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National Updates

We remember and honour Ronnie Delany, an incredible athlete and proud ambassador for Age Friendly Ireland.

Ronnie inspired generations through his remarkable achievements on the track and his lifelong commitment to sport, community, and healthy ageing. As an Olympic champion and a champion for active living, he showed us all what dedication, humility, and positivity look like.

Our thoughts are with his family, friends, and all who admired him. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam

The Housing Agency - Housing Insights Podcast

How do we create homes that truly work for everyone, from young families to our ageing population? In this episode of Housing Insights, it explores the vital role of Universal Design in future-proofing Ireland's housing landscape.

Host Roslyn Molloy is joined by Ruth O'Reilly, Senior Policy and Public Affairs Advisor at the National Disability Authority (NDA), and our very own, Declan Gaffney, National Technical Programme Manager at Age Friendly Ireland. Together, they discuss why inclusive design is a "social emergency" and how it impacts the 40% of Irish households that include at least one disabled person.

In this episode, it discusses:
• Defining Universal Design: Understanding the mindset that ageing and disability are natural parts of life, and why "good design enables while bad design disables".
• The Case for Future-Proofing: Why we must design for a population where the number of older people is projected to rise to 31% by 2057.
• Policy in Action: The impact of the National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022–2027 and the "nothing about us without us" principle.
• Practical Features: From invisible design choices like deeper stair treads to reduce falls by 97%, to the importance of a second bedroom in age-friendly housing.

Listen Here

March 16th - 22nd

The Dementia: Understand Together campaign, led by the HSE in partnership with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Age Friendly Ireland, Age & Opportunity, Healthy Ireland, Alone, Engaging Dementia and the Dementia Services Information and Development Centre, is encouraging everyone to make simple changes to help maintain brain health and reduce the risk of developing some types of dementia.

Just as you can look after other areas of your health, you can take steps to keep your brain healthy – and this can reduce the risk of getting dementia or slow down its progress.

Proactive steps people can take include:

- being physically active
- eating a healthy balanced diet
- quitting smoking
- reducing or giving up alcohol
- managing blood pressure
- looking after your hearing and vision
- making time for social connection and interaction

Adopting these habits in adulthood can play an important part in reducing risk, as well as developing good routines for life.

Learn More

Funding for housing adaptations up €30m

Minister for Housing James Browne and Ministers of State Kieran O'Donnell and John Cummins have announced an increased allocation of €129.5m for Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and Disabled People for the year. The figure represents a €30m increase on the last year, and when local authority contributions are taken into account, total funding for the programme is expected to exceed €152m in 2026. Mr Browne said support for adaptation grants is a "key Government commitment", as grants "help to support independent living for people in their own homes and can also facilitate an early return from hospitals". "I have witnessed first-hand", he said, "how these grants have benefitted many people across the country to remain living independently at home. These grants also support local economies, creating employment opportunities for local contractors."

Learn More

Centre for Excellence in Universal Design
Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

UD26 UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Ollscoil na Gaillimhe
University of Galway

Call For Contributions Open

The Call for Contributions for the 8th International Universal Design Conference (UD26) is now open.

Submissions are invited from a broad range of contributors, including academics, practitioners, policymakers, early-career researchers, PhD candidates and students. We welcome contributions including:

Scientific/academic papers
Practical projects
Case studies
Design interventions
Implementation strategies, and lessons learned
Examples of best practice
Workshops and posters

Participation will provide an opportunity to:

Share your work with an international audience
Connect with leading experts and practitioners
Contribute to shaping conversations on the future of Universal Design
Be part of a vibrant interdisciplinary community

Contributions will be accepted until 8 April 2026.

Contribute Here!

Local Updates

Bosca Beo

Laois and Longford County Councils have unveiled Bosca Beo, an innovative project designed to help people record, collect, cherish, and share their life memories with loved ones.

Developed collaboratively by the Creative Ireland, Age Friendly, Library Services, and Healthy Ireland teams in both local authorities, Bosca Beo takes the form of a beautifully illustrated memory box, styled after a vintage suitcase.

