheda Area Women's Network	Kerry Action for Development Education
Drogheda Community Forum	Kerryhead/Ballyheigue Family Resource Centre
Drogheda Resource Centre for the Unemployed	Kildare Women's Group
Duagh Family Centre	Killarney Counselling Centre
Dublin 12 Women's Action Group	Kilternan Adult Education
Dublin Adult Learning Centre	Kiltimagh CDP
Dublin Men's Coalition	KLEAR LTD
Dunrath Training & Development Educational Guidance Service for Adults	Larkin Unemployed Centre
Eiri Corca Baiscinn – West Clare Development	Leixlip Women's Studies Group
Enable Ireland – Cork Service	LES Guidance Service Limerick
Forum Women's Working Group	Letterkenny Woman's Centre
Foundation For Research and Sustainable Development (FRSD)	Limerick Community Education Network
Francis Street Community Education Centre	Limerick Recource Centre for the Unemployed
Galway Peoples' Resource Centre	Limerick Womens Network
Greater Blanchardstown Development Project	LINKS Community Education Project
Greendale Community School	Longford Women's Link
Harmony Community Dev. Programme	Loreto Centre
Holywell Trust Support Agency	Lourdes Youth & Community Services
Hospital Family Resource Centre	Mary Immaculate Secondary School
Institute for Social Awareness & Rural Development	Mature Student Society WIT
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed	Mayfield Community Adult Learning Project (C.A.L.P.)
	Maynooth Adult Daytime Education (M.A.D.E.)
	Media Access Training

Men's Development Network	People with Disabilities in Ireland, Ltd.
Mercy College	People's Association for Rural Development (PARD)
Mercy Education Centre	People's College
Mercy Family Centre	Presentation Family Centre Ltd.
Mevagh Resource Centre	Prussia Street Women's Group
Ministries Development Group	Redeemer Centre of Ongoing Learning
Moycullen Adult Education Group	Ronanstown Women's Group/CDP
N.C.C.W.N.	Rowlagh Womens Group
National Adult Literacy Agency	Ruhama
National Parent's Council Primary	S.A.O.L. Project Limited
National Training Centre	Sacred Heart Secondary School
National Women's Council of Ireland	Scoil Dara
National Youth Council of Ireland	Scoil Mhuire
Navan Traveller's Training Centre	Seamount College
Nenagh Community Network	Second Chance Education Project for Women
Network Kildare	Shanty Education and Training Centre
New Inn Womens Group	Sligo Adult Guidance in Education (SAGE)
New Ross Community Development Project	Soilse
Newbury House Family Centre	South West Wexford Community Development Project
North Kerry Together	Southill Integrated Development Programme
North Leitrim Women's Centre	Southside Women's Action Network (S.W.A.N.)
North Meath Communities Development Association	South-West Kerry Women's Association (S.W.K.A.)
North Wall Women's Centre	St. Vincent's Trust
North West Inner City Women's Network	St. Aloysius' College
Northside Community Enterprises Ltd.	St. Andrew's Resource Centre
One Family	
PARTAS	
Pavee Point Travellers' Group	

St. Catherines Community Services Centre	Whitefriar Community, Education & Development Project
St. Davids Secondary School	Whiterock Children's Centre
St. Kilian's Adult and Community Education	Wicklow Information Network (WIN)
St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre	Women Educating for Transformation
St. Patrick's Women's Group	Women of the North West
T.A.R.G.E.T.	Women Together Tallaght Network
Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed	Women's Community Projects (Mullingar) Association Ltd.
Teach Tearmainn Women's Refuge Project	Women's Development Group
The Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Outreach Project	Women's Education Research & Resource Centre
The Media Co-op	Women's Equality in Bray (WEB)
The National Agency for Beauty Therapy Education & Training	Women's Issues Task Force
The WEB Project	Women's Resource & Development Agency
Tipperary Women's Network	Workers' Educational Association
Togher Family Centre Ltd.	Yoga Therapy Ireland
Tralee Centre for the Unemployed	Youth Information Centre, Letterkenny
Tralee Women's Forum	
Tuam Community Development Resource Centre	
Tullamore Women's Network	
URRUS – A Ballymun Youth Action Project	
Warrenmount C.E.D. Centre	
Waterford Women's Centre	
Weightwatchers	
West Cork & Beara Womens Network	
West Training & Development	
Western Women's Link	
Westmeath Community Development	

