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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Our Rural Future

Rural Development Policy 2026-2031

Rural Future Policy

Our Rural Future, 2026-2031 is the Government's national Rural Development Policy.

Building on the progress and investment delivered under the first Our Rural Future policy (2021-2025), this renewed policy framework sets out the Government's approach to investing in and strengthening the economic, social and environmental well-being of our rural areas for the period to 2031.

Their approach is grounded in a positive and ambitious vision for rural Ireland as a thriving, resilient and vibrant place, sustained by strong communities, a robust enterprise base, and deep cultural connections

Learn More



National Advocacy Service Annual Report 2025

National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS) & the Patient Advocacy Service: Launch of Annual Report 2025

The 2025 Annual Report from the National Advocacy Service (NAS) and the Patient Advocacy Service showcases the continuing growth and complexity in work carried out by both independent advocacy services.

Advocacy work relating to the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act amounted to 25% of NAS's overall advocacy work by the end of 2025, marking a significant increase from 2024. 2025 was the busiest year to date for the Patient Advocacy Service, with 3,031 new enquiries representing a 43% increase on 2024 when the Service received 2,120 enquiries.

NAS received 3,481 new enquiries to the service in 2025 and opened 982 new advocacy cases. The total number of advocacy cases in 2025 was 1933 with the number of people seeking advocacy services increasing by 10% compared to the previous year. Since the commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 (ADM) on 26th April 2023, NAS decision-making cases have grown exponentially. Crucially, NAS Advocates supported 49 people who were Wards of Court during this period as they navigated the discharge process under the ADM Act. Advocates frequently worked with individuals in situations where decisions were being made for them without proper engagement from the person, from third parties asserting control over the person's finances to medical staff ignoring a patient's right to refuse treatment.

NAS continues to provide advocacy to more and more people each year, despite significant resource strain. This will only continue as the deadline for discharging all remaining adult wards of court in Ireland by 25th October 2027 is fast approaching and numbers availing of arrangements under the Act increase.

Joanne Condon, National Manager for NAS said:

“Year on year, we continue to see a significant increase in demand for independent advocacy, a demand impacted further since the commencement of the ADM Act. This reflects not only the growing awareness of advocacy among disabled people and those supporting them, but also the fact that advocacy is becoming increasingly embedded and recognised as an essential part of Ireland’s health and social care landscape. This growing demand is happening alongside a clear recognition across a range of national reports and reviews that independent advocacy needs to be strengthened, strategically developed and appropriately resourced. From the work of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to recommendations and findings across the wider legal and policy landscape, there is increasing recognition of the important role advocacy plays in protecting rights, supporting autonomy and ensuring that disabled peoples voices are heard. The message is clear: as advocacy becomes more integral to how we deliver rights-based health and social care, we must ensure that the capacity and resources available to advocacy services keeps up with pace of demand. Continued investment and a coherent national strategy for independent advocacy are essential if we are to ensure that people can access advocacy when they need it.’

2025 marked the busiest year yet for the Patient Advocacy Service. 3,031 individuals contacted the Service in 2025 seeking support. This represents a 43% increase on 2024 when we received 2,120 enquiries. 1,929 people wanted to make a complaint about their care in public acute hospitals and 304 people wanted to make a complaint to a nursing home. There were 7,969 separate complaint issues identified and some of the biggest complaint issues for people supported by the Patient Advocacy Service’s Advocates were anxieties acknowledged not addressed, patient not monitored properly, aspect of care plan overlooked, chasing departments for an appointment, patient-provided information dismissed, unable to access specialist care, clinician overlooked information, rude behaviour, staff did not communicate care plan and difficulty phoning healthcare unit.

Georgina Cruise, National Manager of the Patient Advocacy Service, said:

“The 43% increase in demand for our Service highlights both the growing awareness and trust people place in the Patient Advocacy Service and the vital role independent advocacy plays in supporting patients in public acute hospitals and residents in private and public nursing homes to have their voice, will and preference heard within the complaints processes and incident reviews in public acute hospitals and public and private nursing homes.

Behind every one of the 7,969-complaint issues raised is a person who felt unheard, overlooked or distressed during their care. Our service has heard first hand from those wishing to make a complaint of the profound impact communication breakdowns, overlooked care plans and basic administrative barriers have had on them. We also see the traumatic impact that a patient safety incident can have on a person and their family. However, we also see how transformative it can be to a person’s experience when they have the support of an independent advocate.

