

**National Updates**



**Welcome to the Age Friendly Family Joanne**



Age Friendly Ireland are delighted to introduce everyone to our wonderful new staff member Joanne Husband. Joanne started working with the Shared Service, 2 weeks ago, as the new Assistant Staff Officer for Healthy Age Friendly Homes, and we are so happy to have her on board. We want to wish Joanne the best of luck in her new role working with the Age Friendly Ireland Programme.

**Best of luck on your retirement Mary Reynolds!**

Longford's long-standing Age Friendly Programme Manager and County Librarian Mary Carleton Reynolds is retiring this month.

"Mary has been a tremendous advocate and promoter of the aims of Age Friendly Ireland in County Longford. She has devised programmes and projects with infectious enthusiasm to make Longford a truly better place in which to grow old. From its foundation she led programmes and events promoting intergenerational understanding, environmental improvements both urban and rural to enhance the lives of older people, music and drama, literary courses and courses in literacy, digital skills and healthy living, walkability studies and the follow-on improvements. Mary sourced funding and initiated programmes for the less able and disabled, brought music and entertainment to nursing homes and those confined to their homes. Above all Mary took time to talk to and listen to your story, your concern, your worry, your need and then she found a solution. Many and many an hour she spent working way beyond the call of duty to bring a festival or a project to fruition. The Bealtaine festival was one of the highlights of the year and Longford's annual Information Day are two major highlights now for older people throughout the county. Through her we enjoyed learning new skills, celebrating historic events, and sourcing help to improve our daily lives as we grow older.



Mary Carleton Reynolds is a wonderful lady, of unbelievable energy and creative initiative warm hearted and caring, with a dazzling sense of style and good humour. Thank you, Mary, we were so fortunate to have you as the founding Age friendly Programme Manager in Co Longford. We wish you a very happy and healthy retirement. Go raibh mile, mile maith agat agus Slán leat."

**Kitty Hughes, Chair Longford OPC**

9<sup>th</sup> March 2022



An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Social Protection



## Extra €125 Fuel Allowance Payments to be paid to 372,000 households

- Minister for Social Protection, Heather Humphreys, has announced that the €125 once-off Fuel Allowance payment.
- The payment, on top of regular Fuel Allowance, was agreed as part of the government's €505 million package aimed at mitigating the effects of rising energy costs.
- The Fuel Allowance, which is a means-tested payment, is paid to 372,000 pensioners, widows, widowers, jobseekers, lone-parents and people with disabilities.
- The Fuel Allowance scheme is a means tested payment to assist pensioners and other long-term social welfare dependent householders with their winter heating costs.
- In Budget 2022, Minister Humphreys announced a number of reforms to the Fuel Allowance scheme including an increase in the weekly rate by €5 to €33

For more information click below:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/94258-extra-125-fuel-allowance-payments-to-be-paid-to-372000-households-from-today-minister-humphreys/>



## Free Travel in Ireland

With restrictions lifted and everyone getting out and about, please make sure to check the expiry date on your bus passes. A lot of people have not been travelling on public transport recently, but when they go to use the bus pass it might have expired.

The [Free Travel Scheme](#) allows you to travel, free of charge, on public transport and some private bus and ferry services.

Everyone aged 66 and over, living permanently in Ireland, can get the Free Travel Scheme.

People with disabilities and carers aged under 66 may also qualify for Free Travel.

If you qualify for Free Travel, your Public Services Card (PSC) will have FT (for Free Travel) in the top left-hand corner. The letter following it shows who you can take with you:

- FT-P - you can travel for free
- FT+S - your spouse, partner or cohabitant can travel with you for free
- FT+C - you can have a person (over 16) travel with you for free

You must carry it with you when you are using public transport.

Paper free travel passes are no longer being issued but you can still use your paper pass, if it is valid.

