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Edition No. 60 April 2025



Front Page Poems The Pink Moon

April brings capricious weather,
Wear all your clothes outside.
Bring a brolly and your wellies
And sunscreen, case it's dry.

Rhubarb should start appearing.
Though, has it shown its face already?
Perhaps it's global warming.
Our seasons are unsteady.

Easter is a time of renewal.
Children hunt for eggs.
Families go to the seaside
And grannies show their legs.

The air is fresh and promising.
It'll be the summer soon.
Look up in the clear skies mid-month,
I hope we all see the Pink Moon.



Quick-fire Phone Competition!

The 5th person to call **Lois** on **07595 261253** will receive a £10 Tesco voucher.

Calls will be taken 10am-4pm, Monday-Friday.

Competition closes 14th April.

Winner announced in next edition.

The winner of March's Edition (Edition 59) was **Win McConaghys**.



END AGE DISCRIMINATION

Do you realise that older people in Northern Ireland are more vulnerable to age discrimination than older people in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland?

This is because there is a lack of age discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland. A new attempt is underway by Independent MLA Claire Sugden to introduce Age Discrimination Legislation to Northern Ireland to redress this lack of protection for older people here.

In 2010, the Equality Act was introduced into Great Britain. That act banned discrimination on the grounds of age in the provision of goods, services, and facilities. This means that if you are an older person in England, Scotland and Wales, you have protections. The law in Great Britain covers services like transport, types of medical care, and goods in general. In the Republic of Ireland there is similar legislation in the Equal Status Act.

These laws, however, do not cover citizens in Northern Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Assembly has stumbled on a number of occasions to introduce equivalent legislation. There are anti-discrimination laws in Northern Ireland preventing discrimination on the grounds of sex, disability, race, religious and/ or political beliefs, and sexual orientation, but not on the grounds of age.

In July 2015 the Executive Office issued a consultation document asking for views on age discrimination legislation. The proposals being considered at the time considered discrimination against people aged over 16 years of age. Objections were raised that this failed to consider the rights of children and young people under the age of 16.

Other stumbling blocks have included the suspension of the Assembly at various times. A range of older people's organisations have lobbied



consistently for legislation. Now MLA Claire Sugden is starting the process to introduce a Private Member's Bill.

Public Consultation on New Legislation

Claire Sugden is undertaking a public consultation on legislation to address age discrimination in Goods, Facilities and Services. This is extremely important as it affects older people's rights. For instance, recent proposals to reduce Department of Health costs identified cutting services predominantly used by older people, such as acute care beds in hospitals and places in care homes. If age

discrimination legislation were in place it would be possible to challenge cuts to older people's services and protect the older population, who often require more health provision.

To participate in the consultation telephone Claire Sugden's office on 028 9052 0310, email bill.office@niassembly.gov.uk or do a Google search for "Claire Sugden Age Discrimination" (the weblink is too long to publish in the PAL Gazette).

It's up to us to make our voices heard. The consultation runs until 20th June 2025.

PAL Gazette News

GET INVOLVED! Would you like to join the team that helps put the Gazette together? You can help by writing articles, collecting recipes, searching for competitions, even helping with the mail out.

Call Lois on **07595 261253** if you would like to join the PAL Gazette team.

In the meantime, keep sending in your stories! We love your recipes, special stories, and poems.

Call Lois on **07595 261253**. Or if you use email, send them to info@engagewithage.org.uk



Anne's Crafty Corner Egg Flower Cups

Eggs make the perfect perch for a pretty bouquet of small spring flowers. Perfect for Easter! You could use as a centrepiece or place them in a colourful egg carton as an easter display.

Materials needed for Egg Flower Cup:

- Eggs
- Egg carton
- Knife
- Paints
- Flowers - can be bought or picked from your garden or you could use plastic ones

To make:

Step 1

Use a serrated knife to cut off one end of an egg; drain the egg out (you can use the egg for cooking or perhaps make scrambled eggs). Discard the shell end.

Step 2

Rinse the shell with warm water and a few drops of distilled vinegar. Repeat as desired (you can make as many as you want to fill your carton).

Step 3

Paint/decorate your egg carton anyway you wish.

Step 4

Fill shell halfway with water and desired flowers (if using artificial flowers use no water).

