



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

April 2021 – Issue 231

CONTACT US:

Safe Home Ireland
St Brendan's Village
Mulranny, Westport
Co. Mayo, Ireland

Tel:

098 36036 (from Ireland)
+353 98 36036 (from
abroad)

Mobile:

+ 353 86 059 4538
(Text/WhatsApp)

Website:

www.safehomeireland.com

Email:

info@safehomeireland.com



Safe Home office hours:

Monday to Thursday:
9.00am to 5.00pm
Friday:
9.00am to 4.00pm

**Thinking of returning or
moving to Ireland?
Get in touch!**



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Boinn Geothaí Fachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Safe Home Programme CLG
trading as Safe Home Ireland
Charity No: 20049119
Company Reg No: 351678

Welcome Message from our CEO

Welcome to our April Newsletter! We have been blessed here in Ireland with beautiful blue skies and sunshine the past week and we are hopeful for an easing of restrictions in the coming weeks, so things are looking up! It has been a long and difficult lockdown since January and we are all looking forward to summertime and hopefully meeting up with loved ones in the not too distant future.

It has been a busy few months and April has been no different! We held our AGM on 7th April and in line with our three-year succession plan, our Founder, and former Chairperson, **Dr. Jerry Cowley**, stepped down as Chair and was appointed as our Life President. Many of our readers will have never met Dr. Cowley, but many feel they know him personally as he wrote the introduction to this Newsletter for almost 20 years! We are eternally grateful to Dr. Cowley for his commitment and dedication to Safe Home since our inception and are extremely pleased to continue to have him on board in this new honorary position.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce **Nova Fariss**, who was appointed as our new Chairperson at our AGM. Nova was born in Perth, Western Australia, and has lived in Ireland since 2002 with her Irish husband. Nova is a qualified social worker, has served on several boards and has extensive fundraising, marketing and HR experience. Nova has personally experienced immigration and how to deal with the dilemmas of being away from family and home, which is at the core of Safe Home Ireland's work. You will hear more from and about Nova, as she will be writing the introduction to our May Newsletter!

We said goodbye and welcomed staff members in April too. In early January, **Niamh O' Sullivan** joined Safe Home as Communications and Information Officer, however, she had to resign on health grounds very soon after her appointment. Albeit Niamh was only with us for a short time, she made an impact and we want to thank Niamh for her support and work with Safe Home and wish her a speedy recovery and good health going forward.

We are pleased to welcome **Bernadette Connaghan** to the Communications role now. Bernadette was born in the UK and assisted her parents return home to Achill, where she now lives too. Bernadette has a background in sales & marketing and digital marketing within the Tourism and Hospitality sector. You will be hearing a lot more about and from Bernadette in the coming months as we continue to mark our 21st Anniversary to enhance our impact and our profile!

While we are unable to travel for in-person meetings at present, we continue to collaborate with partner organisations both here in Ireland and abroad. This month we held a virtual teams meeting with Irish based Crosscare Migrant Project and Irish Council and Prisoners Overseas, which was an opportunity to review our core areas of work, upcoming projects, trends, challenges facing returnees, areas for joint work and cross referrals as well as opportunities for collaborations going forward.

While we all continue to be affected by restrictions and travel home or abroad to see family and loved ones is mostly prohibited, we continue to stress the importance of staying connected. On this note, please read on for all the news on our up-coming concert on Mayo Day. Some staff wanted to include 'Mayo for Sam 2021' in all the publicity materials, but we decided against that.....for now!

**Take care, stay in touch and stay safe from Karen and the staff and board of
Safe Home Ireland**

Mayo Day 2021 Safe Home Ireland Presents



- **Seán Keane**
Singer/Songwriter/Musician
- **Stephen Doherty**
Multi-Instrumentalist
- **Coda**
Singers/Musicians
- **Olwyn Murray**
Singer/Songwriter
- **Pat Mulloy, Rose & Cónan Kilcoyne**
Singers/Musicians
- **Moffatt School of Irish Dancing & Atlantic Rhythm**

Saturday 1st May 2021, 18:00pm (UTC+1)

Text SAFEHOME to 50300 to donate €6

Text costs €6. Safe Home Ireland will receive a minimum of €5.40. Service Provider: LIKECHARITY. Helpline: 076 6805278.



facebook.com/safehomeprogramme



The first Mayo Day event took place in 2015 and no other county in Ireland has a day dedicated to its people and place! The population of Mayo is just over 130,000, but it is estimated that there are 3.5 million people around the world with Mayo origins.