	<p>You can use your Free Travel on most Iarnród Éireann, Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus, DART and Luas Services and on certain <a href="#">private bus and ferry services (pdf)</a>.</p> <p>Free travel is also available on Dublin Bus <a href="#">Nitelink</a>, <a href="#">Go-Ahead Ireland</a> and TFI (Transport for Ireland) <a href="#">Local Link services</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">More details on the Free Travel Scheme can be found on their website.</a></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fáilte Isteach – Welcoming Migrants through Conversational English Classes</b></p> <p>Fáilte Isteach is a community project involving predominantly older volunteers welcoming migrants through conversational English classes but to the 104 communities it impacts across Ireland, Fáilte Isteach classes are so much more.</p> <p>Their groups provide a space for those who are isolated to connect; for perspectives to evolve; for attitudes to change. The informal, relaxed approach to learning allows the most marginalised in their society to engage with others and truly integrate into life in Ireland.</p> <p>Fáilte Isteach embraces a relaxed, unstructured learning environment. Their classes are tutored entirely by volunteers who are encouraged to welcome participants to their community through language; identify needs through conversation and focus primarily on fluency and building confidence. Flexible classes allow our volunteers to support participants in their immediate language requirements while offering a warm welcome.</p> <p>You may be interested in volunteering a little time each week to provide voluntary conversational classes in English for this new population. Such involvement is worthwhile, hastens integration and enriches the whole community.</p> <p>You can read more about Fáilte Isteach and how to get involved <a href="#">by clicking here</a></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Invitation: Launch of Stronger Together: The Mental Health Promotion Plan 2022-2027 - Wednesday, 6th April</b></p> <p>You are invited to the launch of Stronger Together: The Mental Health Promotion Plan 2022-2027 on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 12:00 – 13:30 via webinar.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>You can register <a href="#">HERE</a></b></p>



**WEBINAR INVITATION**  
**Launch of Stronger Together:**  
The HSE Mental Health Promotion  
Plan 2022 – 2027

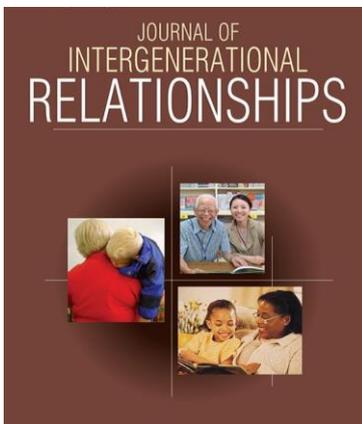
By Anne O'Connor, Chief Operations  
Officer, HSE

Date: April 6th 2022  
Time: 12pm – 1.30pm



Stronger Together is a five-year plan that includes a range of actions focused on promoting positive mental health across the population that are within the remit of the HSE and our external partners. The plan will be launched by Anne O'Connor, Chief Operations Officer and the event will include a number of inputs on mental health promotion as well as an overview of the plan followed by a panel discussion including experts from across the HSE and our external partners.

If you have any queries about this please contact  
[mentalhealth.wellbeing@hse.ie](mailto:mentalhealth.wellbeing@hse.ie)



**Bridging the Age-based Digital Divide: An Intergenerational Exchange during the First COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown Period in Ireland**

This qualitative study explored the digital communication skills assistance provided by young adults in the age range 18 to 25 years to older family members during the period of the first COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in Ireland in 2020. Data were collected from a sample of young adults (n = 248) using an online survey instrument to explore their learnings from the intergenerational exchange. The study found that young adults who assisted their older family members considered the learning experience to be successful and were rewarded with reciprocal benefits. This study contributes to the field of intergenerational research by exploring the perspectives of young adults involved in an intergenerational exchange to support the digital skills of their older adult family members in Ireland.

Open access link to full  
paper: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15350770.2022.2050334>



### Launch of Briefing Report Services on Critical Life Transitions and Social Exclusion

We are delighted to announce the launch of the PLACED-Lives Briefing Report Series on social exclusion and critical transitions in later life. Focusing on dementia onset, bereavement and forced migration, this three-report series explores the links between major, and often life-changing, events in older people's lives and multifaceted forms of disadvantage.