Step 5

Display in an egg carton.

Top Tips

These would make lovely gifts for Friends and Family. You may wish to paint or decorate the shell of the egg – use your own design or paint it yellow and turn the shell into a chick. You could display them in egg cups and distribute them in different places throughout your house.



Can You Read This Paper Clearly?

If you need a magnifying glass **phone or text Paul on 07436 174793.**

We will send you one through the post for FREE.



HERE TO HELP

To reach the Engage with Age team see numbers below.

We are always happy to receive your phone calls so our mobile numbers are:

John McCandless 07729 516576

Colin McKinty 07468 695593

Hannah Lockhart/Sarah Gordon 07423 702721

Paul Hendry 07436 174793

Anna Albrzykowska

07425 627531

Our telephones are available during office hours and weekdays.

If you phone and we can't answer, please leave a message and we will return your call.

Send your letters to:

The PAL Gazette, Engage with Age, East Belfast Network Centre, 55 Templemore Avenue, Belfast BT5 4FP.

Or you can email:

info@engagewithage.org.uk



The Questionnaire

Name: Hazel McLean

Role: Member of the Greater Shankill Senior Citizens' Forum, the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, and founder member of 'The Grapevine'.

Favourite pastime:

I have a couple of favourite hobbies. I enjoy flower arranging, I love gardening, and I am a real 'shopaholic'. I am often either in the garden or at the shops. I really make use of my SmartPass, going on the train and the bus to go to lots of different places. You can only shop so much in Belfast and so you have to go further afield. I once spent three hours in a shop, though in my defence it was Christmas-time and I had a Christmas shopping list of get through.

Why are your pastimes important?

I get a lot of pleasure out of flower arranging and I love a tidy, organised garden. The garden is good because gardening keeps you on the move and it's good to keep your mind active. Recently I have been out and about weeding, and I have just cut my grass from last year. I had four buckets of grass clippings. I like rose trees and flower beds and I like to arrange things in the garden to make it look good. It's a bit too early for much stuff in the garden yet. And I just really enjoy shopping. I like shops with clothes stands and different things. It's important to have some enjoyment in your life, it does you good.

What is the best thing about living here?

It's what everybody says, it's just so friendly here. Belfast is a very friendly city to live in. There's always somewhere you can go and something you can do. It's a place where you can go out on your own and not feel 'out of it'. If you are on a bus someone always says hello to you.

Favourite Food:

I'm really flexible with food and I'll eat anything. I love fish, particularly prawns. I love a good roast dinner, and I love home cooking, soups and stews. I've kept old time recipes all over the years and I really enjoy making them.

Favourite Film:

My all-time favourite is "The Quiet Man". I could watch it time and time again. I love John Wayne. It's the perfect film.

Tell us something that not many people know about you?

When I was at school, I went to the swimming baths and I was pushed under the water, so I had a fear of water for years. I was in my forties before I learned to how to swim. I was very sporty when I was at school. I represented my school at a big school gathering that took place every year in a sports ground called the U.C. which was up the Ormeau Road. I was a runner, ran relays, did the high jump and also ran hurdle races. I did this with my friend Jean. We really enjoyed sports at school.

Have Your Say with the G6

It is a busy time for the G6 with lots of issues coming up. Recent activities include visits to Grand Central Station, meetings of the Health Sub Committee, and our ongoing monthly meetings. Here is some useful information that has arisen at our meetings.

NIE Vulnerable Customers Number

Storm Éowyn caused much disruption when it hit Northern Ireland in February this year. There was a considerable response from public agencies, and one thing that arose is that some people don't know about the NIE Vulnerable Customers Team. This will help provide additional support for customers, particularly in times of power shortages. You can register with the team for special support, and this includes older

Issues of Note

people, people with medical needs, and people who require an electrical supply to run important equipment. People can call and register by phoning 03457 643 643.

£100 Payment to Older People

There was much dismay when means testing for the Winter Fuel Allowance was introduced by the government in Westminster. The Department for Communities in the Northern Ireland Assembly announced it was making a £100 payment to all older people who had previously received the Winter Fuel Allowance. This £100 payment is only making its way into people's bank accounts over the last week of March and first week of April. Keep your eyes peeled for the arrival of £100 in your bank account.



