



# Age Friendly **LAOIS**

## **The Laois Age Friendly Guide to Services for Older People**





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# THE LAOIS AGE FRIENDLY GUIDE TO SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

## Age Friendly Cities & Counties Programme

The Age Friendly Cities & Counties Programme in Ireland supports the development of communities where people, as they age, can continue to enjoy a good quality of life and continue to participate fully in their communities. The model is based on the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Cities Framework and Guidelines which were developed in recognition of the challenges and opportunities that societies will face as they respond to an unprecedented growth in the number of older people living in our communities. It is our belief that the Age Friendly Programme can have a very considerable and positive impact on the life of people living in County Laois, in particular for those over the age of 55. Since 2014, Age Friendly Ireland has been supporting Laois County Council in the development of the Laois Age Friendly County Initiative resulting in the publishing and launch of the County Laois Age Friendly Strategies 2016-2021 and 2023-2027.

## Age Friendly Ireland

Age Friendly Ireland is the organisation responsible for the national Age Friendly Programme, affiliated to the World Health Organization'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.

Age Friendly Ireland operates as a shared service centre of local government hosted by Meath County Council. The shared service centre supports a network of 31 local Age Friendly Programmes which are led by local authorities and which involve many stakeholders from other public bodies, universities, community/voluntary and private sector partners. The shared service supports a number of strategic national structures and provides technical guidance to its networks.

Within the framework of the WHO's Age Friendly Cities and Communities model, city and county based stakeholders are making commitments to shared action plans addressing pillars spanning housing, our health services, built environment, transport and employment. Under the leadership of the local authority, governance is anchored in the multi-agency Age-Friendly Alliances, supported by broadly representative Older People's Councils actively engaged as co-design partners.

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. Access to outdoor spaces and buildings is fundamental to the vision.

The programme has a strong focus on creating walkable, attractive and accessible communities and age-friendly spaces. 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.

In December 2019 after a decade of work, Ireland was formally recognised by the World Health Organisation as an international leader and the first Age Friendly country in the world.

## The Laois Age Friendly Alliance

The Laois Age Friendly Alliance was formally established in 2014 and consists of relevant agencies in the support of the older people's sector in the county and the promotion of a positive approach to ageing. Through cooperation and consultation with older people in Laois, the Alliance developed and launched the Laois Age Friendly County Strategy in June 2016 and a subsequent County Strategy for 2023-2027. This strategy sets out the vision and the aims as regards making Laois an Age Friendly County.

One of the issues raised in the consultation process for both strategies was a lack of available information on the services, entitlements and activities available to older people. Therefore, the Laois Age Friendly Alliance along with Laois Older People's Council are continuing this inclusive information guide which will be a quick reference to those services and activities available in the County for older people. Age Friendly Laois also compile a monthly newsletter which aims to give good information to older people in Laois.

## Laois Older People's Council (OPC)

The Laois Older People's Council aims to be the voice of older people. It has been established as part of the Laois Age Friendly County Programme. The Older People's Council meets to discuss common issues, solutions and actions. If a representative from your community or organisation wishes to join this Council, please complete the Application Form included with the guide in order to register to become a member.

## Laois Public Participation Network (PPN)

Laois PPN was established in March 2015 and is the main link through which the Local Authority connects with the Social Inclusion, Environmental and Community and Voluntary groups within County Laois.

The PPN facilitates the sharing of information on funding opportunities, public consultations and policy development in County Laois. The PPN allows groups to nominate PPN representatives to decision and policy making bodies in the county such as the LCDC, JPC and SPC. Laois PPN has 29 representative positions. The PPN Secretariat which consists of 12 Members acts as a steering group for overseeing the activities of the PPN.

Laois PPN continues to grow its network with 650+ Member Groups currently registered.

*\*The information contained in this Guide has been checked for accuracy at the time of going to print in January 2024, however details may change over time; if you spot any omissions or errors, please advise.*

If you would like to make a submission regarding the information in this Guide please contact, the Age Friendly Programme Manager, Community and Enterprise Section, Laois County Council, County Hall, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

Email: [agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie) or Tel: 057 86 64150.

# INFORMATION

## Citizen's Information

There is only one Citizen's Information Centre in County Laois. It provides free professional and confidential information on civil and social rights and entitlements.

### Portlaoise Citizen's Information Centre

(Over Mulhall's Supervalu)  
Kellyville Centre Portlaoise  
Co. Laois  
R32 K6RY

Phone: **0761 075590**

Email: **portlaoise@citinfo.ie**

Office Opening Times: 9.30am to 5.00pm Monday — Friday

Public Opening Times: 10.00am to 12.00 noon and 2.00pm to 4.00pm Monday — Friday

## Free Legal Aid Centre

Are offering a limited phone clinic by appointment each Wednesday from 2pm to 4pm. Please contact 0808 075 290 for further information and to speak to an information officer to make an appointment (this service is by appointment only).

## Guide to Entitlements

A useful and practical guide to services and rights for people aged sixty and over is published by the Citizen Information Board. This booklet is available through the Citizen's Information Centres.

National Citizen's Information Phone Service 0761 07 4000 (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 8.00pm)

Web address: **www.citizensinformation.ie**

## Money Advice and Budgeting (MABS)

The Money Advice and Budgeting Service is the State's money advice service, guiding people through dealing with debt and helping them to manage their money. Their Helpline is open Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5pm (**0761 07 2000**) if you would like to have a chat.

There is only one MABS Office in County Laois situated in Portlaoise at: Railway Mews, Railway Street, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, R32 K298.

Phone: **0761 072620**

Email: **portlaoise@mabs.ie**

## Making a Will

It is important to make a will to ensure that your wishes are carried out. It also makes it easier and less costly to administer your estate after your death. Professional advice is advisable, especially if your estate is large. There are a number of ways to access information on this.

- Your local **Citizen's Information Centre** provides information on 'Making a Will'.
- The Irish Hospice Foundation launched a new booklet called "Think Ahead". This booklet encourages you to gather your thoughts about your financial and legal affairs. It gives you a chance to write down your personal wishes for future medical and personal care. Forms are available from your local Citizen's Information Service and Pharmacies or can be downloaded at **www.thinkahead.ie**
- Safeguard your finances in later life; log on to **www.safeguardingireland.org** to find out more.



## Toilet Access

One of the main challenges of the physical environment identified by older people is access to toilets. Public toilets are available in Lyster Square, Laois Libraries, Courthouses and other public buildings for your use. Other private buildings, public houses, restaurants and coffee shops, which provide toilet facilities for their customers, will usually allow older people to use their facilities if approached.

A map showing the location of toilets available for use around the county is available at [www.pee.ie](http://www.pee.ie) This map does not show all toilets available.

## Eircode

Eircode is the postcode system that was introduced to Ireland in 2015. The postcode is a mix of letters and number and is seven characters in length. The Eircode Postcode is divided into two parts: a routing key and a unique identifier.

Eircode brings many benefits:

1. Makes it quicker and easier for medical emergency services to locate addresses.
2. Allows delivery and service companies to accurately identify addresses so deliveries get to the right location.
3. Makes it quicker and easier to shop online.
4. Helps to develop Irish businesses and facilitate better planning and delivery of public services.

Age Friendly Laois have free Eircode stickers available to individuals and groups. Contact us on **057 8664150**. Display your Eircode in a prominent place in your home (for example, at front door or fridge door).

You can find your Eircode by visiting [www.eircode.ie](http://www.eircode.ie). If you require assistance with finding your Eircode, please contact Age Friendly Laois, who will help you.

We also have I.C.E. Cards available, which, when filled in, contain all your relevant information in case of emergency.

To request Eircode Stickers or I.C.E. cards for you or your group or to find out more about Age Friendly Laois, contact **Tom Curran** on **05786 64150 / 086 0363426** or [tcurran@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:tcurran@laoiscoco.ie)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Eircode: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency:

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact No: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Blood Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# ENTITLEMENTS

## Applying for a Pension

Application forms are available from your local Social Welfare Office, Post Office or Citizen's Information Centre. Completed forms should be sent to the Social Welfare Services, Department of Social Protection, College Road, Sligo, F91 T384.

Call **0818 200 400** or **071 9157100**

Email: **state.con@welfare.ie**

Web: **www.gov.ie/en/category/social-welfare/**

## Collecting your Pension

You can have your pension paid into your bank account or you can collect it from the Post Office. If you have any difficulties at any stage getting to the Post Office (e.g. through illness, by reason of distance etc.), you can nominate someone to collect your pension on your behalf. Fill in an 'Agent Form', which is available at your local Citizen's Information Office or Post Office.

Return the form to the Pensions Office in Sligo.

- The Post Office can only make payments to named and notified agents. The naming of an agent does not stop you from continuing to collect your own pension at any stage.

## Age 80 Allowance

Pensioners receiving an Irish social welfare pension automatically receive an increase in the personal rate of their pension when they reach the age of 80.

## Department of Social Protection Staff (DSP Staff)

Department of Social Protection Staff (DSP Staff) known as Community Welfare Officer (CSO). DSP Staff are available through the Department of Social Protection Offices. They assess and advise on the eligibility for (financial) allowances/supplements. All allowances are subject to means testing and vary according to circumstances and the nature of the need. These allowances include, but not exclusively:

- Heating Supplement is an additional weekly payment to help with the cost of heating your home. You may get a heating supplement if you:
  - Can show you have extra heating needs because of your age, medical condition, or disability.
  - Are living alone or only with a dependent adult or dependent children.
  - Satisfy a means test.

More information is available from your local **Citizen's Information Centre** or **DSP Portlaoise Branch Office**: 057 86 78010 – DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise.

## Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

HAP is a form of social housing support provided by all local authorities. HAP means that local authorities can provide housing assistance for households who qualify for social housing support, including many long-term Rent Supplement recipients.

Under HAP, local authorities will make a monthly payment to a landlord, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a tenant's behalf. In return, the tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the local authority. This 'rent contribution' is based on the household income. It is calculated in the same way as the rent paid by a tenant of a local authority owned property.

For more information see **www.hap.ie** or **www.laois.ie**, Laois County Council Housing Department (Tel: **057 86 64000**) or contact your local Citizen's Information Centre.

## Free Travel

For information on Free Travel; Household Benefits Package (Electricity Allowance; Cash Electricity Allowance; Natural Gas Allowance; Cash Gas Allowance; Bottled Gas Refill Allowance; Free TV Licence) contact **0818 837 000** or your local Citizen's Information Centre.

## Household Benefits for Over 70s

The Household Benefits Package is a package of allowances per household which help you with the costs of running your household. You must be fully resident in the Republic of Ireland to receive this allowance and only one member of a household can qualify for Household Benefits. There are two allowances: the Electricity or Gas Allowance and the Free Television Licence.

To apply, you will need a MyGovID account

## Fuel Allowance

A Fuel Allowance is a payment to help with the cost of heating your home during the winter months. It is paid to people who are dependent on long-term social welfare and who are unable to provide for their own heating needs. Only one Fuel Allowance is paid per household.

## Living Alone Allowance

The Living Alone Allowance is an additional payment made weekly if you are 66 years or over and live alone. This payment is made to certain social welfare recipients who mainly live alone. You will also qualify if you are under 66, live alone and are getting Disability Allowance, Invalidity Pension, Incapacity Supplement or Blind Pension.

However, there are some exceptions to this rule. You must apply separately. Forms are available from your local Citizen's Information Centre.

## Widow/Widower's Pension

The bereavement allowance is given to widows, widowers or surviving civil partners over age 45 until they reach state pension age. It is paid for up to 52 weeks. The amount you get depends on your age at the time of your partner's death and the overall level of their PRSI contributions.

Contact your Local Social Protection Office see page 9 of this Booklet or Citizens Information on **0818 07 5590** or email [portlaoise@citinfo.ie](mailto:portlaoise@citinfo.ie)

## HEALTH

### Health Service Executive (HSE)

The HSE provides a range of Health and Social Services for Older People including: Medical Cards, E111 Cards currently known as EHIC (European Health Insurance Card), Drugs Payment Scheme, Long Term Illness Scheme, Hardship Allowance, Chiropody, Adult Optical and Appliances, etc.

If you would like more information, please contact **HSE LIVE** from 8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and 9:00am to 5:00pm Saturday & Sundays. Callsave **1850 24 1850** or **041 685 0300**.

You can also contact the HSE at **Portlaoise Health Centre**, located on the Dublin Road, Portlaoise by telephone 057 86 21135, Opening Hours: Mon - Fri 9.30-1.00 & 2.00-5.30

### Laois Community Stop Smoking Service

Get the support you need to Quit Smoking for good. This free, friendly and supportive service offers support from an HSE Stop Smoking Advisor. You are 5 times more likely to Quit for good with our help.

To find the nearest service to you, contact:

**Helen Maher 087 3334223 helen.maher4@hse.ie**

**Amanda Caulfield 087 6076432 amanda.caulfield@hse.ie**

**Free 1800 201 203**

### Public Health Nurse (PHN)

Public Health Nurses are employed by the HSE to provide a range of health care services in the community. You can contact your Public Health Nurse at your local Health Centre on (Page 28 of the Guide) and this may be your first contact with the health services. The public health nurse provides home and clinic nursing care to people over 65 years who have a medical card.