Contributing to a research topic that remains underdeveloped, each report presents the lived experiences of older people, and describes the challenges for inclusion across key areas of life and participation. Recommendations for policy and practice are presented in each report.

To read the reports, please click [here](#).

### ICSG awarded IRC funding to Investigate Virtual Engagement and Exclusion for Older Adult Groups.

ICSG's, Kieran Walsh, and Carl Vogel (Trinity College Dublin) have been awarded funding from the Irish Research Council's COALESCE scheme to examine the potential of everyday communication devices to support the development and re-purposing of retirement groups for: social connectivity; information communication; and advocacy in virtual environments. Entitled Virtual-EngAge, this 2-year programme is in collaboration with Active Retirement Ireland.

It addresses the related challenges of older people's digital exclusion and limited participation opportunities, which have been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To read more about Virtual-EngAge, which draws on social gerontology and computational science approaches, please click [here](#)



## UN Decade of Healthy Ageing

Hear our voices: Register now for the online premiere of three films made by older people.



[Click here to watch the film trailer in your browser.](#)

**DATE: 29 March 2022**

**TIME: 14:00 – 15:45 CET - [find my timezone](#)**

It's time to listen to older people and find out what matters for them. In 2021, groups of older people from Canada, Jordan, and Togo were involved in a UN Decade of Healthy Ageing project that meaningfully engaged with their lived experience, perspectives, and expertise by training them to produce films that tell their authentic stories on healthy ageing. Join us at the [online premiere screening event](#) to watch their films and hear reflections from those involved in the process. You will gain insights into what older people think healthy ageing is, and their recommendations on how to create a world where all people can live long and healthy lives.

The event will have live interpretation in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish.

[Register for the online screening](#)



## ExWell ZOOM - Fridays 5pm

ExWell Participants and Friends,

Please join our weekly Zoom meeting **TOMORROW AT 5PM. (25th March)**  
Please also share the details with anyone who you feel might enjoy hearing more about ExWell.

**The link (tomorrow, 5 pm) is**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87583061631?pwd=WStjYUpzbnJkOVtZlZ5QkQ3STZnQT09>

**The schedule will be:**

**5.00 pm:** Welcome

**5.05 pm :** "how exercise impacts chronic disease" - Dr. Emmett Byrne

**5.20 pm:** Updates and News - Danny Fagan

**5.45 pm:** Discussion



### Cork County St Patricks Day Parade where Liz Downes Vice Chair OPC was Chief Marshall in Mitchelstown



Cork County Age Friendly were proud of Liz Downes, Vice Chair OPC and an active member of the Age Friendly Committee of Mitchelstown on St Patricks Day.

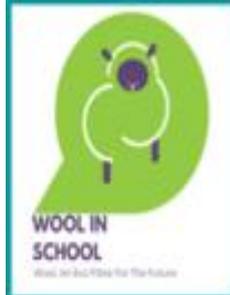


Liz was afforded the prestigious honour of Chief Marshall at the Mitchelstown St Patricks Day Parade.

Liz proudly took up the offer and did all who know and admire her proud.



# Age Friendly Knit Stitch Initiative



## GLOBAL INTERGENERATIONAL WEEK

25th April-1st May 2022



### KNIT-STITCH INITIATIVE



#### TAKE PART

for more information  
[www.woolinschool.com](http://www.woolinschool.com)

#### Connections

Our knitting initiative is about connections, between children and older people. We aim to strengthen this bond with wool and magic, knitting our lives back together.

#### Shared learning

Sharing moments and creating memories through the tradition of knitting is also at the heart of this very special activity.

#### Community

Sense of pride and connection to the local area and schools. Inspiring children one stitch at a time.