Missing Payments Number

If you don't receive your £100 from the Department for Communities, please call 0800 121 4296, the Missing Payments Helpline, and they will check when you are due to receive your payment.

The New Commissioner for Older People,

We are delighted to see that Siobhan Casey has been appointed the new Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland. Siobhan comes to the post after a considerable career with Age NI. Siobhan takes up the post this month, following on from Eddie Lynch whose term finished in December 2024. We wish Siobhan every success in her new role.

WHAT'S ON

WALKS

There will be walks in East Belfast every Wednesday afternoon at 2.00pm. If you are interested in taking part, contact Paul on **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

South Belfast Walking Group, weekly on Mondays at 11.00am in Botanic Park. To join in, contact Paul on **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

THE KEEPING IN TOUCH GROUP (KIT GROUP)

Every Thursday 2.00pm. Dee Street Community Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

Every Friday 2.00pm at Finaghy Community Centre, 1-6 Geeragh Place, Belfast BT10 0ER. To join in, contact Paul on **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

T'AI CHI

Every Friday 11am at Dee Street Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

DANCE GROUPS

Every Friday at 2.00pm. Contact Engage with Age for details on this fun dance group.

Tuesdays, 2.00pm at Morton Community Centre, Lorne Street, Belfast BT9 7DU (Line/Sequence Dancing)

Dementia Friendly Coffee Morning

11.00am Thursday 10th April 2025.

To attend, RSVP to Paul at palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

Classic Hot Cross Buns

As it's Easter later this month we thought we would provide an additional hot cross bun treat. Here is a fool proof recipe for hot cross buns. It's perfect to make on a lazy day as it requires a bit of time for proving and baking. The results are fantastic!

Ingredients

- 250ml whole milk
- 50g unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 500g strong white bread flour, plus 140g for the crosses and extra for dusting
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 85g golden caster sugar
- 7g sachet fast-action dried yeast
- 2 eggs beaten
- vegetable or sunflower oil for the bowl
- 100g mixed dried fruit
- 50g mixed citrus peel
- 2 tbsp apricot jam

Method

Step 1

Warm the milk in a small saucepan over a low heat until steaming. Remove from the heat, add the butter and swirl the pan until the butter has melted and the milk has cooled slightly.

Step 2

Mix the 500g flour, the cinnamon, sugar, yeast and 1 tsp salt together in a large bowl. Pour in the warm milk mixture and half the beaten egg, and combine with a wooden spoon until the mixture starts to clump together. Tip out onto a floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes – the dough should bounce back when pressed with a finger. Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover with a tea towel and leave to prove in a warm place for about 2 hrs, or until doubled in size.

Step 3

Dust your largest baking tray with flour. Tip the dough back out onto the work surface and knead in the dried fruit and mixed peel until evenly distributed. Roll the dough into a long sausage shape and cut into 12 equal pieces along its length (they should weigh about 85g each). Roll each piece into a tight, smooth ball, then arrange on the floured tray, leaving a small gap between each ball. Cover loosely with a clean tea towel and leave to prove in a warm place for 1 hr, or until almost doubled in size again – the buns should be just touching.

Step 4

Heat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/Gas 4 and brush the buns with the remaining beaten egg. Mix the 140g flour with enough water to make a smooth, thick paste, then spoon this into a piping bag fitted with a small round nozzle (or use a sandwich bag and snip off one corner). Pipe crosses over the buns, then bake for 25 mins until deep golden brown and cooked through.

Step 5

Mix the jam with 1-2 tsp hot water to loosen it a little, then brush this over the buns. Cool for 10 minutes on the tray, then serve warm or toast and spread with butter.

Top Tip - Will keep in an airtight container for three days, or frozen for up to two months.