Services include post hospital care, dressings, injections, referral to respite and day care and assessment for Nursing Home Subvention, home support, nursing aids and appliances. Your Public Health Nurse will also advise you on Dietary, Diabetic and Counselling Services.

### Medical Card Scheme

The Medical Card Scheme entitles certain people to free public health services. To be eligible, your income must be below a certain level. If you do not qualify for a card on income grounds you may get a GP Visit Card. There are different guidelines for the means test depending on whether you are under or over 70 years of age. In the case of a couple, the assessment is based on the age of the older person. You can apply online at **www.medicalcard.ie** or Phone: **1890 252 919**, or visit your local Citizen's Information Centre for more information.

### Voluntary Groups

Voluntary Groups with a Health & Well-Being Focus e.g. Men's Shed.

The Health Service Executive is responsible for grant aiding voluntary groups and for administering the Health Service Executive Lottery Funding. Contact **Mr Jimmy Todd, Community Development Services**, HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster, Health Centre, Arden Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

Tel: **057 935 9622** and **086 806 2387**

Email: **jimmy.todd@hse.ie**

## GP Visit Card for Over 70's

Everyone aged 70 or over and ordinarily resident in Ireland is eligible for free GP care, regardless of income. Medical Card holders and GP Visit Card holders do not have to register for this scheme. If you do not have one of these cards you can apply online at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie). You can also contact the HSE at Portlaoise Health Centre **057 86 21135** or your local Citizen's Information Centre to find out more.

## Treatment Benefit Scheme

The Department of Social Protection provides limited dental, optical and aural services under the Treatment Benefit Scheme. This Scheme is available to insured workers and retired people who have the required number of PRSI contributions. Contact the Treatment Benefit Section on Lo-call: **1890 400 400** or contact your local Citizen's Information Centre for more information. [www.gov.ie/en/publication/3ae149-operational-guidelines-treatment-benefit-scheme/](http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3ae149-operational-guidelines-treatment-benefit-scheme/)

## Dental Treatment Services Scheme

This Scheme (DTSS) provides access to limited dental treatment for adult medical card holders (only) and does cover GP Visit Cardholders. This includes a free oral examination every calendar year and free emergency dental treatment to relieve pain. [www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/dental/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/dental/)

## Long Term Illness Scheme

Drugs and medicines for the treatment of a particular range of medical conditions are free of charge. Check with your Public Health Nurse or ask at your local Citizen's Information Centre for the list of Long-Term Illnesses covered by this Scheme. [www2.hse.ie/services/long-term-illness-scheme/long-term-illness.html](http://www2.hse.ie/services/long-term-illness-scheme/long-term-illness.html)

## GP Out of Hours Service – MIDOC 1800 302 702

This is a service to provide you and your family with access to urgent family doctor services outside of normal surgery hours. Access to the service is by appointment only, by contacting **1800 302 704**. MIDOC is **not** a walk-in service. Monday to Friday 6.00pm - 8.00am and Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 8.00am - 8.00am (24 hours).

## Chiropody Services

Chiropody services provided by the HSE free of charge to Medical Card holders who are aged 66 and over. Application forms and information on services available can be obtained at your Local Health Centre or Citizen's Information Centre or Laois Community Services, Dublin Road, Portlaoise. Tel: **(057) 862 1135** [www.citizensinformation.ie/en/health/health\\_services/care\\_in\\_your\\_community/chiropody\\_services.html#](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/health/health_services/care_in_your_community/chiropody_services.html#)

## Psychiatry of Later Life Team (HSE)

Psychiatry of later life is a specialist adult mental health team who works with people over 65 who are experiencing mental health problems such as anxiety or depression. We also work with people who have cognitive impairment/dementia and are experiencing other challenges such as aggression and wandering. If however you have previously attended another adult mental health team within the previous five years that team will continue to support you after your 65th birthday.

We are a team of doctors, nurses, occupational therapist, psychologist, social workers, speech and language therapists, health care assistants and administrative staff. The doctor will meet you to give you advice about your diagnosis and your medication. The Nurse will support you in the community and liaise with the doctors in relation to medical issues. The Occupational Therapist

can help you to reengage with supports within the community and maintain your independence. The Psychologist can help you and your family with behaviours that challenge, and provide support in relation to the complex emotions that arise from living with the challenges of living with a mental health issue. Because of some illness some people may struggle with difficulties to communicate. The Speech and Language Therapist can assist you and your family with communication. The Social Worker can help you and your carer with benefits and entitlements, housing and also act as your advocate.

### **Memory Technology Resource Room:**

We also have a Memory Technology Resource Room that people who are attending Psychiatry of Later Life can access.

For those not attending the Psychiatry of Later Life there is a Memory Technology Room available in Primary Care Centre, Portarlinton. The number for the Primary Care Centre in Portarlinton is (057) 868400.

### **Family/Carer Support Group:**

If a family member with a diagnosis of dementia is attending Psychiatry of Later Life, you can avail of information sessions provided by nurses and other members of the team.

If you wish to be referred to Psychiatry of Later Life, please talk to your GP about a referral.

### **Cognitive Assessment Service:**

The Cognitive Assessment Service operates within the Psychiatry of Later Life Team. This is an assessment service for anyone between the ages of 18 and upwards who have concerns about their memory. It is a nurse led service, supported by doctors with access to Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, Social Workers, and Speech and Language Therapists. If you have worries about your memory, talk to your GP/Consultant if you are already attending a service and if necessary he/she/they can refer you to the Cognitive Assessment Service.

## **Home Support Service for Older People**

The HSE Home Support Service (formerly called the Home Help Service or Home Care Package Scheme) aims to support older people, aged 65 or older, to remain in their own homes for as long as possible and to support informal carers.

The Home Support Service provides you with support for everyday tasks including:

- getting in and out of bed
- dressing and undressing
- personal care such as showering and shaving

The support you will receive depends on your individual needs. These supports will be provided by the HSE or by an external provider, approved by the HSE.

[www.hse.ie/eng/home-support-services/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/home-support-services/)

## **Home Help (Private)**

Professional private home helps provide a variety of non-medical services that supports older people to remain at home. These services may include meal preparation, companionship, personal care, shopping and assistance, caring for special conditions including dementia.

Unlike the HSE Home Help, private providers can provide laundry and cleaning service. You may claim tax relief on private home help provided.

Home Instead **045 446593** and Bluebird Care **057 86 66377** are the main private care providers.

## **Respite Care**

Respite Care may involve providing short term alternative care for older people and people with different disabilities in order to give the full-time family Carer a well-earned break. For more information contact your **Public Health Nurse**.

## Carer's Support Grant

Persons in receipt of Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit, and/or Prescribed Relative's Allowance automatically receive the Respite Care Grant from the Department of Social Protection. This is paid once a year usually on the first Thursday in June. For more information or to get an application form you can contact your local Social Welfare Office or your local Citizen's Information Centre, See page 9.

[www.gov.ie/en/service/16220307-carers-support-grant/#](http://www.gov.ie/en/service/16220307-carers-support-grant/#)

## Occupational Therapy

These services are provided to people who through illness or disability that need support or change to their lifestyle. Occupational Therapists can advise on changes that may be needed in the home to support a person with special needs and on activities that will help a person to regain their independence. Occupational Therapists will also advise on suitable mobility aids required by a person. Referral to the Community Occupational Therapy Service is done through your local **Public Health Nurse**.

## Day Centres for the Elderly

Day centres are places where older people come together locally to combat loneliness, to have a chat and do activities such as exercises, arts & crafts, painting, computers, play cards, bingo, listen to music and sometimes dance. Older People are warmly welcomed and are treated to a cuppa and home bake, and a 3-course lunch. There are three Day Care Centre in Laois — **Abbeyleix**, **Portlaoise** and **Mountmellick**. Your local Public Health Nurse will give all the details regarding each centre.

## Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise

Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise is a general and maternity Hospital, which forms an integral part of the Health Service Executive Midland Region. The Hospital aims to deliver a patient-centred, quality-driven focused service and provides a wide range of diagnostic and support services for County Laois. Tel: **057 86 21364**.

## Nursing Homes & Nursing Homes Support Scheme

Under the Health Acts everyone is eligible for a place in a public nursing home and will have to pay certain charges. It can be a really difficult decision to look at choosing a nursing care facility for yourself or a loved one. The Nursing Home Support Scheme, "A Fair Deal," began on the 27th October 2009. From that date onwards people can apply to the HSE for the scheme and it is the single funded means of accessing long-term nursing home care for new entrants.

[www.myhomefromhome.ie](http://www.myhomefromhome.ie)

**Kilminchy Lodge Nursing Home**, Portlaoise 057 86 63600

**Ballard Lodge Nursing Home**, Portlaoise 057 86 61299

**Droimnín Nursing Home**, Stradbally 057 86 41002

**Oakdale Nursing Home**, Portarlinton 057 86 45282

## Nursing Homes Support Scheme (Fair Deal)

The Nursing Home Support Scheme known as the "Fair Deal" provides financial support to people who need long term nursing home care. Under this scheme, you will contribute towards the cost of your care and the State will pay the balance. This applies whether the nursing home is public, private or voluntary. The HSE administers the Fair Deal Scheme with the resources available. Applicants cannot avail of State Funding for a nursing home place prior to receiving

approval of their application. Your Public Health Nurse can supply you with the nursing home list and application forms. For more information on this scheme or help with your application form visit your local Citizen's Information Centre.

The funding for access to all nursing homes, both public and private is through Fair Deal/Nursing Home Support Scheme. This is an overview of the scheme; however, it is strongly recommended to seek more detailed information and clarification from the Fair Deal Website, <https://www2.hse.ie/services/fair-deal-scheme/about-the-fair-deal-scheme.html> in relation to your own personal circumstances or contact HSE Nursing Homes Support Office, Bury, Quay, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Phone: **057 932 7834**  
**057 932 7821**  
**057 932 7830**  
**057 935 9734**

The application for the scheme is based on:

- An application form
- A care needs assessment generally completed by the Public Health Nurse which assesses whether a person needs long term care.

## Community Hospitals – Laois Public Nursing Homes

A Community Hospital does not have an Accident and Emergency Department. Below is a list of Community Hospitals in County Laois:

**St. Vincent's Hospital, Mountmellick** Tel: 057 86 44783

**St. Brigid's Hospital, Shaen, Portlaoise** Tel: 057 86 46717

**Abbeyleix Hospital** Tel: 057 87 31204 – Respite Care Only

## Mental Health in Co. Laois

Mental health problems are common and can range from a low period to more serious depression, to a small number of people who will experience very severe issues. If you feel persistently sad, have trouble sleeping or experience unexplained aches and pains, you should visit your GP for advice. If you are worried about yourself or someone you know, it is important to get help as soon as possible. There are a number of options:

- Contact your local GP. If its late in the evening or night-time, contact MIDOC **1850 302 702**
- Go to the **Emergency Department** at your nearest hospital, Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise, Naas General Hospital or Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore.
- Contact emergency services on **999** or **112**.
- Call the **Samaritans**, the 24-hour listening service, to talk to someone about what's on your mind. Call **116123**.

**GROW** is a voluntary organisation that provides friendship and support for people with mental health problems and people who are at risk of mental health problems. The Laois office can be contacted on **057 93 51124** or by contacting Michelle McCormick on **086 4183805** or by email: [michellemccormick@grow.ie](mailto:michellemccormick@grow.ie). The website [www.yourmentalhealth.ie](http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie) contains advice on mental health.

**AWARE** provides information for many people: those include individuals who are experiencing depression, or related mood disorders; those who are concerned for a family member or friend; people who are seeking to learn more about the condition, and also those who may be wondering if depression could be a factor for them.

Freephone **1800 80 48 48** Contact [jo@samaritans.ie](mailto:jo@samaritans.ie) Tel: **116 123**



## Resource Office for Suicide Prevention – Midlands

### We have a self-directed online training programme:

LivingWorks Start is targeted at anyone over the age of 18yrs who wants to help prevent suicide and develop the skills to assist someone who may be at risk of suicide. It can be completed in 1½ hours and includes a four-step model and impactful simulations which are undertaken and put into practice during the programme.

The programme provides the opportunity for participants to:

- Become more comfortable talking about suicide
- Feel more confident in keeping a person safe in times of distress
- Be able to support members of the community, friends and co-workers
- Build personal and professional skills
- Have peace of mind knowing the readiness to help is obtained
- Gain awareness of the supports and services that are available.