Individual Members

Syed Adnan Ali
Ms. Aine Ahern
Faheem Ahmed
Ms. Veronica Allen
Mr. Patrick B. Bannon
Mr. Denis Barrett
Ms. Mary Blake
Ms. Breda Bollard
Ms. Ruth Bourke
Ms. Mary Brodie
Ms. Rita Brophy
JJ Brosnan
Ms. Sinead Burke
Ms. Elaine Butler
Ms. Melissa Butler
Ms. Geraldine Butler
Ms. Sandra Byrne
Ms. Breda Cahill
Ms. Frances Callan
Ms. Dorothy Calvert
Sr. Chanel Canny
Ms. Monica Cassidy
Mr. Serge Claes
Mr. Matthew Gerard Clarke
Ms. Marie Cody
Mr. Donal Coffey
Mr. Stephen Colbert
Ms. Ann Cole
Ms. Agnes Coleman
Ms. Ursula Coleman

Sr. Bernadette Collins
Ms. Grainne Collins
Ms. Maureen Condon
Ms. Patricia Connolly
Fr. Martin Convey
Mr. Jerry Cronin
Ms. Susan Cullinane
Ms. Dolores Cummins
Ms. Jacinta Cunneen
Ms. Andrea Dalton
Ms. Orla Daly
Ms. Anna Dangerfield
Ms. Merike Darmody
Ms. Fiona De Buis
Ms. Teresa Delaney
Yinka Dixon-O-Bennett
Olayinka Dixon-Oludaiye
Mr. Andrew Doherty
Ms. Emer Dolphin
Ms. Liz Donnelly
Ms. Linda Dowling
Ms. Catherine Doyle
Prof. Sheelagh Drudy
Mr. Ed Du Vivier
Ms. Liz Duffy
Ms. Anne Dunne
Mr. J.G. Dunne
Ms. Susan Dunne
Sr. Angela Durkin
Ms. Rita M Edwards

Mr. Brendan Egan
Mr. Mike Egan
Ms. Paula Faller
Ms. Maeve Finch
Ms. Riona Fitzgerald
Mr. John Fitzgibbon
Ms. Rhonda Flanagan
Ms. Mary Flannery
Mr. Desmond Fleming
Dr. Ted Fleming
Mr. David Flynn
Ms. Trish Forde
Ms. Mary Foudy
Ms. Theresa Gallagher
Mr. Christopher Glancy
Mr. Brian Glennon
Mr. Pdraig Glynn
Ms. Margaret Griffin
Ms. Betty Hannon-Flavin
Mr. Kevin Harrington
Ms. Joan Hassett
Ms. Brigid Haugh Mac Sweeney
Ms. Aobhan Haverty
Ms. Patricia Hayden
Ms. Fiona Healy
Ms. Orla Heeney
Ms. Marietta Herraghty
Ms. Mary Hickey
Mr. Pat Higgins
Ms. Cathleen Hogan
Ms. Freda Holly
Ms. Eleanor Hough
Ms. Margaret M. Hurley

Mr. Kevin Hurley
Ms. Susan Hymas
Mr. Mark Hynes
Sr. Margaret Ivers
Ms. Niamh Jackson
Ms. Deirdre Johnson
Mr. Larry Kavanagh
Ms. Alison Keane
Ms. Anne Martina Kehoe
Ms. Paula Kelly
Ms. Margaret Kelly
Mr. Michael Dermot Kelly
Ms. Diana Kelly
Ms. Fiona Keogh
Ms. Máire Kerrane
Mr. Filiz Keser
Yousaf Khan
Mr. Liam Kilbride
Ms. Jenny Kilbride
Ms. Paula King
Ms. Bernadette Kinsella
Ms. Josephine Lally
Mr. Michael Lanigan
Mr. Paul Larkin
Ms. Kerry Lawless
Ms. Deirdre Lawlor
Mr. Ray Lucey
Ms. Nora M. Edgeworth
Tsambwa MacDonald Freeman
Ms. Sarah Mackey
Ms. Breege Madden
Ms. Eileen Magee
Ms. Lesley Malone

