

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026

Hello from the Special Advocate for Survivors,  
Patricia Carey

## Hello all,

**Welcome to our newsletter**

**This edition has a lot of news and information which we hope you find helpful and interesting.**

We have included a **Bulletin Board** with information on external events and news. Please let us know if you have an event or update and we can include it in our next newsletter in the Summer.

I am very pleased to launch our **Voices of Courage Podcast**, and I hope you will find the four podcasts as interesting and inspiring as I did when making them with Anne, Jude, James and Katie. Each person gives us a unique insight into their lives and experiences of family separation and time spent in institutions.



We have also included a Frequently asked questions update on the Supports for Survivors Act which is for Industrial and Reformatory Survivors. The office has received a huge number of callers seeking updates and information on what is covered in this law and who will be able to access services. I hope you find this information helpful.

Very importantly the **Department of Education** has set up a mailing list, More information on how to sign up to this can be found below.

In the coming months I will publish my second **Annual Report** informed by your concerns and issues, please contact the team if you have any matters you would like me to include in this important report, which is sent to Minister Norma Foley TD.

Over the last number of months, I have heard from many Survivors and their families about their issues and concerns; access to Redress, access to full records, housing and healthcare needs. Many of you have also contacted me about burial grounds in institutions and the need for examination of grounds to ensure dignified burial and local memorialisation.

**Thank you all for your ongoing contact with the Special Advocate office and the support for me and the team.**



# VOICES OF COURAGE

Updates From  
The Special

## About the Podcast

**Voices of Courage is a new podcast from the Office of the Special Advocate for Survivors of Institutional Abuse launching this month.**

This series shines a light on the lived experiences of Survivors and the lifelong impact of Ireland's institutions, including Mother and Baby Institutions, Industrial School Institutions, Magdalene Laundries, those who experienced forced family separation and those who were boarded out. Since the Special Advocate Office was established in March 2024, Patricia has heard from hundreds of Survivors and Affected Persons.

Many have spoken about their hope for their stories to be heard in their own words. Voices of Courage aims to answer that call.

In Season One, Patricia sits down with four Survivors. Each guest offers their own unique story, told with honesty, strength, and dignity. Together, they also speak about the wider issues brought to the Special Advocate—issues that continue to affect Survivors today.

## How to Listen

If you are viewing this newsletter online, click on the links shared below to listen to the episodes

[www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/)

Or if you are searching for the podcast using an app:

- Open your podcast listening app, the most popular apps are iTunes (Apple) and Spotify.
- Open the app you regularly use and search 'Voices Of Courage'
- Click on the episode, and click the play button



**[Click here to Listen](#)**



# VOICES OF COURAGE

Burial and memorialisation

## Anne's Voice

In this episode, we speak with Anne Murphy- nurse, midwife, piano teacher, mother, and lifelong volunteer who was born in the Castlepollard Mother and Baby Home in the 1950s.

Anne shares her journey from infancy and time spent in multiple institutions, through adoption to emigrating to Canada and searching for the truth about her early life. With honesty and warmth, Anne reflects on uncovering her family story and reconnecting after decades abroad.

A powerful conversation about identity, resilience, and the enduring impact of Ireland's Mother and Baby Home Institutions.

[www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/)



## James' Voice

In this episode, we speak with James Sugrue, who shares his powerful story of being boarded out as a child in Ireland- separated from his brothers and forced into years of exploitation on a Kerry farm.

After rebuilding his life and becoming a criminal lawyer, James has become a leading advocate for the thousands of boarded out children excluded from State enquiries and redress.

This is a powerful conversation about resilience, justice, and the fight for long overdue recognition.

[www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/)





# VOICES OF COURAGE

Updates from the  
Special Advocate  
Office

## Jude's Voice

In this episode, we speak with Jude Hughes- Dubliner, master tailor, anti-racism pioneer, and survivor of Ireland's institutional system.

Born in a mother and baby home and raised in five institutions, Jude went on to build a remarkable life of sport, music, community activism, and decades of campaigning for equality. A powerful conversation about identity, resilience, and the legacy of one extraordinary man.

