



October - November 2020

LUTON IRISH FORUM

WELFARE, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES

Gain those essential digital skills with us

We're delighted to welcome Sue Curran, ESF Project Manager and Tutor to the LIF family.

The ESF (European Social Fund) is helping to fund a Digital Skills Project at LIF that will enable people with limited or no computer and internet expertise to gain those skills or improve existing ones and help them secure employment.

Sue explains: "It's very difficult to even apply for a job these days when you don't have digital skills. If you're looking for work and it's your computer and internet knowledge that's holding you back, this is the perfect chance to learn those in a friendly and non-pressurised setting."

Topics range from absolute beginner skills such as to how to turn on a computer and surfing the internet safely to emailing, creating documents and applying online for paid work. Participants work at their own pace and can choose which skills they want to gain or develop.

OUR SERVICES DURING NOVEMBER LOCKDOWN

In line with Government regulations we have adapted our services until at least 2nd December. Please phone or email, we are unable to see anyone 'dropping in'. Check our website and social media or get in touch for updates after 2nd December.

Welfare advice: Operating by phone and email, please contact us for help.

Social clubs: Temporarily suspended.

Passport witnessing: Emergencies only.

Befriending service: Phone and online.



Get in touch with Sue to find out how you can gain the computer skills needed to help you find employment.

"If you have good computer skills already and simply want a bit of help with your CV and applying for work or getting ready for interview, we can assist with just those things," adds Sue. "This exciting initiative is a wonderful chance to build confidence, enhance your skills and get above the competition!"

Anyone of working age can take advantage of this opportunity but those over 50 years old, Irish and other BAME (black and minority ethnic) people, and women, are especially welcome. Registration is open now, contact Sue via our main number (01582 720447) to find out more.

Sue comes to LIF from a learning and development role in human resources of a local convenience store chain.

"I'm really excited to join the LIF team," says Sue. "I'm looking forward to making a difference by imparting my knowledge and helping other people to develop their skills and find work."

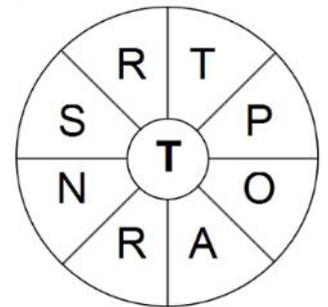
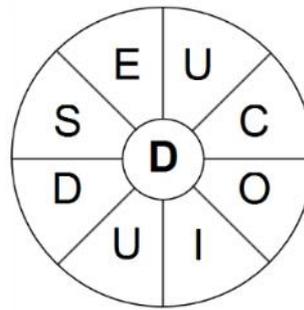
Keep yourself 'brain fit'!



How many of these words relating to Irish foods can you find in our wordsearch? Letters may be used more than once.

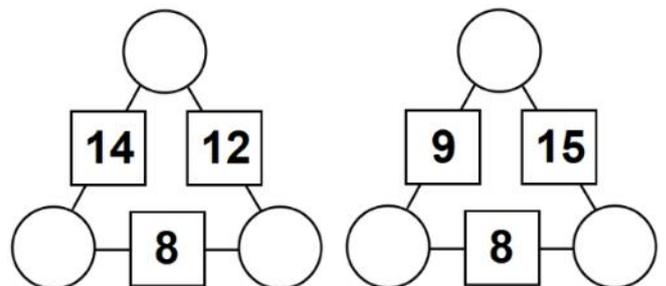
Thanks to www.discoveryeducation.co.uk

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| APPLECAKE | IRISH STEW |
| BACON AND CABBAGE | OYSTERS |
| BLACK PUDDING | POTATOES |
| BOXTY | RASHERS |
| BARMBRACK | SALMON |
| CODDLE | SAUSAGES |
| COLCANNON | SEAFOOD CHOWDER |
| CORNED BEEF | SODA BREAD |
| CRUBEENS | PORTER |



Each of these word wheels contains a nine letter word relating to a theme ('autumn' on the left and 'transport' on the right). Try and find that word, then make as many words of any length as you can from the letters, each word must include the letter in the middle of the wheel.

Also from freeprintablepuzzles.com, can you work out which numbers go in the empty circles below? The numbers in the square boxes are made by adding together the numbers in the circles each side. The numbers have to add up two ways! Answers are on page 4.



Help for carers of Irish people with dementia

Irish In Britain (IIB) has announced its Cuimhne Carers Project to support anyone caring for an Irish person who has memory loss and/or dementia. Cuimhne (pronounced 'queevna') is the Irish word for memory.