Ms. Joslyn Manuel
Ms. Anne Marron
Ms. Mary Mather Leahy
Ms. Vivienne McCann
Ms. Josephine McCann
Ms. Pamela McCarthy
Ms. Mary McCoy
Ms. Teresa McCullagh
Mr. Sean McDermott
Ms. Pauline McDermott
Ms. Mary McEvoy
Mr. Dermot McGarthy
Mr. Pat McGill
Ms. Maureen McGovern
Ms. Majella McGovern
Ms. Valerie McGrath
Ms. Sinead McMahan Coffey
Ms. Ann McNamara
Ms. Marian McRory
Ms. Kay Meany
Mr. Peter Melanie
Ms. Catherine Melvin
Ms. Meabh Mhic Gairbheith
Mr. Adrian Mitchell
Ms. Mary Molloy
Mr. Patrick Moloney
Ms. Marie Mooney
Ms. Patricia-Anne Moore
Ms. Kaye Mullaney
Ms. Ciara Murphy
Mr. Denis Murphy
Ms. Marian Murphy
Ms. Margaret Murphy

Ms. Clora Neilan
Ms. Cait Ni Mhurchu
Ms. Maire O'Brien
Ms. Loretta O'Brien
Ms. Ann O'Brien
Mr. Sean S. O'Broin
Ms. Eva O'Connell
Ms. Fiona O'Connor
Ms. Elizabeth O'Connor
Ms. Catherine O'Connor
Ms. Mary O'Donnell
Ms. Siobhan O'Dowd
Ms. Mary O'Driscoll
Ms. Noelle O'Dwyer
Ms. Julia O'Gorman
Mr. James O'Loughlin
Mr. John O'Loughlin
Mr. T O'Mahoney
Mr. Colm O'Maolmhuire
Ms. Trish O'Rourke
Ms. Katherine O'Sullivan
Mr. Rory O'Sullivan
Dr. Sylvia O'Sullivan
Mr. Joseph O'Sullivan
Ms. Sorcha O'Toole
Ms. Rosina Owens
Ms. Toni Owens
Mr. Paul Patton
Mr. Gary Pheasey
Ms. Angela Potter
Ms. Eileen Pugh
Ms. Mary Rafferty
Ms. Fionnuala Richardson

Mr. Michael Riordan
Mr. Paddy Robinson
Ms. Patsy Ryan
Ms. Hilary Ryan
Ms. Miriam Ryan
Ms. Orna Ryan
Mr. Seamus Scanlan
Mr. Eugene Scully
Ms. Anne Shanahan
Ms. Vera Shaw
Ms. Mary Sheehy
Ms. Mary Sheridan
Ms. Carmel Sheridan
Mr. Dermot Andrew Skelly
Ms. Sheila Smith
Ms. Carol Spellman
Ms. Lynda Stacey
Mr. Paul Stanley
Ms. Imelda Staunton
Ms. Ruth Stewart
Mr. Jim Strain
Mr. Ricky Thompson
Ms. Gabrielle Thorsch
Mr. Arthur Twomey
Mr. Ray Walker
Ms. Fiona Wall
Ms. Sarah-Beth Watkins
Mr. Robin Webster
Mr. Keith Whelan
Ms. Catherine White
Mr. Owen Wims
Mr. Tony Downes (RIP)
Fr. Liam Carey C.C. (RIP)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2004 - ACCOUNTS

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Organisational Information

Directors

Mr. John Ryan (President)
Mr. Tom Hussey (Vice-President)
Ms. Brid Connolly (Hon. Secretary)
Cllr. Patrick Nolan (Hon. Treasurer)
Mr. Denis Barrett
Ms. Anna Dangerfield
Mr. Andrew Doherty
(resigned 10 November 2004)
Ms. Marietta Herraghty
Mr. Deiniol Jones
Ms. Margaret Murphy
Ms. Loretta O'Brien
Mr. Sean O'Connor
Ms. Leonora O'Reilly
Ms. Ruth Smith

Co-opted Members

Ms. Jan Lewis
Ms. Valerie O'Carroll

Secretary

Ms. Brid Connolly

Company Number

80958

Charity Number

6719

Registered Office

83-87 Main Street
Ranelagh
Dublin 6

Auditors

Anne Brady DFK
Iveagh Court
Harcourt Road
Dublin 2

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Business Address

83-87 Main Street
Ranelagh
Dublin 6

Bankers

Bank of Ireland
Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2

Solicitors

P.J. Walsh & Company
12 Upper Fitzwilliam Street
Dublin 2



AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2004

The Board of Directors of AONTAS present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2004.