[www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/)



## Katie's Voice

In this episode, we speak with Katie Doyle, a survivor of Ireland's Industrial Schools and Magdalene Laundries.

Taken into care at four years old, Katie has very clear and distinct memories of her 14 years spent in institutions.

Today, she leads the Survivors Integrated Service at the London Irish Centre, supporting survivors across the UK.

A powerful conversation about memory, resilience, and the ongoing fight for justice.

[www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/projects-and-events/podcast-page/)



## Updates to the Special Advocate Website



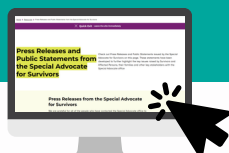
We are continuing to populate the website for the Special Advocate:

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

### Recent updates to the website have included:

#### Press Releases and Public Statements from the Special Advocate for Survivors

Here you can find the responses and statements issued by the Special Advocate to Government and other bodies, raising the issues and experiences shared by Survivors and Affected Persons with the Special Advocate



#### Our Newsletter

View previous editions of the Special Advocate newsletter here. We will continue to add to the website. If you have any ideas of suggestions of content which you would find useful, please get in touch with the team.



## Annual Report

The Special Advocate is currently drafting her second annual report covering the period (March 2025 – March 2026).

Once completed, this will be sent to the Minister for Children, Disability and Equality and then published this summer.

This annual report is based on the issues that have been raised by Survivors with the Special Advocate and will include recommendations from the Special Advocate for consideration by the Government.

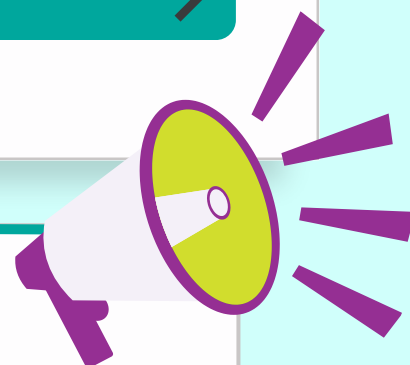
**We always welcome hearing from Survivors and Affected Persons, on the issues and matters that they wish to raise with the office. If you would like to share any insights to further help inform our work in the coming year, please get in touch:**


**Email:** [info@specialadvocate.ie](mailto:info@specialadvocate.ie)

**Phone:** +353 (0)1 511 7660

**To read last year's annual report visit the website:**

[www.specialadvocate.ie/our-work/annual-report/](http://www.specialadvocate.ie/our-work/annual-report/)



  
Special Advocate  
For Survivors of  
Institutional Abuse  
Special Advocate for Survivors of  
Institutional Abuse  
Annual Report 2024





## Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Act 2025 and related measures



Since July 2025, the Special Advocate office continues to receive a significant amount of queries every week from Survivors and Affected Persons and their family members, seeking updates and information on the Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Act and related supports.

We are aware of the urgent need for transparency, and for clear, accurate, up-to-date information and practical guidance from relevant Departments on how to access these support measures. In response, we have collated some of the most Frequently Asked Questions raised by Survivors with the office to date.

The Department of Education and Youth have provided answers and further contact information for additional queries below, which Survivors and Affected Persons may find helpful.

**To read these Frequently Asked Questions visit the Special Advocate webpage:**



**[Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Act  
2025 - Special Advocate](#)**





## Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse- UPDATE

The government has approved the delivery of a package of ongoing supports to survivors of abuse in residential institutions such as industrial schools and reformatories.



The package includes health, education and advocacy supports, and other initiatives in areas such as housing, funeral costs and certification relating to detention in a relevant institution.

This website will be updated as further information on the various supports becomes available.

If you would like to receive updates on the supports, please email [survivorsupports@education.gov.ie](mailto:survivorsupports@education.gov.ie) to be added to our mailing list.



Application forms as well as additional information on eligibility criteria are available on the Department of Education website on the link below

**[Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse](#)**





## Contact details for any queries on these supports

Any queries from Survivors and their family members about these support measures and their delivery can be directed to the Department of Education and Youth who will be best placed to answer.



