



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

From the Chairman's Desk

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Greetings,

Summer is upon us with the ending of spring and the arrival of more visitors to our area, and long warm days full of the abundance of foliage, flowers and wildlife. Change is the one constant in our daily lives. Some changes are for the better and can reinvigorate what we are about and give us new and broader horizons. As part of good governance Safe Home CLG was delighted to refresh our board of directors by welcoming two new board members Ms. Orlagh McHugh originally from Co. Meath, and Mr. Padraic Grennan, originally from Co. Louth, both now living in Dublin. They both come from different backgrounds which are very relevant to the work of Safe Home and we look forward to working with them and gaining from their relative youth, enthusiasm, and expertise.

I remember well as a founding member and chairman of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes meeting literally hundreds of decent people all over rural Ireland who had become involved in helping their own community by setting up their own local group water schemes to provide potable water to their kitchens, as well as water for the farmyard, and for sanitary services. They were true heroes who did something great by providing a service that the Irish state could not otherwise provide, and they still do it. One of our first tasks was to move founding water scheme members forward from the onerous trustee system they had taken upon themselves (be anything in life, but don't be a trustee!) to the more modern co-op or CLG model. Many of those mostly older men have since passed on to their eternal reward but their good work and admirable endeavour was not lost but moved forward through a more appropriate structure to better serve those same communities. They believed in what they were doing and although change can be difficult, they were prepared to embrace change as a move for the greater good of existing and future generations.

I salute all of those wonderful selfless people who have served, or still serve on voluntary boards all over Ireland. Where would we be without them?

So long for now, **Dr Jerry Cowley (Chairman)**



Housing Opportunity



For Kerry applicants only: A Housing Association in **Castleisland, Co. Kerry** has a one-bedroom property available. Applicants must be 65 years or over and preference will be given to people, who are originally from/with strong family connections in the Castleisland area.

Applicants do not have to be approved by Kerry County Council

This vacancy would be most suited for single occupancy. Maximum rent is €108 monthly.

Please contact the Safe Home office for more information on this scheme

Legal Advice clinics – Chicago Irish Immigrant Support (CIIS)

CIIS is hosting regular legal clinics and workshops to assist members of the Irish community with their immigration concerns, enquiries, and paperwork. They host multiple clinics per month and each clinic provides an opportunity to meet 'one on one' with an immigration attorney for a free 30 minute appointment. For any paperwork or follow up that is required, CIIS offers a free or sliding scale fee structure. The clinics are held on both the north and south sides of the city. Telephone consultations are available under certain circumstances. Available appointments are limited.

To book your appointment with an immigration attorney, call CIIS on **773-282-8445** or email Michael Collins: **mcollins@irishchicago.org**

Pets on Trains – Irish Rail:

Small dogs and cats can be carried free of charge in the passenger compartment of services provided they travel on the owner's lap. Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times unless contained in a basket or in an appropriate container.



Animals are not allowed in restaurant cars with the exception of Guide dogs or Assistance dogs. If another customer objects to the presence of a pet in their carriage, the owner will be requested to move to another part of the train. Some other restrictions may also apply so it's always advisable to contact Irish Rail before setting out on your journey with your four-legged friend. For more information, **Tel: + 353 1836 6222** (Customer Service) or see, **www.irishrail.ie**

Exploring social housing options in the North of Ireland

Safe Home does not have a brief to operate in the North of Ireland. Social housing in the North comes under the management of The Housing Executive. To apply for both Housing Executive and Housing Association properties, applicants must complete the relevant application form. There is one form for people who are already resident in the North of Ireland and a different one for those who wish to apply from outside of the area. Housing applicants must meet general rules and eligibility criteria that include the following;

- The applicant usually needs to be over 18 years of age and have a local connection to the North of Ireland. **Note!** If an applicant has been assessed and approved under the homelessness legislation, they do not have to be over 18 or have a local connection

What is deemed to be acceptable as a local connection?

