

## Preparing for the Future 2006 AGM

On the 14th November NØW hosted their 2006 Annual General Meeting. The event was well attended and it gave NØW the opportunity to launch their new Annual Report for 2005 -2006. The Report has been designed according to new SORP format; it gives a very comprehensive report on the fantastic achievements of the trainees and staff but also gives the reader the opportunity to see the work NØW's Board have done around Governance and Strategic Development. Margaret Dunlea (NØW's Chair) spoke about the excellent work which went on during the year and invited everyone to celebrate the successes NØW has achieved over the past number of years.

Guest Speakers on the night were: Sanadra Kelso-Robb

Sandara is an Independent Consultant who has provided NØW's Director with Mentoring support through the Msc in Executive Leadership Programme (funded by Peace II, supported by Belfast LSP). Sandara spoke about sustainability and the need for NØW to at new ways of creating sustainability and independence in the changing times ahead.

Sinead Mc Menamy

Sinead explained that she was a trainee in the NØW Project and gave a brief description of her background: She initially attended day centres but didn't like the atmosphere at the centres and decided to pursue employment. She worked on a voluntary basis with Dunnes Stores and stayed with them for 9 years. Unfortunately, Sinead did not feel she received any recognition for the work she did and felt it was time she got a paid job.

Sinead left her placement and joined the NØW Project in pursuit of supported paid employment. Sinead participated in NØW's Employment Programme and achieved a mainstream paid employment position with Our Lady's Nursing Home, working 30 hours per week. Sinead is also a member of the SEA Project, which is attempting to achieve independence for people with disabilities by influencing public policy in Northern Ireland and in Europe.

Sinead stated she is now an independent person, earning a wage and managing her own finances, She concluded by thanking the NØW Project for their support.