Free images attached, high resolution images available on request and issued to photo desks by Photocall Ireland

Case studies/interview with ASI reps are available upon request.

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Comedian Neil Delamere and Beauty Expert and Entrepreneur Pamela Laird Invite the Nation to the Annual Alzheimer’s Memory Walk Fundraiser, Supported by Irish Life**

Comedian ***Neil Delamere*** and beauty expert and entrepreneur ***Pamela Laird*** invite the public to make every step count for the third successive ***Alzheimer’s Memory Walk***, proudly supported by ***Irish Life***, which is taking place nationwide on Sunday, September 18th, during ***World Alzheimer’s Month 2022***.

Alzheimer’s Memory Walk is a ***family-friendly*** event suitable for all ages and abilities to unite together with their families and communities to raise awareness and funds for dementia supports. The ASI hopes that ***3,000 walkers*** across Ireland will help us raise ***€250,000*** for vital services that help to support so many people with dementia and their family carers across Ireland.

An estimated ***64,000*** people live with dementia in ***Ireland,*** which will more than double in the next 25 years to over 150,000 by 2045. However, there is one thing you can do to help – you can ***Walk Together*** on Sunday, September 18th

Walk with your household, family, friends and pets; it’s guaranteed to be a fun event. You can choose where you walk, whether your back garden or the local park – remember, on Sunday, September 18th – ***Let’s Walk Together***. Family-friendly prices are ***€8*** for kids and ***€20*** for adults.

***THREE EASY STEPS TO WALK TOGETHER***

***1.*** **SIGN UP** - Register on [www.memorywalk.ie](http://www.memorywalk.ie) we’ll send you your Walk Participant Pack and t-shirt

***2.* PLAN** your route for Sunday, 18th September and Let’s Walk Together

**3. SHARE** photos and videos of Your Walk on Social Media, and remember to use the hashtags #ASIMemoryWalk, #LetsWalkTogether and #PowerOfSupport.

***Can’t participate in Alzheimer's Memory Walk this year? You can still go the extra distance for people living with dementia by donating on Alzheimer.ie***

**Comedian and ASI ambassador Neil Delamere said:** *“I’m excited to team up with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and show my support for Alzheimer's Memory Walk. Alzheimer's and dementia is a huge issue for our society. We can all do our part and Walk on Sunday, September 18th to raise much-needed funds for the 500,000 people in Ireland whose families have been affected by dementia. The ASI really relies on funds to keep its supports and services going such as day care, home care, dementia advisers, family carer training, Alzheimer Cafes and social clubs. As demand continues to increase, so does the pressure on these support services; every day, at least 30 people are diagnosed with dementia in Ireland – even people in their 30s/40s/50s. We can all lend a hand and support this important fundraising campaign so more people who are living with dementia in our communities can access the supports and services they need. Join us on September 18th for Alzheimer’s Memory Walk; whether you walk by yourself, with your family or your friends, you can help make a huge difference to the lives of people with dementia in Ireland, and their carers. Sign up now on* [*www.memorywalk.ie*](http://www.memorywalk.ie/)*.”*

***Pamela Laird*** is delighted to back the campaign and has shared her ***family connection with dementia*** as her father, Sylvester, was diagnosed with dementia in 2016. The Dublin-based entrepreneur has said while the family started noticing changes with her father as far back as 2010, the dementia diagnosis was still very challenging for them all to deal with – especially when the pandemic. The former ***Dragons Den*** and the ***BBC’s Apprentice*** contestant wants to spotlight dementia during World Alzheimer’s Month and encourage others to reach out for support – like a member of her family did when they completed The ASI’s family carer training course. Pamela is doing the walk with her mother Yvonne and her Chihuahua, Tallulah, and wants others to do the same.