A free access licence is required to undertake the programme, relevant links and info available on: <https://bookwhen.com/suicidepreventiontrainingmidlands>

### Introduction to Self-Harm is facilitated/delivered online also:

An 'Introduction to Self-Harm' (2 hrs) programme is suitable for those aged 18yrs and over who seek to develop their knowledge and understanding of self-harm. The programme aims to clarify what self-harm is and the causes, motivations and functions are discussed. Information on how to support and care for those engaging in self harm and the resources and services that are available is given. Dates of scheduled online facilitated programmes are advised on the link below as well as the registration process: <https://bookwhen.com/suicidepreventiontrainingmidlands>

### SafeTALK is a face to face programme (3hrs):

**SafeTALK** is a half-day alertness training that prepares attendees, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. Most people with thoughts of suicide don't truly want to die, but are struggling with the pain in their lives. Through their words and actions, they invite help to stay alive. SafeTALK-trained helpers can recognise these invitations and take action by connecting them with life-saving intervention resources. Participants learn how to provide practical help by using the steps of TALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keepsafe) and also gain information on the supports and resources available locally, regionally and nationally.

The four basic steps of TALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keepsafe) are called 'suicide alertness skills' and are taught with the expectation that the person learning them will use them to help save lives and reduce suicide risk in their community. Information and registration process to attend scheduled workshops is advised on: <https://bookwhen.com/suicidepreventiontrainingmidlands>

Individual settings based safeTALK Workshops can be delivered upon request to groups with a minimum of 12 participants – contact [josephine.rigney@hse.ie](mailto:josephine.rigney@hse.ie)

An awareness programme is also available for group settings if desired:

### Awareness Presentation: Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention (2hrs)

This 2hr presentation advises on the whole of society approach to suicide prevention in Ireland today and how each of us can play our part in reducing deaths through suicide. Information on suicide risk factors, warning signs, advice on how support can be given to someone at risk, and information on local and national supports and services is provided. Information on the service which Pieta provide through their Suicide Bereavement Liason Service is also outlined. Advice on protective factors and how we can all work towards keeping ourselves and those we love safe and well is also provided. Requests or queries can be made by contacting – [josephine.rigney@hse.ie](mailto:josephine.rigney@hse.ie)

## Elder Abuse Supports

### Recognise the signs of Elder Abuse:

A wide range of people may abuse older people, including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates. There are several forms of abuse, which may be carried out as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance and include the conditions below:

**Psychological Abuse:** consider the possibility of psychological abuse if:

- You are made feel afraid in your living accommodation
- You are experiencing feelings of hopelessness or helplessness because of the attitude or behaviour of others
- You are made feel tearful and agitated

**Neglect:** consider the possibility of neglect if:

- You are not receiving adequate liquids to drink or food to eat
- Your clothes are not being washed when required
- You are not being provided with appropriate clothing for the weather conditions
- You are being denied the aids you need, e.g. glasses, hearing aid, dentures etc
- You are being left alone for long periods when you cannot move about easily or prepare meals without assistance
- You are bed/chair bound and you are experiencing significant discomfort which is not alleviated when this is brought to someone's attention

**Financial Abuse:** consider the possibility of financial abuse if:

- Someone else has access to your accounts without your full permission
- You feel pressured to allow someone else access to your accounts
- Someone else makes decisions about your money without speaking with you
- You feel you have lost all control over your money
- Your money is being spent by someone else for things other than your bills, clothes, food, etc.
- You feel pressured to give money to someone else

**Physical Abuse:** consider the possibility of physical abuse if:

- You have been treated roughly, enough to leave marks or bruises
- You have been treated violently which caused broken bones, sprains, dislocations or other injuries
- Someone has inflicted pain on you

**Sexual Abuse:** consider the possibility of sexual abuse if:

- Someone has forced you to be intimate with them without your consent

If you are experiencing any of the feelings or effects outlined above, you may need to speak with your GP, Public Health Nurse or Safeguarding and Protection Team or contact the HSE Information line on 1850 24 1850.

## Laos Domestic Abuse Service

This is a service for women experiencing domestic abuse. The approach is to seek to understand the experiences and difficulties of individuals. Support is provided to women to make their own decisions about their relationships/lives by providing impartial information and outlining possible options. Options include: A Court Accompaniment Service, a Group Support Programme, a Counselling Service, a Complimentary Therapy Service and a Referral Service.

Laos Domestic Abuse Service, 3 Kellyville Court, Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise.

Phone: **057 86 71100** - Monday - Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 2.30pm - 4.00pm

[www.laoidomesticabuseservice.ie/](http://www.laoidomesticabuseservice.ie/)

# HOUSING

## Laois County Council Housing Department

Laois County Council's Housing Department provides confidential support services for older people and people with disabilities who need housing or who need to improve the accessibility of their homes. For more information you can contact Laois County Council Tel: **057 86 64000** or visit their website [www.laois.ie/departments/housing/](http://www.laois.ie/departments/housing/)

## Housing Grants

There are a number of different grants available. You can download the grant application form from [www.laois.ie/departments/housing/](http://www.laois.ie/departments/housing/) or contact Laois County Council on 057 86 64000 or email [housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie) to get a form posted to you.

This application form is used to apply for 3 different grants which are available to older people and people with disabilities to adapt their homes. The grants are:

- 1. Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability**
- 2. Mobility Aids Grant**
- 3. Housing Aid for Older People Grant**

The form contains detailed information about the scheme's conditions and a checklist of documents that you must include. You can also contact the Housing Section of Laois County Council for information about the eligibility rules in Laois, which may differ from those in other local authority areas.

Contact Laois County Council on **057 86 64000** or email [housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:housinggrants@laoiscoco.ie)

### 1. Housing Adaptation Grant (HGD)

The Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability is available to assist in the carrying out of works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who is a member of the household. The maximum grant available is €30,000.

For this grant, you need to complete the sections of the form for the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability.

### 2. Mobility Aids Grants Scheme (MAG)

The Mobility Aids Grants Scheme is available to cover works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing. The works grant aided under the Scheme include grab-rails, access ramps, level access shower, stair-lifts and other minor works deemed necessary to facilitate the mobility needs of a member of a household. The maximum grant is €6,000. The grant is available to households whose gross annual household income does not exceed €30,000.

For this grant, you need to complete the sections of the form for the Mobility Aids Grant.

### 3. Housing Aids for Older People Grant Scheme (HOP)

The grant is for essential repairs to improve the condition of an older person's home so they can continue to live there.

Essential repairs can include:

- Repairing or replacing the roof
- Upgrading the electrical wiring

- Repairing or replacing the windows and doors
- Providing central heating (where none exists) or that the existing heating system is 'beyond economic repair'

It is aimed at people aged 66 and older, who are living in poor housing conditions.

This grant covers some of the cost of work needed, but not all of it. The amount of money you get depends on your gross household income for the previous tax year after any disregards and deductions are applied. The maximum grant available is €8,000 or 95% of the cost of the work approved by Laois County Council.

For this grant, you need to complete the sections of the form for the Housing Aid for Older People Grant.

## Healthy Age Friendly Homes

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme aims to support older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence, for as long as possible. The programme's ambition is to enable everyone to live longer healthier lives by keeping care close to home and expanding the range of health and social care services in the community. It is about providing a range of alternatives for older people who may otherwise transition into long term residential care prematurely. To do this we have appointed a Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinator in each Local Authority. Each coordinator will case manage a support package for each person referred, linking the supports from the variety of public, voluntary, private and community agencies in the area. The coordinator will carry out a home based assessment and, in partnership with the older person, will identify and design a range of supports to enable the older person to continue living independently. The 'Healthy Age Friendly Homes' programme is available in every Local Authority Area.

The Laois co-ordinator should be in place by early January 2024, In the meantime, contact the Laois Age Friendly Office for more info or for referral forms or contact the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Admin team, Tel.: **046 924 8899**, Email: **healthyagefriendlyhomes@meathcoco.ie**

# HOME SERVICE SUPPORTS & MAINTENANCE

## Warmer Homes Scheme

The service involves the installation of standard energy efficiency measures appropriate to the eligible household subject to SEAI survey, budget allocation and available capacity. The service is provided at no cost to the household and the measures that may be available under this scheme are: attic insulation, draught proofing, lagging jackets, low energy light bulbs, cavity wall insulation, energy advice. This scheme is available to homes which meet the following criteria: owner occupied, non-local authority homes, constructed before 2002 and the owner is in receipt of the fuel allowance (means tested social welfare scheme).

Further details available on: [www.seai.ie/grants](http://www.seai.ie/grants). Waiting lists for this can be up to twenty four months. Lo-Call **01 8082100**, [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie)

## Better Energy Homes Scheme

The Better Energy Homes Scheme provides grants to homeowners of houses before 2006 to improve energy efficiency in their homes. This scheme is different to the Warmer Homes Scheme as it provides grants to improve energy efficiency. Grants are available for the following:

- Roof insulation
- Wall insulation - for example, cavity wall, internal dry lining or external insulation.
- Heating controls upgrade
- Installation of a high-efficiency boiler (more than 90% efficiency) including a heating controls upgrade
- A Building Energy Rating (BER) after the energy-saving work is carried out (you must get this BER to qualify for the grant)
- Solar heating

For more information, you can contact Better Energy Homes Scheme on Lo-Call 1850 927 000 or visit the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's website [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie). Once approved, the works must be carried out in eight months.

In theory it would be possible to apply for both, but in practice as there is a waiting list of twenty four months for the Warmer Homes Scheme, and once approved for Better Energy Home Scheme the work has to be done within eight months, this may not be practical.

Lo-Call **01 8082100**

[www.seai.ie/publications/Scheme-and-Application-Guidelines.pdf](http://www.seai.ie/publications/Scheme-and-Application-Guidelines.pdf)

[www.seai.ie/home-energy/](http://www.seai.ie/home-energy/)

## LSTEP – Laois Services to Elderly People

LSTEP is a Community Services Programme to provide a repair, maintenance, and gardening service to people over the age of 65 living in County Laois. In addition to its core service, LSTEP also provides general advice and information including a referral service to local agencies such as Citizen's Information Service, Department of Social Protection, Laois/Offaly Education & Training Board, TASK Community Care etc. and serves as a vital social contact for socially excluded older people living in isolation. For further information contact LSTEP on **057 86 82779**.

## Emergencies

At some point in your life, you may need to call the emergency services such as fire, police, or medical personnel. By being prepared for calling the emergency services, you can get the help you need much more quickly which can often make a big difference. In Ireland we have two emergency numbers, **999** and **112**.

112 also works in all EU countries and from any phone, free of charge. Remember when calling 112 (or 999), 'stay calm, stay focused and stay on the line' and if possible, give the Eircode of the house so that the emergency services can easily find you.

## The Seniors Alert Scheme

The Seniors Alert Scheme is financed by Pobal and provides a grant for the supply of equipment and Personal Pendant Alarms. The pendant alarm is worn on the wrist or around the neck and when activated in cases of emergency, it provides immediate contact with the people you have chosen to be on your emergency list. This enables older people to continue to live securely in their own homes. The grant assistance is made available through community and voluntary groups registered with Pobal (e.g. LSTEP). Pobal Helpdesk: **01 5117222**.

To be eligible you must be:

- Aged 65 or over and have limited means or resources.
- Living alone or with someone who also meets the eligibility criteria.
- Living in the area covered by the community group administering the grant support.
- Able to benefit from the equipment being supplied.
- Willing to maintain contact with the community group.

For more information contact LSTEP on **057 86 82779** or your local **Garda Station**.

## Garda Stations in Laois

There are twelve Garda stations that cover the County Laois area, but Portlaoise Garda Station is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, while others are part-time stations. Abbeyleix, Arles, Ballylinan, Borris-in-Ossory, Clonaslee, Durrow, Mountmellick, Mountrath, Portarlinton, Portlaoise, Rathdowney and Stradbally. **Portlaoise Garda Station: 057 86 74100**.

## Crime Prevention Officer

Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs) are trained to encourage, promote and advise on crime prevention to both the private and business community. There are dedicated crime prevention officers within each Garda Division. They monitor crime types in their division, assist in planning, and in implementing crime reduction strategies in their division, and they educate and advise members of the public in relation to crime prevention and reduction. They conduct security reviews and audits (including CPTED surveys) of private and public premises and lands.

Scams are constantly evolving but the reasoning is always the same. They want personal information and/or financial information. They will use any guise to dupe individuals into passing over this information. Please pause, think twice, seek advice, and never give personal information until you are 100% satisfied that it is genuine.

Information on frauds at **[www.fraudsmart.ie](http://www.fraudsmart.ie)**

Information is also available at **[garda.ie](http://garda.ie)**

**Contact Graham Kavanagh, Crime Prevention Officer on [graham.b.kavanagh@garda.ie](mailto:graham.b.kavanagh@garda.ie)**

For further details please contact the Garda Stations listed above or your local Garda Station.

## Community Gardaí

The role of the local Community Garda is to liaise with the local community, organisations and services. Their role is to get to know the community by giving talks, organising activities and linking with service providers. For further information in relation to your local community Garda please contact any of the stations listed above or Portlaoise Garda Station: **057 86 74100** or your Community Gardaí on **Portlaoise.community@Garda.ie**

## Bogus Caller Cards

Unfortunately, everyone can receive visits from bogus callers and our vulnerable persons are sometimes targeted by criminals. Information on how to identify and protect yourself from these types of crime can be found on our website – **www.garda.ie/en/crime-prevention/crime-prevention/**

Bogus callers will say anything to get into your home or onto your property including producing false identification claiming to be there in an official capacity.

