

SEPT 2026 – Issue 286

contact

Office:

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 Ireland,
St. Brendan's Village,
Mulranny, Co. Mayo
F28 A386

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 with us!

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

follow us



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme
An Buidéal Gaelach Eiriseach agas 'Trídísle
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Welcome from our CEO

Welcome to our September Newsletter and the start of autumn here in Ireland! We are still enjoying some lovely sunny days (mostly!), which is always a bonus at this time of year and might just help to make the winter ahead feel a little shorter!

Earlier this month, we were pleased to invite Patricia Carey, [Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse](#), and her team, together with the [Irish Support Agency NSW Inc](#) in Sydney, to facilitate an online **Information Session** for staff to help us to support Irish people living abroad who may have been affected by their time in Ireland's institutions. The session provided important information on available supports and current open schemes for survivors and affected persons, including those impacted by Industrial Schools, Mother and Baby Homes, Magdalene Laundries, as well as those who were boarded out, were trafficked and/or adopted abroad. We know that many people left Ireland to get away and start a new life but continue to live with the lasting impact. If you or someone you know may have been affected, we encourage you to get in touch with us or the Special Advocate's Office in Ireland for information and support. If abroad, Ireland's Global Irish Diaspora Directory provides information on Irish Centres and other services around the world that may be able to offer guidance and assistance. For more information about the work of the Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse, including details of the various redress schemes, please visit www.specialadvocate.ie

I attended the Irish Hospice Foundation's (IHF) **40th Anniversary Conference on End of Life** at Croke Park on 24 September. The Conference brought together national and international experts, healthcare professionals, researchers and community representatives to explore the theme '*Every Death Matters: Dying, Death and Bereavement in a Changing Ireland – Emerging Narratives*'. Discussions included diverse experiences of grief and the voices of people who can be underrepresented. The Conference also launched a new research report exploring how dying, death and bereavement have been portrayed across national media platforms in Ireland over the past three years. The findings were particularly interesting and can be viewed [HERE](#). We are grateful to the IHF for the invitation, further to a recent meeting with CEO Paula O'Reilly, in the context of referrals from Irish people living abroad and the recent *Irish End of Life Care Report*, undertaken by Irish in Britain and Innisfree Housing Association. We know that many Irish people living abroad wish to return to Ireland, including at the end of life, and we look forward to working with the IHF and others to explore how we can, where possible, support people to realise these wishes. Please see [HERE](#) for more information on the excellent services and resources offered by the Irish Hospice Foundation.

Finally, I would like to thank Maya Bullard and her musician friends, who held a '**charity busk**' in Castlebar in aid of Safe Home Ireland as part of Culture Night 2026. Maya was inspired to choose Safe Home Ireland by our Ambassador, [Seán Keane](#), as her favourite song is *Isle of Hope, Isle of Tears*, beautifully sung by Seán and written by Brendan Graham and tells the story of Irish emigration through Ellis Island, New York. We are very grateful to Maya and her friends for choosing to support Safe Home Ireland and for helping to raise funds and awareness of our services.

Until next month, take care and have a great month ahead from everyone at Safe Home Ireland

UK Outreach – Monday 28th September to Friday 2nd October 2026

This week our Outreach and Advocacy officers, Karen Bollen and Noreen Mulrine are in England conducting home and centre visits across London and Luton. They will meet with some of our housing applicants in their own homes to discuss the process of returning to Ireland, address any concerns they may have as well as look at the practicalities and implications of moving country.

An important part of our work is meeting with clients, staff and volunteers of Irish Centres/ Community groups and during this visit we will meet with a number of organisations across London and Luton. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to share information about Safe Home Ireland's remit and provide practical information and guidance on returning to Ireland at any life stage.

Our Officers will be visiting and meeting staff, volunteers and members of [BIAS Active Ageing Club, Brent](#); [London Irish Centre](#); [Ashford Place](#); [Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas London](#); [Irish Community Services, Bexleyheath](#); [Southwark Irish Pensioners Project](#). Karen will be attending [Luton Irish Forum](#) for 'Tea & Chat' on Thursday 2nd October (10am to 12pm).

We will be holding Information Clinics in some of the Centres so if you would like to see one of our Outreach Officers, please contact the Centres directly.

It is always a great opportunity to learn more about all aspects of the Centres work and see first-hand the impressive services they provide to their communities. We also explore ways in which we can work together collaboratively for the benefit of those we support.

