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National Updates





Visit of Age Institute of Finland Delegation - 31 March and 1 April 2026

On Tuesday 31 March, and Wednesday 1 April 2026 Age Friendly Ireland hosted a delegation from the Age Institute of Finland. The Age Institute is based in Helsinki, and seeks to support older people and service providers in best practice in the areas of health and physical activity, mental health wellbeing, housing and age friendly environments.

The visit to Ireland was funded under the European Union Erasmus Programme, and was the first of a series of visits to European countries to be undertaken by the Institute to examine the development of age friendly programmes. The delegation was made up of:

Ulla Halonen, who specializes in leading and developing participation/inclusion and mental well-being. She also contributes to networking, advocacy, and the research activities in Age Institute.

Kati Savela-Vilmari, specialist in communications, and is responsible for overall communications in Age Institute and has twenty years of experience as a journalist and communications professional.

Merja Palkama, specialist in physical activity, and supports the development and implementation of exercise and well-being services and promoting a culture of physical activity across private, public, and voluntary sectors.

On the morning of 31 March the delegation met with representatives of Age Friendly Ireland where the structures, governance and the programmes of both organisations were discussed. The delegates were welcomed by Cllr Wayne Harding, Cathaoirleach of Meath County Council and Mr. Kieran Kehoe, Chief Executive of Meath County Council.



In the afternoon the delegates met with Ms Valerie McHugh, Age Friendly Programme Manager, Meath County Council to learn about the role of the Programme Manager and Ms Barbara Vaughan Chair of the Meath OPC, who outlined the work programme for the OPC in 2026. Following this, the delegation received presentations from Colm Ryan and Jade Geraghty of the Exwell Medical Programme on its physical activity programmes for older people, and from James Kiernan, Age Friendly Technical Advisor, Meath County Council on the application of Universal Design and Age Friendly principles in the Yellow Ford Housing Development.

On the morning of 1 April the Finnish delegation visited Croke Park, the worlds first Age Friendly Stadium, where they were hosted by Ms Elaine O'Rourke of Croke Park, and were treated to a guided tour of the stadium, and learned about the actions implemented by Corke Park to improve the user experience of older fans on match days. The visitors were joined by Mr Bruce McDevitt, Regional Programme Manager for Dublin and Ms Sharon Griffin, Programme Manager for Dublin City North.



The visit culminated with a visit to Dublin City Council's Glin Court housing scheme for Older People, where the group met with Jessica Lange, Technical Advisor, Natasha Bagnall, Programme Manager and Connell McGlynn and the team from the Area Office, as well as Mary Carroll and Frances Hannon, Chair and Vice Chair of the Dublin North Central OPC, where they got a tour of the scheme, and visited the home of one of the residents to hear her story.



Pavilions Shopping Centre Swords

We are delighted that 10 more Age Friendly Parking Spaces have made their way to Fingal! A great achievement to see in the busy Pavilions Shopping Centre in Swords.



Local Updates



Walkability Audit Laois

The Age Friendly Walkability Audit took place last week in Laois Hire O'Moore Park.

We received plenty of feedback and a report will be completed by Declan Gaffney, National Technical Programme Manager at Age Friendly Ireland.

A big thank you to all who completed the survey and took part in the walkability audit.



Roscommon's Older People's Council

At the March 2026 meeting of Roscommon's Older People's Council (OPC), members received an in depth presentation from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on the new and enhanced home energy grants that became available on 1st March 2026.

The OPC had previously requested that a representative from SEAI attend a meeting to outline the supports available to homeowners.

Eve Hughes from SEAI delivered a very informative and accessible presentation, guiding OPC members through the different grant options and eligibility criteria. She also provided printed information leaflets for attendees to take home. Following the meeting, Eve emailed a digital copy of her presentation to the OPC for reference and further circulation.



Council gives green light for construction of 172 social homes in Letterkenny

Donegal County Council members have given the green light to a major social housing project in Letterkenny.

The development at Ballymacool is the first of two flagship housing projects to be built in Letterkenny, and the largest of its kind to be undertaken by the local authority.