- “There’s been an accident, can I call an ambulance?”
- “I’ve broken down, can I use your phone?”
- “I’ve had a fall, could I have a glass of water”
- “I’m from the council, there’s a burst main, I need to turn off your supply”
- “I am checking counterfeit currency and I am a detective”

In all cases you need to be wary of strangers calling to your home. They may be offering services such as power washing, painting, selling goods etc.

Take precautions:

- Do not open the door to anyone before you’ve checked who it is and what they want. Use your door viewer and chain/limiter.
- Check identification, where appropriate.
- Do not leave strangers unattended at your doorstep.
- Ensure your back door is locked when you answer a call at the front door.
- Keep gates to yards closed.

We advise and encourage people not to engage with such callers. Don't open your door to anyone before you have checked who it is and what they want. They can be intimidating and refuse to take no for an answer. Please pass this advice on to those in our community that may live alone or be susceptible to engaging with strangers.

**REMEMBER IF IN DOUBT KEEP THEM OUT.**

## “Message in a Bottle” Initiative

The “Message in a Bottle” Initiative is free to all who need it and is aimed at older adults whose medical details are written on a page, placed inside the plastic bottle and kept in the fridge where the emergency services will find it. It will save the emergency services valuable time identifying someone in difficulty and will quickly provide his or her emergency contacts.

All First Responders i.e. the emergency services, HSE ambulance teams, Fire Brigade, and the Gardaí support the initiative. If called to an emergency, upon seeing the stickers, they will immediately collect the vital information from the fridge. Further details on this initiative available by contacting **057 86 64127** or email: **agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie**.

## I.C.E. Cards Initiative

**In Case of Emergency cards** are available from the Age Friendly Office. Designed to be carried on the person, in a wallet or purse, the card was conceived as an aid to first responders, in identifying a person and having access to vital information. It is particularly important if a person is non-responsive.

The card's primary function is to provide valuable information to first responders such as: Name, Eircode, who to contact in case of an emergency, allergies, blood type and medication. These details are to be filled in by the holder of the card and kept on the person. The input of first responders i.e. the Gardai, the HSE, and the Fire service was sought as to what was the most important information to have in case of an emergency. The secondary function of the card is to contain some useful contact numbers, such as Emergency Services, ESB Networks and Gas Networks Ireland. The cards are also being distributed through Laois County Council's Library Service, Laois Sports Partnership, Laois & Offaly Education & Training board, An Garda Síochána, and Laois & Offaly Local Link, all of whom are members of the Laois Age Friendly Alliance.

For more information and to request ICE cards for your group or to find out more about Age Friendly Laois, contact **Tom Curran** on **05786 64150 / 086 0363426** or **tcurran@laoiscoco.ie**

## Neighbourhood Watch/Community Alert

Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert are crime prevention programmes aimed at getting local communities working in partnership with the Gardaí and becoming actively involved in observing and reporting suspicious activities to help create a better environment in which to live. They will be in a position to advise you on home safety and work with the Gardaí on Text Alert notices and other security initiatives. Contact your local Garda Station or **Portlaoise Garda Station 057 86 74100** who will advise you about your nearest **Neighbourhood Watch** (Towns) or **Community Alert** (Rural Areas).

## Stay Safe While Out and About

An Garda Síochána offer the following advice on their Crime Prevention leaflet for Older People while out and about (**[www.garda.ie/documents](http://www.garda.ie/documents)**)

- Avoid travelling alone, where possible. Go with family, friends or neighbours.
- If travelling by car, keep all doors locked.
- Be alert when parking and getting in/out of your vehicle.
- On public transport sit as close to the driver or exit as possible.
- Keep cash to the minimum.
- Carry only the credit/debit cards that you need.
- Keep wallets and purses out of sight.
- Hand or shoulder bags should be kept close to the body and not dangling by the strap.
- Do not put your handbag on the shopping trolley in the supermarket.
- If collecting your pension or cash in the Post Office or bank, put the money into your purse or wallet before you leave the building.

Try to avoid walking at night; if you must, it is advisable to have a companion, walk in well-lit streets and as close to the roadside as possible. If you are threatened by physical force do not resist. Try to remain calm and, if possible, concentrate on getting a good description of the culprit.



## General Fire Safety in Your Home – Fire Prevention – Key Points

### Fire safety check:

A fire safety check only takes a few minutes but it could mean the difference between life and death. Make it part of your daily routine and always before you go to bed.

### Make sure to:

- ✓ Unplug all electrics at night (except equipment allowed to remain on like fridge, freezers etc)
- ✓ Empty ashtrays before you go to bed. Run the contents under the tap before you empty them.
- ✓ Place a spark guard in front of open fires.
- ✓ Close all doors at night. The closed doors will help reduce smoke spreading around your home.
- ✓ Make sure there is a charged phone or personal alert in the bedroom to call for help – (never charge your phone when you are asleep)
- ✓ Keep your way out clear of trip hazards day and night.
- ✓ Keep a working torch beside you at night in case of power failure.
- ✓ Keep the keys to doors and windows nearby.
- ✓ If you hear the fire alarm, check doors with the back of your hand for heat before you open them. If they are warm, the way might be blocked by fire.
- ✓ Call 999 or 112 and follow the control room operator advice (if possible have your Eircode reference with you for the 999 / 112 staff member information)
- ✓ Plan for a safe place in case you cannot get out of the house/bedroom. Make sure there is a window so you can either get out or call for help. Stay by the window if you can't get out.

### General Fire safety Advice

- ✓ Clean your chimney and service your heating system at least once a year.
- ✓ Use a spark guard with open fires.
- ✓ Where possible, keep your gas cylinder outside, on solid ground and away from anything hot.
- ✓ Use a proper holder for candles. (and always be careful that your pet can not reach and possibly knock over the candle and consider battery alternative candles where possible)
- ✓ Keep a suitable fire extinguisher and fire blanket in the kitchen
- ✓ Repair or replace faulty electrical appliances immediately.
- ✓ Do a fire safety check before you go to bed.

### Smoke alarms

- ✓ Smoke alarms give you an early warning of a fire. Over 80% of fires that kill people are in homes with no working smoke alarm.
- ✓ Fit smoke alarms in your home . Fit a heat alarm in the kitchen.
- ✓ Test your smoke alarms at least once a week.
- ✓ Change the battery right away when you hear the warning beep.
- ✓ Make an escape plan for your home and practice with everyone who lives with you.
- ✓ Plan at least two ways out in case one way is blocked by smoke and or fire.
- ✓ Have a meeting point in a safe place outside the house.

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors

A carbon monoxide detector or CO detector is a device that detects the presence of the carbon monoxide (CO) gas in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. CO is a poisonous colourless, tasteless and odourless gas given off by any appliance which burns a fossil fuel such as gas, coal or oil. It can enter your home if your appliance is faulty, or the room is not properly ventilated, or if the chimney or flue is blocked. They are readily available in any hardware store.

### NEVER:

- ✗ Smoke when you are in bed, tired or on medication.
- ✗ Leave the room when there are candles burning.
- ✗ Leave young children alone near an open fire or cooker.
- ✗ Leave matches and lighters where children can get them.
- ✗ Leave the room when a chip or frying pan is on even for a minute.
- ✗ Overload electric sockets – one socket, one plug.
- ✗ Use electric appliances that don't work properly.
- ✗ Use a heater or the cooker to dry clothes.
- ✗ Stand too close to fires or heaters.
- ✗ Use petrol or paraffin to light a solid fuel stove.
- ✗ Go back into a burning house for any reason.
- ✗ Borrow batteries from the smoke alarm.
- ✗ Have mirrors over fire places with real fires. Your clothes might catch fire if you stand too close to look in the mirror.



# SOCIAL & LEISURE ACTIVITIES

## Senior Citizen Clubs

There are many social/friendship clubs and groups in County Laois such as, Senior Citizens Groups, Social Services Groups, Art Groups, Flower and Garden Clubs, Vintage Clubs, Women's Groups, Knitting, Sewing Clubs, Dancing Groups, Whist & Bridge Card Clubs, Choirs, etc which organise get-togethers, Bingo, Outings and Christmas Parties. Perhaps you might like to join one or more of these groups, meet people, discover and make friends who have similar interests as yourself? You will find contact details of many of these groups and clubs on the Community Pages for your area in the local newspapers i.e. Laois Nationalist and Leinster Express or on noticeboards in local shops and parish churches/offices.

## Active Retirement Ireland

Active Retirement Associations in County Laois are all affiliated to Active Retirement Network Ireland. They were established to enable retired people and anybody over 55 to enjoy a full and active life and to advocate for them.

At local level, Active Retirement Associations arrange social events, educational options and activities which encourage and support retired people to remain healthy and active. Many Active Retirement Association members are also involved with other local organisations, providing much needed volunteers in a variety of activities. If you would like to join an Active Retirement Club or you would like more information, please contact the main office in Dublin on 01 873 3836 or visit the website [www.activeirl.ie](http://www.activeirl.ie)

Below are the Active Retirement Associations in County Laois as listed on the Active Retirement Ireland website. There may be other groups which provide a similar service but are not listed.

**Abbeyleix Active Retirement Association, Ballinakill Active Retirement Association, Camross Active Age Association, Cloneygowan Active Retirement Association, Cullohill Active Retirement Association, Emo Active Retirement Association, Killenard Active Retirement Association, Mountmellick Active Retirement Association, Portlaoise Active Retirement Association, Portarlinton Happy Hearts Active Retirement Association, Portarlinton St Brigid's Active Retirement Association, Rathdowney Active Retirement Association, Stradbally Active Retirement Association, and Vicarstown Recreational Group.**

## Birdwatch Ireland

Birdwatch Ireland is the largest most active conservation organisation in Ireland, dedicated to conserving Ireland's birds, habitats and biodiversity. For information on events and meetings in County Laois please contact **Des Finnamore**, Secretary of the Laois Branch of Birdwatch Ireland Telephone: **086 2291637**, **John Maher** on **086 601 3483** or visit their website [www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie), Email: [birdwatchlaois@gmail.com](mailto:birdwatchlaois@gmail.com) and Facebook page – **Birdwatch Ireland Laois Branch**.

## Green Gyms

Green Gyms aim to provide an outdoor fitness experience that is accessible and enjoyable to all. They are outdoor community gyms that resemble gym equipment found in an indoor gym. Laois outdoor gyms are located near areas of interest such as parks, Leisure Centres and playgrounds and are completely free to use. Each item of equipment is designed to improve the coordination, heart rate and posture of users. Users can enjoy exercising in the fresh air with friends and family as the variety and quantity of equipment ensures that many people can use the equipment at the same time.

## Irish Country Women's Association Clubs (ICA)

The ICA is the largest women's association in Ireland with more than 6,500 members and 338 guilds across the country. Laois Federation has been involved in ICA from its early days. If you are interested in joining or finding out more about the ICA in your area, please contact one of the following Guilds or Contact **Anne Cass**, Laois Federation President. Email: [annecassgrant@gmail.com](mailto:annecassgrant@gmail.com)

### ICA Guilds in Laois

Arles, Ballylinan, Borris-in-Ossory, Castletown, Clonad, Clough, Killabban, Killanure, Mountmellick, Portlaoise, Spink and Stradbally.

## Laois and Offaly Education and Training

The Further Education and Training Service within Laois Offaly Education and Training Board strives continually to both develop and provide a wide range of quality learning opportunities for adults throughout Laois and Offaly. The aim of the service is to encourage, enable and support adults who wish to return to education to avail of the educational opportunities that best suit their needs.

The Adult Education Guidance and Information Service provides information on education and training options. It works to encourage adult learners to think about their lives in a way they might not have done before, to re-evaluate their existing strengths, abilities and skills, as well as looking at ways to develop new ones.

The Adult Literacy Service provides free and confidential group classes and one-to-one tuition for adults who wish to improve their reading, writing, spellings, maths or basic computer skills.

The Community Education Programme supports the delivery of adult education courses in the community through the provision of funding for tuition costs and support in the setting up of courses. Priority is given to groups who organise community education programmes for people who face acute barrier to taking part in education: Older people, people experiencing disadvantage, people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, unemployed, carers and groups providing community education in areas where adults do not have easy access to education opportunities.

For more information:

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Laoise agus Uíbh Fhailí | Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board

1 Lyster Square, Portlaoise, Co. Laois R32 D268. M. **085 8054579** | w. [loetb.ie](http://loetb.ie)

## Laois Garden Trail

Laois Garden Trail offers 10 public and privately owned gardens open at different times throughout the year for people to visit. Please visit [www.laoistourism.ie](http://www.laoistourism.ie) to find out more or contact **Dominic Reddin** on **057 86 64218**.