GODDERS' CORNER - Occasional Observations On Life

1. What's the point? The object of Golf is to play the least amount of Golf. How crazy is that?
2. Don't you think?... Don't you think youngsters drive like they're on borrowed time, and Elderly People drive like they've got all the time in the world.
3. What kind of table can you eat? Vegetables.
4. What question can you never honestly answer 'yes' to? Are you asleep?
5. Prisoner of the cell phone. I finally realised that people are prisoners of their phone... that's why it's called a "cell" phone.
6. How is this possible? A girl was 10 on her last birthday, and will be twelve on her next birthday. How? Today is her Eleventh Birthday!
7. Generation to generation. Our ancestors used to remove their hats to give respect. Now the new Generation removes their headphones to give respect.
8. Who else tried it? Even though our fingers are different lengths they all line up when you curl all your fingers in.
9. Why? If humans evolved from Apes, or Chimps, why are the Chimps and Apes still here?
10. Why? If snails are slow, why do we never see them coming? It's like, CRUNCH... there's a snail!
11. How 'Eyeconic'? Eyelashes are supposed to prevent stuff from entering my eye, but when I do have something in my eye, it's mostly an eyelash.
12. If the Apple company made a car, would it have 'windows'?
13. Why? If one teacher can't teach all subjects, why is one child expected to study all subjects?
14. What are two things you can't eat before breakfast? Lunch and Dinner.
15. It makes you think, doesn't it? If you spell RACE CAR backwards it's RACE CAR.

In all instances above, please phone Paul first on **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for details

'The Grapevine' - Connection Hub

Tuesdays 11am - 1pm in 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast City Centre. Drop in event each week. An opportunity to enjoy a chat, meet new people, become involved in events and learn about new services. Closed Tuesday 22nd April 2025.

ONLINE EVENTS

Chocolate Bingo

7.30pm Thursday 3rd and Thursday 17th April 2025. Via zoom. Contact eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk for the link.

The Pub Quiz Without the Pub

7.00pm Thursday 10th April 2025. Via zoom. Contact palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for the link.

Free IT Assistance

If you are over the age of 60, live in Belfast, and have a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone, you are eligible. The training is provided by Ignite IT and can help you with your email, getting online, online safety etc.

To avail of this, call Paul on **07436 174793**.

Shingles vaccination

The shingles vaccine will help protect against this common and painful disease and its complications.

Who is eligible for the vaccine?

People 50 and over and identified as having a severely weakened immune system*

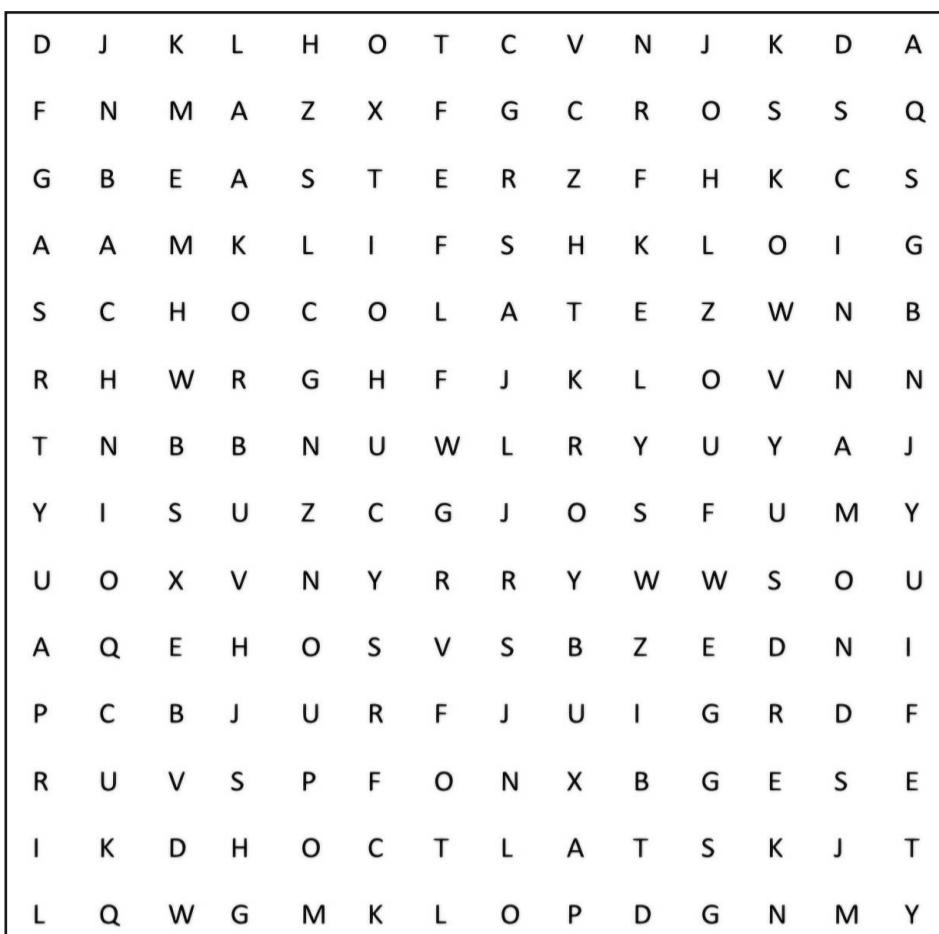
People aged 65*

People aged 70*

People aged 71-79 never vaccinated*

 Public Health Agency

WORD SEARCH



Enter our Word Search competition for a chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

Find the following 9 words hidden in the word square above:

- APRIL • HOT • CROSS
- BUNS • CINNAMON • CHOCOLATE
- EASTER • FLOWERS • EGGS

To enter, phone Lois Kennedy on **07595 261 253 on weekdays, 10am-4pm**. Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

The winner will be announced in the next edition of The PAL Gazette.

Entries for this edition's word search need to be in by 14th April 2025.

The winner of March's Edition (Edition 59) was Angela Coogan.

Night Blessing

Submitted by Audrey Lynas
"People hear you on the level you speak to them from. Speak from your hearts, and they will hear your heart." Marianne Williamson.

#niteblessing



Our website www.MindingYourHead.info has information and advice on common mental health problems such as:

Self-harm Anxiety
Stress
Low mood and depression



Stay safe online

Create a strong and unique password for your email. If 2-step verification is available, always enable it.

• RESEARCH • PAYMENT • LOOK FOR THE LOGOS • ONLINE SAFETY

In partnership with:



OLD JOKES HOME!

Submitted by our Anonymous Phone Caller who loves a joke.
What do you call a mischievous Easter egg?

A practical yolkster.



Tea Time Quiz

Answer each of these five questions correctly for your chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

1. Which folkloric figure / animal brings the Easter eggs?
2. What is the Sunday before Easter called?
3. Which light fruit cake, with two layers of almond paste or marzipan, is traditionally eaten during the Easter period?
4. Which British chocolate company makes the Mini Eggs?
5. What headwear item is associated with Easter parades?

To enter, phone **Lois Kennedy on 07595 261253 on weekdays**. Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 14th April 2025.
Winner of March's Edition (Edition 59) was **Dolly Misra**.

For all quiz lovers, join in The Pub Quiz without a Pub, 7pm Thursday 10th April 2025.
For zoom link email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

The answers to August's quiz were:

1. Manchester 2. Michelangelo 3. 1912 4. Dame Maggie Smith 5. Turo

Recipe Light Tomato and Spinach Pasta Sauce

This recipe is excellent because it uses so few ingredients, it is very tasty, and provides two of your "Five a Day" vegetables! Serves four.

Ingredients:

- 1 white onion, diced
- 2 tins of tomatoes
- 1 bag of spinach (250g)
- 2 teaspoons of butter
- Oil, salt and pepper

Method:

1. Fry the onion very slowly in 1 teaspoon of butter and 1 tablespoon of oil, with a pinch of salt. Cover with a lid, or a butter paper, and cook at a very low heat for 30 minutes. The onions will become translucent and sweet. Some cooks call this an "onion melt". Make sure to stir your onions occasionally as you cook them to prevent them from burning or "catching" on the bottom of your pot.
2. Add the tins of tomatoes, bring up to a simmer, then simmer very slowly for 30 minutes.

3. Blend the tomato and onion mix with a hand blender/ food processor.

4. Add the spinach and cook for 30 minutes. Then blend with a hand blender.

5. Season with salt and pepper, and add a teaspoon of butter for richness.

6. Serve on cooked tagliatelle pasta.



WELCOME BACK HANNAH

We are welcoming back Hannah Lockhart this month, who returns after being on maternity leave. Hannah job-shares the Telephone Befriending service with Sarah Gordon. Hannah works all day Mondays, Tuesdays, and half day Wednesdays, while Sarah works all day Wednesdays, Thursdays, and half day Fridays. We would also like to take the chance to say thank you so much to Sharyn Ruseckas who covered Hannah's maternity leave. All systems go, as they say!



Engage with Age thanks its supporters and funders:

