



**Irish  
Wheelchair  
Association™**

# Strategic Plan

2017 - 2020





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## **IWA VISION**

Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) has a vision of an Ireland where people with disabilities enjoy equal rights, choices and opportunities in how they live their lives, and where our country is a model worldwide for a truly inclusive society.

## **IWA MISSION**

Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) works with, and on behalf of, people with physical disabilities to drive positive change in Ireland through the influencing of public policy, the provision of quality services and enabling accessibility to all aspects of society.

# OUR VALUES



# Introduction

*Irish Wheelchair Association is delighted to present our Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020.*

When IWA was founded back in 1960, by a small group of wheelchair users committed to improving the lives of people with physical disabilities in Ireland, the hope for the future was to create a world where people with disabilities would be a real part of their community and where the work of IWA would be at the centre of making that happen. Over 50 years later, our Association is made up of a vibrant national network of 20,000 members, over 2,500 staff, 2,300 dedicated volunteers and 57 community centres in towns all across the country. While much has been achieved since our foundation, many challenges remain.

In developing our Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020, we are keeping people resolutely at the heart of everything we do, underpinning our values as we strive for IWA's vision of an Ireland where people with disabilities enjoy equal rights, choices and opportunities in how they live their lives, and where our country is a model worldwide for a truly inclusive society.

Our Strategic Plan is our roadmap for the next three years. IWA's Vision, deliberately aspirational, is of the world we want to operate in – the destination we ultimately want to reach. Our Mission – to work with, and on behalf of, people with physical disabilities, to drive positive change in Ireland through the influencing of public policy, the provision of quality services and enabling accessibility to all aspects of society – represents what IWA is going to do in order to get there; and our Strategic Objectives are the areas which we will prioritise and where we will focus our energies over the next three years.

Financial sustainability is critical to successfully implementing IWA's strategic plan and ensuring we can continue to respond to the needs of our members and the wider community of people with physical disabilities. IWA welcomes developments in the governance and regulatory environment in which we operate. With these developments come increased costs in providing essential services while state funding for these services remains static.



Over the life of this strategic plan we, aim to develop, diversify and grow our funding streams in order to ensure IWA's long term financial sustainability and resilience.

We will further develop our profile as the leading representative organisation and service provider for people with physical disabilities and we will continue to advocate for the rights, choices, opportunities and independence of people with disabilities, to achieve international best standards of service provision and full social inclusion.

IWA will continue to invest in our people and our infrastructure and we will value and prioritise communications with staff, members, volunteers and customers, to enable and empower everyone to contribute directly to the success of IWA.

Our plans for the future are ambitious and challenging. For over 50 years, IWA has advocated to see a shift in the many obstacles and barriers – physical, environmental, legal and attitudinal – faced by people with physical disabilities, and that legacy makes me confident that together we will achieve our vision of a better Ireland. If ever a group of people could tell the story of moving from total exclusion to achieving social, civic, and political inclusion, it is the people who are Irish Wheelchair Association.

**Rosemary Keogh**

*CEO, Irish Wheelchair Association.*

# Consultation Process

Towards the end of 2016, we commenced work on IWA's strategy for the next three years. Building on our strong foundations while also recognising the financial and regulatory challenges, we sought expert advice from external consultants, undertook a market research project to learn more about IWA's current role within society and circulated a detailed survey to all key stakeholders. The results of this process were discussed at length, analysed and condensed to form our new strategic plan for 2017 – 2020.

As Ireland's leading representative organisation and service provider for people with physical disabilities IWA advocates for the needs of people with physical disabilities and provides services and support to over 20,000 members in their homes and communities throughout Ireland. People remain at the heart of everything that IWA does. Our overriding goal for the next few years is to be a thriving independent organisation, advocating for an inclusive society and providing quality services that enable people with disabilities to live the life they choose.

IWA's Strategy 2017 – 2020 is an extremely important endeavour for IWA and will steer our future direction for the next three years. The process of planning and preparing our new strategic plan included an extensive consultation process with IWA members, staff, volunteers and community supporters. Many thousands of hours have gone into the formation and production of the strategy and we now have a clear and comprehensive roadmap for IWA which is reflective of the views and ideas of those intrinsically linked to our organisation.

We would like to extend our thanks to all who contributed and provided vital feedback and responses during the consultation process. Hundreds of surveys were completed online and through IWA's dedicated social media platforms. Consultation and information sessions were held in IWA Centres across Ireland. IWA Branches and Sports Clubs were also invited to provide useful information and important feedback. Many individual members, staff and volunteers supported the development of the strategy by participating in workshops or focus groups.