**Beauty expert, entrepreneur and ASI Ambassador, Pamela Laird said:** *“I am delighted to return as an ambassador for Alzheimer’s Memory Walk again this year – it’s an excellent way to bring families and communities together to raise vital money and awareness during World Alzheimer’s Month 2022. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland does excellent work throughout the country, and my family have used their supports to help my dad with his journey with dementia. The ASI needs to keep fundraising to keep its services running. Through my father’s diagnosis of dementia, I am all too aware of what so many families go through in Ireland – the confusion, the sadness and the isolation. It’s at a time like this that we need to remember those alone and get them the support that they desperately need. During Alzheimer’s Month 2022, I really want to put a spotlight on dementia as it desperately needs our attention. You can walk 5km, 10k or whatever distance you can do; Let’s Walk Together. Alzheimer’s Memory Walk is suitable for all ages and abilities to unite together with our families and communities to raise awareness and vital funds for dementia supports and services. I’m really looking forward to taking part in the Alzheimer's Memory Walk on Sunday, September 18th. I would encourage everyone to do the same, it’s so simple. Go to* [*www.memorywalk.ie*](http://www.memorywalk.ie) *for details.”*

**Fundraising Manager Nikki Keegan said:**“*We are looking forward to walking together for those living with dementia on what promises to be a great event for all the family. We can't put into words what it means to have the support of our wonderful ambassadors, Pamela and Neil, our sponsor and CSR partner, Irish Life and our public supporters. Thank you all for being part of Alzheimer's Memory Walk. We are excited to get out on September 18th, walking together, supporting people with dementia.”*

**Irish Life Staff Charities Committee member John Roberts said:** “*Irish Life is honoured to support the Memory Walk, the flagship event in 2022 for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. Some of our team at Irish Life have first-hand experience of the effects that Alzheimer’s can have on us, and our loved ones. This was a key reason why we chose The Alzheimer Society of Ireland as one of our Irish Life Staff Charities for 2022. We hope to bring the power of our support to this wonderful event, so that Irish Life can play a small part to help deliver vital benefits to those who live with and support people with dementia in Ireland.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Hugh O’Donoghue at** **hugh.odonoghue@alzheimer.ie** **or 085 856 71 43.**

**NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

***About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI):***The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is the leading dementia specific service provider in Ireland. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland works across the country in the heart of local communities providing dementia specific services and supports and advocating for the rights and needs of all people living with dementia and their carers. Our vision is an Ireland where people on the journey of dementia are valued and supported. A national non-profit organisation, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland advocates, empowers and champions the rights of people living with dementia and their communities to quality support and services. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland also operates the Alzheimer National Helpline offering information and support to anyone affected by dementia on 1800 341 341.

***The ASI turns 40 (1982-2022):***

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland celebrates 40 years in 2022. There have been so many milestones achieved since 1982 when carers Winifred Bligh and Imelda Gillespie held their first meeting and changed the face of dementia care in Ireland forever. 40 years on, and The ASI is now a national organisation providing support, services and care to the 64,000 people living with dementia and their family carers in Ireland today. In 2022, we want to mark this milestone and our many achievements together with our staff, branches, volunteers and supporters.

***Alzheimer National Helpline:***

For more information on our supports and services during this challenging time, please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland National Helpline. The Helpline is open six days a week Monday to Friday 10am–5pm and Saturday 10am–4pm on 1800 341 341. Email at helpline@alzheimer.ie or via Live Chat at [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie)

**ABOUT DEMENTIA**

* There are 64,000 people with dementia in Ireland and the number of people with the condition will more than double in the next 25 years to over 150,000 by 2045.\*
* There are 11,000 new cases of dementia in Ireland each year. That’s at least 30 people every day and anyone can get dementia - even people in their 30s/40s/50s.\*\*
* Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a range of conditions which cause changes and damage to the brain.
* Dementia is progressive. There is currently no cure. Dementia is not simply a health issue but a social issue that requires a community response.
* The majority of people with dementia (63%) live at home in the community. Over 180,000 people in Ireland are currently or have been carers for a family member or partner with dementia with many more providing support and care in other ways.
* 1 in 10 people diagnosed with dementia in Ireland are under 65.
* The overall cost of dementia care in Ireland is just over €1.69 billion per annum; 48% of this is attributable to family care; 43% is accounted for by residential care; formal health and social care services contribute only 9% to the total cost.

*Figures referenced to Cahill, S. & Pierce, M. (2013) The Prevalence of Dementia in Ireland*

*\*Figure referenced from Alzheimer Europe (2020) Dementia in Europe Yearbook 2019 ‘Estimating the prevalence of dementia in Europe’*

*\*\*Figure referenced from Pierce, T., O’Shea, E. and Carney P. (2018) Estimates of the prevalence, incidence and severity of dementia in Ireland.*