

National Updates

Coronavirus  
COVID-19



Restrictions Tighten to Curb the Spread of Covid

Three Border counties have been moved to Level 4 restrictions as of 15<sup>th</sup> October (**Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal**), the rest of the country are at level 3. The government have advised people not to visit other households indoors or in their gardens; exemptions will be made on compassionate grounds and essential reasons like caring or childcare. Northern Ireland are entering a 4 week lock-down to try curb the spread of the virus. A reminder below of the levels in Ireland's Framework for Restrictive Measures

 THE IRISH TIMES	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
 Visitors	10 from 3 households	6 from 2 or 3 households	1 other household	No visitors permitted	No visitors permitted
 Gatherings	50 outside your home or garden	6 indoor 15 outdoor	No social or family gatherings	No indoor gatherings	No Except funerals or weddings
 Weddings	100 people can attend	50 people can attend	25 people can attend	6 people can attend	6 people can attend
 Indoor events	100 Up to 100 can attend indoor gatherings	50 But up to 100 in larger venues	No indoor gatherings	No indoor gatherings	No indoor gatherings
 Sports fixtures	100 indoor 200 outdoor	50 indoor 100 outdoor	No matches or events (except elite sport)	No matches or events (except elite sport)	No matches or events
 Bars, cafes & restaurants	Open with protective measures in place	Open 6 people from up to 3 households	Open. Take away or delivery. Outdoor dining only. Max 15 patrons	Open. Take away or delivery. Outdoor dining only. Max 15 patrons	Open. Take away food or delivery only.
 Wet pubs	Open	Open Groups of six from 3 households	Open Additional restrictions	Open outdoor only limited to a max of 15	Only offer takeaway or delivery service
 Domestic travel	No restrictions	No restrictions	Stay in your county/region apart from work/education/essential purposes	Stay in your county/region apart from work/education/essential purposes	Stay at home except to exercise within 5km from home
 Public transport	Travel off-peak hours or walk/cycle, if possible	Peak hours essential workers/ purposes only; 50% capacity	All hours essential workers/ purposes only; 50% capacity	Avoid public transport; essential workers/ purposes only; 25% capacity	Avoid public transport; essential workers/ purposes only; 25% capacity

Graphic: Paul Scott/IRISH TIMES GRAPHICS

## Key Points

BUDGET 2021



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Airgeadais  
Department of Finance

## New Investment Announced in Budget 2021

Budget 2021 was announced this week with a €3.4bn Covid-19 recovery fund and €4bn extra for health service announced.

### Some key commitments announced in the budget include:

- A reduced VAT rate from 13.5 per cent to 9 per cent for the hospitality sector with effect from November 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 until December 2021.
- Carbon tax will be increased by €7.50 from €26 to €33.50 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- A further €600 million will be allocated to the capital budget in addition to a planned increase of €1 billion for 2021 under the National Development Plan.
- An extra €4 billion for the health service. This will provide capacity for 100,000 tests a week, supply PPE where needed and continue into 2021 all of the necessary Covid-19 measures which have been put in place since March.
- There will also be an additional 1,146 acute beds; an increase in permanent adult critical care beds from 255 pre-Covid to 321 by end 2021; 1,250 community beds in 2021 which includes over 600 new rehabilitation beds; five million additional homecare hours following on from the 19 million provided in 2020.
- Some €5 million will be dedicated to the development of community-based dementia services and supports.
- An extra €500 million will be directed towards capital expenditure and will facilitate the construction of 9,500 new social housing units in 2021.
- A total of 12,750 units will be added to the social housing stock including leased units. There will also be a total of €65 million available to fund deep retrofitting of social housing stock.
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- State Pension Qualifying Age to remain at age 66 from January – legislation to be implemented by end 2020.
- €5 increase in the weekly Living Alone Allowance from €14 to €19 paid to people aged 66 and over who are living alone – over 221,000 pensioners, widows/widowers and people with disabilities to benefit.
- Over 600,000 pensioners will benefit from the Christmas Bonus Double Payment.
- Fuel Allowance will increase by €3.50 to €28.00 per week – over 375,000 households to benefit.
- Grant of up to €500 will be paid for hearing aids without requiring it to be matched by the customer. Hearing Aid repairs of up to €100 will no longer require matching funding by the customer.