## Laois Heritage Society

For information on upcoming events and meetings and to learn about the work of the Society, please Email: [laoisheritagesociety@gmail.com](mailto:laoisheritagesociety@gmail.com)

You can also visit their website [www.laoisheritagesociety.org](http://www.laoisheritagesociety.org)

## Laois Sports Partnership

Our role is to "Lead, Co-ordinate, Support, Inform and Deliver a range of Sports and Physical Activity opportunities for our community". Our work is guided by four pillars 1) Increase levels of participation, 2) More sustainable infrastructure, 3) Greater access to training & education and 4) Improved access to information. We provide a number of sport and physical activity programmes

for older adults to participate including prime time for older adults, activator poles, Go for Life Activities, PAL's (Physical Activity Leaders) Training, Sport Fests, bocchia etc. We also provide online resources for physical activity across our social media channels. In providing opportunities to participate we are increasing the numbers of older adults being more active, more often. These programmes also empower and enable older people to participate in sport and physical activity. Tel: **057 86 71248** to find out more information or visit their website **www.laoissports.ie**.

## Libraries

Libraries offer free membership to all of the community with a fantastic range of books, DVDs, magazines, newspapers and CDs and a host of other materials for lending. Libraries have modern comfortable buildings with helpful and trained staff who will assist in a professional manner. Libraries provide free knitting clubs, book clubs, adult colouring and mindfulness sessions, Irish conversation classes, book launches and also local history and heritage talks. Computer classes are available in some libraries. All libraries offer free sessions on the internet for our "silver surfers". Please check your local library for details, contact and opening hours are available on Appendices Page 48 at the back of the Guide.

## Lions Club

Lions are men and women dedicated to serving those in need, whether in their own community or around the world. Membership of Lions Clubs provides people with the opportunity to meet and work with other individuals in a spirit of fellowship, striving toward the common goal of helping those in need. The Portlaoise Lions Club hold their meetings on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 8.00pm in the Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise. There are also Lions Clubs in Abbeyleix and Portarlington.

## Rotary Club

Rotary Clubs unite people from all continents, cultures, and occupations to exchange ideas and act in communities around the world. The collective leadership and expertise of 50,000 members in Great Britain & Ireland, and 1.2 million members worldwide, helps to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges, locally and globally.

Meetings take place on the first and third Monday of every month. To find out more about Rotary please feel free to contact – **portlaoiserotary@gmail.com**

## Bealtaine Festival

Celebrating creativity in older age the Laois County Council Arts Office organise creative arts events in community settings and in care settings, during the month of May. Working with the Dunamais Arts Centre, the Library Service, Active Age groups and Laois Sports Partnership, a programme of events is published each year.

## Men's Sheds

The Irish Men's Shed Association works towards a future where all men have the opportunity to improve and maintain their health and well-being by participating in a community Men's Shed. A Men's Shed is a dedicated, friendly and welcoming meeting place where men come together and undertake a variety of mutually agreed activities. Men's Sheds are open to all men regardless of age, background or ability and are a place to share skills and knowledge while maintaining or enhancing the well-being of the participants.

The following are the Men's Sheds in County Laois as listed on the national Men's Shed website **www.menssheds.ie**. You can also contact their national number on **01 891 6150** for more information. The main point of contact for **Laois Men's Shed** is Liam Stapleton on **087 1329122**.

- **Mountrath Men’s Shed Contact:** Jack Ozenbrook Tel: 0860734023
- **Borris in Ossory Men’s Shed Contact:** Michael Ward Tel: 086 355 6223 or Pat Dunne Tel: 087 289 4640
- **Rathdowney Men’s Shed Contact:** Patrick Ryan Tel: 087 259 0504
- **Laois Travellers Men’s Shed Contact:** Niamh Fingleton Tel: 057 868 2210
- **Portarlington Men’s Shed Contact:** Paddy Kelly Tel: 087 3493649 or Val Kennedy: 0872332653
- **Mountmellick Men’s Shed Contact:** Tom Gorry Tel: 087 6177727 or Joseph Kelly Tel: 086 0760 853
- **Portlaoise Men’s Shed Contact:** Ray Harte Tel: 086 2624092 or Dominic Kessie Tel: 087 2916469
- **Knock Vintage Men’s Shed:** Niall Headen Tel: 087 814 1682 or Brian Brennan Tel: 087 261 9151

### **TFI Local Link Laois Offaly – Bus Service**

TFI Local Link Laois Offaly provides safe secure and reliable Public Transport services in local and rural areas of Laois. Open 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday Scheduled services and door-to-door services Free Travel Pass accepted. Pre-book door-to-door services with TFI Local Link Laois Offaly Email: [lo@locallink.ie](mailto:lo@locallink.ie). Telephone: **057 86 91268** Website: [locallinklaoisoffaly.ie/](http://locallinklaoisoffaly.ie/)

### **Train Stations in County Laois**

- **Portlaoise Station** 057 86 21303
- **Portarlington Station** 057 86 23128
- **Ballybrophy Station** 0505 46331

### **Bus Services throughout Laois**

- **Slieve Bloom Coaches** 057 86 24416 [www.slievebloomcoaches.ie](http://www.slievebloomcoaches.ie)
- **JJ Kavanagh & Sons** 0818 333 222 [www.jjkavanagh.ie](http://www.jjkavanagh.ie)
- **Martleys of Portlaoise** 057 86 20888 [www.martleys.com](http://www.martleys.com)
- **Bus Éireann** 0818 836 611 [www.buseireann.ie](http://www.buseireann.ie)
- **M & A Coaches** 056 88 33454 [www.mandacoaches.com](http://www.mandacoaches.com)

### **Free Travel Scheme**

The Free Travel Scheme allows you to travel free of charge on all public transport owned by the State. This includes bus, rail and Dublin’s LUAS with some exceptions.

Everyone aged 66 and over, legally living permanently in the State, is entitled to the Free Travel Scheme. Some people under 66 also qualify. You cannot use your existing free travel pass for free travel within Northern Ireland.

More information about the scheme can be found at [www.gov.ie/en/service/9bba61-free-travel-scheme/](http://www.gov.ie/en/service/9bba61-free-travel-scheme/)

You should contact the Department of Social Protection to check if your private bus operator accepts free travel cards.

## Free Travel and Public Services Card

The Government has introduced a Public Services Card which will allow people to access a range of government services and payments. The Public Services Card will eventually replace the Free Travel Pass. If you are entitled to free travel, when you are issued with your new Public Services Card it will also be your Free Travel Card. The card will have FT printed in a yellow octagon in the top-left-hand corner of the card. You may also be entitled to Free Travel plus a companion. The card will have FT + C printed in a yellow octagon in the top-left hand corner of the card. You must show your Public Services Card to the travel operator when you are using public transport.

If you are aged 66 or over and are getting a social welfare pension, the Free Travel Card will be issued automatically if you have registered for your Public Services Card. If you have not registered for a Public Services Card, you will be asked to register before your Free Travel Card is issued to you. Contact Portlaoise Social Welfare Office at 057 86 78010 for an appointment to get your new Public Services/Free Travel Card. You must attend in person in order to have your photograph taken. Bring Passport/Driving Licence as proof of identity and a current Utility Bill as proof of address.

## All Ireland Free Travel

This scheme allows a Free Travel cardholder to travel free of charge on all bus and rail services within Northern Ireland using a Senior Smart-Pass card. Free Travel cardholders wishing to avail of the All Ireland Free Travel scheme within Northern Ireland must first get a Senior Smart-Pass card. To get this you must fill in an application form. (It is not possible to get this form online, you must contact your local social welfare office).

For more information on any of these schemes or for help with application forms please contact the Free Travel Section of the Social Welfare Services Office in Sligo:

Tel: **071 915 7100** Lo-call: **0818 200 400** Website: **www.welfare.ie**

You can also contact your local Citizen's Information Centre for more information.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Alzheimer's Society

The Alzheimer's Society of Ireland works across the country in local communities providing dementia specific services and supports and advocates for the rights and needs of all people living with dementia and their carers. They also operate the Alzheimer National Helpline offering information and support to anyone affected by dementia on 1800 341341.

The Laois Alzheimer's Society supports a Dementia Home Care Service, a Family Support Group monthly meeting for family carers and a bi-monthly Social Club in The Portlaoise Parish Centre for people with memory problems and their family carer.

**Laois Alzheimer's Branch Office:** Alzheimer's Society, Community Centre, An Garran, Kiln Lane, Mountrath, Co Laois, R32 X8H0. Contact Ann Munnelly: **057 87 56371 / 086 837 2168** or email: **amunnelly@alzheimier.ie**

### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels can organise delivery of a midday meal to your home if you are living alone or are incapacitated. There is a nominal cost per meal. Contact your **Public Health Nurse** for information on the areas in which this service operates.

### St. Vincent de Paul (SVP)

The Society of St. Vincent De Paul's main goal is to fight poverty in all its forms through practical assistance to people in need. The SVP offer direct, personal assistance that is non-judgemental and based on the need of the individual or family. In addition, the SVP provides a wide range of services through its local offices, shops, Resource centres, housing, day-care and holiday schemes. For more information contact: **Abbeyleix 087 6247868 or 057 87 57345; Mountrath 086 6616270; Portarlinton 087 7640557 or 057 8643886; Portlaoise 057 86 60486; Stradbally 087 1359382.**

Helpline: **087 7655793** and Regional Office: **051 350725.**

National Office: Telephone **01 8848200** or Email: **info@svp.ie** or **www.svp.ie**

### Support for Carers

Family Carers Ireland is Ireland's national voluntary organisation for family carers. Family Carers Ireland provides a variety of supports and services throughout Laois, which include support groups, workshops, advocacy, training and respite in the home. Support groups provide a place for carers to meet, chat to one another and receive support from the other members of the group. A confidential Free-Phone Care-line on 1800 240 724 is available which offers advice and support to families who are caring for a loved one.

The Laois/Offaly branch is located at Market Square, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 PW50.

Contact Beth Wogan on **057 93 22920** or **bwogan@familycarers.ie** or log onto **laois.ie/wp-content/uploads/Who-Cares-Carers-Resource-Pack-1.pdf**

### Laois Volunteer Centre

We aim to be a 'one stop shop' for all your volunteering needs in County Laois. Laois Volunteer Centre is an independent organisation which works with individuals and organisations to carry out a range of activities to improve our communities.

We provide the following services for volunteers:

- Information about volunteering opportunities.
- Information about finding suitable volunteering opportunities – matching your skills, talents



and abilities to a suitable organisation / organisations, taking into account the time you have available, your interests etc.

- Support and advice about volunteering.

**info@volunteerlaois.ie**

**087 24 99 659 / 089 231 8904**

## Laois Befriending Service

ALONE's Visitation Support & Befriending Service provides regular visits to an older person from a volunteer who provides one-to-one companionship and practical support. Volunteers can support with practical tasks and provide information on local activities and relevant initiatives. All volunteers are trained, Garda vetted and receive support from ALONE staff.

If you wish to be an ALONE befriending volunteer in Laois, register with Laois Volunteer Centre at **www.volunteerlaois.ie** or email **info@volunteerlaois.ie** or phone Catriona on **0872499659** or Storm on **0892318904**.

If you wish to avail of the befriending service, contact ALONE through their website **www.alone.ie** or email **fiona.boyle@alone.ie**

## Fáilte Isteach

Fáilte Isteach is a community project which trains volunteers to welcome migrants through English conversation classes. The programme provides necessary language skills to new migrants in a student centred, welcoming and inclusive manner, while involving volunteers and recognising their skills, expertise and contribution to the community. In Laois, Fáilte Isteach classes are provided by Laois Partnership Company in conjunction with Third Age, Laois/Offaly ETB and Respond Social Housing and especially welcome older people to train up as volunteers. If you wish to become a Fáilte Isteach volunteer or to avail of the English conversation classes, contact Fáilte Isteach on **087 9131236**.

There are six classes in run in Laois:

- Portarlinton Further Education and Training Centre, 12 Bracklone Street, Portarlinton
- Laois Partnership Company buildings, New Road, Portlaoise, R32VY22
- Manor Hotel, Abbeyleix
- Durrrow Library
- Mountmellick Further Education and Training Centre
- Pedigree Corner Ballylinan

Contact **Olena Kryvulya**, Fáilte Isteach coordinator, by email:

**olenakryvulya@laoispartnership.ie** or telephone: **087 9131236**

## East Midlands Parkinson's

East Midlands Parkinson's is a branch of the Parkinson's Association of Ireland and provides support for people with Parkinson's disease and their families in the Midlands area. They offer support in the form of information, advice, friendship and also provide classes such as yoga, movement to music and speech therapy. They hold about six general meetings per year at which a health professional will give a presentation on up to date therapies and advice on being as well as you can be while living with Parkinson's disease. After each meeting a cup of tea and refreshments is shared where members get a chance to interact with each other and share experiences and information. It is vital for people with Parkinson's disease to stay active and they strive to encourage members to do this through the classes provided. The social aspect of activities is also very important to members who are encouraged not to give up on life after diagnoses. If you would like further information on East Midlands Parkinson's please contact **Martina** at **087 6550176**, **John** at **087 2712448** or **Marian** at **085 211297**.

## Family Resource Centre

Family Resource Centres promote and support health, wellbeing and quality of life for families and individuals in the communities through social, recreational and educational activities.