- If the applicant lives or has previously lived in Northern Ireland
- If the applicant has a job or is looking for a job in Northern Ireland
- If the applicant is moving to Northern Ireland for family support
- If the applicant is moving to Northern Ireland to study
-

Applying from abroad: If you need permission to enter and leave the UK you will not usually be eligible to apply for social housing. Most European Union citizens are allowed to apply for social housing, but there are restrictions on which EU citizens can get help under the homelessness laws. Non-EU citizens are not usually eligible to apply for social housing unless they have been granted refugee status.

For more information or to request an application form; Tel: **00 353 3448 920 900** (8.30am to 5.00pm, Mon-Friday) or see **www.nihe.gov.uk** where you can complete an online enquiry form

Working with Irish Advice agencies at home and abroad

As well as working with clients who have returned to Ireland (either with the assistance of Safe Home or independently), Safe Home has clients dotted around the world. We are fortunate to work closely with Irish advice agencies, here in Ireland, agencies throughout the UK and those operating further afield.

Just a few examples; In carrying out a recent round of returning to Ireland Information Sessions **in the UK** (London, Manchester, Liverpool), our agency counterparts there were a great help in promoting the events and organising the logistics with us.

We are currently working hand in hand with the Emerald Isle Immigration Centre **in New York** in assisting a mutual client to apply for social housing back in their native Co. Sligo.

We have had great support from the Irish Support Agency **in Bondi, New South Wales** in assisting us to link in with services in Australia. Trying to access paperwork, in reverse, for a returnee was proving very difficult for us due to time delays and expensive phone calls from this side. **In Ireland**, we continue to work in collaboration with Crosscare Migrant Project and The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) to identify and highlight policy areas that may affect returning Irish emigrants.

We were delighted to have recently partnered with Crosscare, the London Irish Centre and the Irish in Britain in hosting an Information in Clinic with Agencies working with Irish emigrants and with Innisfree Housing Association in their Irish Sheltered Housing Scheme. Whether it is for information sharing or assisting the most vulnerable of our clients, we are very lucky to have these close links and great support to tap into.

Don't forget to get in touch with us! If any agency has queries about returning to Ireland or on the Irish welfare/health care system or specific queries for clients, Safe Home Ireland is only too happy to offer any help that we can.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Information requested by private landlords in Ireland; I have been researching returning to Ireland and have been looking for private rented accommodation in Dublin. On the foot of an enquiry about a property recently advertised online, I have been asked by the landlord to provide the following;

- Bank statements for the past 3 months
- Letter of employment (incl. salary details)
- Copy of passport
- PPS Number

Q: I am worried about identity theft. Do I really have to provide this level of personal information?

A. When looking for private rented accommodation you may be asked to provide certain information to a prospective landlord or agent. Below is a list of items that may be requested from. **You should not be asked to supply this information unless you are being offered a tenancy:**

- PPS No. (this is required for the registration of the tenancy with the Residential Tenancies Board) (www.rtb.ie)
- A reference from your previous landlord
- A reference from your current employer
- Photo I.D. such as a driving licence or passport
- Evidence of residency
- Recent bank statements
- Payslips

You can ask for what purpose the information is being collected but you do not have to provide any information if you do not wish to do. However, the reality is that failure to provide any information requested may result in you not being offered the tenancy. Under Data Protection legislation any information held should be adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purposes for which it has been obtained and held. Such information cannot be misused and you can get more information from the Data Protection Commissioners website www.dataprotection.ie

Answer above is from the National Housing Charity, Threshold; www.threshold.ie

2. Double taxation on a small Irish work pension

Q. I am in receipt of a small post office pension from Ireland and I live permanently in the UK. I pay 20% tax on this in Ireland and have now been advised by the Inland Revenue that I will have to pay 20% here too, this doesn't seem fair to me.

Q. Do I have to pay both?

A. You may be entitled to "an exclusion order", this should prevent you from being taxed on your Irish Pension in BOTH jurisdictions. To apply for this exclusion order/request the relevant form, you will have to contact the International Claims Section at the Irish Revenue Commissioners; **Tel: 00353 67 633 84** or email: intclaims@revenue.ie

Note! Tax matters are very individual, depending on the person's specific circumstances. Ideally, we advise people to contact the relevant Revenue Commissioners office to make direct enquiries on their own situations. To find out more about tax matters in Ireland, see; www.revenue.ie

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



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