



Emigrant Support Service



ADVICE &  
INFORMATION



OUTREACH  
VISITS



HOUSING  
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

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### CONTACT US:

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#### Safe Home office hours:

Monday–Thursday:  
9am–5pm

Friday: 9am–4pm

### From the Chairman's Desk

Greetings,

If you are a recently returned Irish emigrant who has had problems with banking, getting car insurance or swapping your driving licence for instance, or had other problems on your return to Ireland or you are planning a move back to Ireland, then the new initiative by the Irish Abroad Unit will be of great interest to you. They want to know from you about the barriers impeding returning Irish emigrants. This is a welcome development and a priority area for the Minister with responsibility for the Diaspora, Mr Ciarán Cannon, T.D.

Minister Cannon, together with one of his officials from the Irish Abroad Unit, paid us the great honour recently by coming down to visit us in St. Brendan's Village, Mulranny, Co. Mayo to see first-hand the work of Safe Home. It was a great pleasure for us to meet the Minister in person. We wish him every success in his most worthwhile endeavour.

**\*You can contribute to the Minister's Irish Abroad Unit initiative by emailing: [globalirish@dfa.ie](mailto:globalirish@dfa.ie)**

\*The deadline for receipt of submissions is the end of September 2017

I was one of 53,032 people in Croke Park on last Saturday 26th August 2017 to witness glorious Mayo earn their place in style to play in yet another All Ireland Senior Football Final on Sunday 17th September 2017 by demolishing the Kerry replay hex. It's a long time since Mayo won the Sam Maguire Cup (1951 to be exact) but the holy grail of football is now almost within our grasp, and not before time to win it for our county. The scramble for all Ireland tickets is about to begin in earnest. For the third time in four seasons and for the second year in a row Dublin take on Mayo who are facing in to their fourth All Ireland final in four years. Up Mayo. Sam, we're coming for ya!

So long for now,

**Dr Jerry Cowley - Chairman**



## Housing Opportunity – Co. Mayo



Our near neighbours at **St. Brendan's Village in Mulranny, Co. Mayo** have a number of one-bedroom properties available. Maximum weekly rent is €79. St. Brendan's Village is a sheltered housing scheme designed for older/disabled people who can live independently. The village offers secure affordable tenancies in a community setting, with additional support services on-site.

While preference will be given to Safe Home applicants originally from Co. Mayo or those with strong family links to the county, applicants from other counties may also apply. Qualifying applicants who are registered and approved by Mayo County Council can apply for assistance with their rent. Those who are not on the Council list will have to meet the full rent costs from their own income.

**Please contact the Safe Home office for more information**

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** I returned to Ireland last year and now receive assistance via Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). My daughter and her young family still live in Manchester. I would like to be able to visit them occasionally. **Am I allowed to claim my weekly JSA payment while I am outside of the country?**

**A. Yes,** in certain circumstances, you can continue to get certain social welfare payments if you are on holiday abroad for a specific period of time or if you are getting medical treatment abroad.

As in your case, those getting Jobseeker's Allowance or Jobseeker's Benefit can go on holiday for a maximum of 2 weeks and get the 2 weeks payment **on their return**. You must notify your Intreo Centre or Social Welfare Branch Office **before** planning or taking holidays. Some social welfare offices allow you to apply for holidays online, check if this service is available via your local office.

**Note!** If you plan to take longer holidays or to be abroad for an extended period your social welfare payment may not be paid.

**Q.** I am a British citizen whose parents were born in Ireland. If I apply for an Irish passport, will I have to give up my British citizenship?

**A. No,** British citizens are allowed to hold dual citizenship. This means that you do not have to renounce your British citizenship when you apply for an Irish passport. **Note!** If you are an Irish citizen, you may also hold dual citizenship, that is, citizenship of another country.

## **Luton Irish Forum (LIF) project set to reduce social isolation and improve the wellbeing of older Irish people in the community.**

It was great to hear the recent announcement from LIF about Lottery funding awarded to deliver this new project that will reduce social isolation and improve the wellbeing of older Irish people in the community. There are over 3,000 older Irish people living in Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis, of which one in five live alone. The number of older people is predicted to increase by 40% over the next 20 years [General Lifestyle Survey 2011, Office for National Statistics, 2013]. In Luton, one in 10 older people are Irish and many are unable to meet their basic needs and as a consequence have poor quality of life. Thanks to National Lottery funding, a new Welfare Officer will respond to the increase in welfare service enquiries and help people to access the support they need.

