



January 2021 – Special Edition

# LUTON IRISH FORUM

WELFARE, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES



*Our Welfare Team continues to help and advise members by phone and online throughout the pandemic. L to R: Nicola McLaughlin, Welfare Case Supervisor; Heather Roy, Welfare Case Officer; Jackie Humfrey, Welfare Support Worker; and Kay Ahmad, Welfare Case Officer.*

## Our offices may be closed – but we're still here, and helping!

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic we have continued to provide as many of our services as we can. In line with Government regulations, our offices are closed and only a limited number of staff who can't work from home are on site with some volunteers also helping from home.

Our Welfare team are busy providing advice and support on a range of issues including benefit checks, form filling and appeals. The staff are using telephone, email and good old-fashioned post to ensure information, advice and guidance gets to those who need it.

Local people needing help from the welfare team are asked to phone us (01582 720 447) on Tuesday mornings (9:30am-12 noon) when a team member is available specifically to take your details. Initial advice will be provided over the phone where appropriate and each case will then be allocated to a named team member.

Please see our website and social media for our services during Covid-19 restrictions.

## Extra funds to keep you well in winter



If you, a family member or friend is finding it difficult to keep warm, please get in touch.

LIF has been granted funds to be distributed in small amounts to local people who need help to stay warm, as a result of us being selected as a partner in Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation's 'Stay Well This Winter' campaign. The Welfare team will assess each individual case and monies awarded can be used to pay energy costs or to provide essential items as part of a care/winter package.

Don't forget, our expert Welfare Officers can advise and help with a range of issues such as a benefit check to ensure you are claiming all that you're entitled to.

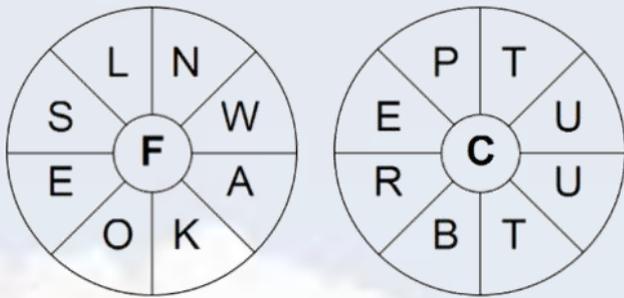
Get in touch by phoning us on 01582 720 447 or emailing [info@lutonirishforum.org](mailto:info@lutonirishforum.org).

# Fun to keep your brain fit



Can you work out the missing numbers in the puzzles below right? They are whole numbers between 0 and 9. In each row, numbers add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals along the bottom. The diagonal lines also add up the totals to the right. Answers are the bottom of page 4.  
Thanks to [puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/](http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/)

The word wheels below have the theme of winter (on the left) and flowers (on the right). Find the nine letter word relating to the theme, (answers at bottom of page 4), then make as many words of any length as you can, using each letter once only and always including the letter at the centre of the wheel. Thank you to <https://freeprintablepuzzles.co.uk/>



If you're a fan of Catchphrase or similar programmes on TV, then this one's for you! Say what you see to discover a dozen well known phrases or sayings. Answers on page 4.

NlbumpGHT	<b>Blood Water</b>	T O W N
Jack	Aid ← Aid Aid	GROUND feet feet feet feet feet feet
Mill1on	ice <sup>3</sup>	Read
Somewhere 	R O C G  K N I	Think 

				16				25	
			8	18	3			21	
				18	5		2	21	
0	7		9	24	3	8	7	25	
		0	2	7			0	4	17
13	14	12	28	17	15	26	23	20	20

We've all been spending a lot of time at home recently and the hidden words below are things that you might see indoors. Can you find a secret message too? Ignore the spaces between words, letters in the grid may be used more than once. You can find this wordsearch and lots more puzzles and number fun at [puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.co.uk](http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.co.uk)

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| BANNISTER      | KITCHEN           |
| BEDROOM        | MAGAZINES         |
| CARPETING      | MICROWAVE         |
| COOKER         | PHOTOGRAPHS       |
| CURTAINS       | SHOWER OR BATH    |
| CUSHIONS       | SOFA AND ARMCHAIR |
| DINING TABLE   | STAIRCASE         |
| FRIDGE FREEZER | TELEVISION        |
| FRONT DOOR     | WINDOWS           |
| KETTLE         | WORKTOP           |

R	N	R	O	S	C	E	P	G	T	P	R	S	R	L
P	I	E	E	B	N	O	L	E	Y	O	K	E	P	L
D	M	A	Z	T	T	I	L	T	O	S	Z	G	H	E
M	I	Q	H	K	S	E	A	D	T	E	I	N	O	W
A	E	N	R	C	V	I	T	T	E	E	C	I	T	D
G	K	O	I	I	M	N	N	R	R	U	K	T	O	N
A	W	I	S	N	O	R	F	N	S	U	C	E	G	A
Z	N	I	T	R	G	E	A	H	A	O	C	P	R	E
I	O	L	F	C	G	T	I	D	O	B	O	R	A	F
N	W	J	K	D	H	O	A	K	N	Q	Y	A	P	A
E	K	K	I	H	N	E	E	B	F	A	M	C	H	S
S	U	R	W	S	W	R	N	Y	L	J	A	M	S	Y
M	F	M	I	C	R	O	W	A	V	E	B	F	Q	A
S	H	O	W	E	R	O	R	B	A	T	H	A	O	T
E	S	A	C	R	I	A	T	S	Y	O	T	E	C	S

# A good chat - and safety advice



*Our Tea and Chat group regularly welcomes speakers of interest at its weekly group on Thursdays.*

Our Tea and Chat group welcomed PCSOs Dan McHugh and Liam Hill to its weekly get-together by Zoom on Thursday 14th January 2021.

