



National Updates



Happy May Day

Today is May Day and is considered important in the Irish calendar dating as far back as pagan times. The day marks the coming of summer and was celebrated in a festival called Lá Bealtaine so it comes as no surprise that the Irish had many customs and traditions surrounding this time of year.

[Here's a little information on the history of this festive day from Irish Folklore](#)



Pitch perfect as Croke Park gets a little rest and recuperation time

With no action on Dublin's Croke Park pitch, plans for re-surfacing could be put on hold. Pitch manager Stuart Wilson told the Irish Times Paul Keane, that with no activity for a full fortnight, a rare break for a living, breathing and heavily used surface, he and his team over seeded the pitch and covered it with germination sheets. What they found when the sheets were removed before Dublin's intended Allianz Football League game against Meath on March 15th, was that a strong seed strike had delivered new and widespread growth. The pitch has just got better and better, week by week and the pitch manager said he had never seen the Croke Park pitch look as good in April. Read the full interview [here](#) – interesting reading for Gaa and grass lovers alike!



'Shack 24-7' raises funds for South African families

A County Cork family is living in a replica shantytown shack in an effort to raise funds for children in lockdown in a South African township. The Corkery family, from Kanturk, constructed the 6x10ft shack over a week ago and the four siblings have been living, eating and sleeping in the crudely-constructed abode since. They are providing a Facebook live stream of their life in the shack as they seek donations to provide food parcels and sanitary packs for families in a township in Cape Town. For the past number of years the Corkerys have been part of the Mellon Educate team, helping to build and renovate schools in South Africa. But due to the Covid-19 outbreak this year's trip has been cancelled. So far, the family has raised over €11,500. **Well done to the Corkery Family, here's a link to the [full story](#)**



Trainee priest returns to virus front line

RTE's Gail Conway reports on a young trainee priest from Belfast who has put the pursuit of his religious vocation on hold to help out during the coronavirus. Chris Gault has temporarily put his religious calling on hold to re-register as a medic and is back working in the Mater hospital using his Queens University medical qualification. His superior Fr John Walsh commented on the outpouring of love that is being witnessed throughout this pandemic across the world. Read Gail Conway's full interview with [Brother Chris Gault](#)



Dublin artist's mural pays tribute to frontline workers

Eleanor Mannion of RTE reports that a Dublin street artist has finished her latest mural in a series of works using pop culture to thank frontline workers and highlight social distancing measures. Emmalene Blake's 'Stay at Home' murals appear on the walls of the Kingswood estate in Tallaght, Dublin, where she lives. So far, they have featured rap superstar Cardi B, singers Dua Lipa and Robyn, as well as rock group The Police. The star shared a photograph of the mural to her millions of followers on social media. The post now has more than three million likes on Instagram. Emmalene said: "I wanted to paint something that was kind of light-hearted but was also reminding people about social-distancing. Take a look at some of [Emmalene's murals](#), very clever way to get the message 'Stay at Home' to people of all ages!



Age & Opportunity are keeping Older People connected

At Age & Opportunity we are continuing to provide opportunities for older people to be more active; more visible; more creative; more connected; more often, during these difficult times. We've gotten creative and transferred a number of our initiatives online to reach our audience who are following social-distancing and cocooning guidelines. More info on our website at <https://ageandopportunity.ie/>.

Many thanks to Age & Opportunity for providing us with information on some of their great on-line initiatives which include;

Keeping Active – Movement Minutes Live

Building Resilience – Something Inside So Strong

Getting Creative at Home

Celebrating the Arts in May

You can find out more about all of the above [here](#)



Many childcare services are posting lovely activities for their children online, such as craft activities, baking tutorials and Storytime sessions, etc. It's a really nice way for the childcare professionals to stay connected with the children, and the children love being able to see them every day. One little girl fell asleep listening to one of her afterschool teachers reading her a story.



CHY 6830
Registered Charity Number 20013554

End of Life & Bereavement Care

The Irish Hospice Foundation has developed a series of information resources on matters relating to end of life and bereavement, in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

The Covid-19 Care & Inform Hub includes a range of information resources and videos focusing on the themes of Grief, Funerals in Exceptional Times, Caring for Others and a suite of resources for Healthcare Professionals to support and guide all who need it during this time. The information is regularly updated.

Here's some very useful links to information, support and advice on grief and loss

[Grieving in exceptional times](#)

[Acknowledging and coping with grief of a Covid-19 death](#)

[Finding ways to help children and young people grieve](#)

[Planning a funeral in exceptional times](#)

[Planning a funeral when your relative has died from Covid-19](#)

Caring for others

[What can I do when I can't visit a loved one who is dying](#)

[Caring for someone near end of life at home during the Covid-19 crisis](#)

[Practical Information: Caring for someone at end-of-life at home](#)
[Resources for healthcare workers](#)



Calling all Digital Champions to Support Older People to Get Connected!!!

Age Action has joined the ChangeX Community Call initiative to mobilise Digital Champions who will support older people to get connected to the internet using the Age Action Getting Started KIT.

The Age Action Getting Started KIT is a series of NALA approved How To KIT Guides and a video tutorial, presented by Mary Kennedy, to help people older people to use a smartphone, or other device, to get online so they are more connected, informed and supported particularly during periods of social distancing. There is also a How to Avoid False Information About COVID-19 produced in partnership with Media Literacy Ireland and the Institute for Future Media and Journalism at DCU.

- People can sign up to be a Digital Champion and get the Getting Started KIT [here](#)
- The Age Action Getting Started KIT materials are available to download from [here](#)
- People can call 01 8730372 leave their name and address and Age Action will post the How to Guides within 10 days from 1 May.
- The video tutorials will be available to view on [this page](#) on Tuesday 5 May.