Finally, keep an eye on our Social Media channels for daily updates from London and Luton! Next month we provide an update from our trip!

Could You Qualify for Fuel Allowance?

[Fuel Allowance](#) is a payment from the Department of Social Protection to help eligible households with the cost of heating their homes during the winter months, starting in September up until April. It is paid to people who meet the qualifying conditions, and only one Fuel Allowance is paid per household.

You may qualify if you are aged 66 or over (subject to a means test) or if you receive certain long-term social welfare payments and meet the qualifying conditions. For more information you can visit the [Citizens Information website](#) or contact your local Citizens Information or Intreo Centre.

If you would like to know more about this, you can contact Safe Home Ireland through the contact form on our website, by emailing info@safehomeireland.com or by phone on +353 9836036.

Frequently Asked Question - Household Benefits Package (HBP) – Returned from USA

My dad, who is 68 years old, recently returned home from New York. He owns his own property here in Ireland.

Q. He does not have an Irish pension and is wondering whether he can qualify for the Household Benefits Package (HBP) based on his US Social Security pension?

A. Yes, your dad's US Social Security Pension is considered a 'qualifying payment' for the HBP. **However**, in order to meet habitual residency conditions, he will be required to show proof that he is permanently resident in Ireland, including proof to show that his US pension has been transferred/is being paid to him here. Your dad should provide this supporting documentation with his HBP application form, as well as an electricity bill in his own name.

For additional information on the Household Benefits Package, including qualifying criteria and how to apply, please see [HERE](#).

Returned Emigrants Network (REN)



Returned Emigrants Network

Saturday 17th October 2026 at 2pm

Online Meeting

Healthcare in Ireland on your return

We have designed a brief and confidential survey. Please complete the survey as it will be informative and a good guide on what exactly we need to focus on. Answers will be treated with the highest confidentiality!

Survey Link



Zoom Link



Need to contact us?

Name: Karen at Safe Home Ireland
Tel: 098 36036/087 977 5080
Email: karen@safehomeireland.com

SAFE HOME IRELAND
DIASPORA SUPPORT SERVICE

Supported by
Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme

Safe Home Ireland is a charity that works with the Irish diaspora. With your support, we can continue to provide information and guidance to Irish abroad thinking of returning home and maintain our vital support services for those who have recently returned.

www.safehomeireland.com

Charity Number - 20049119

We are delighted to announce that our next REN meeting will take place **online** on **Saturday 17th October at 2pm**.

The topic for this meeting will be **"Healthcare After Returning to Ireland"**.

As this is a very broad topic, we have designed a brief survey to help us gain a better understanding of returnee's experiences. We would really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete the survey as your responses will help us identify areas to focus on during the meeting. Your answers will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and you will not be asked to provide your name or share any information you are not comfortable providing.

Complete the survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7Z8XNM7>

Join the virtual REN on Saturday, 17th October

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82797739851?pwd=GH28Jk6f8caPgX7nbYZntKl2vvSEdh.1>

If you would like any further information about the meeting or the survey, please contact our office. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the meeting!

Long-Term Social Housing Income Limits - Ireland

Safe Home Ireland does **not** own, build or manage any housing ourselves, nor do we have direct access to housing in the private rental sector.

Our role is to support qualifying older Irish-born emigrants to apply for social housing with the Local Authority/Council in the area where they have the strongest connection. Approval for social housing is an essential first step, as it is required before a person can be considered for most long-term social housing options in Ireland.

Once approved, applicants may be eligible for one of a number of housing options, including:

- ☐ Local Authority (Council) housing
- ☐ Approved Housing Body (AHB /Housing Association) properties
- ☐ Financial assistance towards rent in the private rental sector (where applicable)

Income Limits Apply

Social housing is **means-tested**, and each Local Authority has its own maximum income limit. These income thresholds vary from county to county. A table of allowable income levels can be found [HERE](#)

As part of the assessment, Local Authorities examine **all income received during the 12 months immediately before the date of the housing application**.

Important Note!

There is **no discretion** in the application of the income limits. If an applicant's assessable income exceeds the relevant Local Authority threshold, **even by a small amount**, the Council cannot approve the application for long-term social housing support.

For this reason, anyone considering making an application should familiarise themselves with the income limits that apply in the county where they intend to apply and ensure they understand how their income will be assessed.

If you have any questions about the social housing application process or your eligibility, the Safe Home Ireland team will be happy to provide guidance and explain the requirements before you submit an application.