Independent advocacy is more than just supporting someone through a process, it helps transform a person’s lived experience into an opportunity for systemic learning, safety and quality improvement. When people are really listened to and placed at the centre of their care, the health and social care system becomes a safer, more compassionate system for everyone.”

Learn More

Local News



Age Friendly Ireland at DCU's Generations at Work Conference

Our Regional Manager, Mary Fitzsimons, recently represented Age Friendly Ireland at the DCU Generations at Work conference. Mary delivered an insightful overview of the Age Friendly Workplace Pathfinder and our comprehensive employer guidelines. We were also delighted to see the OPC Chairs from both Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council in attendance, highlighting the strong collaboration across our network!



Understanding Your health and your wealth

Don't miss our upcoming events to promote health, financial and energy literacy.

Learn about:

- Health information
- Money and finances
- Energy bills



New date for Monaghan

Monaghan Peace Campus **Friday 13 November**
10am - 1pm

10am: Tea, coffee and pastries

10.30am - 12.30pm: Guest speakers

12.30pm - 1pm: Ask the experts



To book your **FREE** place, use the QR code or:

Call into:

- Your local library
- Your local CMETB Adult Education Centre

Or

Contact **Ceinwen** on **047 71914**

CeinwenFergus@cmetb.ie



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Am mairbhonnóg
ar Éireann
Co-funded by the
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An tAidís Oideachais
Leasaimh agus Scileanna
Turbar Education and
Training Authority



Presents

Wonderful World



WITH GUESTS

*Age Friendly Roscrea
Ukulele Group,
the Rosie Greys Choir
&
Dunkerrin Folk Choir*



**Friday 6th November
7.30pm**

**St Cronan's
Church, Abbey
St, Roscrea**

**Free entry
Donations in aid of Age Friendly**





LIVING WELL EXPO 2026

For Older People

*Discover What's Available
in Your Community*



Mount Wolseley Hotel
Wednesday, 25th November 2026 | 9.30am – 1pm
HOSTED BY CARLOW OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL | FREE ADMISSION

Meet local service providers. Information, advice, and support on:

-  **Health & Wellbeing**
-  **Community Supports**
-  **Active Ageing Opportunities**
-  **Housing & Home Supports**
-  **Transport & Mobility**
-  **Safety & Security**
-  **Digital Skills & Technology**
-  **Recreation, Hobbies & Social Activities**

Connect with organisations, explore local services, and discover opportunities to help you stay informed, active, and independent.

Hosted by Carlow Older People's Council with the support of the Carlow County Council Carlow Age Friendly Programme in partnership with local agencies and community organisations.

Living Well • Staying Connected • Ageing Positively

Everyone Welcome




To ensure the widest possible participation from exhibitors, speakers and attendees, the Living Well Expo has been rescheduled from 21 October 2026 to 25 November 2026. We look forward to seeing you then.



October Age Friendly Events Offaly Libraries

A note from Raheny Age Friendly Community Club



October 2026 Update

As we head into the Autumn months our October meet up brought reflections on our September activities. These included a celebration of the 35th Anniversary of the Country Market in Raheny. Free tea and cakes and local entertainment was enjoyed by all who visited on the day. This was a collaboration between Age Friendly Tidy Towns and Dublin City Council(DCC).

In recognition of Positive Aging week a free Chair Pilates session led by Paul Eglington took place in Cara Hall on the 29th September. Funded by Dublin City Council with thanks. Refreshments and chats were available afterwards.

The following day on the 30th September a very active day was enjoyed by a number of our group who participated in the Active Senior fitness and mobility workshop held in the National Sports Arena in Abbotstown. This was hosted by Sports Ireland Campus as part of the BeActive Campus week. It was organised by the Dublin City Sport and Wellbeing Partnership and funded by DCC. This proved to be very enjoyable indeed as people partook in a variety of sporting activities with all recognising just how much they could do. Free transport was provided making it more accessible for people to attend.

On the 1st October as part of our education programme, 35 attendees and 9 volunteers thoroughly enjoyed a presentation given by a Dietitian and Nutritionist at our monthly Social coffee morning. Ms Margaret Donnelly, MINDI provided a very informative session Eat Well - Be a Healthy 60+ on the benefits of good eating in aiding our wellbeing and health. There was much interest in the topic. This session was funded by DCC with thanks.

This month saw 5 new attendees and an engaging morning of tea, coffee ,cakes and chats was enjoyed by all.

Our Chairperson Ms Clare Farrell O'Sullivan advised that next month we will carry out our annual review of attendees contact details, to ensure we maintain effective communications and update our records.