(090) 648 3625



survivorsupports@education.gov.ie



Residential Institutions Redress Unit, Department of Education and Youth  
Residential Institutions Redress Unit,  
Department of Education and Youth,  
Cornamaddy, Athlone,  
County Westmeath,  
N37 X659



Further information on this scheme will be published on [www.gov.ie/survivorsupports](http://www.gov.ie/survivorsupports)



You can send an email to [survivorsupports@education.gov.ie](mailto:survivorsupports@education.gov.ie) to be added to their mailing list to be informed when the application process is opened, in case this is something that will be useful to be kept up to date on.

## Statement on State Apology and additional measures

### ***The value of any Apology for Survivors will be measured by the actions taken after it.***

While the recent State Apology is welcome, Patricia has expressed her serious concerns on the continued exclusion of Industrial School and Reformatory Institution Survivors who previously missed out receiving redress under the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme.

Many Survivors have been repeatedly locked out of State supports and redress – including Caranua, the Supports for Survivors of Institutional Abuse Act 2025, and other additional support measures recently announced by Department of Taoiseach.

A significant number of those Survivors who have contacted the Special Advocate office were eligible under the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme but did not apply to the scheme for a variety of reasons. This is a subject of deep distress for many, who reported that this redress could have helped them considerably. Sadly, many Survivors and their family members reported that they did not apply because:

- They were not aware of the existence of the Residential Institutions Redress Scheme
- They did not feel ready or able to engage in the redress process due to the abuse they experienced, or due to mental or physical health issues at the time.
- They wanted to apply, however had no support or guidance to do so
- They missed the application window deadline
- They were in prison or hospital, or resident in another institution and were not in a position to apply

*“With the residential institutions redress scheme, you see I lost out there myself because I was afraid to tell my story, afraid I wouldn't be believed or heard.*

*It was my experience in these industrial schools, and country homes, it was drilled into us not to talk, for our own sakes or we'd be ostracised. Plus because my pain and loss and suffering and trauma was suppressed for so long, I was terrified of letting the lid off, afraid my feelings and emotions would engulf me*

*So it would be awful if others who like me then, were afraid to speak up and out and if they did finally the scheme would be closed! It should be reopened to those who missed out.”*

**-Quote from Survivor**



## Update from the Department of Justice in relation to Criminal Records

**As part of the State Apology to Survivors of Industrial School and Reformatory Institutions, made on 25 February 2026, The Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration made the following comments in relation to Criminal Records.**

“The State did not and does not regard individuals as having committed a criminal offence, and that no criminal record is recorded against them, by virtue of their detention in any industrial school.

“With regard to children who were detained in industrial schools and who were subsequently transferred to a reformatory school solely by virtue of their detention in the industrial school, they are likewise not considered to have had any criminal record.

“No person and, in particular, no agency of the State, should regard these individuals as having committed a criminal offence, or having a criminal record.”

The Minister has confirmed that individuals who wish to have further confirmation can be provided with a written certificate.

Individual certificates can be issued to survivors, on a case-by-case basis, including posthumously, following receipt and review of records.

The process for obtaining a certificate will be put in place by the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration as soon as possible.

In the first instance, survivors of industrial and reformatory schools who wish to obtain their records for the purposes of seeking such a certificate should email



[survivorsupports@education.gov.ie](mailto:survivorsupports@education.gov.ie)

## Redress for Survivors who were Boarded Out as Children, from all pathways

**The Special Advocate continues to urgently call for Survivors who were Boarded Out (from all pathways) to finally be included in financial redress from the State.**

Survivors who were Boarded Out from all pathways and experienced abuse and neglect continue to contact the Special Advocate to share their extreme disappointment, anger and hurt at their ongoing exclusion from redress. The decision by Government to not include boarded out children in a redress plan has caused immense pain to these Survivors and further perpetuated the sense that these Survivors have been abandoned, forgotten and left behind by the State.