This year Mayo Day takes to the National Stage with a **Flagship Mayo Day Concert** to be broadcasted on TG4 and the TG4 Player at 21.30pm! Details are being kept under wraps but some of the biggest names in the Mayo diaspora are expected to make guest appearances this year. There will also be an outstanding programme of events throughout the day celebrating achievements, heritage and culture, diaspora, community spirit and 'Mayo-ness' – see Mayo.ie for more detailed information.

Safe Home Ireland started off as a pilot project in 2000 in beautiful Mulranny, where our head office is still located and whilst we are a national charity with a global remit, we are extremely proud of our Mayo roots! With this in mind and to mark our 21st Anniversary, we have partnered with Mayo County Council as part of their May Day festival programme to produce a fabulous virtual concert on 1st May at 18.00pm. As you can see from our poster we have an outstanding line-up of performers from Co. Mayo, led by our Ambassador, [Seán Keane](http://SeánKeane.com) and many will be performing from iconic and scenic locations around Mayo! We are really looking forward to connecting with our Mayo friends, family, colleagues in Ireland and abroad as well as all those who would like to connect with all things Mayo! The Concert will be live streamed from our [Facebook](https://facebook.com/safehomeprogramme) page as well as from Mayo.ie Facebook page.

Returning to Ireland Information Session

After the success of the last Information clinic on 25th March, where there were attendees from all around the world, The Luton Irish Forum and Safe Home Ireland have scheduled another online information session on 12th May (18.30pm) for those hoping to return to live in Ireland or those born outside Ireland thinking of moving to Ireland. The session is particularly designed for those living in the UK but is open to anyone who has an interest in moving to Ireland in the future. Please register your attendance via email to: info@lutonirishforum.org or phone 01 582 720447. **IF** you are living outside of the UK and you would like us to facilitate a similar session, contact our office and we will be delighted to facilitate.

FREE legal clinics by Irish Community Services (ICS) in Chicago

If you have immigration or US citizenship questions, then the free legal clinics being hosted by Irish Community Services (ICS) in Chicago may be of interest to you. Up-coming clinics will take place on 28th April, 12th May and 2nd of June. Consultations are being conducted via Zoom. To register or for more information, please call ICS; **Tel:** 773-282-8445 or **email** info@irishchicago.org

Police Checks/Garda Clearance requirement by social housing providers in Ireland

For Safe Home housing applicants; We are once again highlighting the fact that most Local Authorities and social housing providers in Ireland will require prospective tenants to have Police/Garda clearance (or the equivalent, depending on the country you are currently living in).

These checks can often take some time to be carried out. For example; In the UK, the relevant clearance is known as a Subject Access Request (S.A.R). There is no charge for the S.A.R, applications, whether online or by post, take up to 30 days to be processed.

When you submit a S.A.R application you will need to include copies (not originals) of at least two different documents which confirm your identity, current address and signature. These could be:

- A passport or driving licence which shows your date of birth and signature
- A utility bill, bank, mortgage or credit card statement which is dated within the last six months and which shows your current address

More information on **UK Subject Access Requests**, including the application form can be obtained via: **www.acro.police.uk**; To request an application form; **Tel:** 02380 47 9920

Email: customer.services@acro.pnn.police.uk Applications can be made online or by post.

Some people may already have police clearance or the equivalent, if you have this and want to give your housing application the best chance of being successful, please forward to our offices to include on your housing file.

Important Note! In our experience of dealing with Housing Associations throughout the country, particularly in most recent times, only applicants who have ALL of the required paperwork in order will be considered for vacancies that arise. We understand that some applicants may have difficulty in applying for the required checks so please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries whatsoever. The application procedures will of course be different depending on what country you are based in, so, you may need to research things for yourself in your host country. If you live close to an Irish Welfare & Advice Centre abroad, they too will be happy to offer assistance.

Frequently Asked Question:

Q. I am an Irish citizen, with an Irish passport. Will I automatically qualify for free health care, housing and social welfare supports if I move back to Ireland?

