Free images are attached, and high-resolution photos are available on request and issued to photo desks by the ASI Communications Team.

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

Thursday, 23rd June 2022

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Officially Opens Its Drogheda Centre**

***Minister Mary Butler TD opened the new Tredagh Lodge Centre***

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (The ASI) officially opened its Tredagh Lodge Day Care Centre in Drogheda. This new centre will allow The ASI to provide supports and services to people living with Dementia and their families in South Louth and East Meath.

This launch is the culmination of 25 years of fundraising and lobbying by its volunteers, Drogheda Branch, the local committee, local media and businesses, Louth County Council, their officials and the people of Drogheda and surrounding areas. Doohamlet Construction, Castleblayney constructed the building.

There are an estimated ***64,000*** people living with dementia in ***Ireland***;an estimated 578 people live with dementia in ***Louth,*** and ***2078*** live with dementia *in* ***Meath.*** The new centre – which has cost €1 million to build – will allow The ASI to cater to 20 to 25 people daily and provide much-needed support to people living with dementia and their families.

The Mayor of Drogheda Michelle Hall, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler TD, Louth County Council Cathaoirleach Conor Keelan, ASI CEO Andy Heffernan, ASI Director Cathy Reynolds, and ASI Drogheda Branch Chair Gerry Leydon attended the launch of Tredagh Lodge Day Care Centre along with staff, supporters, family members, and volunteers and members of the wider Drogheda community.

In March 2021, a special 'Donate for Dementia' fundraising and awareness week with Virgin Media Television raised €1 million for The ASI, with €70,000 going towards Tredagh Lodge to create a dementia-specific garden in the new centre.

Virgin Media Television aired special programming around the disease, with the highly anticipated broadcast of Finding Jack Charlton (commissioned by Virgin Media Television and the BBC) wrapping up the successful week. Over half a million people nationwide tuned in to the powerful programme. 355,800 tuned in for Martin King’s documentary, We Need To Talk About Dementia, with the entire week reaching over a million people.

**Speaking ahead of the launch, Minister of State Mary Butler said:** “I am very honoured to be in attendance today for the opening of the Tredagh Lodge Centre. I have long been an advocate for the development of services for people with dementia. In line with Sláintecare principles of developing primary and community health services to enable people to stay healthy in their homes and communities for as long as possible, there will be an additional €15 million investment dedicated for dementia-specific supports and services in 2022. This includes an increase in home support hours dedicated specifically for people living with dementia and an additional €7.3million for the continued implementation of the National Dementia Strategy. I wish to acknowledge the hard work by everybody involved in making today a reality.``.

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland CEO, Andy Heffernan said:** “I’m honoured to attend the opening of the Tredagh Lodge Centre. This centre is a testament to the tireless efforts and dedication of our volunteers, the Drogheda Branch, and the people of Drogheda. 2022 is The ASI’s 40th Anniversary, and this triumph is a fitting tribute to the work we do for people living with dementia in Ireland. Thousands of people living with dementia and their carers in South Louth and East Meath can now access vital supports and activities. I’d like to thank Minister of State Mary Butler for her support over the years and am very grateful for her presence at this launch.”

**Drogheda Branch Chairperson, Gerry Leydon said: “**The provision of our brand new, state-of-the-art Tredagh Lodge Day Care Centre is the realisation of a dream. We now have a daycare centre of which we can be proud. Thanks to the tremendous support of local people and businesses over the last 20-plus years. One that can provide the best in terms of daycare and supports increased numbers of people living with dementia, their families and carers in the area.”

**ENDS**

**Please Contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Hugh O’Donoghue at** **hugh.odonoghue@alzheimer.ie** **or 085 856 71 43 for more information or to arrange an interview with an ASI representative.**

**NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

***About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI):***

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is Ireland's leading dementia-specific service provider. 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. Many milestones have been achieved since 1982 when carers Winifred Bligh and Imelda Gillespie held their first meeting and changed the face of dementia care in Ireland forever. Forty years on, 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 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, 10 am –5 pm, and Saturday, 10 am–4 pm on 1800 341 341. Email at helpline@alzheimer.ie or via Live Chat at 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.
* Most 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 is 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.*