Inside, there is space to safely store keepsakes, photographs, documents, and other important personal items.

The box launched this week at Portlaoise Library, contains a set of 80 prompt cards with gentle questions to help spark memories and conversations. These cards are ideal for sharing stories with family members of all ages, making it a wonderful intergenerational activity. Included is a life journal where people can write about their experiences, from childhood through to the present day.

In addition, Bosca Beo includes a family tree booklet, allowing users to record details about themselves and previous generations, helping to preserve their family history for the future.

Bosca Beo is available free of charge through the library networks in both counties.

Fingal County Council are delighted to announce the launch of our first age friendly walking loop in partnership with Castleknock Tidy Towns. The walking loop is located just off Auburn Avenue and is marked by information signs at each entrance.

Learn More

Clonakilty Dementia Awareness

The Healthy Age Friendly Home Coordinators for Cork County, Norah Conway & Aisling O'Sullivan attended a 'Dementia Awareness Event' in Clonakilty Fernhill House Hotel, Clonakilty on March 10th .
The event was organised by the HSE West Cork Dementia Inclusive Project. The keynote speaker was Dr Brian Carey -Consultant Geriatrician at Bantry General Hospital. The West

Cork Dementia Inclusive Project, in partnership with the HSE's Dementia: Understand Together campaign, invited residents, businesses, community groups, and clubs across Clonakilty to learn about the practical steps we can all take to help build a Dementia Inclusive Community.

Representatives from all the local service providers had information stands at the event such as Healthy Age Friendly Homes, Sage, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Alone, Cork County Library and the local emergency services. There was a great turnout at the event, with over 200 people attending on the night.

Share your views
to help build a healthier Ireland
hi
Healthy Ireland
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland
For more information or to have your say
visit gov.ie/HealthyIreland2026

Roscommon Branch Library
Welcomes You To
'SPOKEN WORD'
A relaxed social gathering in a welcoming space for people living with memory difficulties.
Join us for an easy, enjoyable hour sharing a short story together - no preparation needed.
Every Friday at 11.00am
Refreshments provided.
ROS COM MON
Contact Details:
Email: library@roscommoncoco.ie
Phone: (090) 663 7277

DUBLIN NORTHWEST PARTNERSHIP

Empowering | Collaborative | Accountable | Purposeful | Courageous

Older Person's Information Fair

Tuesday 24th March 2026

10am -1pm

Erins Isle GAA, Farnham Drive Dublin 11

Contact: pauline.hazel@dublinnorthwest.ie

Tel: 086 041 6155

To book your place, visit www.dublinnorthwest.ie

Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Intreo Partner

"The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, and the European Union"

Register Here

Positive Age
St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Join us for the Parade & Party!

Meeting for Parade Bus: 11:30 AM

St. Patrick's Day Party: 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Free Entry!

- Food & refreshments served
- Entertainment by Dessie Ronan

Raffle on the Day!

Plus... don't miss our Pot of Gold Fundraiser Raffle!

- €500 Cash Prize
- Tickets €5 each
- Proceeds support Positive Age activities and our Building Fund

Will you be the lucky one to find the Pot of Gold?

Location:
Positive Age, Castlemanor Community Centre, Drumalee, Cavan

Call to Book & Buy Tickets:
+353 49 438 0725

For more info – Message our Facebook page

#PositiveAge #StPatricksDay #PotOfGold #CommunitySpirit

#PositiveAge #StPatricksDay #PotOfGold #CommunitySpirit

Echelon Park Hosts Age Friendly Walkability Audit to Boost Accessibility

The audit brought together older people, disability advocates and local stakeholders to help shape a more inclusive stadium experience.

A Walkability Audit took place at Echelon Park, Wicklow GAA County Grounds in Aughrim on Friday 6th March. Echelon Park was one of four successful GAA stadiums across Ireland selected to pilot this project in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland and the GAA, aimed at making facilities more accessible and age friendly. A walkability audit evaluates whether an area is safe, convenient and accessible for individuals of all ages and abilities to walk or wheel independently.