The PCSOs answered questions from group attendees and gave useful safety advice. They reminded us to be alert to anyone asking for our personal information or claiming they're from our bank, internet supplier or similar, whether it's on the phone or calling at the door.

The pair spoke about home security and how

video doorbells and cameras can help. Simple to fit, they can detect motion; send notifications to your phone, tablet or PC; and enable you to see, hear and speak to visitors from wherever you are.

PCSO Dan McHugh highlighted how one option now available allows you to review, save and share the videos of visitors to your property. He commented that this has been vital several times recently in helping the local police track and catch people before they break into properties in the town.

## Farewell to a good friend to many of us

We were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of John Hutcheson after a short illness.

John was a stalwart here at the Luton Irish Forum since our formation in 1997.

A former Trustee, organiser of the annual Sean O'Riada Gaelic Mass sung at Luton St Patrick's Festival, and a very active volunteer in many other ways, he was extremely well known among our members.

His community spirit did not end with LIF. He was also very involved in Leagrave Comhaltas, the local Labour Party and within his neighbourhood. He was always good humoured, a great friend and neighbour, and a constant in the lives of many of the staff,



*John (top right, back row) and choir members during the Sean O'Riada Mass, sung in Gaelic, part of Luton St Patrick's Festival 2018.*

volunteers and members of LIF. He is missed greatly by us all.

A funeral mass was held at Our Lady Help of Christians RC Church on Wednesday 20th January. Rest In Peace John.

# Irish and UK citizens keep CTA rights

Irish citizens in the UK and British citizens in Ireland have rights under the Common Travel Area (CTA). This agreement pre-dates Irish and UK membership of the EU and is not affected following the UK's departure from the EU.

For example, the CTA allows Irish and British citizens to move freely and live in either country and to enjoy the associated rights and entitlements including access to employment, healthcare, housing, education, social benefits, and the vote in certain elections. One particular point worth noting is that neither Irish citizens in the UK nor British citizens in Ireland need to take any action to protect their status and rights associated with the CTA.

The UK Home Office has indicated that Irish citizens do not need to register or take any action under the Settled Status scheme. However, as Irish citizens are also EU citizens, they may apply under the Settled Status scheme, if they wish.

Close family members and/or dependents of Irish citizens who are neither Irish nor British (which includes EU and non-EU family members) are not covered by the CTA; they do need to apply for the Settled Status scheme in order to maintain their right to live and work in the UK after the end of the transition period. The deadline for applying is 30 June 2021.

## Level 5 pauses the Irish Passport Service

The Irish Passport Service and Foreign Birth Registrations have paused operations in line with the move to Level 5 of the Irish Government's National Framework on Living with COVID-19 since 24 December.

Their phone lines are closed and links for adult witness forms, guardianship; consent forms or for photo re-submission cannot be re-activated until a return to Level 4. Any supporting documentation that was submitted is being held

## Diary

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

Tuesdays 10:00am-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 11:00am-2:00pm  
**Art Group by Zoom**

Fridays 2:30-4:30pm  
**Calligraphy by Zoom**

Saturday 30th January 2021 12:00-1:30pm  
**St Brigid's Day Afternoon Tea by Zoom**  
**FREE event/£10 per person for Afternoon Tea**  
**\*Book online via Eventbrite or contact LIF\***

Tuesday 9th February 2021 5:00-6:30pm  
**Trustees Meeting by Zoom**



securely although you cannot retrieve it at this time. Documentation will be returned within 20 working days of resuming operations at Level 4.

Online passport application is open for renewals and first time applications, including children, resident in Ireland, UK, EU, EEA or Switzerland. However, applications will not be processed until the Passport Service resumes operations.

If you need a passport for travel in an emergency (death or serious illness of a family member or for emergency medical treatment of the applicant), contact the Passport Service online at <https://www.dfa.ie/passports/contact/>

For up to date travel advice please see [dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice](https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice). If you are abroad, contact your local Irish Embassy or Consulate for help.

Answers to puzzles on page 2

Word wheels: Snowflake; Buttercup; Phrases: Bump in the night; Blood is thicker than water; Town going down; Jack in the box; First Aid; Six feet below ground; One million; Ice cube; Read between the lines; Somewhere over the rainbow; Rocking around the world; Think outside the box; Missing Numbers (left to right, top to bottom): 6138, 7119, 0789, 0502; 3387, 5772, 4867, 3824.

## Luton Irish Forum

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