



ADVICE &
INFORMATION



OUTREACH
VISITS



HOUSING
ASSISTANCE



CONNECT

June 2025– Issue 262

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

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



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme

An tSúilín Ceimiciúil Rannacha
Department of Foreign Affairs

Welcome from our CEO

Welcome to our June Newsletter and we are pleased to connect with all our housing applicants and postal subscribers this month. Regrettably, due to escalating postal costs and funding constraints, we are only able to post our monthly Newsletter twice/year (June & December). However, our newsletters are available on our [website](#) and you can subscribe to our mailing list if you wish to receive your own e-copy every month.

We had another busy month in June to include both in-person and online meetings with some of our partners and [Emigrant Support Programme](#) funded organisations in Ireland and abroad.

We were pleased to partner with the [Coalition of Irish Immigration Centres, \(CIIC\)](#), USA, to co-facilitate a Webinar on *Retiring to Ireland* on 28th May as part of their *Moving to Ireland* webinar series. Contact the Coalition if you would like to get more information/to get the slides from any of the webinars in their Moving to Ireland series.

We also continued to meet virtually with staff at the [Irish Australian Support & Resource Bureau](#) in Melbourne. Recently, this involved an inter-agency approach to support an older Irish citizen return home once more.

In early June, we were pleased to be invited by Crosscare Irish Diaspora Project (CISP) to sit on a panel, Navigating Crisis, at their first virtual Conference, [Abhaile](#). Together with a representative from the [The Department of Foreign Affairs Consular Service](#), Crosscare Irish Diaspora Project and [The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas](#), we discussed some of the issues affecting Irish citizens returning under difficult circumstances and how together we work to offer a coordinated response. This session and a number of other very interesting panels featured during the conference can be viewed via links from [Crosscare Irish Diaspora Project](#) website

During May and June our Outreach Officers carried out home visits to a number of our UK based housing applicants, covering areas in London, Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Kent. While travelling in the UK, they also took the opportunity to meet with some London based [Emigrant Support Programme Funded](#) Irish Welfare organisations.

On 14th June, we were invited to Dublin City University (DCU) to contribute to a high-level multi-agency round table meeting involving a delegation from the Netherlands with a focus on housing and health. We were pleased to highlight the work of Safe Home Ireland and also learn more about the Dutch systems. We learned that there are many parallels, however, there are no direct services supporting Dutch diaspora return home!

That's all for this now! Until next month, take care.....

Slán agus beannacht, from all the team at Safe Home Ireland



Change in Circumstances International Pensions Section – DWP – UK

For people who may have lived and worked in the UK in the past and particularly for pensioners who have returned to live in Ireland, contacting the International Pensions Section to update your circumstances will be one of your necessary tasks.

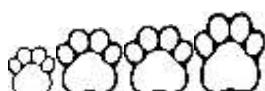
While you can send general enquires via the online enquiry portal on the [International Pensions website](#), a change in circumstances must be notified by post or phone.

The Pensions Service advise that contacting **by phone is the quickest route**. To do so, you can use this **Freephone number: 00 44 800 731 0341**

Or write to: The Pension Service 11, Mail Handling Site A, Wolverhampton, WV98 1LW, United Kingdom

Note! if notifying in writing, keep a copy of the letter.

Bringing your pet (cat/dog) to Ireland – from a non EU country



One of the questions that came up in the recent webinar on Returning to Ireland run by our colleagues in the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers in the US was about returning to Ireland with a pet (cat/dog).

Here is some guidance that may prove helpful.

The Department of Agriculture here in Ireland operate an online Advance Notice Portal; <https://publicapps.agriculture.gov.ie/inis-pub-ui/#/pets>

Registering via this portal must be completed prior to bringing your pet into Ireland from non-EU countries

If you are not travelling with your pet (i.e. on the same flight/ship), then your pet must be travelling within 5 days either side of your travel date AND must be travelling with someone authorised to travel with them on your behalf. Your pet must also be accompanied by original paperwork.

If this is not the case, you cannot continue with the compliance check booking via the online portal. In this instance, you will have to email; livetrade@agriculture.gov.ie for further instructions/guidance or **Tel: +353 (0) 1 607 2827**

Note! as there are different requirements for animals travelling unaccompanied, it is important to verify your individual situation as this may require making alternative travel arrangements. Additional information can be also be found at <http://www.pettravel.gov.ie/>



Walk this way! Launch of The Global Irish Famine Way

The Global Irish Famine Way was officially launched at EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum on Saturday 25th May 2024. This is an extension of the [National Famine Way](#) and is intended to be the largest heritage trail in the world. It will eventually follow the journeys of all the Irish Famine emigrants around the world, including the UK, Canada, the United States, South Africa, and Australia. The Bronze Shoes that mark the National Famine Way will also mark each significant location on the **Global Irish Famine Way**.