Carers, family and paid, and others such as those working or volunteering with Irish people who have dementia or memory loss, can access online resources via 'Cuimhne Carers Project' at www.irishinbritain.org. If you're caring for an Irish person with dementia and would like information but can't get online, please contact LIF.

Online resources available are as below.

Webinars – topics include communicating with the person with dementia; practical tips to help with dressing, eating, and sleeping; preventing agitation and dealing with anger and difficult behaviour; and (very importantly!) self-care for carers.

Reminiscence resources – a large collection of reminiscence material specifically designed for people of Irish heritage.

Carers forum – somewhere carers and family members are able to share experiences, advice and give each other mutual support.

Thank you and good luck Patience

Thank you and goodbye to Patience Tagarira, our postgraduate student placement.

Patience was in her first year of a Masters in Social Work at the University of Hertfordshire when she joined LIF in July, in the middle of the Covid-19 restrictions.

“The biggest challenge was working from home for an organisation I’d never been involved with,” says Patience. “I didn’t get the opportunity to shadow staff so I was in at deep end – but I did have good instructions with help and advice at the end of a phone and email.”

Patience has been helping people phoning in to LIF reception, assisting welfare clients and attending social clubs.

“For example, I enabled one client to write a letter to her doctor to express her opinion on her medication; result is that now she has more control over her treatment. I supported others to make applications for Carers Allowance, housing from the local authority, and for funding in a financial crisis plus a review of their care package.”

Patience is finding the work very rewarding, particularly encouraging people to carry out some actions for themselves.



Nicola McLaughlin, Welfare Case Supervisor.



Patience Tagarira is studying for an MSc.

She explains: “We share the work: they do the bits they can and I help them with the rest. It’s very empowering for people to realise they are able to do something towards resolving the situation.”

“I’ve learnt a lot on this placement and have enjoyed working with so many different people. I have felt involved, part of the team and not just a student, I really appreciate that. The clients and group attendees have been very welcoming and helped me learn about Irish culture. The approach I get from everyone here, that’s what I will use in the future when I have students!”

Nicola McLaughlin, Welfare Case Supervisor and Patience’s line manager says: “We were so pleased when Patience was able to join us after her placement was originally postponed in April. Providing learning opportunities for a student working from home was one of many new challenges we have faced this year. Patience showed real tenacity when it came to getting the most out of her placement despite the unique circumstances and got involved in as many activities as possible. It’s been a pleasure to have her in our team and we wish her well for her future career in social work.”



Discount to help you keep warm

If you're on a low income, whether you're on a pension or working age, you could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2020 to 2021 under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

The money isn't paid to you – it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between September and March. You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter. If your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity you may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead, contact your supplier to find out.

The discount will not affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment.

There are two ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

- You get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit - known as the 'core group'
- You're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme - known as the 'broader group'

If you are on Pension Credit Guarantee you'll receive a letter between October and December 2020 telling you how to get the discount if you qualify.

If you are not on Pension Credit Guarantee but your income is low your electricity supplier decides who can get the discount – check with your supplier to see if you're eligible and how to apply.

Answers to puzzles on page 2.

Number triangles: 9-12-3-8-5-14 8-15-7-8-1-9

Diary

Please get in touch or check online for latest details and any updates.

Tuesdays 11:00am-1:00pm

Art Group by Zoom

Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm

Irish Language chat by Zoom

Thursdays 10:00-11:00am

Tea & Chat by Zoom

Fridays from 11:00am-2:00pm

Art Group by Zoom

Fridays 2:30-4:30pm

Calligraphy by Zoom

Tuesday 10th November 5:00-6:30pm

Trustees Meeting by Zoom

Tuesday 8th December 5:00-6:30pm

Trustees Meeting by Zoom

Right to UK EHIC will remain in 2021

Recently, the UK Government announced that EU nationals and their family members who are resident in the UK at the end of the transition period (and therefore covered by the Withdrawal Agreement) are eligible for a UK-issued EHIC (European Health Insurance Card), provided the UK is responsible for their healthcare.

This right will remain in place after the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020 and is not limited to the expiry period of their current EHIC.

Further details are expected to be announced by the UK Government in due course.

Additionally, under the Common Travel Area (CTA) and regardless of whether you hold an EHIC card or not, Irish and British citizens who live in, work in, or visit the other state will continue to have the right to access healthcare there. This covers emergency, routine and planned access to health services.

Check lutonirishforum.org/news and our social media or get in touch for updates.