A. While being an Irish citizen gives you the right to reside/work in Ireland, it does not guarantee automatic access to social housing, welfare or health care here.

To apply for **social housing supports**, applicants must meet the relevant income and other criteria set down by individual Local Authorities

Social welfare payments all have their own set of qualifying criteria, which can include; age criteria, means testing of income, habitual residency assessments, and for certain payments, demonstrating a medical need (e.g Disability /Carer related applications)

Access to health services in Ireland is based on being considered 'ordinarily resident' in the State and means testing, rather than nationality. **Note!** 'ordinarily resident' means that you have been living in Ireland for at least a year or you intend to live here for at least one year. To establish that a person is ordinarily resident the HSE may require:

- Proof of property purchase or rental, including evidence that the property in question is the person's principal residence
- Evidence of transfer of funds, bank accounts, pensions etc.
- A residence permit or visa or a work permit or visa
- In some instances, the signing of an affidavit (a sworn written statement) by the applicant

Mandatory Quarantine Arrangements

The Irish Government continues to strongly advise against all non-essential travel to and from Ireland. In the event of urgent travel to Ireland, passengers are advised to contact the nearest Embassy or Consulate before commencing the journey or contact The Department of Foreign Affairs Emergency Travel Advice Line **Tel: + 353 1 613 1700** or check www.dfa.ie for more information.

All passengers arriving in Ireland must:

- complete a COVID-19 Passenger Locator Form
- provide evidence that you have a negative or 'not detected' result from a COVID-19 Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test carried out no more than 72 hours before you arrive into Ireland, or have evidence that you are exempt from this legal requirement

If you are travelling from or via a designated state (deemed high risk) you **must** also pre-book and pre-pay for a place in a designated facility for mandatory hotel quarantine. See www.quarantinehotelsireland.ie for more information/booking details. It is important to note that the list of designated states will be subject to change at short notice and passengers are required to check the list before travelling to Ireland, to be sure of their obligations.

If you come into Ireland from any country deemed 'high risk' OR if you come to Ireland without a negative or 'not detected' PCR test you must complete a 14-day mandatory quarantine in a pre-booked hotel which you must book in advance. On arrival, the Defence Forces will meet you and ensure that you are safely transported to your hotel quarantine. You will be informed at the hotel about your stay including food choices, exercise and wellbeing. The Irish Defence Forces will be onsite 24/7. You are required to complete 14 days quarantine, which can be reduced if a non-detected Covid test is taken after 10 days. Rates are €1,875 for one adult or one parent family, and €2,500 for 2 adults or two parent family.

Fines of €2,000 or up to 1 month prison sentence will apply for failure to complete a mandatory hotel quarantine or complete a required RT-PCR test. Limited exemptions to quarantine are available.

People travelling to Ireland who are fully vaccinated are now exempt from the mandatory hotel quarantine, **however**, you must provide documentary proof, have a negative PCR test prior to travel and you must complete self-quarantine after arrival. See www.gov.ie to for details of what 'fully vaccinated' means.

For the latest information on the Covid-19 restrictions including the most recent list of designated states (deemed high risk) see the Irish Government Portal – www.gov.ie

Recent Covid-19 Easing of Restrictions

Whilst Ireland is still at Level 5, April has brought in the phased easing of restrictions as shown below:

Phased Easing of Restrictions



| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 12th April <ul style="list-style-type: none">Full schools reopening.Two households can meet outside for social/recreational purposes.You can move within your own county.Construction of housing and childcare facilities recommences. | 19th April <ul style="list-style-type: none">Additional high performance sports training will resume, including senior inter-county GAA and Sport Ireland approved high performing athletes. | 26th April <ul style="list-style-type: none">Golf, Tennis, Pitches reopen.Outdoor amenities including zoos and wildlife parks reopen.Funerals up to 25 mourners.Outdoor training for all exercise activities for under 18s can recommence |
|--|---|---|

  People who have been fully vaccinated (first and second doses, or single-dose vaccination) may socialise indoors with others who are also fully vaccinated, 14 days after final vaccination.

With the new modifications, the number of people being vaccinated rapidly increasing and the numbers of hospitalisations dropping, we can now hopefully look forward to 30th April, the next announcement regarding further easings. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel, we just have to hold firm whilst travelling towards that light and then all being well, we can meet our families and friends again in person.