Attendees included members of the Older People's Council Executive Committee, the Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC), Sunbeam House services, along with representatives from Wicklow County Council, including the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer in Wicklow Sports and Recreation Partnership and the Age Friendly Technical Advisor and Programme Manager.

Participants in the audit used a checklist to assess the stadium's accessibility, including aspects such as car parking availability, clear signage and accessible restrooms. The expertise and first-hand experience of individuals with a lived experience of disabilities is highly valued for this project and is greatly appreciated.

For anyone who could not participate in the Walkability Audit but would like to provide feedback, an online survey is available through Wicklow County Council's social media pages on Facebook and Instagram. All feedback is greatly appreciated.

Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council, Emer O'Gorman, commented that, "This walkability audit at Echelon Park is an important step in delivering on the ambitions of our Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2023–2027. Ensuring that public spaces are accessible, safe and welcoming for people of all ages and abilities is central to our work. The insight provided by older people, people with disabilities and our partner organisations is invaluable, and will help continue to improve the experience for all who visit the Wicklow GAA County Grounds."

Michael Nicholson, Director of Services and Chair of the Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance, said, "I want to acknowledge the dedication of everyone involved in organising and participating in this walkability audit. Their collaboration ensures that the improvements made are informed, practical and genuinely responsive to the needs of the community. This initiative strengthens our ongoing work to enhance accessibility across Wicklow's public spaces."

Age Friendly Ireland is responsible for the national Age Friendly Shared Service, affiliated to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities. The programme involves a multi-agency, multi-sectoral approach to age related planning and service provision. Age Friendly Ireland supports cities and counties to be more inclusive of older people by addressing their expressed concerns and interests under the eight pillars of the World Health Organization's global programme. Successful Age Friendly Programmes are working to create the kinds of communities in which older people live autonomous, independent and valued lives. To date, the local government led Age Friendly Programmes across Ireland have implemented real change in imaginative and cost-effective ways. By introducing actions to address participation and inequality, it is intended that people of all ages will be supported to enjoy healthier, more active and connected lives.

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) is Ireland’s largest sporting organisation. It is celebrated as one of the great amateur sporting associations in the world. It is part of the Irish consciousness and plays an influential role in Irish society that extends far beyond the basic aim of promoting Gaelic games. The Association also promotes Irish music, song and dance and the Irish language as an integral part of its objectives. As a community-based organisation, it is often stated that it is difficult to determine where the community ends and the GAA club starts as they generally overlap and are closely intertwined.

This partnership between Age Friendly Ireland and the GAA forms a strategic focus on the continued implementation of age friendly practices through the GAA’s network of club and county structures while further developing its stadiums to achieve age-friendly recognition.

Wicklow County Council’s Disability and Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC) works to integrate disability and inclusion into all of Wicklow County Council’s actions and strategies. Laura O’Callaghan, from the Disability Federation of Ireland facilitates DISC and works closely with the Access Officer and Age Friendly Programme Manager, Sarah McElroy. If you would like to support DISC’s work, you can email disability@wicklowcoco.ie. We are particularly interested in hearing from people with a lived experience of disability who would like to get involved in the committee.

Future Planning Event

Information Event about Future Planning

- **Think Ahead Forms**
- **Advanced Healthcare Directives**
- **Enduring Power of Attorney**
- **Future planning your Home**

Tues 24th March 2026 at 10am

WEXICOP, St Johns Hospital, Munster Hill,
Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, Y21 N902.

RSVP to wexicop@hse.ie or by text to 0877091006.

Hosted by Sally Veale and Yvonne Wycherley, Senior Medical Social Workers, Deidre Mullally & Mary O'Connor, Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinators and Caroline Hanley, Sage Advocate.

HSE | WEXICOP Wexford Integrated Care for Older Persons | Age Friendly Ireland Healthy Age Friendly Homes | sage advocacy

Making Memories Café

The **Making Memories Café** provides a relaxed and informal place for people with memory difficulties and their carers to come have a cup of tea and share information.

Join Us:
The Last Tuesday of Every Month

Time:
11am to 1pm

Location:
Whitehall Colmcilles
GAA Club (Puck Lane)
Collins Avenue
Dublin 9
D09 W688

For More Info:
Tel: 086 044 9627
Email: Amanda.wilkinson@hse.ie

In Partnership with HSE, DCC, Larkhill CU,
Alzheimers Society of Ireland & Whitehall Colmcilles GAA Club.

Active Ageing Festival 2026

Age Friendly Kerry was delighted to support the Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership Active Ageing Festival 2026. The event was held in Foilmore on Friday, 6 March 2026 with over 160 people in attendance.

The Active Ageing Festival has been an annual event in Kerry since 2022. The event promotes physical activity for older adults by providing attendees an opportunity to try activities such as Go for Life Games, chair aerobics and Activator Pole walking.

Kerry Age Friendly Ambassador, Mr. Francis Brennan, provided the welcome address on the day. The keynote speaker was Mr. John Lonergan, former Governor of Mountjoy Prison, Wellbeing advocate and Age Friendly Ambassador for Tipperary. John is a strong advocate for ageing well and he shared his insights with attendees on staying active and positive in later years.

The event also featured information stands which provided an opportunity to local organisations and service providers to showcase their services and supports to attendees. Information stands included Age Friendly Kerry, Healthy Age Friendly Homes Kerry, the HSE Community Department, Men's Shed, Chime and local development companies, among others. The event was a great opportunity for the Kerry Age Friendly office to promote the ongoing public consultation and survey as part of the development of a new Age Friendly Strategy for Kerry.

Library News

Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge / Irish Conversation Group in Loughboy Library
Wednesday 18th March from 11.00 – 11.30am
This is an enthusiastic gathering, seeking to use their cúpla focail. It is open to all levels of fluency, beginners, improvers and advanced.
Just come along any Wednesday agus beidh fáilte romhat!

One-to-One Tech Support in Loughboy Library

Friday 20th March from 11.00 am - 1.00 pm
Do you need assistance with your mobile phone, tablet or laptop, or other digital devices and services?
One-to-One Tech Support will be available in Loughboy Library on Friday 20th March from 11.00 am -1.00 pm.
We are grateful to the Transition Year students from Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny for their support.
No booking required. Just drop in!

Chair Yoga in Ferrybank Library
Friday 13th March to Friday 24th April, 11.00 am each week
Join Lisa Kearney for an introduction to Chair Yoga. Over the 6-week course, you will get to know the concept of chair yoga, and how to use it to your advantage in your daily life.
Please note that this is a 6-week course, you must sign up for all 6 sessions at registration.
Booking essential. Contact Ferrybank Library on 051-897200 or email ferrybank@kilkennylibrary.ie to book.

Word Games in Ferrybank Library
Every Friday from 2.30 - 3.30 pm
Are you a fan of wordle, crosswords and scrabble? Indulge your passion by dropping in to our Friday afternoon word game group.
A good exercise for the brain cells but lots of laughter guaranteed.

Knitting and Crafting Group in Ferrybank Library
Every Tuesday from 10.00 am – 12.30pm
Do you enjoy getting creative with crafts Meet fellow craft lovers at our weekly get together, where you can share tips, swap inspiration, and work on your own projects in great company.
All are welcome - no booking required.

Morning Mug Club in Castlecomer Library
Every Friday from 10.00 am – 1.00 pm
Join us every Friday from 10am to 1pm at Castlecomer Library for our Morning Mug Club. Relax with a hot cup of Tea or Coffee, enjoy a biscuit or two, tackle a jigsaw or crossword, read the morning paper or simply pop in for a friendly chat. It is a cosy way to start your Friday.**Nattering Knitters in Castlecomer Library**

Every Thursday from 10.00 am – 12.00 pm
Join this talented bunch of knitters for a knit and a cuppa every Thursday morning 10am to 12pm. No need to book, everyone welcome.