Our next Social morning takes place on the 5th November in Cara Hall.

Rosemary Farrell.

Secretary Raheny Age Friendly Community Club

Library News



Loughboy Library



As part of our Handy Helps collection, Reachers are available to borrow from Mayfair Library and Loughboy Library. The Reacher is ideal for picking up everyday items around the home if bending or reaching is difficult to do. Activator Poles are available to borrow from Loughboy, Castlecomer, Ferrybank and Graigueenamanagh Libraries. The Activator Poles are designed to improve balance, posture, and mobility. So why not try out our Reachers or Activator Poles - it's absolutely free, and you're certain to feel the benefit!

Help us to reach our Library Membership Target for 2026!

Loughboy Library is hoping to reach its library membership target for this year and we need your help! Did you know that a library membership only lasts for a year? So, if you or your family haven't visited Loughboy Library recently, please do pop in or give us a call and we can let help you to renew your membership for another year. Or to join as a new member, if you're not already with us. If you wish, you can also receive our monthly newsletter with details of upcoming events and our latest news!

Please help us, so we can continue to help you.



Loughboy Library



Toddler Storytime with Magic Table

Fridays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th November
10.00am to 10:30am

LOUGHBOY LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Monday:	Closed
Tuesday:	10am - 5pm
Wednesday:	10am - 5pm
Thursday:	10am - 5pm
Friday:	10am - 8pm
Saturday:	Closed

Please contact us to book events:
0567794176 or
loughboy@kilkennylibrary.ie

ADULT EVENTS...

WEEKLY | Ciorcal Comhrá Gaeilge/Irish Conversation Group | Wednesdays | 11am to 12pm

Buaileann an Ciorcal gach maidin Dé Céadaoin, ar a haon déag a chlog. Bíonn comhrá, ceol agus craic acu. Open to all levels of fluency: beginners, improvers and advanced.

Come along any Wednesday, beidh fáilte romhat!

No Booking Required.

MONTHLY | Irish Creative Writing Group | Last Friday of Each Month | 11am to 12pm

The Irish Creative Writing Group meet on the last Friday morning of each month in Loughboy Library.

No Booking Required

Creative Writing Group |
Every Tuesday
11.00 am - 12.30 pm

The Creative Writing Group meet every Tuesday morning in Loughboy Library.
Booking Required

Knitting Circle
Every Wednesday
10.00 am - 12.00 pm

The Knitting Circle meet every Wednesday morning in Loughboy Library.
Booking required.



Loughboy Library



The Handy Helps collection consists of a range of aids and gadgets that assist with everyday tasks. These items are grouped into 3 themed Handy Helps Packs: Culinary Aids, Mobility Aids and Social Aids.

Items in the packs include lightweight foam-handled cutlery, a button hook and zip puller, a plug pull and a portable car assist handle, helping to make daily tasks easier.

Each Handy Helps pack includes clear information sheets explaining how to use each item.

Handy Helps packs are available to borrow from Mayfair Library, Loughboy Library, Thomastown Library and Castlecomer Library.



Loughboy Library



One-to-One Tech Support

Fridays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th November

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 Fridays from 11.00am - 1.00pm.

We are grateful to the Transition Year students from Presentation Secondary School, Kilkenny for their support. No booking required. Just drop in! Please note that One-to-One Tech Support will not take place during school holidays.

Kerry Library

Age Friendly resources available include digital magnifiers, C-Pens, and a book trolley for use within the library. C-Pens are available to borrow free to library members. Contact info@kerrylibrary.ie.

Tralee Library

Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society Lecture
Thursday 5th November, 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Emerging from the woodland excavation and conservation of an early medieval caiseal in Derrynane National Historic Park by Laurence Dunne - Archaeologist

Cleachtadh Cainte

Every Thursday. 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Ar mhaith leat do chuid Gaelainne a fheabhsú? Would you like to improve your Irish?

Conversational Irish for intermediate level speakers.

Cahersiveen Library

Chess at Cahersiveen Library

Every Thursday. 5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Beginners welcome.

Ciorcal Comhrá

Every Thursday. 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Caint, Craic, cairdeas agus comhrá. Bí Linn! Join us for an informal get together to use your cúpla focal. Fáilte roimh gach éinne.

Castleisland Library

Stitches in the Stacks

Every Thursday. 11.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Crochet and knitting group. Bring along your work in progress or new ideas. New members welcome.

Leabharlann Dhaingean Uí Chúis I Dingle Library

Dingle Board Game Club (adults only)

Every Thursday. 6.00 p.m.