Portlaoise Family Resource Centre, Harpur's Lane, Portlaoise, Co. Laois, Tel: **057 86 86151**  
Email: [info@portlaoisefrc.ie](mailto:info@portlaoisefrc.ie)

## Arthritis Ireland Laois Branch

The Laois Branch is committed to creating awareness, providing information and support to people with a diagnosis of arthritis and fibromyalgia including their family and carers in the County of Laois. This is a small group of volunteers who have a monthly support group on the last Tuesday of every month in Eddie Phelan's restaurant, Mountrath at 11am. No prior booking is necessary, just arrive for a friendly chat and a cuppa. Contact the Laois Branch on **086 8852503**.

The group also promotes activities, as they believe to keep moving/active is essential for general health and wellbeing. Some of the activities promoted and arranged are:

- **A walking group** each Tuesday morning from 10.45am to 12.00 midday in Castletown, meeting outside the church. This is open to people of any age and fitness level as it is supervised by a Trained Walking Leader.
- **Gentle Zumba Classes, Fit-Sticks** and **Aqua Aerobics** training sessions at intervals throughout the year.

Details are advertised on their website and Facebook page and parish newsletters.

## Vision Ireland (previously NCBI)

Vision Ireland is a not for profit charity, which offers support and services to people of all ages, who are experiencing difficulties with their eyesight. Vision Ireland offers community-based services to help people to adapt to sight loss and maintain their independence. Services provided are emotional support to individuals and their families, and advice and information on all aspects of vision loss. Practical support is provided as well through the provision of assistive technology and other practical aids to maintain an independent lifestyle within the community. If you wish for further information, please do not hesitate to contact Vision Ireland.

Location: Vision Ireland Laois, Alvernia House, St. Fintan's Campus, Dublin Road, Portlaoise.  
Telephone – **057 86 60191** or **1800 911250**.

## Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)

The Irish Wheelchair Association's vision is the achievement of full social, economic and educational inclusion and integration of people with disabilities as equal, independent and participative members of their communities and society.

Portlaoise branch operates a four-day service and a youth service, a range of activities from social to educational are offered and at all times making the service person centred. The IWA believe people have a right to freedom of choice, self-determination and to be respected as individuals, and dignity and control over how they live their lives.

**Sylvia Rouget**, Service Support Officer, Irish Wheelchair Association, Alvernia House, St. Fintan's Campus, Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.  
Tel: **057 86 94030** or Mobile: **087 26 51706** Email: [sylvia.rouget@iwa.ie](mailto:sylvia.rouget@iwa.ie).

# USEFUL NUMBERS

## Age Action

A charity which promotes positive ageing and better policies and services for older people across the country. Age Action provides services including Care and Repair, computer training and information, and also campaigns for older people at national level. For more information Tel: **01 475 6989** Email: [info@ageaction.ie](mailto:info@ageaction.ie) or visit their website: [www.ageaction.ie](http://www.ageaction.ie)

## Age & Opportunity

A national organisation that inspires everyone to reach their full potential as they age. The organisation facilitates opportunities to engage in arts, cultural activities, sport and physical activity and to learn and be involved as active citizens. They work to provide opportunities to encourage people to live their longer lives to the full. They are continually finding new ways to engage, to motivate and to support people in this adventure.

For more information Tel: **01 805 7709** or visit their website: [www.ageandopportunity.ie](http://www.ageandopportunity.ie)

## Third Age

Third Age is a national voluntary organisation celebrating the third age in life when people may no longer be in paid employment, but remain healthy, fulfilled and continue to contribute to society. The organisation runs a Senior Help Line which is a confidential telephone listening service for older people provided by trained older volunteers for the price of a local call anywhere in Ireland.

For more information call **046 955 7766** or visit their website [www.thirdageireland.ie](http://www.thirdageireland.ie)

## ALONE — Helping older people in need

ALONE work with older people who are socially isolated, homeless, living in poverty or crisis and support them to age at home.

ALONE provide direct support to hundreds of older people every week through four main services – Community Support, Befriending, Supportive Housing and Campaigns for Change.

ALONE do not duplicate services provided by other organisations, but work in partnership to ensure the best outcome for the older person in need. Every older person who contacts them for help receives a direct service from them or are referred on to an organisation who can provide them with the support they require.

Telephone: **0818 222 024**

Email: [enquiries@alone.ie](mailto:enquiries@alone.ie)

Address: ALONE, Olympic House, Pleasants Street, Dublin 8

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### Falls Prevention

Falls in the elderly lead to an increase in the risk of hospitalisation and a significant health decline. As well as physical injuries suffered, the psychological and social consequences of falling can have an equally huge impact. As you get older, a fall can result in broken bones, but also in loss of confidence, loss of mobility, depression, anxiety, isolation, loss of independence and fear of leaving your home. Many falls can be prevented, and by making small changes you can lower your chances of falling.

1. Keep active, exercise and wear loose, comfortable clothing and well fitted sturdy shoes.
2. Regular physical activity makes you stronger and improves your balance and coordination.
3. Start with walking. You can slowly increase the distance you walk.
4. Ask your GP to review your medicines as some medicines may make you feel faint.
5. Have your vision checked as your eyesight changes as you get older.
6. Arrange furniture so that you can easily move around all your rooms.
7. Keep the floors clear from papers and books that could cause a trip.
8. Remove rugs or use non-slip tape or backing so rugs will not slip.
9. Make sure wires or cords from lamps, telephones etc do not trail where you walk.
10. Do not leave shoes or books on steps of stairs.
11. Have a light switch fitted at the top and bottom of the stairs.
12. Install handrails on both sides of the stairs, making sure they reach the top.
13. Fit grab rails next to your toilet, bath and shower.
14. Use non-slip mat in the bath or shower.
15. Keep items you use often in the kitchen within easy reach.
16. If you need to reach high shelves use a steady step rather than a chair.
17. Place a lamp close to your bed where it is easy to reach.
18. Make sure there is a light between your bedroom and the bathroom.
19. Have a phone extension fitted in your bedroom.
20. Wear a personal alarm.

### Driving Licence

You are required to **carry your driving licence** with you at all times when driving. When your driving licence expires, you must renew it if you wish to continue driving. The Road Safety Authority now has responsibility for driver licensing and has set up a new National Driver Licence Service (NDLS). When applying for a driving licence, you have to visit one of the new NDLS centres. The only NDLS centre in Laois is in the Laois Shopping Centre in Portlaoise. As part of the face-to-face application process, your photo and your signature is captured digitally. You must also provide (1) Evidence of your PPS Number, (2) Proof of Address (3) Photographic ID to confirm your identity.

A new plastic-card driving licence has been introduced, replacing the paper driving licence. If you are older than 67 but under 70 years of age, you may apply for a 3-year licence. Once you are over the age of 70, you will need a Medical Certificate to drive which must be completed by your doctor to apply for a 3-year or a one-year licence. Medical Certificates must be submitted within one month from the date of signing by your doctor. Motorists over the age of 70 can get their driving licence renewed for free.

## Garda Stations and DSP (CWO) Contact Numbers & Times

Abbeyleix Garda Station	057 87 30580
Arles Garda Station	059 91 47628
Ballylinan Garda Station	059 86 25112
Borris-in-Ossory Garda Station	0505 41122
Clonaslee Garda Station	057 86 28022
Durrow Garda Station	057 87 36113
Mountmellick Garda Station	057 86 24140
Mountrath Garda Station	057 87 32236
Portarlinton Garda Station	057 86 23112
Portlaoise Garda Station	057 86 74100
Rathdowney Garda Station	0505 46122
Stradbally Garda Station	057 86 25222

## Laois Defibrillator

In an emergency situation, it is important that Responders are able to find and access a defibrillator within 4 minutes of the casualty collapsing.

The Laois Defibrillator Group are dedicated to generating awareness of the importance of 24/7 public access to Life Saving Cardiac Defibrillators, and to make everybody aware of the Location of their nearest Defibrillator.

A map of all defibrillators is available at <http://laoisdefib.com/>

## Department of Social Protection (Community Welfare Officer)

Office Location	Address	Catchment Area	Phone	Times
Graiguecullen	Health Centre, Graiguecullen, Co. Laois	Graiguecullen, Ballylinan, and Wolfhill	059 9136066	Tuesday & Friday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Mountmellick	Primary Care Centre, Mountmellick, Co. Laois	Mountmellick, Clonaslee, and Rosenallis	057 8634101	Thursday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Portarlinton	Primary Care Centre, Kilnacourt, Portarlinton,	Portarlinton, Emo and Ballybrittas	0578642110	Tuesday & Thursday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Portlaoise	DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	Graiguecullen, Ballylinan, Wolfhill and Portlaoise Town	0578678010	Wednesday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Portlaoise	DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	Rathdowney, Mountrath, Camross and Portlaoise Town	0818 405060	Tuesday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Portlaoise	DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	Abbeyleix, Durrow and Portlaoise Town	0818 405060	Thursday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Portlaoise	DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	Stradbally and Portlaoise Town	0818 405060	Friday 10.00am–12.00pm By Appointment Only
Rathdowney	DSP Government Buildings, Old Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise, Co. Laois	Rathdowney, Mountrath and Camross	(0505) 46920	Thursday 11.00am–1.00pm By Appointment Only

- Dr Adrian McDonald, Clann Medical Centre, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. Tel: 057 8620371
- Dr Aileen Twomey, Kilnacourt Surgery, Kilnacourt House, Bracklone Street, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623333
- Dr Alice Phelan, Mountrath Health Centre, Link Road, Mountrath, Laois. 057 8732203
- Dr Andrew Lavin, Kilnacourt Surgery, Kilnacourt House, Bracklone Street, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623333
- Dr Anna Gullane, Clann Medical Centre, Green View, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8620371
- Dr Anna Kavanagh, Clann Medical Centre, Green View, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8620371
- Dr Anna Kavanagh, Abbeyleix Health Centre, Ballinakill Road, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8731359
- Dr Anne-Marie Miller, Stradbally Medical Practice, Court Square, Stradbally, Laois. 057 8625106
- Dr Ashfaq Ahmad, Kilminchy Medical Centre / Boston Health Centre, Saint Anne's, Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8668440
- Dr Averil Atkinson, Deirdre fa, 86 Main Street, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8662929
- Dr Avril Murphy, An Lialann, College Avenue, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8624299
- Dr Cathleen McFadden, Maryborough Family Practice, Parkside, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8662929
- Dr Marese Murphy/, Clann Medical Centre, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8620372
- Dr Ciara O'Boyle, Portarlinton Family Practice, Rosetta, Station Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8642772
- Dr Conor Grimes, Stradbally Medical Practice, Court Square, Stradbally, Laois. 057 8625106
- Dr David Booth, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr David Joyce, Dr. John S. Madden, Main Street, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8668440
- Dr Denis Hickey, Medical Centre, 4 Anfield Terrace, Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8622200
- Dr Desmond McGlynn, An Lialann, College Avenue, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8624299
- Dr Ethelda Ellis, Portarlinton Family Practice, Rosetta, Station Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8642772
- Dr Fergus McKeagney, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Fiadhait Carroll, Kilnacourt Surgery, Kilnacourt House, Bracklone Street, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623333
- Dr Frank O'Hara, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Gisele Lopes Semedo dos Reis, Rathdowney Health Centre, Rathdowney, Laois. 050 548856
- Dr Gráinne McHale, Dr. John S. Madden, Main Street, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8668440
- Dr Huma Nasir, The Fairgreen Clinic, Gandon Court, Fairgreen, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8665094
- Dr Jeanne Brennan, Dr. John S. Madden, Main Street, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8668440
- Dr John Geraghty, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr John Lyons, Dr John Lyons, Mountrath Health Centre, Link Road, Mountrath, Laois. 057 8632203
- Dr John Madden, Dr. John S. Madden, Main Street, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8668440
- Dr John White, Portarlinton Family Practice, Rosetta, Station Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8642772
- Dr John-Paul Campion, Rathdowney Health Centre, Rathdowney, Laois. 050 548856
- Dr Judith Murray, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Julie Cuningham, Clonaslee Medical