Elected councillors yesterday gave Part 8 approval for the Ballymacool works to proceed.

The development has an approved preliminary budget of €49.3 million and will be built in three phases.

The initial phase has a target of 100 units completed by the end of 2026.

Read More



Rethinking intimacy and relationships in dementia

Free symposium
Guinness Enterprise Centre
The Liberties, Dublin
Wednesday 20th May

Tickets:
<https://dementiaandintimacy.eventbrite.ie>

RCSI DSiDC
Dementia Services Information & Training Centre



Work on age friendly apartments at west Mayo convent site to start in May

The construction of 18 age-friendly apartments on the site of a former convent in Westport is expected to start in May after Mayo councillors approved leasing land to a housing body.

West Mayo councillors approved the disposal of land at part of the site at the former Sisters of Mercy Convent in Westport to Tuath Housing for the construction of 18 age-friendly apartments along with community space.

Read More



EASTER EVENT

WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL 2026
KILBRIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE (F42 N277)

**INFORMATION STANDS AND HEALTH CHECKS
 AVAILABLE FROM 10:30AM**

LAUNCH OF ROSCOMMON AGE FRIENDLY DIRECTORY

EVENT COMMENCING AT 11AM

ON THE DAY

Deputy Dr. Martin Daly
STORY TELLER | CHAIR YOGA | REFRESHMENTS
MUSIC | SPOT PRIZES

For queries, contact Linda on 086 780 7438
or Sheila on 087 150 8511



Easter Event

Roscommon's Age Friendly Programme has organised a special Age Friendly Easter Event to take place in Kilbride Community Centre on Wednesday, 8th April 2026. This gathering

will bring older people from across the county together for a morning of celebration, connection and community spirit.

A highlight of the event will be the official launch of Roscommon's Age Friendly Directory, an important new resource designed to help older people easily access local services, supports and activities. The Directory will be officially launched by Dr. Martin Daly, TD, marking a significant milestone in Roscommon's ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive, supportive and Age Friendly county.



Retrofit for Homeowners

Age Friendly Kerry, in collaboration with Kerry County Council's Climate Action Coordinator, facilitated the attendance of members of the Older People's Council Executive at a free course on 'Retrofit for Homeowners'. This was one of four free courses open to the public from 30th March to 2nd April 2026. As part of a European funded project, managed by the Laois Offaly ETB, expert tutors from the National Construction Training Centre delivered the course onboard an innovative training rig at the Tralee Bay Wetlands Centre.

Participants welcomed the hands-on learning environment where they could see a heat pump in operation, view insulation options for building retrofits and learn about air tightness and ventilation. It was an opportunity to learn about energy upgrades and retrofit pathways. Practical, accessible information was provided for participants to make informed decisions about improving energy performance, comfort and sustainability in their homes.



Positive Age Ltd
The Positive Ageing Organisation

Positive Age Ltd – Spring Trip 2026

Join us for a wonderful 4-day trip full of history, sightseeing, and great company!

 **Programme Schedule**

- **Sunday 19th April**
 - Depart Castlemanor Community Centre at 10:30 a.m.
 - Stop for lunch at Fernhill Garden Centre, Athlone
 - Arrive at hotel for check-in, dinner & music with **Dessie Ronan**
- **Monday 20th April**
 - Breakfast at hotel
 - Guided tour of **Rock of Cashel** (depart 10:30 a.m.)
 - Free time for lunch in **Cashel Town**
 - Guided tour of **Cahir Castle**
 - Return to hotel for dinner & music with **Dessie Ronan**
- **Tuesday 21st April**
 - Breakfast at hotel
 - Visit **Thomond Park Stadium & Museum**
 - Free time in **Limerick City Centre**
 - Return to hotel for dinner & music with **Dessie**
- **Wednesday 22nd April**
 - Breakfast at hotel
 - Visit **Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar**
 - Free time in **Mullingar Shopping Centre**
 - Return to Castlemanor Community Centre (~6:00 p.m.)