Principal Activity

The principal activity of the organisation is the promotion and development of adult education in Ireland.

Results for the Year and State of Affairs at 31 December 2004

The results for the year and the state of affairs of the organisation at 31st December 2004 are set out on pages 67 to 78 of the financial statements. The results for the year show a (deficit)/surplus of €(35,843) (31st December 2003: €47,848).

Health and Safety of Employees

The organisation has adopted a safety statement in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Companies (Amendment) Act, 1986

The reporting requirements of the Companies (Amendment) Act, 1986 relating to financial statements do not apply as AONTAS is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

Directors

The Executive Committee constitutes the Board of Directors of the organisation under the terms of Article 28 of the Articles of Association of the organisation:

Mr. John Ryan (President)
Mr. Tom Hussey (Vice-President)
Ms. Brid Connolly (Hon. Secretary)
Cllr. Patrick Nolan (Hon. Treasurer)
Mr. Denis Barrett

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Ms. Anna Dangerfield
Mr. Andrew Doherty
(resigned 10 November 2004)
Ms. Marietta Herraghty
Mr. Deiniol Jones
Ms. Margaret Murphy
Ms. Loretta O'Brien
Mr. Sean O'Connor
Ms. Leonora O'Reilly
Ms. Ruth Smith

The following members were appointed as co-opted members

Ms. Jan Lewis
Ms. Valerie O'Carroll

Books of Account

The measures taken by the directors to ensure compliance with the requirements of Section 202, Companies Act, 1990, regarding proper books of account include the implementation of necessary policies and procedures for recording transactions, the employment of competent accounting personnel with appropriate expertise and the provision of adequate resources to the financial function. The books of account of the organisation are maintained at 83-87 Main Street, Ranelagh, Dublin 6.

Auditors

The auditors, Anne Brady DFK have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 160(2) of the Companies Act, 1963.

Signed on behalf of the Board

Mr. John Ryan
Director

Cllr. Patrick Nolan
Director

Date: 9th April 2005

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2004**

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the organisation and of the surplus or deficit of the organisation for that year. In preparing these the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2003. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Board

Mr. John Ryan
Director

Cllr. Patrick Nolan
Director

Date: 9th April 2005

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AONTAS

We have audited the financial statements of AONTAS on pages 67 to 78 for the year ended 31st December 2004 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 72.

This report is made solely to the organisation's members, as a body in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act, 1990. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the organisation's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the organisation and the organisation's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinion we have formed.

Respective Responsibilities of Directors and Auditors

The directors' responsibilities for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Irish Accounting Standards are set out in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and auditing standards promulgated by the Auditing Practices Board in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2003. We also report to you whether in our opinion: proper books of account have been kept by the organisation and whether the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit and whether the organisation's balance sheet and its income and expenditure account are in agreement with the books of account.

We report to the members if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration or directors' transactions is not given and, where practicable, include such information in our report.

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

We read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. This other information comprises only the Directors' Report. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of Audit Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the organisation's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the organisation's affairs as at the 31st December 2004 and of its surplus and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2003.

We have obtained all the information and explanations we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the organisation. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion the information given in the directors' report on pages 61 to 63 is consistent with the financial statements.

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Section 40(1) of the Companies (Amendment) Act 1983 does not apply as the organisation is limited by guarantee.



Anne Brady DFK
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Iveagh Court
Harcourt Road
Dublin 2

Date: 9th April 2005



AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

		As Restated	
Income	Notes	2004	2003
		€	€
Restricted and unrestricted funds	2	<u>1,095,141</u>	<u>1,099,120</u>
Resources Expended			
Administration			
Salary costs		173,265	145,215
Pension scheme		16,515	14,516
Staff training and expenses		18,306	14,046
Postage and courier services		15,044	19,679
Printing and stationery		26,096	16,162
Advertising		39,249	19,244
Telephone		10,266	13,189
Motor and travel		15,092	8,662
Executive and general committee expenses		29,969	25,959
Legal fees		30	12,851
Audit and accountancy fees		8,815	6,398
Bank interest and charges		947	909
Representation and affiliation		19,777	24,464
Miscellaneous		(107)	2,014
Rent of venues and equipment		<u>197</u>	<u>6,173</u>
Computer costs		<u>8,164</u>	<u>282</u>
		381,625	329,763