**Chambers  
Ireland**  
Advancing business together

## Local Government Awards highlight the vital work done by Local Authorities in communities around the Country

Chambers Ireland today revealed the shortlist for the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2020. In its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the Awards features a total of 86 projects from Local Authorities shortlisted over 16 categories.

The Excellence in Local Government Awards showcase best practice in local government and recognise the skills, hard work, innovation and enthusiasm within local government that can often go unrecognised. The Excellence in Local Government Awards are held in conjunction with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Age Friendly Ireland are delighted that the awards include an Age Friendly Initiative category. This award recognises the excellent programmes by Local Authorities who take the lead on changing thinking about ageing, and how services are planned and delivered, to encourage communities in which older people live valued lives. Congratulations to the following Age Friendly Programmes who have been shortlisted for an award;

- Cork City Council – Cork City Age Friendly Initiative
- Fingal County Council – Age Friendly Skerries/Fingal – Staying Connected Nursing Home Initiative
- Kilkenny County Council – Thomastown Age Friendly Town Plan
- Limerick City and County Council – Putting Your House in Order
- Mayo County Council – Through the Ages
- Meath County Council – Athboy walkability project and inclusive town developments



## NGO Forum Networking Day

Age Friendly Ireland hosted a networking event for the NGO Forum and Age Friendly Programmes on 13<sup>th</sup> October, called **Lessons from Covid: Moving Forward Together**. This was the second such networking event. Local Age Friendly Programme Managers presented on their local strategies and how they are linking with the NGO sector at county and city level. NGOs present on the day included Age and Opportunity, Age Action, Cara Nua, Irish Council for Social Housing, Flexibus, Third Age and the Irish Hospice Foundation. The event was chaired by Maurice O'Connell. National Network of Older People's Councils was represented by Chairperson Mary Cronin.



comhairle chontae na mí  
meath county council





## Letters from the Mayor to ease loneliness in Galway

RTE news reports on a Galway initiative to address loneliness and isolation. Mayor Mike Cubbard is personally writing to older residents. This follows his recent call-out on local media for people to contact him with details of those who feel alone and isolated. Within days there were dozens of nominations. "People contacted me asking if I could send a letter to their elderly relatives living alone and isolated during this pandemic. Fear and loneliness are palpable at this time and it's nice to know people are thinking of you". Mayor Cubbard said he will keep reaching out to all those missing the embrace of a loved one, a regular family visit, or catching up with friends.



## FOCUS IRELAND – Shine a Light

From the safety and security of their own home, garden, or workplace business leaders, colleagues, friends, families and communities are sleeping-out **tonight**, Friday 16th October to help raise vital funds for people experiencing homelessness. People are sleeping-out in their gardens in a sleeping bag or tent; on their living room floor; wherever they can safely whilst adhering to the government’s guidelines. They will be joining Focus Ireland virtually for a shared digital experience to support people experiencing homelessness. We wish all those participating a successful, safe sleep-out – it’s a very worthy cause. If you want to find out more information about the great work Focus Ireland does or if you’d like to donate to the Shine a Light fundraiser, visit Focus Ireland’s website <https://www.focusireland.ie/shinealight/>



## Don’t worry Fungie isn’t missing

Originally feared to be missing after reports on social media, the popular dolphin Fungie has been spotted by a local fisherman off the Dingle coast in Kerry. The bottlenose dolphin is said to have been first spotted in Dingle in 1983 but had been feared to have been missing after he hadn’t been seen since Wednesday morning. During tourist season, the friendly Fungie is a popular attraction with thousands flocking hoping to see the dolphin. One of the local fishermen who spotted Fungie explained that there are other bottlenose dolphins in the area feeding due to the high amount of sprat in the waters, it looks like Fungie has decided to stay feeding with the other dolphins and enjoy their company. You see **everyone** loves a bit of company!