Representatives from Canada, led by [Dr. Eamonn McKee, Ambassador of Ireland to Canada](#), and the UK (Liverpool), represented by [Liverpool Irish Festival](#) Artistic Director and CEO, Emma Smith, took part in the 2024 National Famine Way commemorative walk (20th to 25th May) to mark start of the expansion of the Global Irish Famine Way.

The first pair of shoes destined for Liverpool were carried on the National Famine Way Commemorative Walk and then on to Liverpool on '[The Walk of the Bronze Shoes](#)'. The Liverpool walkers escorted the bronze shoes by ferry to Holyhead; by road to Birkenhead and by ferry to Mersey Ports. The shoes are now placed on Clarence Dock, where 1.3m Irish Famine poor were brought into Liverpool during An Gorta Mór. The shoes will remain in Liverpool as a poignant symbol of the shared history of Liverpool and Ireland, a history both devastating and enriching.

Fifteen locations have already been secured in Canada including Grosse Île, St John's Newfoundland, Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa. Toronto, Niagara, Saint John Partridge Island, Saint Colombian and Hamilton. Evoking the initial journey, these bronze shoes travelled by sea from Galway to Newfoundland on the Marine Institute vessel the RV Celtic Explorer left on Wednesday 1st May 2024. A series of commemorative events will mark their arrival in Newfoundland this year.



Global Irish Famine Way Future Plans!

Outreach/research is ongoing to establish additional Bronze Shoe sites in the UK, US, Australia and as far afield as Argentina. Once completed, the Global Irish Famine Way will represent a comprehensive profile of Irish settlements post-famine around the world. This would make the GIFW one of the longest heritage trails in the world.

Plans are also underway for a Global Irish Famine Way Conference in 2027 hosted by the National Famine Museum with the participation of the Global Irish Famine Way Chapters from around the world.

Watch this space for more updates!



Left to right: : Karen McHugh (CEO), Diarmuid McAuliffe (Friend of Safe Home Ireland), Nova Fariss (Chairperson), Stephen Graham and Loretta Gordon (Friends of Safe Home Ireland)

A Great Day out - Garden Party at the Áras!

We were honoured to receive an invitation from the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins and Sabina Higgins, to attend a [Garden Party Celebrating Communities In All Their Diversities](#) on 19th June in Áras an Uachtaráin.

It was lovely to be included and recognised for the work that we do both at home and abroad in celebrating the diversity of the Irish diaspora. It was a special day, shared with representations from other great groups and agencies, from around the country. The sun came out to join us too, that was a bonus!

Safe Home was well represented by our CEO, Chairperson of our Board and members of Friends of Safe Home Ireland. See The [President's website](#) for more photos and the powerful address by President Michael D. Higgins.

Irish Driver's licence – some questions answered!

- A full Irish licence is valid for renewal up to 10 years after the expiry date.
- An Irish learner permit is valid for renewal up to 5 years after the expiry date.
- If this time has passed a driver will have to do sit and pass a theory test in Ireland and then apply for an Irish learner permit.
- If a driver holds a current valid full foreign driving licence from a country that Ireland does not have a licence exchange agreement with, they may not have to take EDT sessions 2,3,4,8,11 and 12. And it may be possible for them to take a driving test without having to wait for six months.
- Drivers accepted for Reduced Essential Driver Training are not limited to an automatic licence.

For more information, please see;
<https://www.ndls.ie/>

Individual queries can be emailed to:
lqueries@rsa.ie

Checking your Social Insurance Contributions ('stamps') – Ireland

As people living abroad who have worked and paid contributions in Ireland in the past near pension age here (66yrs), they may wish to access a statement of their contributions history to establish whether or not they have any entitlement to a Contributory Irish State Pension.

For information on obtaining a statement of contributions, please see;

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0fbf7-request-a-contribution-statement/>

While applying online is the quickest method of obtaining a statement, this is not an option that suits everyone.

Other avenues; **Write to:** PRSI Records Department of Social Protection, McCarter's Road, Ardaraan, Buncrana, Donegal, Ireland

Email: CSTGeneralQueries@welfare.ie

PRSI Records Tel: (00353) 1 471 5898 (when prompted, select option 4).

Note! your Irish Contributions Statement is not a forecast of what pension you may expect to qualify for. This can only be determined once a pension application has been submitted and assessed.

Finally, we would like to give you ample advance notice that our office will be closed w/c 4th August to accommodate staff leave after an exceptionally busy year.