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

		As Restated	
	Notes	2004	2003
		€	€
Premises			
Light and heat		3,264	3,060
Rent and rates		65,174	70,246
Repairs and maintenance		18,548	37,220
Leasing charges		967	261
Insurance		8,316	7,598
Cleaning		3,576	3,692
Depreciation of computers and office equipment		29,087	25,954
(Surplus)/deficit on disposal of tangible assets		-	9,918
		<u>128,932</u>	<u>157,949</u>
Development			
Salaries		276,718	274,539
Pension scheme		31,838	28,578
Consultants and contract staff		34,691	49,539
Travel and subsistence		46,152	40,656
Printing and publications		94,834	53,402
Conferences/seminars/membership meetings		62,269	47,743
Public relations		7,233	8,648
Video production		-	605
Information - library		8,756	6,969
Evaluation		6,305	9,935
Recruitment		-	10,705
Childcare		3,887	7,584
		<u>572,683</u>	<u>538,903</u>

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

		As Restated	
	Notes	2004	2003
		€	€
Research			
Community education		-	22,824
Quality assurance framework for community education		47,744	-
Women and mens research		-	1,833
		<u>47,744</u>	<u>24,657</u>
Total resources expended		1,130,984	1,051,272
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for year		(35,843)	47,848
Fund balances at beginning of year		<u>63,282</u>	<u>15,434</u>
Fund balances at end of year		<u>27,439</u>	<u>63,282</u>

Income and expenditure arises from continuing operations. The charity has no recognised losses other than the movement in funds for the year.

The notes on pages 72 to 78 form part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the board on 9th April 2005 and signed on its behalf by

Mr. John Ryan
Director

Cllr. Patrick Nolan
Director

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2004

	Notes	2004		As Restated 2003	
		€	€	€	€
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	8		54,397		66,455
Current Assets					
Debtors	9	7,574		17,866	
Cash at bank and in hand	10	1,320		160,056	
		<u>8,894</u>		<u>177,922</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	<u>(35,852)</u>		<u>(181,095)</u>	
Net Current Liabilities			(26,958)		(3,173)
Net Assets			<u>27,439</u>		<u>63,282</u>
Income Funds					
Restricted funds	14		1,615		38,739
Unrestricted funds	15		25,824		24,543
Total Funds			<u>27,439</u>		<u>63,282</u>

The notes on pages 72 to 78 form part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the board on 9th April 2005 and signed on its behalf by

Mr. John Ryan
Director

Cllr. Patrick Nola
Director

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

		As Restated	
	Notes	2004	2003
		€	€
Reconciliation of operating (deficit)/surplus to net cash outflow from operating activities			
Operating surplus/(deficit)			
less interest receivable		(35,880)	47,753
Depreciation		29,087	35,872
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors		10,292	5,318
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors		<u>(145,243)</u>	<u>(53,877)</u>
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		<u>(141,744)</u>	35,066
Cash Flow Statement			
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(141,744)	35,066
Returns on investments and servicing of finance	12	<u>37</u>	<u>95</u>
Capital expenditure	12	<u>(17,029)</u>	<u>(60,420)</u>
Decrease in cash in the year		(158,736)	(25,259)
Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net debt (Note 13)			
Decrease in cash in the year		<u>(158,736)</u>	<u>(25,259)</u>
Net funds at 1st January 2004		<u>160,056</u>	<u>185,315</u>
Net funds at 31st December 2004	13	1,320	160,056

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

1. Accounting Policies

1.1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles under the historical cost convention and comply with reference to the recommendations of the revised Statement Of Recommended Practice (SORP) Accounting by Charities issued by the Charity Commissioners in 2000.

1.2. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Fixtures and fittings - 20% Straight Line
Office equipment - 20% Straight Line
Computer equipment - 33.3% Straight Line

1.3. Leasing

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.4. Pensions

Payments to defined contribution pension schemes are charged to the profit and loss account in the period to which they relate.

1.5. Grants receivable

Grant income receivable from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and that receivable from the Department of Education and Science in respect of the CEF Training and Support programme are treated as being restricted as the incomes are applied for particular purposes. All other income receivable is treated as being unrestricted.

Where specific grants are received in the year and none, or only part, of the related expenditure has been incurred, the unused portion of the grant is carried forward in creditors and accruals as deferred income.

