

National Updates



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

KEEP WELL

IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Eolas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Public Health Measures

Ireland remains at level 5 restrictions. You can see the [measures in place here](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The vaccination programme continues to be rolled out nationwide, The HSE have administered a total of 121,900 Covid-19 vaccines (up to 20th January). The COVID-19 vaccination programme will be further accelerated as vaccines arrive, and it will involve a national partnership with GPs, Pharmacists and other healthcare professionals across Ireland. We encourage everyone to read about the COVID-19 vaccine and to get their information from a factual, trusted source – here are the links to the pages with information on the vaccine:

Check gov.ie/covid19vaccine for information about the vaccine, information on this page is updated regularly

Find the vaccine information materials at

www.hse.ie/covid19vaccinematerials

Details on getting the COVID-19 vaccine is updated regularly [here](#)

Read the [COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Strategy](#)

Read the [National Immunisation Advisory Committee Chapter about COVID-19 vaccine](#)

Keep Well Resilience Campaign

The cross-Government community resilience campaign co-ordinated by Healthy Ireland and funded by Sláintecare is continuing across the months of January, February and into March. Updates can be found on gov.ie/healthyireland.

The Keep Well campaign is sponsoring Operation Transformation this year. The programme goes out at 9.30pm on Wednesday nights on RTE 1 TV and will be on air until the end of February. Operation Transformation is a TV series on RTE 1 encouraging the Irish public to get healthy. Over the course of the show it gives the nation the tools they need to eat well and maintain and improve their physical and mental health. This year Operation Transformation aims to help people find ways of getting and staying healthier in body and mind while living with Covid restrictions. Previous episodes can be found on the RTE Player

<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/operation-transformation/SI0000001272?epguid=IP000066828>

Cervical Cancer Awareness

European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week ran from 18th -24th January 2021. The HSE message continues to highlight that HPV cervical screening is the best way to see if someone is at risk of developing cervical cancer in the future. Due to the large number of COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, it may take longer for some people to get a cervical screening appointment. But people should still check the register on <http://www.hse/cervicalcheck> and if they are due an appointment, to book one with a provider, even if it's a few weeks away.

Isolation quick guide: adults and children above age 13

You can [find the guide here](#).

New testing and self-isolation requirements for incoming travellers, including healthcare workers, to Ireland from Great Britain, South Africa and Brazil

Please [find further details here](#).

Cleaning guidance for use in non-healthcare settings: General cleaning principles, and cleaning guidance when a person with COVID-19 has been in a setting. You can [find the guidance here](#).

Older persons H&WB Programme - Sexual Health

Further information available at www.sexualwellbeing.ie

Public Health Information Links

As always, for the most up to date information and advice on Coronavirus, please go to: www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/ ; <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>.

Research Manager (2 Year Contract), Office of Engagement & Innovation / Age Friendly Ireland, Maynooth University



Age Friendly Ireland and NUI Maynooth are working together to enhance collaboration between local government and the university sector. From April this year, we will jointly employ a researcher who can support the development of Age Friendly Ireland's Research Strategy and build productive working relationships across Maynooth University and with other research centres. This strategic partnership will greatly enhance opportunities to contribute to policy development, evaluate the impact of the programme, and gather evidence to support the development of Age Friendly services. In the initial phase, particular emphasis will be placed on the themes of housing and health, mobility, access to services, community engagement, climate adaptation and the role of digital/technology adoption. This exciting partnership is an opportunity to break new ground in integrating academic expertise into local government-led programming, and it reflects the evolving roles of both the Age Friendly Programme and the university. We are delighted that this role is now being advertised on the [NUI Maynooth Website](#), the [University Vacancies Ireland Website](#) and on timeshighereducation.com. Closing date midnight Sunday, 14th February 2021. We encourage you to share this exciting opportunity as widely as possible across your networks.



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Lots of Age Friendly Initiatives funded under the Community Enhancement Programme

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O’Brien TD, announced last week that over 3,000 projects have been supported through the 2020 Community Enhancement Programme (CEP). The programme, funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, is designed to support community groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas, through the provision of small capital grants. Among the projects funded in 2020 include childcare groups and playgrounds, recreational groups, community gardens and premises, sports grounds and initiatives that support older people.

“The Community Enhancement Programme shows how relatively small amounts of funding can make a big difference to communities and organisations that carry out really important work.”
- Minister Heather Humphreys TD



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

There were two rounds of this funding in 2020 – June and August - with a total of €7 million available to improve facilities.
[In total 3,068 projects are being funded.](#)



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

National Volunteering Strategy (2021 - 2025)

Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development with special responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O’Brien TD recently launched Ireland's first National Volunteering Strategy.

The [National Volunteering Strategy \(2021 - 2025\)](#) sets out a long-term vision for volunteering and volunteers in Ireland. With actions to be implemented over the next five years, the Strategy set a general direction of travel for government policy in relation to the volunteers and the volunteering environment. It also builds upon and strengthens the renewed relationship and partnership between Government and the voluntary sector which has developed during the course of its preparation.

The purpose of the Strategy is to recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society. The Strategy also provides an opportunity for Government to



National Volunteering
Strategy 2021-2025



acknowledge how important volunteering is to the well-being of the nation and to steer the delivery of an agreed and ambitious vision. The contribution of volunteering to our society has never been more prevalent than during the response in the last number of months to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read more [HERE](#)



Libraries Ireland | Ireland Reads

What is IRELAND READS? On Thursday, 25th February Libraries Ireland are inviting people of all ages get reading. Why? Because taking some time for yourself to relax and do the things you enjoy (like reading) is important to help look after your mental wellbeing.

One minute, ten minutes, an hour, or more – it doesn't matter how long you read for, the important thing is that you read and enjoy the feeling of getting lost in a book. Check back [HERE](#) soon for more information on how you can get involved. Ireland Reads is a public libraries initiative, in partnership with publishers, booksellers, authors and others under the Government's ['Keep Well' campaign](#).

In the meantime, you can always [join the library online](#) (if you're not a member already) and download eBooks, audiobooks, magazines and newspapers right now.



News from An Post

Watch out for two more Free postage-paid postcards from An Post arriving into letterboxes all over the country over the coming weeks. One postcard is blank so that people can add their own artwork or message on the front. We in An Post hope you enjoy decorating and sending them to family and friends to help brighten these wintry days. The cards are joined together for ease of distribution and should be cut into two cards.



All Post Offices are now stocking a mobile phone which has been specially designed for the more mature customer. It has a variety of features including a magnifier and an emergency button. Full details are listed below.

An Post Mobile launches the emporia S4 smartphone in Ireland

A practical easy-to-use phone with great features for the older customer. An Post Mobile is pleased to announce the launch of the emporia S4 smart phone onto the Irish market. The phone is specifically designed for the more mature customer, though its features are of practical use at any age, including:

- Pre- installed contactless payment function – giving the user a choice in how they make payments
- Easy-to-read larger font and App icons
- Built-in magnifier feature – to save swapping glasses

- Full hearing-aid compatibility
- A dedicated emergency assistance button on the back, providing peace of mind for users, their family, carers and friends.
- A simple guidebook to enable users to learn about the phone as their own pace
- Available at all post offices and www.anpost.com/mobile

Michael Ahern, An Post Mobile Manager says “The past year has shown just how important mobile communications are to the community and An Post is especially aware that many of our older citizens have gone for long periods without close contact with family, friends and neighbours. The addition of the emporia S4 smartphone to the An Post Mobile phone range is another opportunity to make life just that little bit easier and safer for the older generation and their families”.

The emporia S4 smartphone is designed to introduce beginners, especially older people, to the world of simple and easy to use smart phone technology and help them access a whole new world of communication, confidently and independently. The S4 features emporia’s unique 135-page training book, a useful reference point allowing users to learn at their own pace which is proving to be a huge benefit to older users. The S4 is currently available contract free with An Post Mobile from €139.95, and comes with unlimited calls, texts and 4G data for just €15 per



month on its new plan (see anpost.com/mobile for details and terms and conditions). With the current offer of the first month for free (when you bring your number to An Post Mobile), the S4 senior-focused smartphone, complete with 135-page training book, will enable this generation to fully connect with family and friends, and with the Emergency button facility, give comfort of mind to older people and carers alike.

An Post mobile also offer a great range of phones including Samsung, Apple, Huawei, Alcatel and Doro, available in all post offices and at anpost.com/mobile.

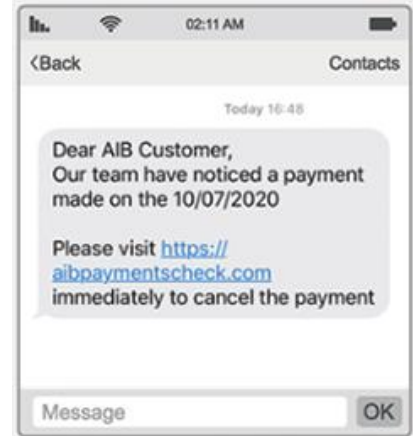
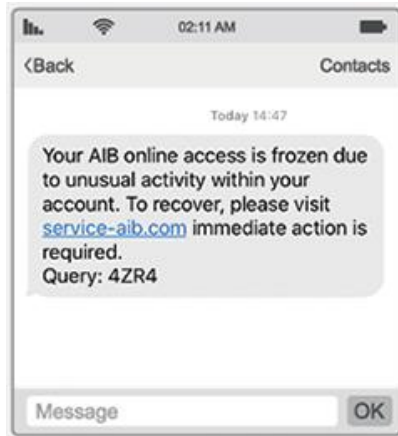


A message from AIB Bank re fraudulent texts and phone calls

Fraudulent texts:

Criminals can make fake text messages to look like they come from us. They can even insert these fake messages into genuine text conversations we are having with you. We're working hard to protect your money and are constantly working to remove fraudulent websites.

It's also important that you are aware of these scams and how to protect yourself. Be careful and never click a link in a text message - even if it appears to be part of a conversation with us. We don't put links into our text messages. Here are some examples of fraudulent texts pretending to come from us:



Fraudulent phone calls:

Criminals can call you pretending to be us. They can even mimic our phone number. But remember:

- We will never text you a One Time Passcode to cancel a transaction.
- We will never ask you to get a code from your Card Reader to cancel a transaction.
- We will never ask you not to log back into your account.
- You should not share your One Time Passcode or Card Reader code with anyone, even if you get an unexpected call or text message, asking for it, whoever they say they are.
- We will never call you to ask for a code we have sent to you, or to ask why you didn't complete the process in the text message.

These codes are the way to make money leave your account. Never share them with anyone. If you believe you have received a fraudulent text message, email or phone call, please send a copy of the details to www.alert@aib.ie

For further information to protect yourself against fraud, visit the Security Centre on our website or refer to FraudSmart.



New Planning Leaflets from the Office of the Planning Regulator

The Office of the Planning Regulator and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have published a series of planning leaflets dealing with all aspects of the planning system. These leaflets cover a wide range of issues including how to prepare and lodge a planning application, how to make a planning appeal, requirements for change of use, building extensions, garages, domestic sheds, agricultural development, etc. The leaflets are available [HERE](#) free of charge and from your local planning authority.



Join us live on Facebook
Monday 1st
Wednesday 3rd
and Friday 5th

at 11am for
Age & Opportunity
Movement Minutes



#AgeandOpportunity

Sessions can be watched live on their Facebook page www.facebook.com/ageandopportunity or afterwards on their YouTube page www.youtube.com/ageandopportunity where a playlist of all Movement Minutes sessions to date can be viewed.

Local Updates



'Tale-a-Phone Exchange' | Storytelling by phone for older people

As part of the Government's Keep Well campaign, Wexford Age Friendly and the Arts Office at Wexford County Council are offering older people in the county the opportunity to receive a phone call from renowned storyteller Joe Brennan. The 'Tale-a-Phone Exchange', will be a chance to hear one of Joe's wonderful traditional stories in the comfort of their own home. Each Exchange, lasting 20 minutes, will be unique to the person receiving the call.

Joe will have a chat with the person receiving the call first and from this he will decide on what story to tell. 'Each call will be different and even where the same story is told, that telling will be unique to that person,' says Joe. 'No two tellings of a story are the same. The listener, and the circumstances of the exchange, shapes the telling of the story.'



This is a new approach to storytelling and the first time in Ireland for sharing traditional oral stories in this way. It is a great opportunity to reach people who have been isolated from so much because of the pandemic. Phone calls will commence every Wednesday from the first week in February and continue through to the 31st of March. To book a call, contact: Ann Marie Laffan, Age Friendly Programme Manager on 053-9196680





Donegal Age Friendly | Keep Well Campaign Spring 2021 Music for Care Homes

As part of the Government's KEEP WELL Campaign, Donegal County Council Arts Service and the Donegal Age Friendly Programme is seeking to recruit a panel of experienced musicians, singers and entertainers to provide a series of music, song and dance performances for residents of the county's long stay Care Homes, over the coming months.

The project continues the engagement with older people by Donegal County Council, through the Culture Division and the Age Friendly Programme, since the start of the current Covid 19 public health restrictions. During 2020, care and support packs were delivered to older people and Christmas care packs were provided by the Council to Care Home residents. The current initiative will allow for an element of entertainment and celebration by residents, at a time when the restrictions are still having a negative impact on their lives.

In consultations with the Care Homes, many of the residents expressed a particular likeness for Irish Traditional and for Country music, so the series will be seeking to respond imaginatively to that preference, as well as catering for other musical tastes and forms of entertainment. The Care Home presentations will be of the highest professional standards and will be delivered in a warm, informal style to facilitate maximum engagement between performers and audience.

In view of the ongoing and envisaged Covid 19 restrictions and protocols around gatherings of people and social distancing, the programme will be focused on engaging solo artists and small duo and trio ensembles. The performances may take place indoors or outdoors, as the ongoing Covid 19 situation dictates.

Performers interested in being considered for inclusion on the panel, can request a copy of the Brief to Performers and an Expression of Interest Form, by emailing their request to Donegal County Council Arts Service: Email: traolach@donegalcoco.ie Completed Expression of Interest Forms must be returned to Donegal County Council Arts Service by **4.00pm on Wednesday, February 10th.**

The KEEP WELL campaign is brought to you with thanks to Healthy Ireland, an initiative of the Government of Ireland, with funding from the Healthy Ireland Fund and the Sláintecare fund, delivered by Pobal.

For more information contact:

Traolach Ó Fionnáin, Arts Officer, Donegal County Council.

T: 074 9163832 | Mob. 087 3612977 | Email: traolach@donegalcoco.ie

Mairéad Cranley, Assistant Social inclusion Co-ordinator/ Co-ordinator Donegal Age Friendly Programme.

Guthán / Tel: 0876052067 / 0749561326 | Rphost / Email: mairiad.cranley@donegalcoco.ie

Your Voice



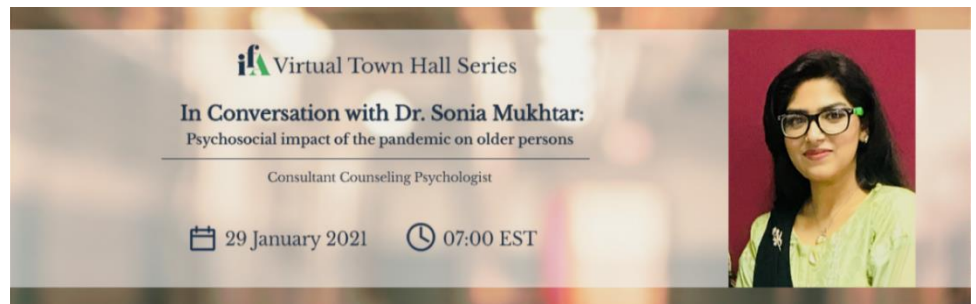
We've heard about so much good work going on all around the country, please let us know what's happening in your area so we can share those innovative ideas with everyone. Please email us your news to Rachel at rleavy@meathcoco.ie Information is one thing we can share right now!

International Updates



IFA Virtual Town Hall | In Conversation with Dr. Sonia Mukhtar: Psychological impact of COVID-19 on older adults

The International Federation on Ageing held a Town Hall event earlier today called 'In Conversation with Dr. Sonia Mukhtar: Psychological impact of COVID-19 on older adults'. A recording of this event will be available on the Federation's website <https://ifa.ngo/>



Important Tips

Always have your **Eircode** close by in case of emergency. You can find your Eircode [here](#)

Perhaps keep a **daily diary** to record the people you are in contact with every day, so if you develop symptoms it will be easier to trace them

Coronavirus COVID-19

If you have fever and/or cough you should stay at home regardless of your travel or contact history.

If you have returned from an area that is subject to travel restrictions due to COVID-19 you should restrict your movement for 14 days. Check the list of affected areas on [www.hse.ie](#)

All people are advised to:

- > **Reduce** social interactions
- > **Keep a distance** of 2m between you and other people
- > **Do not** shake hands or make close contact where possible

If you have symptoms visit hse.ie OR phone HSE Live 1850 24 1850

How to Prevent

- Wash** your hands and wrists and often to avoid contamination
- Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing and discard or seal tissue
- Avoid** crowded, busy, indoor or outdoor events, especially those with international travel
- Clean** and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Stop** shared meals or feasting which require close contact
- Distance** yourself or avoid 2 metres (6 feet) more than other people, especially those who might be unwell

Symptoms

> Fever (high temperature) > A Cough > Shortness of breath > Breathing Difficulties

For daily updates visit

www.gov.ie/health/covid-19
www.hse.ie

IFA Health & Wellbeing Partnership
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HE HSE
Hálan na Míreanna
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Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office Telephone: 046 9097413

Or Email: rleavy@meathcoco.ie

HSE Advice Line: Callsave 1850 24 1850

Call from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday

The following is the list of each **Local Authority's Helpline phone numbers**

| Local Authority | Community Response Number |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Carlow County Council | 1800 814 300 |
| Cavan County Council | 1800 300 404 |
| Clare County Council | 1800 203 600 |
| Cork City Council | 1800 222 226 |
| Cork County Council | 1800 805 819 |
| Donegal County Council | 1800 928 982 |
| Dublin City Council | 01 222 8555 |
| DLR County Council | 1800 804 535 |
| Fingal County Council | 1800 459 059 |
| Galway City Council | 1800 400 150 |
| Galway County Council | 1800 928 894 |
| Kerry County Council | 1800 807 009 |
| Kildare County Council | 1800 300 174 |
| Kilkenny County Council | 1800 326 522 |
| Laois County Council | 1800 832 010 |
| Leitrim County Council | 1800 852 389 |
| Limerick City and County Council | 1800 832 005 |
| Longford County Council | 1800 300 122 |
| Louth County Council | 1800 805 817 |
| Mayo County Council | 094 906 4660 |
| Meath County Council | 1800 808 809 |
| Monaghan County Council | 1800 804 158 |
| Offaly County Council | 1800 818 181 |
| Roscommon County Council | 1800 200 727 |
| Sligo County Council | 1800 292 765 |
| South Dublin County Council | 1800 240519 |
| Tipperary County Council | 076 106 5000 |
| Waterford City and County Council | 1800 250 185 |
| Westmeath County Council | 1800 805 816 |
| Wexford County Council | 053 919 6000 |
| Wicklow County Council | 1800 868 399 |