- Centre, Capparogan, Clonaslee, Laois. 057 8648170
- Dr Kateryna Kachurets, Kilnacourt Surgery, Kilnacourt House, Bracklone Street, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623333
- Dr Maeve Carroll, Borris In Ossory Health Centre, Sentryhill, Borris-in-Ossory, Laois. 050 541198
- Dr Maeve Lee, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Mahan Bati, An Lialann, College Avenue, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8624299
- Dr Maria Carroll, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Mary Sheehan, Clonaslee Medical Centre, Capparogan, Clonaslee, Laois. 057 8648170
- Dr Michelle Byrne, Maryborough Family Practice, Parkside, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8662929
- Dr Mousumi Dunne, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Niamh Barrett, Clonaslee Medical Centre, Capparogan, Clonaslee, Laois. 057 8648170
- Dr Niamh Lavin, Borris In Ossory Health Centre, Sentryhill, Borris-in-Ossory, Laois. 050 541198
- Dr Nora Whelan, Stradbally Medical Practice, Court Square, Stradbally, Laois. 057 8625106
- Dr Olive Strumble, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Orla Fitzgerald, Clann Medical Centre, Green View, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8620371
- Dr Oxana Gradinar, Portarlinton Family Practice, Rosetta, Station Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8642772
- Dr Padraic Farrell, Dr. Padraic Farrell, Ballylinan, Laois. 059 8625108
- Dr Patrick Maher, Old Chapel Medical Centre, Chapel Street, Durrow, Laois. 05787 36610
- Dr Patrick O'Dwyer, Mountrath Health Centre, Link Road, Mountrath, Laois. 057 8732203
- Dr Peter Kemple, Abbeyleix Health Centre, Ballinakill Road, Abbeyleix, Laois. 057 8731359
- Dr Petrus Joubert, Mountrath Health Centre, Link Road, Mountrath, Laois. 057 8732203
- Dr Robert Lawlor, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Roberta Jianu, Glenard Clinic, Connolly Street, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8679830
- Dr Saad Bahusseini, Medical Centre Portlaoise, James Fintan Lalor Avenue, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8664546
- Dr Sahar Abo Attiya, Portlaoise Women's Health Clinic & Family Planning Clinic, James Fintan Lalor Avenue, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8688750
- Dr Salgaonkar Mahadev, Glenard Clinic, Connolly Street, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8679830
- Dr Sarah Punch, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Sean Maontague, Kilnacourt Surgery, Kilnacourt House, Bracklone Street, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623333
- Dr Sharon Delaney, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Sharon McDonald, Clann Medical Centre, Green View, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8620371
- Dr Shonagh Mooney, Medi Centre, Link Road, Portarlinton, Laois. 057 8623138
- Dr Simon Honan, Maryborough Family Practice, Parkside, Abbeyleix Rd, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8662929
- Dr Sinead Burke, The Cedar Clinic, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, Laois. 057 8621110
- Dr Sinead Lynch, An Lialann, College Avenue, Mountmellick, Laois. 057 8624299
- Dr Thomas Stewart, Dr. Thomas Stewart, 27 Gandon Close, Fairgreen, Portlaoise, Laois. 05786 65388



## Health Centres in County Laois

### Abbeyleix

Health Centre: Public Health Nurse, Dental and GP 057 87 31649 (PHN)  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-1.00 and 2.00-5.30 057 875 7196 (Dental)  
 057 87 31359 (GP)

### Ballylinan

Health Centre: 059 86 21508  
 Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30-10.30

### Borris-in- Ossory

Health Centre, Public Health Nurse 0505 41172  
 Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30-10.30  
 GP: Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 10.00-12.00 & 0505 41172  
 Mon, Thurs 5.00-7.00 & Fri 3.00-5.00

### Clonaslee

Health Centre, Public Health Nurse 057 86 48033  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-10.30 057 864 8170  
 GP: Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.00-12.30 & Mon, Fri 2.30-4.00 & Tue, Thurs 3.30-7.00

### Durrow

Health Centre: Public Health Nurse 057 86 36133  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-10.30  
 GP: Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.00-1.00 and 3.00-5.30 057 87 36585

### Emo

Health Centre: GP & Public Health Nurse 057 86 46575  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-1.00 and 2.00-5.30

### Graiguecullen

Health Centre: Oakley Park 059 91 43651  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.00-5.00

### Mountmellick

Primary Care Centre: 057 86 97500  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Thurs 9.00-1.00 and 1.30-5.00 and Fri 9.00-1.00 and 2.00-5.00

### Mountrath

Health Centre, Public Health Nurse 057 87 32422  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 8.00-1.00 and 2.00-7.00 057 87 56060  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 8.15-12.00 and 2.00-6.00 057 87 32203  
 GP: Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.00-12.00 and 2.00-6.00 057 87 32203

### Portarlinton

Primary Care Centre: 057 87 45038  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30 - 10.30 057 86 84203

### Portlaoise

Health Centre: St. Fintan's Campus, Dublin Rd, Portlaoise 057 86 92873  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-1.00 and 2.00-5.30

### Rathdowney

Health Centre: Public Health Nurse and Dental 0505 46276 (PHN)  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-5.00 0505 46276 (GP)

### Stradbally

Health Centre: Public Health Nurse 057 86 25415  
 Opening Hrs: Mon-Fri 9.30-10.30

## Libraries in County Laois

Branch	Telephone Number	Opening Hours
<b>Abbeyleix Library</b> Market House Abbeyleix Co Laois R32CY65	057 873 0020 abbeyleixlibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tue, Wed, Fri 9.30am–1.30pm & 2.30pm–5.00pm Thursday 9.30–1.30pm & 2.30–5pm Sat 10am–1pm
<b>Durrow Library</b> Durrow, Co. Laois.	057 87 36090 durrowlibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tuesday 1.30pm–5.30pm & 6.00pm–7.30pm Wednesday 10am–1.30pm & 2.00pm–5.30pm
<b>Mountmellick Library</b> O'Moore St Mountmellick Co. Laois. R32 PX61	057 86 44572 mountmellicklibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tuesday 9.30am–1.00pm & 2.00pm–7.30pm Wed, Thu 9.30am–1.00pm & 2.00pm–5.30pm Friday 9.30am–1.00pm & 2.00pm–5.00pm Saturday 9.30am–2pm
<b>Mountrath Library</b> Shannon St Mountrath Co. Laois R32 D576	057 87 56378 mountrathlibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tue, Wed, Fri 10.00am–1.00pm & 2.00pm–5.00pm Thursday 10.00am–1.00pm & 2.00pm–7.30pm Saturday 10am–1.00pm
<b>Portarlington Library</b> Main St. Portarlington Co. Laois R32 PY58	057 86 43751 portarlingtonlibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tue, Thu 10.00am–1.30pm & 2.30pm–5.30pm Wednesday 10.00am–1.30pm & 2.30pm–7.30pm Friday 10.00am–1.30pm & 2.30pm–5.00pm Saturday 10.00am–1.00pm
<b>Portlaoise Library</b> 23 Lower Main St Portlaoise Co. Laois R32 N7EP	057 86 22333 portlaoiselibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Mon, Tue, Fri 10.00am–5.00pm Wed, Thu 10.00am–7.30pm Saturday 10.00am–4.00pm
<b>Rathdowney Library</b> Mill Road Rathdowney Co. Laois R32 DXP5	0505 46852 rathdowneylibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Monday 2.30pm–5pm & 7pm–9pm Wednesday 12.30pm–1.30pm & 2.30pm–5pm Thursday 7pm–9pm Friday 2.30pm–5pm
<b>Stradbally Library</b> Court Square, Stradbally, Co. Laois R32 DT28	057 86 41673 stradballylibrary@laoiscoco.ie	Tue, Thu 1.00pm–5.00pm & 5.30pm–8.00pm Saturday 10.00am–1.00pm
<b>Library HQ</b> The Old Mill Church St Portlaoise Co. Laois R32 HDA3	057 86 89338 library@laoiscoco.ie	Mon–Fri 9.00am–5.00pm

## Weekly Walking Groups in Laois

Group Name	Contact Name	Mobile	Meeting Point	Walk Schedule
Mountmellick Walking Group	Tina Murray	086 1020431	Assemble at MDA Car Park, Mountmellick	Walk every Tuesday at 10.00am. All levels of fitness. New members welcome.
Portlaoise Stepping Out Walking Group	Maureen Culleton	087 9395670	Assemble at Portlaoise Leisure Centre	Walk every Tuesday and Thursday evening at 7.30pm. Also, some Saturday mornings. All walking sessions are 30/40 minutes duration.
Port Trail Walking Group	Donie Molloy	086 3288858	Assemble at Park Lane Car Park, Portarlinton	Walks every Monday at 7.30pm. 40 minutes duration suitable for beginners and Walks every Tuesday at 6.45pm approx. 5km. All Welcome.
Ballybrittas Walks	Mary Boland	086 4026321	Assemble at Rathadaire Church (beside motorway bridge)	Walks every Tuesday at 9.30am. 5km/60 minutes duration approx. All Welcome.
Mountrath Ramblers Walking Group	Anne Delaney	087 9067386	Assemble at Chapel Car Park, St. Fintan's Hall, Mountrath	Walks every Tuesday at 10.45am and Thursday evenings at 7.15pm. All Welcome.
Borris-in-Ossory Walking Group	Mary Fitzpatrick	085 1209894 fuelyourroots@gmail.com	Ossory Hurling Pitch	Walks every Monday and Wednesday at 7.30pm. All Welcome. Walks stop during the summer.
Swan Community Centre	Marien Condren	086 3850905 marien.condren@hotmail.com	The Swan Community Centre	Walks every Monday at 7.30pm, duration of approx. 1 hour. All Welcome.

\* See Slieve Bloom Annual Walking Programme at [www.slievebloom.ie](http://www.slievebloom.ie) or [info@slievebloom.ie](mailto:info@slievebloom.ie)

# SUPPORT AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

## HSE Services

Adult Counselling Service	1800 234 113
Midlands Office: (Victims of Abuse)	057 93 27141
Adult Homelessness (Liaison Nurse)	087 066 0161
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	057 86 96152
Community Alcohol & Drug Service	057 86 92516
Triogue Community Mental Health Centre Portlaoise	057 86 22925
Health Centre, Portlaoise (CWO, Public Health, Social Work, Psychology)	057 86 21135
Health Promotion	057 93 57800
Midlands Crisis Pregnancy Counselling	1800 200 857
Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise	057 86 21364
MIDOC Out of Hours GP Service	1850 302 702
Psychiatry Dept., Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise	057 86 96396
Psychiatry of later life (P.O.L.L)	057 8670245
Resource Office for Suicide Prevention	086 815 7320
	086 8157850

## Local Organisations

ACCORD, Portlaoise / accordportlaoise@hotmail.com	086 41 49034 or	057 86 61581
Ana Liffey Drug Project: Midlands		1800 786 828
Barnardos Family Support Services:	National Callsave: 1850 222 300 or	057 93 26803
Family Carers Ireland		057 93 22920
		1800 240 724
Citizens Information Centres:		0818 075 590
Cuisse Cancer Support Centre		057 86 81492
Domestic Violence Support Services (Laois)		057 86 71100
Domestic Violence Support Services (Carlow)		1800 444 944
Family Resource Centre, Portlaoise		057 86 86151
Foroige (Regional Office)		090 64 48947
Gardai (EMERGENCY ONLY)		999 or 112 from mobile
GROW: Regional Office Information Line: 1890 474 474		057 93 51124
Mental Health Ireland:	Area Development Officer:	086 835 3387
	National Office:	01 284 1166
Merchants Quay Ireland		01 5240160
Midlands Project		090 64 17097
		086 793 4920
Outreach Team		087 292 5727
Midlands Regional Youth Services		057 93 24724
Youth Work Ireland Midlands		090 64 77075
Midlands Simon Community		090 6444641
Emergency Accommodation Athlone		090 64 50280

Emergency Accommodation Tullamore		057 93 51485
Money Advice & Budgeting Service	Email: portlaoise@mabs.ie	0818 07 2620
	National Helpline:	0818 07 2000
St. Vincent De Paul, Portlaoise		057 86 60486
		087 7655793
Portlaoise Parish Centre		057 86 21142
Portlaoise Youth Café		057 86 65010
SHINE: Regional Office	Information Line:	1890 621 631
		086 8525281

## Counselling

PCI Counselling Service Midlands (reduced cost) (11.00am-6.00pm)		0818 555 450
Online counselling		www.turn2me.ie

## National Organisations

Active Retirement Information		01 873 3836
AI / Anon / Alateen		01 873 2699
Alcoholic Anonymous		01 842 0700
Men's Aid Ireland		01 554 3811
Aware	Email: supportmail@aware.ie	Helpline 1800 80 48 48
BeLonG to (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgendered)		01 670 6223 www.belongto.org
Bodywhys (Eating Disorders Association)		01 210 4963 087 203 9752
Helpline		01 210 7906
Cancer National Helpline		1800 200 700
CARI (Child Sexual Abuse Counselling) Helpline		1890 924 567
Connect Adult Abuse Counselling Service		1800 477 477
24/7 Suicide Helpline (Pieta House)		1800 247 247 Text 'help' to 51444
Childline		1800 666 666
Domestic Violence Helpline		059 917 3552
Drugs/HIV Helpline		1800 459 459
Farm and Rural Stress Helpline	Email: farmandruralstress@hse.ie	1800 742 645
Gamblers Anonymous		01 872 1133
Garda Confidential Line		1800 666 111
Gay Switchboard		01 872 1055
LGBT Helpline		1800 929 539
HSE Information Helpline		1850 241 850
Men's Sheds	www.menssheds.ie	057 86 62732
Missing Persons Helpline		1890 442 552
MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence)		085 874 8108
National Office for Victims of Abuse		1800 252 524
One Parent Families Support Helpline		1890 662 212 01 662 9212