This new project will also provide social clubs, classes, and outings to bring people together to learn new skills and improve their physical and mental health e.g. computer classes, the Literary Society, Tea and Chat, Tuesday & Wednesday Clubs, trips to the beach and to other Irish centres. Whilst they promote independence, LIF also encourage older people to access the full services available to them.

It sounds like a really fantastic project and we wish them every success with it in the future. **For more information on this and other services offered by LIF, contact:** Luton Irish Forum, Kathleen Connolly House, 102 Hitchin Road, Luton LU2 0ES  
**Tel: 01582 720 447      Email: [info@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:info@lutonirishforum.org)**

## **Recently introduced measures mean that motorists banned from driving in Ireland for a range of offences will have their ban recognised in the UK, and vice-versa**

The framework for these new arrangements is contained in the Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Driving Disqualifications between Ireland and the United Kingdom, signed on October 30th, 2015.

The new provision concerns disqualifications from a range of traffic offences, including reckless or dangerous driving, driving under the influence of alcohol or other substances, refusal to submit to alcohol and drug tests and driving faster than the permitted speed.

It also includes other conduct constituting an offence for which a driving disqualification of a duration of six months or more has been imposed, or of a duration of less than six months where this has been agreed between the contracting states.

Irish Transport Minister, Shane Ross, said the new mutual recognition of driving disqualifications was "an important road safety measure because it aims to target dangerous drivers on our roads."

"Under the Ireland/UK Agreement, the driving disqualification is, in effect, transferred by the State which imposes it to the licence of the offender's 'home' State. So, the legal consequence of the offence committed follows the offender home".

## Fuel Allowance in Ireland

The Irish Fuel Allowance is a payment under the National Fuel Scheme to help with the cost of home heating during the winter months. It is paid to people who are dependent on long-term social welfare payments and who are unable to provide for their own heating needs.

The Fuel Allowance is currently €22.50 per week and is paid for 26 weeks of the year, from October to end of March annually. Only one Fuel Allowance is paid to a household. Applications for Fuel Allowance made after the start of the heating season (in October), are not be backdated.

For the 2017-2018 Fuel Allowance season (beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017), Fuel Allowance recipients will have the option of getting their total allowance paid in 2 lump sums. To get the first lump sum in October 2017, **you must submit your completed form before 15 September 2017.**

**Changing to the lump sum payment method:** To get your Fuel Allowance in 2 lump sums, you must fill in form, **FA CPF 1**. This form is also available from local post offices, Intreo Centre or Social Welfare Branch Office. You can also text **FORM FUELCHANGE** followed by your name and address to 51909. Completed application forms must be returned to the Department of Social Protection office that deals with your primary payment. If you are unsure about where to send your form, addition enquiries can be made to: **National Fuel Allowance Scheme, Social Welfare Services, College Road, Sligo. Tel: 071 915 7100**

**Note!** The lump sum payment option is not available to people getting payments under the Rural Social Scheme, Tús, Gateway, Community Employment and Supplementary Welfare Allowance.

**Public Services Card (PSC) Ireland;** The Public Services Card (PSC) helps you to access a range of public services in Ireland easily. Your identity is fully authenticated when it is issued so you do not have to give the same information to multiple organisations. A Public Services Card is usually issued when you are allocated a PPS number (Irish Insurance Number). If you apply for, or are currently getting a social welfare payment (including Child Benefit) you will be asked to register for your Public Services Card.

The PSC is currently being rolled out to other public services. For example, all first-time passport applicants aged 18 and above who are resident in Ireland need to have a Public Services Card. This requirement also applies to a small number of adult passport applicants whose last passport was issued before 1 January 2005 and has since been reported lost, stolen or damaged. Since June 2017, you need to have a Public Services Card if you are sitting the Driver Theory Test.

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



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