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

2. Sources of income

	As Restated	
	2004	2003
Restricted Funds	€	€
Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	30,780	122,139
Department of Education & Science: CEF Training and Support programme		130,000
120,000		
Unrestricted Funds		
Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs: Support for locally based womens groups		-
71,500		
Department of Education & Science: Grant in Aid	413,000	402,000
S.P.I.D.A.S. supplement	353,000	348,000
Members' subscriptions	15,054	18,865
Sale of publications	<u>(15)</u>	<u>63</u>
National conference	(720)	(953)
Interest receivable	37	95
Miscellaneous	<u>1,705</u>	<u>5,476</u>
	<u>942,841</u>	<u>1,087,185</u>
Opening deferred income	172,065	184,000
Closing deferred income	(19,765)	(172,065)

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

1,095,141

1,099,120

3. Continuing operations

The statement of financial activities has been prepared on the basis that the organisation has only continuing operations in accordance with the Companies (Amendment) Acts, 1983 and 1986.

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AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

4. Net Outgoing Resources for the Year	As Restated	
	2004	2003
	€	€
Net outgoing resources for the year is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of tangible assets	29,087	17,974
Auditors' remuneration:		
AONTAS	7,000	6,398
CDC Audit	<u>1,815</u>	<u>-</u>
5. Employees	2004	2003
Number of Employees		
The average numbers of employees during the year were:	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>
Employees Costs		As Restated
	2004	2003
	€	€
Wages and salaries	408,938	380,772
Social welfare costs	41,045	38,982
Other pension costs	48,353	43,094
	<u>498,336</u>	<u>462,848</u>

6. Pension costs

The organisation operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions are made by both the employee and the employer. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the organisation in

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by AONTAS to the fund and amount to €48,353 (2003: €43,094).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

7. Taxation

The organisation has been granted exemption from taxation and this exemption has pertained since its incorporation. =====

8. Tangible assets	Office equipment	Computer equipment	Fixtures and fittings	Total
	€	€	€	€
Cost				
At 1st January 2004	48,624	85,571	39,904	174,099
Additions	-	7,414	9,615	17,029
At 31st December 2004	48,624	92,985	49,519	191,128
		<u>=====</u>		<u>=====</u>
Depreciation				
At 1st January 2004	32,152	67,511	7,981	107,644
Charge for the year	5,491	13,692	9,904	29,087
At 31st December 2004	37,643	81,203	17,885	136,731
Net book value				
At 31st December 2004	10,981	<u>11,782</u>	31,634	<u>54,397</u>
At 31st December 2003	16,472	<u>18,060</u>	31,923	<u>66,455</u>

9. Debtors

	<u>=====</u>	<u>As Restated</u>
	2004	2003
	€	€
Other debtors and prepayments	7,574	17,866