## Gardaí launch high visibility nationwide policing plan for this weekend

AN Garda Síochána has today introduced a high visibility, nationwide policing plan focused on support for the vulnerable and crime prevention. The policing plan, which came into effect from 7 a.m. this morning (Friday), continues until midnight Sunday (October 18) and is in support of public health guidelines to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the community. The





weekend's policing plan is focused on ensuring engagement by An Garda Síochána with the public through three key strands.

**1. Community Engagement:** As has been the case throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, community gardaí will work with individuals, community groups, statutory agencies, charities and local businesses to provide a range of services to assist and protect the most vulnerable.

Garda members will also continue to engage with people to ensure compliance with public health guidelines and regulations through the 4Es approach of **Engage, Educate and Encourage, and only where provided for and as a last resort, Enforcement.**

**2. Crime Prevention Patrols:** Crime prevention patrols will be increased nationwide, particularly at locations such as public amenities, parks, and natural beauty spots.

**3. Checkpoints:** Checkpoints with an enhanced focus on crime prevention and detection will take place over the weekend.

Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security, John Twomey, said: "Since the start of the pandemic, garda members throughout the country have been helping the vulnerable and those who feel isolated. This involved simple but important tasks such as collecting their prescription, delivering their pension, or even socially distanced contact. "If people need such assistance or know someone who does, please contact your local garda station. We are here to help."

Thanks to the Connaught Telegraph for this article



## **NUI Galway seeking the views of older adults across the country in relation to diabetes prevention**

**NUI Galway is seeking the views of older people for a study that aims to develop a national programme to assist older adults in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and prevent chronic health conditions such as Type 2 Diabetes.** This programme will be delivered online and includes regular contact with a health coach (e.g. registered dietitian) and social support. Researchers at the university are running a 15-minute survey and would like to reach as many older adults as possible. The survey is a non-invasive questionnaire which asks people about their health behaviours, experiences with technology and their perception of a potential Diabetes Prevention programme. The survey is available online or by post.

For more information about the Diabetes Prevention Study visit, <http://www.pret2d.com/survey> or to request a paper-based survey with free return postage, contact Luke Van Rhoon at [l.vanrhoon1@nuigalway.ie](mailto:l.vanrhoon1@nuigalway.ie).

All participants will be entered into a draw to win one of two €100 One4All gift cards. There is also the opportunity to participate in a follow-up phone or video interview study, if participants choose to do so.

**PUBLIC AWARENESS campaign with Banking & Payments Federation Ireland, October 19-23**

*'Take back and keep control of your money'*

A safeguarding **PUBLIC AWARENESS** campaign together with Banking & Payments Federation Ireland (BPI) will take place next week October 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>. The theme and message will be on financial safeguarding during COVID-19 – encouraging people to 'take back and keep control of their own money' as much as possible.

Watch out next week for further information in local and national media, on RTE Radio and Newstalk, Twitter and Facebook and on the [Safeguarding Ireland website](https://www.safeguardingireland.org)



**Local Updates**



Age Friendly  
**LAOIS**



An Garda Síochána

**Good News as Burglary Rates Drop During Pandemic**

Laois Age Friendly Programme Manager David Murphy sent us the following crime prevention advice. Crime Prevention Officer Sergeant Graham Kavanagh advises that we can enact simple measures to help protect our homes, including:

- Turning on some lights while inside or out of the home
- Using timer switches
- Locking all doors and windows
- Using an alarm
- Keeping keys stored away from windows
- Not keeping large amounts of cash or jewellery in the home

It is accepted that incidences of burglaries, as well as other associated criminal activity, can rise as much as 20% during the winter months when daylight hours are significantly reduced. As many as 42% of all burglaries during winter months take place during the hours of 4pm and 9pm, according to figures provided by An Garda Síochána. The most common days for burglary to occur are Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The rate of residential burglary has decreased sharply in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the falling rate observed most acutely in March and April of this year, when national lockdowns were in full effect. During this time, there were 43% fewer burglaries compared with the same period in 2019.



## Donegal Age Friendly Programme reaches out to Older People by Radio for Social Inclusion Week 2020



Donegal Age Friendly Programme has created very busy phonelines and emails in the last week. To open Social Inclusion week they arranged an Age Friendly full panel discussion on the Greg Hugh's show, Highland Radio. The panel comprised of members from the Age Friendly Alliance, agencies from Donegal County Council, the Health promotion and Primary Care from the HSE, Alone, Donegal Sports Partnership, Local-link and Education Training Board.

The Interagency group talked about the Age Friendly Programme and how they have worked together as group in the last few years but especially this year through the Covid Pandemic. Each of the panel members explained all the different services available to Older People in Donegal and how they can avail of them. The group spoke about the importance for Older People to keep moving through doing simple exercises, how they can keep themselves healthy at home and reminded them if they were in need of anything to contact the free-phone Helpline. The local link explained that transport is still very much up and running but if Older People had any concerns about coming out and needed anything delivered to their homes to contact the Age Friendly Programme through the Helpline and they will arrange it. The radio interview ended on a positive note with a Competition for Older People.

The Age Friendly Programme are running a Treasure Hunt competition of Donegal's Wild Atlantic way through the airwaves on Highland Radio for 2 Older People to win a tablet each and peer to peer training on how to use the tablet. Each day a clue was broadcasted on Highland radio.

The answers are all places in Donegal along the Wild Atlantic Way  
Example of how it works-

- **Clue** - Coloured beach **Answer** -Silverstrand
- **Mondays Clue** - Sounds like a very small deer
- **Tuesday's Clue** - Large Irish sweater surrounded by water
- **Wednesday's Clue** - Part of a garment & Ball game
- **Thursday's Clue** - Hill for heir to throne
- **Friday's Clue** - Ruby fortified building

All Answers can be posted to Mairead Cranley, Age Friendly, Donegal County Council, Dungloe PSC or email [mairiad.cranley@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:mairiad.cranley@donegalcoco.ie)  
Closing date is Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October.

## 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](mailto:rleavy@meathcoco.ie) Information is one thing we can share right now!

## International Updates



European Council  
Council of the European Union

The Council of Ministers of the European Union has adopted Conclusions on Human Rights, Participation and Well-Being of Older Persons in the Era of Digitalisation. This text is not legally binding but is a strong commitment from the European Union and its Member States. You can read the full text here:

[https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/10/12/improving-the-well-being-of-older-persons-in-the-era-of-digitalisation-council-adopts-conclusions/?utm\\_source=dsms-auto&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Improving+the+well-being+of+older+persons+in+the+era+of+digitalisation%3a+Council+adopts+conclusions](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/10/12/improving-the-well-being-of-older-persons-in-the-era-of-digitalisation-council-adopts-conclusions/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Improving+the+well-being+of+older+persons+in+the+era+of+digitalisation%3a+Council+adopts+conclusions)

## 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](http://www.hse.ie)

**How to Prevent**

- Wash** your hands well and often to avoid contamination
- Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing and discard used tissue
- Avoid** touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean** and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Stop** shaking hands or hugging once leaving a bus or providing other people
- Distance** yourself at least 2 metres from other people, especially those who might be unwell

**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](http://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.google/health/covid-19](http://www.google/health/covid-19)  
[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

Infographic created by comhairle na mí  
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## Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office T: 046 9097413 E: [rleavy@meathcoco.ie](mailto: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**



<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Community Response Number</b>
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 500 000
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