[WWW.WOOLINSCHOOL.COM](http://WWW.WOOLINSCHOOL.COM)

CONTACT US 0848053987

[WWW.DCU.IE/AGEFRIENDLY](http://WWW.DCU.IE/AGEFRIENDLY)



## Remembering those lost to Covid... 'As a nation we came through this together'

A special Ceremony of Remembrance and Reflection in honour of those lives lost to Covid-19 and to acknowledge the contributions of frontline workers and the countless volunteers and support personnel and organisations was held at Buvinda House, Meath Co Council HQ, last Sunday.



(Ms. Ita Healy, Meath Older People's Council)

There were reflections from poet Ms Ciara Ní É, Ms Ita Healy, Older Peoples' Council, Trim author Paddy Smith reading extracts from his book 'Cocooner – A Lockdown Diary'; Ms Ingrid Reilly, Comhairle na N'Og before poet Tom French read an extract from his work 'To Distance'.

To read more click here:

<https://www.meathchronicle.ie/2022/03/23/remembering-those-lost-to-covid-as-a-nation-we-came-through-this-together/>



## Age Friendly Library in Kildare

Last year Age Friendly Kildare embarked on the process of making some library's in Kildare Age Friendly. Each library accepted a charter of 3-4 items that was the intention of the library to carry out, in order to make it age friendly, however this just didn't seem to be enough to justify Age Friendly status.

With that in mind Age Friendly Kildare developed a checklist and invited members of our OPC to attend an adapted walkability audit and for them to make the relevant recommendations.

Upon visiting the Leixlip library with members of the Kildare older persons council they completed a 'How age friendly is your library checklist.'



Regarding libraries, thoughtful forward planning, and careful consideration in relation to aspects of signage, lighting, seating of an area and small changes can mean big differences to older people. The plan for Leixlip Library was to determine the existing issues that impact the older patrons. By understanding the existing issues and discussing the potential solutions to addressing these issues, Leixlip library can become Age Friendly.

When determining how Age Friendly is Leixlip library they are essentially attempting to enhance and improve the experience of older patrons in Kildare. The checklist for libraries can pinpoint areas in need of improvement and small deliberate changes can result in the needs and wants of the older people being easily addressed. These changes can greatly improve older people's lives, help them to use the library more easily and more frequently.



Once the report was complete the final recommendation from Kildare Age Friendly Program was that Leixlip Library should receive National Recognition as an Age Friendly Library. This report was prepared by Kildare Age Friendly Programme manager Carmel Cashin.



## Welcome back to County Hall



On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr. Seaná Ó'Rodaigh welcomed Fingal's Age Friendly Older Persons Council (OPC) back to County Hall after a long two-year absence due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Although the OPC continued to meet over Zoom throughout the pandemic they are delighted to be able to meet again in person, not only for the social aspect but also for "getting business done". Mayor Ó'Rodaigh thanked the members of the OPC for their continued commitment to their roles on the Council and spoke about the important of Fingal County Council hearing, understanding and considering the needs of the older aged citizens so that we deliver appropriate services that are accessible and inclusive for all.

## 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



### IFA Global Cafe | In Conversation with Dr Laura Nyblade on "Addressing the Intersection of Stigmas Surrounding Ageism"

The International Federation on Ageing held a Global Cafe event this morning called – **In Conversation with Dr Laura Nyblade on "Addressing the Intersection of Stigmas Surrounding Ageism"**



A recording of this event will be available on the Federation's website <https://ifa.ngo/ifa-global-cafe/> and <https://drbarometer.com/community/resource-library>

## Useful Contacts and Info

**Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office** Telephone: **046 9097413**  
Or Email: [agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie](mailto:agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie)

Twitter: [@agefriendlyirl](https://twitter.com/agefriendlyirl)

Facebook: [Age Friendly Ireland](https://www.facebook.com/agefriendlyireland)

Website: [www.agefriendlyireland.ie](http://www.agefriendlyireland.ie) / [www.agefriendlyhomes.ie](http://www.agefriendlyhomes.ie)

**HSE Advice Line:** Callsave 1850 24 1850

Call from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday