



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

July 2016 – Issue 177

From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings, we hope you like our new- look newsletter.

The old advice "neither a borrower nor a lender be," has taken on a whole new relevance in the light of the hardship created by negative equity and evictions post the building boom in recent times. We were renowned in Europe, and in the rest of the world probably, by our national preoccupation with owning our own home and our previous high levels of home ownership. This was driven by successive government policies over the years encouraging all of us to own our own homes and the need no doubt to ensure private builders continued to feed at the trough for political expediency.

All of that is set to change by the publication of the Government's, "Rebuilding Ireland-Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness" which contains 84 actions to accelerate housing supply and provide 47,000 new social houses by 2021 with 6.5 billion in funding provided. It will also target an annual overall build of 25,000 units per year. This is a serious attempt to change all that went before and to make rental property a real option by improving its availability and affordability. Only recently we have seen a fall in Irish home ownership levels from the previous dizzy heights due to the effects of the recession and the difficulty in getting mortgages for new homes. A new €10,000 tax rebate package to be announced in the budget (backdated to now) for couples purchasing their first house will boost construction of more starter homes. Delays due to planning are intended to be sorted by fast tracking plans through An Bord Pleánála for estates of over 100 houses, bypassing the Local Authority completely. State owned land in Dublin and other big centres will be made available for housing.

It all sounds very good but already some are saying it is not enough, even if the numbers of accommodation units projected are realised. However it seems to be a genuine attempt by government to deal effectively with our housing/ homeless crisis. If successful, it should make renting a viable alternative for the first time. That cannot be a bad thing for anyone.

So long for now, **Dr Jerry Cowley**

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Introduction of new Rent Supplement & Housing Assistance Payment limits

From the 1st of July 2016, revised limits on the level of rent where an applicant can claim social housing supports to assist with rent costs were introduced. **Please see the table below for a breakdown of the new monthly limits on a county/household basis.**

In view of the reduction of supply in the private rented market and increasing rents, the new guidelines also allow for flexibility where landlords seek rents that are over the limits. This applies to existing tenants and to new Rent Supplement applicants. The circumstances of tenants are considered on a case-by-case basis and rent assistance can be increased above prescribed limits, as appropriate

County:	Single Shared	Couple Shared	Single	Couple	Couple/One Parent Family - 1 Qualified Child	Couple/One Parent Family - 2 Qualified Children	Couple/One Parent Family -3 Qualified Children
Dublin - Fingal	€400	€440	€660	€900	€1,150	€1,175	€1,200
Dublin – Not Fingal	€430	€500	€660	€900	€1,250	€1,275	€1,300
Carlow	€270	€290	€440	€510	€570	€600	€630
Cavan	€190	€220	€380	€420	€450	€470	€490
Clare	€220	€240	€360	€400	€480	€515	€550
Cork	€300	€330	€550	€650	€900	€925	€950
Donegal	€200	€230	€340	€370	€410	€470	€520
Galway	€330	€360	€575	€650	€850	€875	€900
Kerry	€200	€230	€380	€410	€525	€550	€575
Kildare	€290	€350	€500	€585	€800	€835	€870
Kilkenny	€230	€270	€480	€530	€630	€660	€690
Laois	€240	€280	€420	€433	€580	€610	€630
Leitrim	€200	€220	€340	€370	€450	€475	€500
Limerick	€270	€300	€420	€450	€650	€700	€750
Longford	€180	€200	€330	€350	€400	€425	€450
Louth	€250	€290	€460	€480	€660	€690	€720
Mayo	€200	€220	€390	€410	€480	€500	€520
Meath	€240	€310	€460	€500	€730	€740	€750
Monaghan	€200	€220	€330	€390	€500	€515	€530
Offaly	€210	€230	€380	€433	€550	€575	€600
Roscommon	€240	€260	€360	€390	€500	€525	€550
Sligo	€220	€250	€460	€490	€550	€575	€600
Tipperary	€210	€230	€380	€420	€525	€560	€600
Waterford	€240	€270	€430	€450	€550	€575	€600
Westmeath	€220	€240	€450	€470	€600	€625	€650
Wexford	€280	€300	€420	€433	€530	€565	€600
Wicklow	€250	€300	€440	€475	€700	€735	€770
M4-M1 Commuter Belt Area	€310	€350	€575	€650	€975	€1,050	€1,100

Housing Opportunity: Aghamore, Co. Mayo

Aghamore Voluntary Housing currently has a one bed furnished property available in their scheme.

Aghamore is a small rural village, approx 8 miles from Knock. This scheme would be most suitable for people who can drive or those with family in the area.

While preference will be given to people originally from Co. Mayo or those with strong family connections in the area, **they will also consider applicants from other counties.**

For more information on the scheme and the application process, please contact the Safe Home Office.



Important Note!

Keeping your Council Housing Application 'live'

Councils throughout Ireland will shortly be carrying out a review to order to update their records on numbers wishing to avail of social housing supports.

As part of this process, Councils are sending out forms for people on their housing list to complete. Many Safe Home housing applicants have already received these forms and are unsure what they should do.

It is very important to complete and return these forms.

In doing so, you will be indicating your on-going desire to be considered for Housing Association schemes back in Ireland

In cases where circumstances have changed since your Council application was processed, it is important to include up to date information; E.G most recent proof of income/benefits/rent statement etc.

If you have received a form from a Council in Ireland, **don't panic!** Give us a call or pop into your nearest Irish Welfare/Advice Centre for assistance.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. I am currently in receipt of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) in the UK. Will this transfer with me if I move to Ireland permanently?

A. Your IIDB payment **will transfer** with you if you move to Ireland.

IIDB is a payment that people who have become ill or disabled may receive as a result of an accident (a) at work or (b) while on approved training scheme or course

IIDB also applies to a number of qualifying diseases that people may have contracted in the course of their work or while on an approved training scheme.

To find out more about IIDB, contact one of the following Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Centres

Barrow Benefit Centre

Post Handling Site B
Wolverhampton, WV99 1RX

Telephone: 0345 603 1358

Barnsley IIDB Centre

Mail Handling Site A
Wolverhampton, WV98 1SY

Telephone: 0345 758 5433

Our New Website

Log on..... have a nosey, find answers or sign up for our newsletter via email

As part of the Safe Home Ireland rebranding process, we have recently 'gone live' with our new website, check us out on **www.safehomeireland.com**

For those of you who would prefer to receive our monthly newsletter via email in an e-bulletin format, you can now sign up for that via on the website. You can also follow us on facebook and twitter.

As always, we welcome any feedback you may have, so don't be shy!

And finally! Brexit

Well, we wonder, is it all over bar the shouting! Following the referendum on 23rd June 2016, Britain will exit the European Union. It's fair to say that the final outcome was a shock, even for those who strongly campaigned on the 'leave side'. There is a lot of confusion around as to what will happen next and the uncertainty is causing much worry and distress. One indication around this is the surge in the number of enquiries for Irish Passports in the aftermath of the decision. Governments in Ireland (as the UK's nearest EU trading neighbour), the UK and throughout all of the EU Member States seem to be just scrabbling about in an attempt to come to terms with the new status quo. The term, 'headless chickens', is a title that has been bandied about by many.

For Irish Citizens living in the UK, UK State Pension holders in Ireland, as well as British Citizens living here, among some of the areas of particular concern are the possible implications for the Common Travel Area, entitlement to healthcare under EU regulations and entitlement to pro-rata EU pensions.

Amidst all of this uncertainty, the main thing to remember is that for the foreseeable future, NOTHING WILL CHANGE. In reality, Brexit is a process that is likely to take many years with experts forecasting that the full exit process will take up to two years to be realised.

The actual exit process is reliant on the activation of Article 50 to formally trigger Britain's exit, which is yet to commence. Whether you were a 'stay or leave' campaigner, it is fair to say that the departure from the EU will have profound legal, economic, social and political implications. During exit negotiations, many 'models' will be looked at in an attempt to enshrine/protect as many of the existing arrangements as possible. Bi-lateral agreements for social security arrangements already exist between Ireland and other non EU members, so hopefully, there will be some light at the end of this tunnel of uncertainty.

We will keep our readers informed along the way as soon as there is anything definite to report. In the meantime, if any of our readers in the UK wish to send information to us or ask questions, please feel free to do so.

Safe Home Ireland is supported by the Emigrant Support Programme via:



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