Killarney Library

Ciorcal Comhrá

Every Thursday. 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Bígí ag caint! All levels welcome. Fáilte roimh chách.

Killarney Crochet & Knitting Group

Every Tuesday. 4.30 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.

Knitting and crochet group. Bring along your work in progress or new ideas.

Spanish-English Conversation Exchange

Every Tuesday. 6.30 p.m.

Conversation exchange for English and Spanish speakers to meet and converse.

Board Games

Every Wednesday. 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

Board games and jigsaw puzzles for adults ages 18-108! Feel free to bring our own games to share!

Killorglin Library

Ciorcal Comhrá

Every Tuesday. 11.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Irish conversation group

Scrabble Club for Adults

Every Saturday. 2.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.

Listowel Library

Activator Pole Session Workshops

Thursday 5th November.

Programmes are available for those with mobility issues and those without. Please contact the library for more information.

Knit & Knatter

Every Wednesday at 11.00 a.m.

Knitting and crochet group. Bring along your work in progress or new ideas.

Loughboy Library Weekly Online Clinic

Tuesday 3rd November 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 4th November 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

Fridays 6th November 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 Fridays 18th and 25th September 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!

Age Action computer training in Mayfair Library

Wednesdays from September - December | 10.30 - 12.30

Age Action offers free one-on-one computer training sessions at for people aged 55 and over. Classes cover essential digital skills and internet literacy over a 5-week programme, with classes running for 2 hours per week. Topics include searching the internet, email, online shopping, banking security, government websites, social media, booking holidays, WhatsApp, and Zoom.

Please register your interest with the library. Call 056 77 94174 or email mayfair@kilkennylibrary.ie

Weekly Bridge Club in Mayfair Library

Every Wednesday from 3.00 – 4.00pm. All levels are welcome.

Word Games in Ferrybank Library

Every Friday from 2.30 - 3.30 pm

Are you a fan of Wordle, Scrabble, or crosswords? If so, we've got the perfect event for you. Our word wizards meet fortnightly for light hearted word games, friendly competition, and plenty of laughs.

So bring your competitive streak and join us for an enjoyable brain boosting session.
New players always welcome.

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.

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.

Chess Club in Castlecomer Library

Saturday 14th November 11:00am – 12:00pm

Our Chess Club continues every Second Saturday, 11.00am to 12.00pm. This is a self-led, everyone welcome, beginners and seasoned players Chess Club.

Come along and share skills or learn from one another and enjoy chess at any level. No Booking required.

Poetry Group in Castlecomer Library

Thursday 19th November from 2.00 – 3.00pm

Join Lori for our monthly Poetry Group, where we'll read, write, chat and enjoy poetry together in a relaxed, friendly space. All levels are welcome - whether you're a complete beginner, a curious dabbler, or someone who already loves putting words on a page.

Each session will include gentle writing prompts, shared reading, and time to explore your own voice. Bring a notebook, bring a friend, or just bring yourself.

Everyone is welcome - no booking required.

Weekly Knitting Group in Thomastown Library

Every Wednesday from 10.30am – 12.30pm. New members are always welcome. Just pop in.

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.

A little extra light can make all the difference!

Whether you're catching up on the local paper, tackling some study, or enjoying a good book, Graiguenamanagh Library now has two portable desk lamps available for use in the library. Each lamp also features a magnifying lens, making it easier to read small print and reducing eye strain.

Community Coffee Morning at Graiguenamanagh Library

New to the area or just looking to meet a few friendly faces? Why not pop into Graiguenamanagh Library for a cuppa and a chat?

Join us on the last Friday of every month for a warm and welcoming get-together. It's a great opportunity to chat with neighbours, meet new people, and feel more connected to your local community. Whether you're new to Graiguenamanagh or have lived here all your life, you'll find a friendly welcome waiting. Drop in, pull up a chair, and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee with us. We'd love to see you.

Age Friendly Resources at Graiguenamanagh Library

Did you know that Graiguenamanagh Library offers a range of Age Friendly resources to help make your visit more comfortable and accessible?

Available for use in the library:

Hearing loops, Magnifiers, C-Pens, A book trolley, Reading glasses and good selection of large print books.

Forgot your glasses? No need to worry. We have a selection of reading glasses available for use in the library, so you can continue reading, studying, or browsing in comfort.

Drop in and speak to our staff to find out more about these helpful resources. We're always happy to help make your library visit as enjoyable and accessible as possible.

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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