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

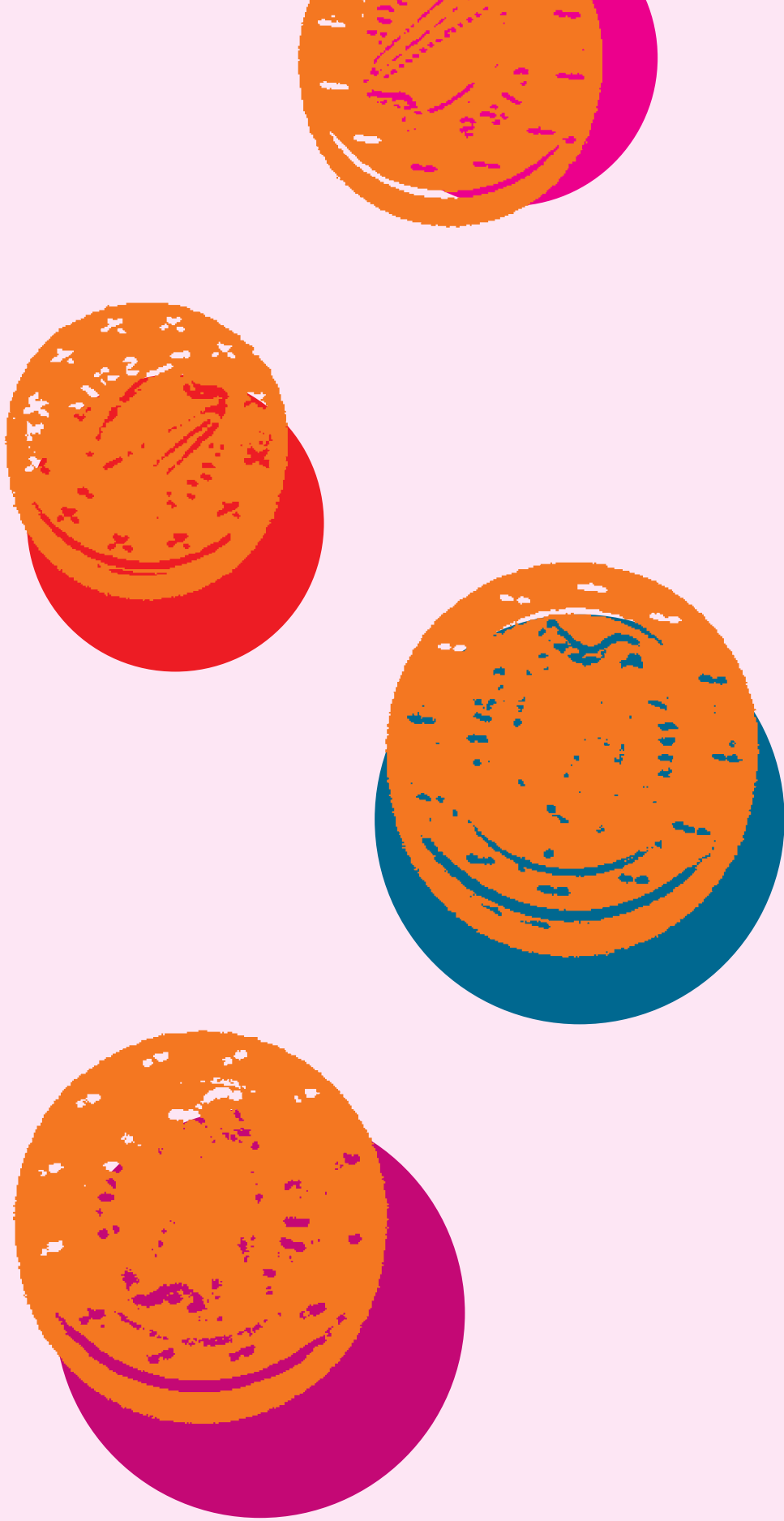
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

10. Cash at bank and on hand		As Restated
	2004	2003
	€	€
Current accounts	-	158,961
Deposit accounts	955	955
Cash on hand	365	140
	<u>1,320</u>	<u>160,056</u>
	=====	=====
11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2004	As Restated 2003
	€	€
Bank overdraft	3,849	-
Trade creditors	2,786	686
Deferred income - grants receivable	19,765	172,065
Accruals	9,452	8,344
	35,852	181,095
12. Gross Cash Flows		As Restated
	2004	2003
	€	€
Returns on investments and servicing of finance		
Interest received	37	95
Capital expenditure		
Payments to acquire tangible assets	(17,029)	(60,420)
	=====	=====

AONTAS (being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2004**

13. Analysis of changes in net funds		Opening balance €	Cash flows €	Closing balance €
Cash at bank and in hand		160,056	(158,736)	1,320
Overdrafts		-	(3,849)	(3,849)
	160,056	(162,585)	(2,529)	
Net funds		160,056	(162,585)	(2,529)
14. Restricted Reserves	Balance at beginning of year €	Incoming resources €	Resources expended €	Balance at end of year €
Specific Funds:				
Grants from Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	27,958	30,780	(58,738)	-
Grants from Department of Education & Science: CEF Training and Support programme	10,781	130,000	(139,166)	1,615
		38,739	160,780	197,904
	1,615			
15. Unrestricted Reserves	Balance at beginning of year €	Incoming resources €	Resources expended €	Balance at end of year €
General Fund	24,543	782,061	(780,780)	25,824



Women 'still battle to bridge the gap
with men in the workplace',
Irish Independent, 26th February 2004.

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campaign

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workplace',
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RONNIS, the National Association of
brings its local election campaign to
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AONTAS brings its local election campaign to Dublin, Evening Herald, 6th May 2004

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Returning to Educa

Principals dismiss plans for a radical Cert, Irish Independent, 25th March

erald, 12th August 2004.

AONTAS urges Government to invest in adult and September 2004.



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