The Special Advocate welcomes the reference to those who were Boarded Out in the State Apology, but redress must now urgently follow for those Boarded Out from all institutions into a Government redress scheme.



**You may be interested to read a recent article about this subject in the Irish Times. Interview Link**





## Request Awareness Materials for the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme

Organisations, community groups, and individuals living in Ireland or overseas can request printed materials from the Payment Scheme Executive Office to help increase awareness of the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme. Available resources include A3 and A4 posters and informational leaflets outlining key details of the scheme. These resources are intended to support wider communication and help ensure information about the scheme reaches those who may benefit from it.

**To request materials, please contact:**



[MBIPS.Communications@dcde.gov.ie](mailto:MBIPS.Communications@dcde.gov.ie)



## Survey seeking feedback in relation to the Payment Scheme

The Mother and Baby Payment Scheme Office are developing a survey for Survivors, seeking feedback in relation to the Payment Scheme. This will launch in early 2026. More information about this survey process from the Payment Scheme Office can be found below:

Your feedback is extremely important and will help the Payment Scheme Office understand what it is like to apply for the Scheme, and how we can make the process and the information we provide clearer and easier for others.

Our goal is to learn how we can improve the process and provide better information and support to applicants going forward.

**For more information about the survey and how to sign up to participate, please contact**



[paymentschemesurvey@dcde.gov.ie](mailto:paymentschemesurvey@dcde.gov.ie)





## First Annual Report of the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme and Special Advocate response

The first Annual Report of the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme was published in February. The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the operation and administration of the Payment Scheme.

The report can be read in full on the Department website here:



[First Annual Report of the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme - June 2025.pdf](#)



To read Patricia's response to this Annual Report, check out her press release on the Special Advocate website via the link below



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



## The Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme is open for applications.

The Payment Scheme provides financial payments and health supports to people who spent time in Mother and Baby and County Home Institutions in the Republic of Ireland.

For further information, please visit [gov.ie/paymentscheme](http://gov.ie/paymentscheme), call our helpline at +353 1 522 9992, or use a smartphone with a camera to scan the below QR code:



## Philomena's Law

As Special Advocate for Survivors, Patricia is acutely aware of how critical Philomena's Law is for so many people living in Great Britain who spent time in Ireland's Mother and Baby Institutions as mothers and children.

It is unconscionable that any survivors who receive redress would be further penalised by having their essential benefits affected.



**Read Patricia's full statement on the Special Advocate website here**



**Visit the Irish in Britain website to learn more about Philomena's Law**

**Irish  
in Britain**



**The campaign for Philomena's Law – Irish in Britain**





## Magdalen Restorative Justice Ex-Gratia Scheme

Since this redress scheme opened, a total of €33.4m has been paid to 833 applicants in ex-gratia awards.

Under the original scheme 811 applications have been received.

We would encourage anyone who may be eligible under this redress scheme to contact the Department and apply.

### Ex Gratia Awards

A total of €33.4m has been paid to 833 applicants in ex-gratia awards.

Under the original scheme 811 applications have been received.

The position in relation to applications as of April 2025 is as follows:

Application Status	Current Status
Paid	744
Offers issued	1
New Applicant	1
In progress	1
Outstanding queries	0
Incomplete applications	0
Ineligible	55
Applicant deceased awaiting probate	5
Applicant died intestate	2
Withdrawn	1
Duplicate application	1
<b>Total Applications Received</b>	<b>811</b>

### Get in Touch

#### Address:

Department of Children,  
Disability and Equality,  
Restorative Justice (Magdalen)  
Team, Block 1, Miesian Plaza,  
50 – 58 Lower Baggot Street,  
Dublin 2, D02 XW14 Freepost  
F5055

#### Email:

[MRJScheme@dcde.gov.ie](mailto:MRJScheme@dcde.gov.ie)

#### Telephone:

- 087 1656460
- 01 2376074

## Resources to assist with finding your records

### Survivors of Magdalene Laundries

**Justice for Magdelenes Research (JFMR) have developed a number of resources to support and assist Survivors of Magdalene Laundries and their family members, who are seeking their records, which may be helpful.**

### Seeking records

This includes guidance about how to contact and engage with relevant Religious Orders, Government Departments and other Agencies.

A list of names and addresses of the Magdalene religious orders is available at the end of these guides, and are also copied below for ease.

**Please visit the links below to read more:**



[jfmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/Research-Guide-for-Magdalene-Survivors\\_April-2025.pdf](https://jfmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/Research-Guide-for-Magdalene-Survivors_April-2025.pdf)



[jfmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/Research-Guide\\_Relatives\\_April-2025.pdf](https://jfmresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/Research-Guide_Relatives_April-2025.pdf)

## CONTACT DETAILS FOR RELIGIOUS ORDERS

### (MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES)

#### Good Shepherd Sisters and the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity (these orders have now merged)

Province Administration Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd  
63 Lower Sean McDermott Street  
Dublin 1

Telephone: 01 8711109 or 0877719723  
Email: province@rgs.ie

#### Sisters of Mercy

Ms. Marianne Cosgrave  
Catherine McAuley Centre 23  
Herbert Street Dublin 2

Telephone: 01-6387521  
Email: info@mercyarchives.ie

#### Sisters of Charity

Sisters of Charity Generalate Caritas,  
15 Gilford Road Sandymount,  
Dublin DO4 X337

Telephone: 01 2697833/2697935  
Email: generalate@rscaritas.co

## Subject Access Requests relating to the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation



An Roinn Leanaí, Míchumais  
agus Comhionannais  
Department of Children,  
Disability and Equality

### Seeking records

The Department of Children, Disability and Equality have developed a resource guide for Survivors looking to access personal information relating to the Archive of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation. More details are included below:

14 Mother and Baby Homes and 4 County Homes were investigated by the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation– a full list of the Homes investigated by the Commission is available here.

[www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/organisation-information/list-of-institutions-that-were-investigated-as-part-of-the-mother-and-baby-homes-commission-of-investigation/](http://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/organisation-information/list-of-institutions-that-were-investigated-as-part-of-the-mother-and-baby-homes-commission-of-investigation/)



On the dissolution of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation, the records of the Commission were transferred to the Department.

If your request relates to an Institution which is not included on the list of the Mother and Baby Homes and County Homes investigated by the Commission of Investigation, you may wish to forward your subject access request to the organisation which is relevant to your particular situation.

### Contact Details

If you would like to access your personal data which may be held in the records of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation and have any queries about this, you can email the following address: **sar@equality.gov.ie**

There is also dedicated telephone information line available for people seeking further information about making a Subject Access Request (SAR). **The Department's SAR Information Line can be contacted on 01-2376001 from Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.**

A full list of Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the Department's website here:

[assets.gov.ie/static/documents/faqs-accessing-information-from-the-mother-and-baby-homes-archive-6b27a58e-176d-4043-b.pdf](https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/faqs-accessing-information-from-the-mother-and-baby-homes-archive-6b27a58e-176d-4043-b.pdf)



There are some details from the Department are included on the next page.

Subject Access Requests can be made online, using email; by post and over the phone. The Subject Access Request form can be downloaded here, or a printed copy can be requested by post.



***How do I make a subject access request (SAR) and is there a form?***

## **For Subject Access Requests sent by Email**

A subject access request (SAR) form is available here. You may be asked to complete a SAR form so that the request is clearly defined. However, this is not a legal requirement and cannot be insisted upon, but it may help to remove any ambiguity in relation to the request and may assist in locating the information you are looking for more readily, and ultimately enable the more timely delivery of a response.

SARs should be submitted by email to [sar@equality.gov.ie](mailto:sar@equality.gov.ie)

If the Department considers that more information is needed, you may be asked to clarify your request to enable us to respond appropriately.

## **For Subject Access Requests made by post**

SARs being submitted by post should be sent to the following address:

Information Management Unit Block 1,  
Miesian Plaza 50 - 58  
Lower Baggot Street  
Dublin 2  
D02 XW14 ·

## **For Subject Access Requests made by other means such as by Phone**

Where a request is received in any other form such as by phone, in line with standard procedure, we will need to verify your identity before we can provide you with your data

### Survivor Representation

#### The National Centre for Research and Remembrance Steering Group has been expanded to include four Survivor Representative members.

These members were appointed on 1 January 2026, following an expression of interest process that ran in the autumn of 2025. This is a direct response to the feedback received from a series of in-person engagement events that were held in Dublin, Galway, Cork and London, as well as an online event, between October 2024 and February 2025.

The development of the National Centre site on Seán MacDermott Street is progressing. Site investigation works are now complete and enabling works are continuing. These works are to make safe and stabilise the existing historic buildings to facilitate the future National Centre construction works.

More information on the Steering Group along with updates on the development of the National Centre can be found on the National Centre website at [www.gov.ie/nationalcentre](http://www.gov.ie/nationalcentre).

To sign up to the Mailing List for updates relating to the National Centre, please send an email to [nationalcentre@dcde.gov.ie](mailto:nationalcentre@dcde.gov.ie)

### Visual representation of the National Centre





## National Archives Advisory Council opportunities for Survivor Representatives



**The National Archives has recently opened applications for their Advisory Council, which includes opportunities for Survivors.**

We encourage any Survivors or Affected Persons who may be interested in the work of the National Archives to apply. Further details are available below.

*The Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport has launched a campaign to appoint 10 members to the National Archives Advisory Council. The Minister encourages applications from diverse, qualified candidates to ensure the Board is a true reflection of Irish society.*

*Established under the National Archives Act 1986, the Council advises the Minister on all matters relating to archives and their use by the public. It plays an important national role in championing the value of records, supporting archival practice, and promoting awareness of archival heritage. Appointments are made through an open process managed by the Public Appointments Service.*

**Closing date:  
10 March 2026 at 3 pm**

### Opportunities for Survivor Representatives

As part of the National Archives' preparation to establish the Archive of the National Centre for Research and Remembrance, applications are encouraged from candidates who have:

- lived experienced of Ireland's institutional and family separation systems (adoption, boarded out, Magdalene Laundries, Mother and Baby Institutions, residential and industrial schools, county homes and related institutions).

**Full details of the roles, required experience, and application process can be viewed here:**

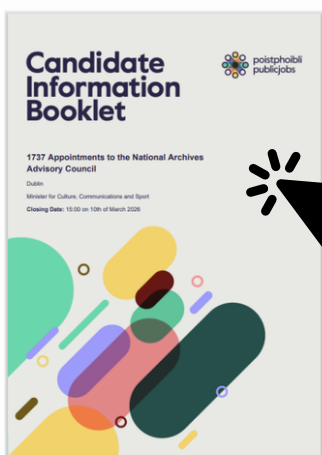


[publicjobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/appcentre-ext/candidate/so/pm/1/pl/3/opp/1737](https://publicjobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/appcentre-ext/candidate/so/pm/1/pl/3/opp/1737)

**The Candidate Booklet can be found here, or by clicking below**



[publicjobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-1/brand-4/xf-51c7622b5de2/candidate/download\\_file\\_opp/1737/105858/1/0/353d17a5247ba8fced505e78c012a9ba63fb191f](https://publicjobs.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-1/brand-4/xf-51c7622b5de2/candidate/download_file_opp/1737/105858/1/0/353d17a5247ba8fced505e78c012a9ba63fb191f)



### Get in touch

For any questions you might have about the work of the National Archives, please get in touch

- **Email:** [query@nationalarchives](mailto:query@nationalarchives)
- **Phone:** +353-1-4072300 and
- **Postal address:** National Archives, Bishop Street, Dublin D08 DF85

## **Upcoming Public Consultation on Amendments to the Civil Registration Act 2004 in respect of Incorrect or Illegal birth registration**

### **Information**

The Department of Children, Disability and Equality will launch a public consultation to address concerns raised by affected people about the legislation regarding incorrect or illegal birth registration shortly.

The targeted amendments reflect the feedback received from affected persons and were developed with input from the General Register Office and the office of the Special Advocate for Survivors.

The proposed changes aim to broaden access to affected persons' entries on the various registers, where the affected person so wishes, and to improve the terminology used in the legislation.

The next step is to give all affected persons, their families, and other interested parties the opportunity to give their views and to have those views heard.

Details on how to participate in the public survey will be published on the Department's website under "Consultations" soon.

**If you have any questions, please contact the email address below for more information:**



[ibrsurvey2026@dcde.gov.ie](mailto:ibrsurvey2026@dcde.gov.ie)

## Sage Advocacy

Sage Advocacy's nationwide team of advocates, support survivors to access information about services to which they are entitled, and where necessary, assist with accessing them.



The advocacy service is consent and issue based, free of charge and confidential. The advocates act independent of family members, service providers and systems interests, whether church, state or institutional. The range of issues addressed on a one-to-one basis include financial, legal, housing, medical and social welfare entitlements.

**Sage Advocacy can be contacted at 01 536 7330, or email [info@sageadvocacy.ie](mailto:info@sageadvocacy.ie) for further information.**

## The Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse

The Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse represents and promotes the interests of victims and survivors who were abused as children in residential institutions in Northern Ireland between 1922 and 1995.



Since December 2020, the Commissioner and her staff have engaged with approximately 1,300 individuals and dealt with over 1,700 cases. One in five victims and survivors engaging with the Office fall outside the Commissioner's current remit.

These insights informed the Commissioner's decision to launch a consultation inviting victims and survivors to reflect on their experiences of current supports and services and what they consider they may need in the future.

The findings of the consultation provide valuable insights into the self-reported health and wellbeing of victims and survivors, their experiences of supports and services and their concerns for the future.

You can read about the Consultation on Supports and Services to Victims and Survivors of Non-Recent/Historical Institutional Child Abuse here:

**[www.cosica-ni.org/consultation-supports-and-services-victims-and-survivors](http://www.cosica-ni.org/consultation-supports-and-services-victims-and-survivors)**



**Contact the office of the  
Commissioner at:**

Telephone: 028 9054 4985  
Email: [info@cosica-ni.org](mailto:info@cosica-ni.org)

5th Floor South  
Queen's Court  
56-66 Upper Queen  
Street  
Belfast  
BT1 6FD

## Barnardos Boarded out Practical Support Service for Individuals boarded out as children.

The Taoiseach's State apology for Survivors of Institutional abuse highlights Barnardos Boarded Out Practical Support Service for individual's boarded out as children.



Following the Taoiseach's State apology to survivors of institutional abuse — with specific acknowledgement of those boarded out as children — Barnardos is highlighting its free and confidential Boarded Out Practical Support Service.

The service supports anyone who was boarded out, farmed out, fostered or nursed out as a child before the 1991 Child Care Act. Many people have never spoken about their experiences, including early separation, trauma, abuse, forced labour, stigma, missed education, and identity challenges. Barnardos aims to reach out and offer support, because childhood lasts a lifetime.

- Support to access health, community and social services
- Support with isolation and loneliness
- Assistance in filling out forms and grant applications
- Advocacy, information and signposting
- Referral to Barnardos therapeutic supports through the Birth History Service

## Referral to Barnardos therapeutic supports through the Birth History Service

Barnardos has centres in Dublin, Cork and Galway offering a wide range of supports. Contact (Free & Confidential):



**Email:** [birthhistory@barnardos.ie](mailto:birthhistory@barnardos.ie)

**Dublin:** Christchurch Square, Dublin 8 / 23–24 Buckingham St Lower, Dublin 1  
(01) 813 4100

**Cork:** Blackmore House, Meade Street, Cork  
(021) 203 8005

**Galway:** The Sanctuary, 27 Chois Chlair, Claregalway  
(091) 454489

# Bulletin Board



Information shared here has been provided to the Special Advocate Office, and we have chosen to share it here.

**Please note that the Special Advocate is not involved in the organisation of these events**

## Books of Interest

### Can lives lived reveal their secrets and promises when they are part of Ireland's Scaradh Magdalene?

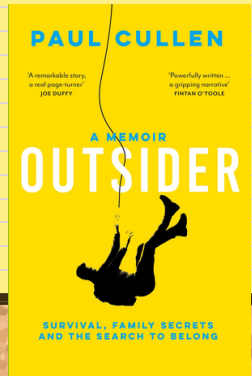
This is the remarkable true story flowing from the birth of a child, his marriage, a wife who became the guardian of his secrets. We discover a mother, incarcerated without due process for 42 years and a father who suffered loss and isolation. Love is forbidden. A promise to find truth and justice reveals that incarceration, dogma and indifference towards a vulnerable life, leads to the stunning realisation that a mother's death is cheap, untruthful and disrespectful.

Can she ever return home? Is a father still invisible? Is a wife released from a lifetime of the agony of secrecy? Has a son's promise to a father been satisfied? The stories of four lives delivers joy, tears and discovery of what it is to be human, to be Irish. It is a story of Ireland and of a Magdalene Rose and many women like her. It is the ultimate journey home.



### From near-death fall to the truth of adoption

After a near-fatal fall in 2017, journalist Paul Cullen can no longer ignore the questions that have haunted him since childhood. This powerful memoir follows his search for the truth behind his adoption and the hidden past that shaped him.



A memorial plaque honouring victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse has been unveiled at Northern Ireland's Parliament Buildings. A memorial to victims and survivors of historical institutional child abuse has been unveiled at Parliament Buildings.

### Bessboro Vigil

Sunday 8th March at 1pm

The Bessboro Mother & Baby 'home' Support Group are protesting against the development of 140 apartments at Bessborough which has been granted permission by Cork City Council Planning.

If this development goes ahead, it will set a precedent and is likely to lead to further larger developments in the grounds of Bessborough getting planning permission also, which will change the landscape of the whole area.

923 children born in Bessboro died and the burial places of 859 of them are not recorded, but the majority are likely to be buried on the grounds.

The remaining undeveloped 60 acres of the Bessborough estate should be preserved as a National Site of Conscience to remember and honour all those that died, as well as the 18,706 women and children that were incarcerated here. They were forgotten for so long!

In addition to being a place of remembrance, the 60 acre site would be an invaluable amenity for the local community.

We will be appealing the planning decision.

at the gates of Bessborough. Bring a teddy, flowers, candle and your Support

## 30th Anniversary of Dear Daughter

**Dear Daughter was the first televised exposure of the horrific abuse of hundreds of children in Ireland's industrial schools and which heightened public awareness of institutional abuse.**

In this documentary, Christine Buckley bravely recounts the extent of the atrocities she experienced as a child in Dublin's Goldenbridge orphanage. Born in Dublin, she was the daughter of a married Irish woman and a Nigerian medical student. At the age of three weeks old she was given up to be fostered. Dear Daughter delves into her traumatic childhood at the orphanage and her persistent determination to find her parents.



Watch by clicking the link below:

**fiarchiveplayer.i  
e/dear-daughter**

## Contact the Special Advocate office

### We Would Like To Keep In Touch:

We are committed to ensuring the collective voices of Survivors and Affected People are heard.

We will endeavour to assist in any way that we can, and where possible, guide & signpost you to the information and services you are looking for.

### You can keep up to date and can contact the Special Advocate team in different ways:

**Email:** [info@specialadvocate.ie](mailto:info@specialadvocate.ie)

**Phone:** +353 (0)1 511 7660

**Website:** [www.specialadvocate.ie](http://www.specialadvocate.ie)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/specialadvocateforsurvivors](http://www.facebook.com/specialadvocateforsurvivors)



### Visit the Special Advocate's Website



**Visit:** [www.specialadvocate.ie](http://www.specialadvocate.ie)



If you no longer wish to receive communications from the Special Advocate office, please email [info@specialadvocate.ie](mailto:info@specialadvocate.ie) and you will be removed from our mailing list.