Trip Cost

- Per Person Sharing: **€495**
- Single Supplement: **€170**



 **Booking Information**

- Limited places – first come, first served
- Deposit: **€250** (non-refundable)
- Balance due: **Friday 20th March 2026**

To Book:

- Call Positive Age Office: 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. on **MONDAY, TUESDAY, or WEDNESDAY ONLY**

To Book:
Call Positive Age Office:
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
MONDAY, TUESDAY,
WEDNESDAY, only
Phone: **049 4380725**

Don't miss this chance to explore, relax, and enjoy music with friends!



Loughboy Library Weekly Online Clinic

Tuesday 7th April from 2.30 - 3.30 pm

Would you like to learn more about the wealth of online resources available from Kilkenny Libraries?

Pop in to see us at our weekly online clinic and we can demonstrate to you how to use such fabulous online resources as Borrowbox, Universal Class and more!

No booking required. Just drop in!

Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge / Irish Conversation Group in Loughboy Library

Wednesday 8th April 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!

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.

Watercolour Painting Workshop for Bealtaine Festival in Castlecomer Library

Tuesday, 12th of May from 10.00am – 12.00pm

Join artist Rachel Burke for a Watercolour Painting Workshop. Participants will be painting Irish May flowers using watercolours, and will be guided in how to draw and paint native flowers. All materials will be provided and all abilities are welcome.

Booking is essential as places are limited. Please phone 056 4440561 or email castlecomer@kilkennylibrary.ie

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.

**Preparing for Your Camino Journey – A Talk in Loughboy Library
Friday 17th April from 6.15 - 7.15 pm.**

This talk is perfect for anyone considering the Camino, especially older adults who want practical guidance.

We'll cover how to gradually build fitness, what kind of training schedule works best, and what a typical day on the Camino actually looks like from morning starts and scenic walking segments to rest breaks, meals, and your end-of-day routine.

The session focuses on confidence, preparation, and enjoyment.

Whether planning your first Camino or simply curious, you'll leave with a clear understanding of how to get started, how to pace yourself, and how to make the most of this unforgettable experience.

Places are limited. Phone 056 7794176 or email loughboy@kilkennylibrary.ie to book a place.

Gorey Library, County Wexford Events

Grandparents Pop Up Storytime with Story Sacks in Gorey Library

Friday 10th April at 11.00am

Children and their grandparents are invited to join us in the library to tell stories together using our fun Story Sacks! Story sacks are bags containing books, puppets, and toys, to bring stories to life. The librarian will tell a story first, and then children and grandparents can explore the story sacks and enjoy telling stories to together.

"In the Singing of Songs and Poetry of William Granger" with Rachel Uí Fhaoláin in Gorey Library

Thursday 16th April at 7.00pm

Traditional singer and folklore collector Rachel Uí Fhaoláin will present a body of her work, connecting the writings of local poet William Granger (1901-1994) with the folklore & landscape of North Wexford and South Wicklow in a new way.

Happy to Chat Coffee Morning in Gorey Library

Wednesday 8th April at 11.00am

Join us for conversation and a cuppa.

Film Club at Gorey Library

Thursday 9th April at 2.30pm

Join us for 'Make 'em Laugh' month in our Film Club, where we'll watch a funny film, with refreshments and a discussion afterwards.

Earth Day Adult Craft Circle in Gorey Library

Wednesday 22nd April at 11.00am

Join Mary for an Earth Day themed craft circle, using recycled materials to create something new from something old.

Tea/ Coffee will be served throughout.

Jigsaw and Board Games Swap Week in Gorey Library

Monday 20th to Saturday 25th April

To celebrate Earth Day, Gorey Library is hosting a jigsaw swap. Simply bring a jigsaw or board game that you no longer use, and take one home for free.

Items brought should be in good condition with all pieces included. Items brought should be deposited in the drop box for processing.

Age Friendly Homes Talk in Gorey Library

Thursday 30th April at 1.30pm

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes programme aims to assist older people to remain in their own homes with dignity and independence for as long as possible.

North Wexford Historical Society "Jane Austen" Talk

Thursday 30th April at 7.00pm

Jane Austen is the subject of this month's talk, presented by Hazel Percival.

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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