Irish Council for Social Housing

Sheltered/ Supported Housing Response to Coronavirus

The coronavirus has had a dramatic impact on all aspects of social housing management and provision but supported housing has been particularly impacted due to its higher support nature and its more vulnerable client group. It has been a particularly challenging time with the support needs of vulnerable tenants increasing, in many cases at the same time as staff and volunteer resources are being restricted.

However, the supported housing sector has responded to the many challenges that the virus has presented through innovative working, contact and support practices and it will continue to play a key role in safeguarding and supporting tenants for the duration of this emergency.

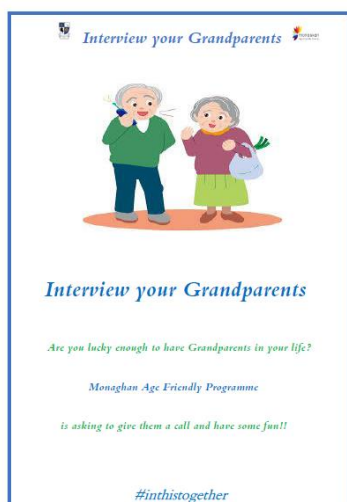
Many thanks to Karen in the Irish Council for Social Housing for providing us with a highlight of some of the work which is going on, as well as laying out some of the challenges facing the sector over the coming months. [Take a look at the ICSH's briefing note](#)

Local Updates



Thanks to our Age Friendly Clare Programme Manager, Karen Fennessy for making us aware of a wonderful initiative that has taken place in Clare where a local Community Hospital, St Joseph's Ennis, has teamed up with Southern Advertising to make a concert video of local teenagers & musicians to entertain the residents who are cocooning. Clare County Council's Chief Executive introduces it and there's even a performance from Daniel O'Donnell.

[Take a look at this outstanding virtual concert](#) and please share on twitter if you can!



Monaghan Age Friendly Programme – Interview your Grandparents!

This is a challenging time for us all, it is especially challenging for those who are cocooning and those who live alone. We have all been busy calling, zooming and whats-apping! But we are all running out of news and craic to share. Monaghan Age Friendly programme has put together "Interview your Grandparents" to help put a bit of fun into the family chats.

We forget our parents and grandparents had busy fun lives long before they were parents and grandparents. This is a lovely opportunity to get to know them that little bit better. We know not everyone is lucky enough to have grandparents in their lives, you can interview anyone in your family or neighbourhood who might enjoy it.

Thanks to Bernie Bradley, our Age Friendly Programme Manager in Monaghan for sharing this wonderful initiative – pass on [these wonderful suggested questions](#) for children to ask their grandparents.



What a lovely initiative by Meals on Wheels in Gorey, Co. Wexford they have put out a **Community Call - Baked Treats Needed**, via their Facebook page. They are asking all those kids stuck at home, particularly those who may be anxious and want to help with the community's response to have a 'Home Bake In'. They are looking for sweet treats, the sort of cakes you might bring to a bake sale and they will distribute them to older and isolated people in Gorey and Courtown by Meals on Wheels volunteers. They have a special delivery going out on May Bank Holiday Monday so **anyone in the area, start baking now and drop your bakes to the bakery counter at Pettitts Supervalu Gorey** (Please follow in-store safety precautions). Thanks to Ann Marie Laffan, our Age Friendly Programme Manager in Wexford for sharing this with us. Good luck to all the bakers!!!

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 reavy@meathcoco.ie Information is one thing we can share right now!

International Updates



Europe Countries are planning their exit from lockdown
Most European countries have been setting out tentative plans to ease lockdowns imposed to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The aim is to restart economies rapidly devastated by the sudden shutdowns brought in to slow the spread of the virus and protect health services. These moves to reopen economies slowly are giving people hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel. The European Union has urged a coordinated approach as constraints are eased. Different approaches are being taken in different countries; in Andorra, people who live in even numbered houses are allowed to go out on even numbered dates, and vice versa for odd numbered houses!
Take a look at what various EU countries are planning [here](#)



Lithuanian airport transforms into a drive-in cinema
Lithuanian capital Vilnius has opened a drive-in cinema at the airport. The airport teamed up with the Vilnius International Film Festival for this initiative. The first movie was the Oscar-winning South Korean drama Parasite on Wednesday (April 29). Around 150 cars showed up to watch the movie. Social distancing measures meant vehicles had to be parked at least two metres apart, with a maximum of two people per vehicle. In keeping with the airport's travel theme, organisers plan to show movies from different continents every week.

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](#)

How to Prevent



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

Symptoms

- > Fever (High Temperature) > A Cough > Shortness of Breath > Breathing Difficulties

For daily updates visit

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

Infected: operating a confidential design
www.hpsc.ie/covid19



Riadas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office T: 046 9097413 E: 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

Carlow County Council
Cavan County Council
Clare County Council
Cork City Council
Cork County Council
Donegal County Council
Dublin City Council
DLR County Council
Fingal County Council
Galway City Council
Galway County Council
Kerry County Council
Kildare County Council
Kilkenny County Council
Laois County Council
Leitrim County Council
Limerick City and County Council
Longford County Council
Louth County Council
Mayo County Council
Meath County Council
Monaghan County Council
Offaly County Council

Community Response Number

1800 814 300
1800 300 404
1800 203 600
1800 222 226
1800 805 819
1800 928 982
01 222 8555
1800 804 535
01 890 5000
1800 400 150
1800 928 894
1800 807 009
1800 300 174
1800 500 000
1800 832 010
1800 852 389
1800 832 005
1800 300 122
1800 805 817
094 906 4660
1800 808 809
1800 804 158
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