Huge effort has gone into finalising IWA's Strategy 2017 – 2020. Thank you to all who participated and contributed, ensuring a comprehensive, detailed and ambitious strategic plan for the next three years.

# Our Values

People are at the heart of everything we do and this is enshrined in all of our values:

## Integrity

IWA is proud of what we do and how we do it – we behave responsibly with the highest standards of **integrity**. Our work is informed by need and we operate to the highest standards of governance being accountable to our members, funders and the wider public.

## Excellence

IWA's commitment to **excellence** in the provision of services and corporate governance drives our development and growth as we strive to attain the highest standards in everything we do. We are results focused and operate with independence in all areas of our work.

## Positivity

IWA is immensely proud of our heritage, achievements and people. We **believe** in the determination of our members, staff and volunteers to be instrumental in the achievement of a new, inclusive Ireland.

## Respect

IWA is committed to a culture of mutual **respect** between members, staff and volunteers. We listen with an open mind to what people have to say and value their diversity and contributions.

## Equality

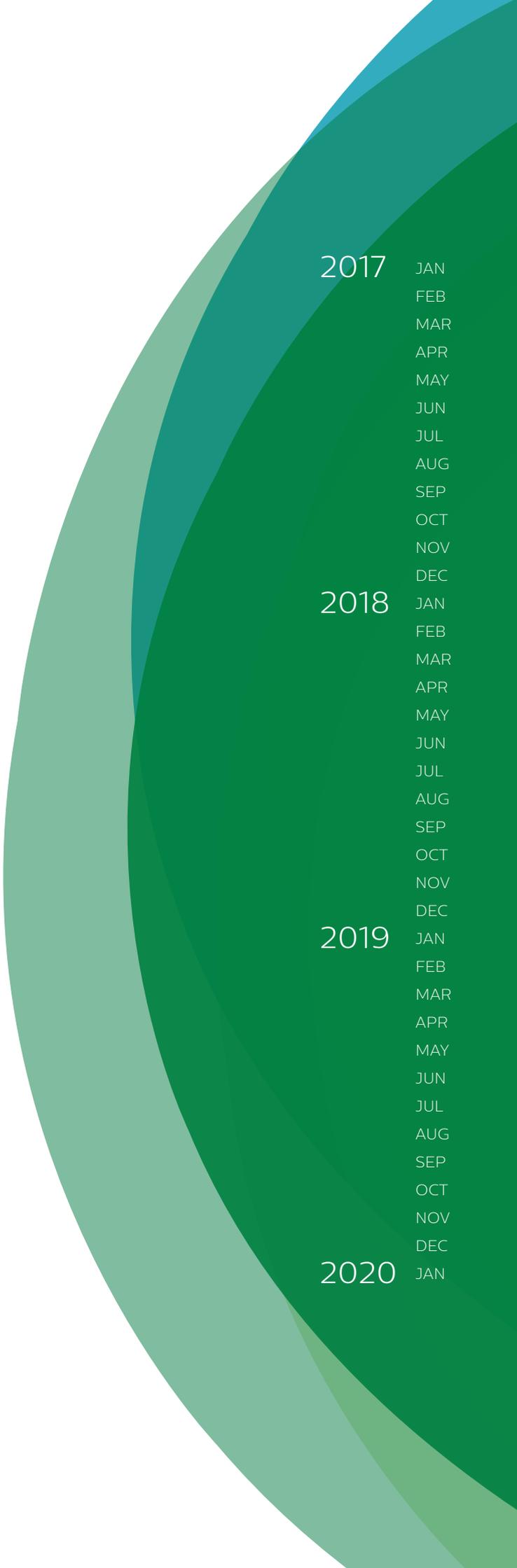
IWA believes in a fair and inclusive society. We work actively to ensure that every person with a physical disability in Ireland can achieve their right to an independent life, with **equal** access to opportunities, services and supports within their communities.

## Leadership

IWA is the **leading** influencer in shaping public policy and societal attitudes to advance social inclusion for people with physical disabilities. We see beyond boundaries and identify new approaches for an improved world for people with physical disabilities.

# Three Year Goal

Irish Wheelchair Association is recognised as Ireland's leading organisation for people with physical disabilities. We are a thriving, independent organisation, advocating for an inclusive society and providing quality services that enable people with physical disabilities to live the life they choose.



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# Strategic Objectives



# Profile

Raise our profile so that IWA is recognised as Ireland's leading representative organisation and service provider for people with physical disabilities.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Increase public awareness of IWA and its activities



✓ Public awareness increases from Quarter 1 2017 baseline as measured through public surveys carried out bi-annually.