Intergenerational Chess Workshop in Castlecomer Library
Saturday March 28th at 11.00am - 12.30pm
Castlecomer Library is delighted to have Ruairí from Red King Chess visiting on Saturday March 28th at 11.00am - 12.30pm for an Introduction to Chess workshop.
This workshop is part of our initiative focused on creating a vibrant intergenerational chess club in Castlecomer, and as such both children and adults are welcome to this first workshop!
Contact Castlecomer Library on (056) 444 0561 or at castlecomer@kilkennylibrary.ie to book your space. Parents will need to stay with children in the library under the age of 12 but are also more than welcome to take part in the session.

Age Action Computer classes in Mayfair Library
Classes are held on Wednesdays, lasting 2 hours each, over a period of five weeks. Each learner is matched with a dedicated tutor and receives personalised, one-on-one instruction tailored to their specific needs and the device they use, i.e. iPhone/Android/tablet/laptop. Age Action's Getting Started programme provides classes to anyone seeking support with using their smart devices. This includes topics like setting up an email, downloading an app or using video to connect with loved ones.
To register for future classes, email Niamh Budds at info@ageaction.ie

Adult Book Club in Graiguenamanagh Library
meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.00 pm. New members are always welcome.

Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge / Irish Conversation Group in Graiguenamanagh Library
Every Wednesday, 11.00am – 12.00pm If you're looking to use your cúpla focal, this is a great group to meet up with. It's open to all levels of fluency — beginners, improvers, and advanced speakers are all welcome. Just drop in any Wednesday agus beidh fáilte romhat!

Crafty Crew in Graiguenamanagh Library
Every Wednesday from 10.00am – 12.00pm Enjoy meeting up with like minded crafters? Drop into the library any Wednesday morning to share tips, have a chat, and enjoy a cuppa while you work on your projects. All are welcome — no booking required.

Word Searches & Sudoku in Graiguenamanagh Library
Every Friday from 11.30am–12.30pm Drop into the library for an hour of quiet time and enjoy our weekly word searches and sudoku. A lovely way to unwind at the end of the week.

Film & Book Club in Graiguenamanagh Library
meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 6.00 pm.

Age Friendly resources available at Graiguenamanagh Library
include hearing loops, magnifiers, C Pens, and a book trolley for use within the library. Reading glasses If you forget your glasses, fear not — we have a selection of reading glasses available to use in the library.

Bunclody Library Knitting Group
The knitting group meets every Thursday, 10.30am to 12.30pm. All welcome, no booking required.

Seed Propagation with Marie Hirst of Unwinding with Plants - Thursday 19th March at 7.00pm
Join Marie Hirst of Unwinding with Plants for a seed propagation discussion. Marie is a member of the Chartered Institute of Horticulture. Booking essential. To book, please telephone 053 9375466 or book online at wexfordcoco.libcal.com.

Singing For Wellbeing – Did you know that group singing makes you feel good?
Join Gina for an eight week series of singing workshops for people of all ages and abilities. No experience necessary – the focus is on enjoyment.

Bagenalstown Library: Wednesdays 9.45am to 10.45am beginning Wednesday 11th March, Email nbrennan@carlowcoco.ie or phone 059 9129703 to reserve your place

Carlow Library: Wednesdays 11.30am to 12.30pm beginning Wednesday 11th March, Email library@carlowcoco.ie or phone 059 9129705 to reserve your place

International Updates

Boston

Our Meath County Council and Age Friendly delegation is in Boston this week. Here they are picyured meeting with the Boston Irish Business Association in Bostonia Public House. Later today they are delighted to be meeting with Professor Arthur Kleinman and colleagues in Harvard Medical School, Harvard University Boston Campus.

If you would like a PDF version of the newsletter, please click **HERE**

- This Newsletter is prepared and circulated by Age Friendly Ireland
- The Newsletter is published weekly, every Friday
- If you wish to provide information that may be included in the Newsletter please email it to: **agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie** no later than midday on the Thursday. Age Friendly Ireland retains full editorial responsibility for content of the Newsletter.

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service, Meath County Council

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office
Telephone: 046 9032170
Email: agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie

Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme (Referrals)
Telephone: 046 9248899
Email: healthyagefriendlyhomes@meathcoco.ie

HSE Advice Line: Call save 1850 24 1850
Call from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday

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