Parentline		1890 927 277
Pieta House (Prevention of Suicide & Self Harm)	Dublin Centre	01 601 0000
	Limerick Centre	061 484 444
	Roscrea Centre	0818 111 126
Senior Helpline		1800 80 45 91
Samaritans	Email: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a>	116 123
		Text: 087 260 9090
Rape Crisis Centre Helpline:	Athlone (Midlands)	1800 306 600
	Dublin	1800 778 888
Teenline Ireland Helpline (8pm-11pm)		1800 833 634
Treoir (Unmarried Parents Support)		1890 252 084
Women's Aid National Helpline		1800 341 900

## Bereavement Support

Anam Cara Parental & Sibling Bereavement Support		01 404 5378
Barnardos Bereavement Helpline		01 473 2110
HSE Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service:		086 418 0088
Cuisle Centre Bereavement Counselling		057 86 81492
Midlands Living Links (Suicide Bereavement Support Service)		086 1600641
MIDOC Out of Hours GP Service		1800 302 720
Parish Bereavement Support Service Portlaoise	087 98 78300 or	057 86 21142
Rainbows – Child Bereavement Support		057 86 21142

*If you are concerned that a family member, friend or colleague is in distress and may be having thoughts of ending their life, don't hesitate to discuss your concerns and get advice from your GP, MIDOC Out of Hours GP on **1800 302 702**, the HSE Resource Office for Suicide Prevention on **086 8157320** or any other service.*

## Talk About How You Feel

Teenline Helpline:	1800 833 634 (8.00pm - 11.00pm)
Samaritans Helpline:	116123
Aware Helpline:	1890 804 848 / E: <a href="mailto:supportmail@aware.ie">supportmail@aware.ie</a>
Bodywhys Helpline:	01 210 4963 / <a href="http://www.bodywhys.ie">www.bodywhys.ie</a>
Childline:	1800 666 666
HSE Suicide Bereavement Liaison Support:	086 418 0088
HSE Drugs Helpline:	1800 459 459 / <a href="http://www.drinkaware.ie">www.drinkaware.ie</a>
LGBTI Helpline:	1800 929 539 / <a href="http://www.belongto.org">www.belongto.org</a>
Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service:	1800 200 857
Separated Parents	090 64 77075

## Information & Support Websites

[www.yourmentalhealth.ie](http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie) / [www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com) / [www.nosp.ie](http://www.nosp.ie) / [www.mentalhealthireland.ie](http://www.mentalhealthireland.ie)



# Laois Service Area



USEFUL INFORMATION

For a Local Link Laois Offaly Service in your area check out our website:  
[www.locallinklaoisoffaly.ie](http://www.locallinklaoisoffaly.ie) for timetables or contact the office on **05786 92168**  
 Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. All services accept Free Travel Pass Cards

## Local Link Timetable

DAYS	SERVICE ID	ROUTE AREA	DESTINATION
Monday–Sunday	834	Roscrea–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Monday –Sunday	2343	Borris-In-Ossory–Castletown–Mountrath–Portlaoise–Mountmellick–Portarlinton– Walsh Island–Mount Lucas	Mount Lucas
Monday–Friday (Term time)	4994	Durrow–Abbeyleix–Ballyroan–Portlaoise–Mountmellick Tullamore–Athlone AIT	Athlone IT
Monday	7097	Stradbally–Lugacurran–Carlow	Carlow
Monday	7094	Garryhinch–Tullamore (2nd Monday)	Tullamore
Monday	7095	Cloneygowan–Portlaoise (4th Mon)	Portlaoise
Monday & Thursday	547	Rathdowney–Errill–Roscrea	Roscrea
Monday & Thursday	553	Vicarstown–Moyanna / Inch Cross–Stradbally–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Tuesday	558	Mountmellick–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Tuesday	7093	Rathdowney–Abbeyleix–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Tuesday & Friday	546	Clonmeen–Errill–Rathdowney	Rathdowney
Tuesday & Friday	544	Clonaslee–Rosenallis–Mountmellick–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Ballyfin–Portlaoise	Portlaoise	Shanahoe–Abbeyleix	Abbeyleix
Tuesday & Friday	551	Shanahoe–Abbeyleix	Abbeyleix
Tuesday & Friday	545	Ballyfin–Killanure–Camross–Coolrain–Pike of Rushall– Castletown–Mountrath / Portlaoise (every Tue to Portlaoise)	Mountrath / Portlaoise
Wednesday	560	Portarlinton Area (Feb–Jun & Sep–Dec)	Portarlinton
Wednesday & Friday	550	Kilminchy–Dublin Road–Portlaoise (Portlaoise town loop)	Portlaoise
Thursday	552	Lugacurran–Stradbally–Portlaoise	Portlaoise
Thursday	7092	Ballyfin–Rosenallis–Clonaslee–Tullamore	Tullamore
Thursday	548	Cloneygowan–Portarlinton	Portarlinton
Friday	549	Bracknagh–Portarlinton	Portarlinton
Friday	557	Clonaghadoo–Mountmellick (every 2nd Fri)	Mountmellick
Friday	557	Clonaghadoo–Mountmellick–Tullamore (every 2nd Fri)	Tullamore
Saturday	554	Ballyfin–Camross–Coolrain and surrounding areas	Coolrain
Friday, Saturday & BH Sunday	4728	Mountrath–Ballyfin–Castletown and surrounds	Mountrath
Friday, Saturday & BH Sunday	4729	Emo and surrounds	Emo
Saturday	555	Rosenallis and surrounding areas	Rosenallis
Sunday	556	Rosenallis and surrounding areas	Rosenallis
Saturday	556	Rosenallis and surrounding areas	Rosenallis
	7096	Bracknagh- Tullamore	Tullamore

\* Please note all times are approximate and subject to change  
<https://localinklaoisoffaly.ie/timetable/>



## Laois County Council



### (1) The Home

- Have a good supply of non perishable, easy to prepare food
- Have an adequate supply of heating / cooking fuel and if possible a suitable alternative should the main supply fail
- Have torches / batteries should the power supply fail
- Have candles and matches available. Store appropriately and never leave a burning candle unattended
- Have a water container to ensure a supply of drinking water
- Have a shovel and a bag of salt for clearing paths
- Know how to turn off the water supply
- Ensure your home / water tank are well insulated
- Call on elderly relatives and neighbours regularly. Ensure they have sufficient supplies of food / fuel / medication etc. For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

### (2) Personal Safety

- Keep sufficient stock of essential medication
- Keep warm, eat well and avoid unnecessary travel
- Eat regular hot meals and drink plenty of fluids, this will keep you warm and will give you energy to keep active
- Wear well fitted shoes with non-slip soles
- Try to limit outside walking during the cold weather
- Consider wearing a personal alarm so that family and friends are alerted when required
- Have emergency contact details to hand (next page)
- Don't be afraid to contact for help if required
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

### (3) Water Shortages

- To prevent stopcocks from freezing, open the stopcock chamber and remove any water. Fill the chamber with nonabsorbent material to provide insulation. Do not use absorbent material as it will freeze when wet
- Do not leave taps running as this merely wastes resources
- If you are leaving your property unattended for a period of more than a day or two, you should cut off the water supply to the property from the external stopcock (while ensuring that any water-dependent appliances or facilities are also shut off)
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

### (4) Avoiding Frozen Pipes

- Ensure all exposed pipes are adequately insulated. This includes pipes in the attic where the attic floor has been well insulated
- Insulate or wrap a towel around outside taps
- Leave a light on in the attic
- Consider opening the attic trap door to allow heat in
- Leave heating on for longer periods at lower settings
- Warmth offers the best protection against frozen pipes so keep warm
- Frozen mains water supply – if your supply is frozen, be cautious with the use of heating systems, back boilers, washing machines or other water-dependent appliances or facilities
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

### (5) Water Leaks

- Water supply in vacant premises and holiday homes should be shut off and drained down in preparation for winter
- Key holders - check premises regularly for possible leaks if a leak is detected;
- Turn off water supply – stop valve is usually under the kitchen sink
- Turn on cold taps to drain the system
- Turn off central heating
- Turn off electricity supply if leak is near electrical appliances
- Call a qualified plumber
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

### (6) Clearing Snow (see legal advice on next page)

- Clearing snow can be demanding work - only undertake the task if you are reasonably fit and do not have an underlying medical condition
- Clear snow or ice early in the day if possible
- Wear sturdy, insulated, waterproof footwear with good gripping soles
- Use a shovel. There are special shovels for this task but any garden shovel will do
- Make a path down the middle of the area being cleared so that you will have a clear surface to walk on
- Never use boiling water to clear snow (it may re-freeze and cause the formation of black ice)
- You can prevent ice forming by spreading salt on the area that you have cleared
- When you are clearing snow it is important that you don't create an obstacle for pedestrians or traffic. Ensure that the snow is removed to a location that won't create a hazard

## (7) Clearing Snow

### Legal Advice for Snow Clearance and Gritting

The Office of the Attorney General has advised that liability does not arise when snow is cleared from footpaths in a safe manner.

In relation to people gritting roads with grit supplied by the local authorities, the legal advice is that the issue of liability does not arise where the material is delivered, stored and used in a safe manner and does not cause hazard.

- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

## (8) Flooding Advice

- Move valuables and other items to safety. Place them above the flood level or upstairs
- Put sandbags at any openings where the water could gain access
- Turn off gas and electricity
- Have warm clothing and wellingtons ready
- Have medication to hand (if needed)
- Co-operate with emergency services and local authorities. For your safety you may be evacuated.
- Don't try to walk or drive through floodwater
- If possible avoid contact with floodwater as it may be contaminated or polluted
- Take care if you have to walk through shallow water – manhole covers may have come off and there may be other underwater hazards that you can not see
- Never try to swim through fast-flowing water – you may get swept away or struck by an object in the water

## (9) Flooding Advice

- Move your car to high ground if possible
- Remember that floodwater could get into your garage so move any chemicals or fuel to ensure that they do not spill into the floodwater and cause an additional hazard
- Weigh down any manhole covers with sandbags or heavy objects. These could open during a flood and cause a hazard
- Close off the flow valves on propane tanks, oil drums, or other fuel containers that supply your home through pipes and fittings
- Unplug any exterior electrical connections such as outdoor lighting, pond pumps and filters
- Be prepared to evacuate your home or business. Protect yourself, your family and others that need your help
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

## (10) Road safety

- Get your vehicle serviced to ensure it is fit and safe
- Carry out regular checks on the vehicle
- Check for wear and tear on wiper blades and replace them as soon as they start to smear rather than clean windows
- Keep tyre pressure at the manufacturer's recommended level
- Replace tyres if necessary - check your tyre tread depth - the minimum legal limit is 1.6mm, however, for winter driving 3mm is advised
- Make sure all vehicle lights are working and clean
- Ensure the vehicle has adequate levels of anti-freeze coolant and screen wash
- Check your vehicle battery
- Keep torch, blanket, High visibility vest, shovel, tow rope, warm clothing, and spare mobile phone charger in the car.
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

## (11) Farming

- Have a supply of gritting material available to allow access to and from the farmyard
- Insulate any exposed pipes
- Taps left running at a low rate to keep water flowing in order to reduce the likelihood of pipes freezing should only be considered where there is an on-farm supply source. This option cannot be used if the water is supplied by the Local Authority or Group Scheme
- Install a thermostatically-controlled heater in plant rooms which should cut in when the temperature reaches 1°C.
- Grit sloped yards and roadways to facilitate traffic
- Herd out-wintered livestock during daylight hours and be back before nightfall
- Keep away from hazardous areas and rough terrain
- Bring a mobile phone when going out herding or on other journeys
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)

## (12) Business Sector

- Preparing Your Business for Severe Weather
- For more information see section 13 of this leaflet and Visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie)
- A practicable checklist for the business sector that outlines the key issues to address, in order to ensure business continuity during severe weather events, is available on [www.djei.ie](http://www.djei.ie) and [www.forfas.ie](http://www.forfas.ie)

## (13) Be Winter-Ready Booklet

The booklet can be downloaded from the website [www.winterready.ie](http://www.winterready.ie)

An Irish language version is also available. Copies are also available by emailing the Office of Emergency Planning at [oepp@defence.irlgov.ie](mailto:oepp@defence.irlgov.ie) or telephone **1890 252 736**

## (14) Contact Information

- Laois County Council  
**057 8664000**
- **Laois County Council Major Emergency Hotline**  
**1800 832 010**
- If you have an emergency and need the Emergency Services dial **999 or 112**

## (15) Personal Contact Details

Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

Chemist \_\_\_\_\_

Local Garda Station \_\_\_\_\_

Fuel Supplier \_\_\_\_\_

ESB Emergency No: **1800 372999**

Bord Gais Emergency No: **1800 205050**

Add as appropriate

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## **Age Friendly Laois**

**Laois County Council, Áras an Chontae, JFL Avenue,  
Portlaoise, Co Laois R32 EHP9**

 **agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie**

 **05786 64150**

 **086 0363426**

 **[https://laois.ie/departments/community/  
promoting-social-inclusion/age-friendly/](https://laois.ie/departments/community/promoting-social-inclusion/age-friendly/)**

**YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@Laoiscoco>**