Increase IWA footprint across all media platforms



✓ Media engagement increases from 2016 as measured quarterly through monitoring of traditional and new media platforms.

Implement processes and systems that allow us to measure and report on our social impact and outcomes



✓ IWA key messages and publications demonstrate quantitative evidence/ measurement of social impact and outcomes of IWA major activities.

# Infrastructure & Resources

With a focus on excellence, maximise efficiency and effectiveness of people, infrastructure, assets and resources.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Invest in development of our people and create a management culture that advances innovation, empowerment and accountability at all levels and across all functions in the organisation.

- ✓ Personal development plans are in place for all staff.
- ✓ Forum to facilitate innovation and ideas - discovery and development.
- ✓ Leadership development programme and succession planning process in place.
- ✓ Performance Management process aligned to achievement of IWA strategic objectives, in place for all staff.

Implement corporate and organisational structures that align functions, roles and competencies with delivery of our strategy.

- ✓ Competency and knowledge framework in place for all roles across all functions and departments.
- ✓ New organisation structure in place that aligns functions, roles and competencies with IWA values, mission and three year goal.

Invest in our IT infrastructure to enhance economic value and operational excellence across all our activities.

- ✓ Monetary and process efficiencies delivered through achievement of budgeted return on investment on all IT projects as set out in business cases.
- ✓ Effective knowledge and information management systems and processes are in place.

Align IWA's asset portfolio with our strategic goals and objectives.

- ✓ Increase balance sheet liquidity ratios from 2016 baseline.

# Advocacy

We advocate for the rights, choices, opportunities and independence of people with disabilities, to achieve international best standards of service provision and full social inclusion.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Define IWA's desired advocacy impacts in line with the wants, needs and requirements of our members.



✓ Identify, develop and communicate advocacy actions and key messages on same throughout the organisation.

Enable and empower people with disabilities to become active citizens and powerful self-advocates.



✓ Increase in number of active independent disability advocates.

Work independently, and in partnerships with others, to positively influence policy and attitudes in all areas impacting the lives of people with disabilities.



✓ Strategic alliances in place with identified partner organisations.  
✓ Ongoing quarterly/annual review of advocacy programme to address desired impact and outcomes as defined at outset.  
✓ Ongoing research and monitoring changes in policy and societal attitudes in place.

Research and identify international best practice in advocacy generally and advocating for disability specifically.



✓ Implementation of advocacy programme that aligns to international best practice.

# Services

IWA delivers a range of quality accredited services that meet the requirements of people with disabilities and that reflect, through a process of continuous improvement, international and sectoral standards of excellence.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Retain and expand IWA's external quality accreditation across all services.



- ✓ Identification and implementation of best fit and best practice quality system for the sector.
- ✓ Continious Improvement programme in place across all IWA services.
- ✓ External quality accreditation achieved and maintained across all IWA services.

Ongoing review and delivery of services in line with customer requirements, financial and operational viability, international best practice and sectoral developments.



- ✓ Review of all existing services completed including decisions around future viability of all services.
- ✓ Customer Satisfaction Surveys.
- ✓ Mechanism in place for ongoing review of new and existing customer service requirements in the context of organisational capacity and viability.

# Communication & Engagement

People are at the centre of everything we do. We value and prioritise communications with staff, members, volunteers and customers, to enable and empower everyone to contribute directly to the success of IWA.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Develop and implement internal communications channels that encompass IWA board, management, staff, members, volunteers and customers across all of our services, functions and activities.



- ✓ Higher participation and satisfaction levels with internal communications reported in internal satisfaction surveys compared to 2016 baseline.
- ✓ Platforms, tools and methods for listening and facilitating organisation wide feedback in place by end 2017.

Understand our membership profile and grow our membership through enhanced engagement with customers and the wider community of people with disabilities.



- ✓ Membership and membership categories defined by end 2017.
- ✓ Targets in place for growth in each membership category by end 2017 and reached by end 2019.

# Financial Sustainability

Ensure IWA long term financial sustainability and resilience.



## ACTIONS

## METRIC

Price our services to cover our costs and reflect our value.



✓ Achieve at least break-even across all service lines and activities.

Diversify and grow our income streams.



✓ €4m increase in income from new and existing fundraising and social enterprise activities over life of plan.

Grow our contribution from every income source to ensure we build financial reserves to levels that are in line with best corporate practice.



✓ €1m increase in unrestricted funds over life of plan.

Develop long term sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships with all of our customers.



✓ Process in place to manage and measure strategic relationship management by end 2017.

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