

nhi

homes

NHI Nursing Homes
Week 2026

Connected with Nature

17 - 23 August

"Life in Full Bloom"





Welcome

Welcome to this year’s celebration of the **NHI Nursing Homes Week**, which will celebrate the beauty, connectivity, and therapeutic essence of nature and gardening, as well as the unique and idyllic natural surroundings of Ireland’s towns/villages.

This year, we invite all nursing homes, residents, family members, and staff to take part in a nationwide celebration of getting back to our roots, through direct engagement with nature, gardening, and the ‘great out doors’.

About the Theme: Connected with Nature

The “Connected with Nature” campaign will provide nursing home residents and staff with the opportunity to engage in a variety of practical activities which nurture the body and soul by promoting the artistic and restorative elements of gardening, nature walks, engagement with herbs/crops/plants, and a chance to reconnect with Ireland’s ancient ceremonial seasons (outlined by the Celtic Wheel of the Year) -specifically:

- **Lughnasadh** (1st Aug – 31st Aug / Celebration of the First Harvest);
- **Mabon** (September /specifically 21-24 Sept / Celebration of the Autumn Equinox).

This theme will also allow for residents who have a history of involvement (professional or recreational) with agriculture and/or horticulture to reconnect with past passions and offer them the opportunity to display their skills and expertise - as well as allowing them to share their knowledge on all thing's nature.

“Life in Full Bloom”

Why This Theme?

In our everyday life, we are all continually connect with nature, but sometimes we need to remind ourselves to slow down and really appreciate this connection.

For residents in nursing homes, this connection has been present throughout their lives, even more so than younger generations, so this year's Nursing Homes Week will help them to celebrate the beauty, connectivity, and therapeutic essence of nature and gardening.

"Connected with Nature" was chosen because it will help nurture the body and soul by promoting the artistic and restorative elements of gardening, nature walks, and engagement with herbs/crops/plants, - as well as providing residents with the perfect a chance to involve families, staff, and the wider community in their celebrations of Nursing Homes Week 2026!

The **Connected With Nature** Theme is:

- **Inclusive** of all abilities and care needs;
- **Intergenerational**; connecting residents with younger family members;
- **Emotionally Meaningful**; rooted in personal identity, heritage, and past experiences;
- **Visually Engaging**; offering moments to capute & share with families, freinds, neighbours;
- **Sensory-rich**; using touch, smell, sight, and sound to spark engagement, collaboraiton, and memory.

Goals of the Week

Celebrate Residents

Celebrate residents' activity and individual identities through creative engagement with seasonally appropriate nature-based activities.



Create Meaningful Memories

Help residents, staff members, and families to make meaningful shared memories through connecting with nature and the seasons.



Capture Moments Worth Remembering & Sharing

On social media, within your nursing home, and across the country.



Contribute to the National Celebration

By taking part in a campaign that unites nursing homes across Ireland in integration, recognition, pride, and creativity.

How Homes Can Take Part

Bring this year's theme to life in your home with simple, meaningful activities.

There are many different ways your home can help to showcase how you are **Connected with Nature**, and celebrate a **Life in Full Bloom**. Whether you arrange **Gentle Gardening** activities, lead reminiscence sessions through **My Nature Memories Workshops**, lead **Sensory Garden Days**, arrange **Nature Trails**, create meaningful pieces of interactive art with **Postcards From Our Garden**, celebrate local wildlife through **Our Feathered Friends'** discussions, or help residents **Reconnect with Our Seasons** - every contribution helps to build a shared national celebration.



Submit Your Ideas & Plans to NHI

"Contribute to a National Celebration"

Submit your ideas for your Connected with Nature Moments, and outline you will be celebrating Life in Full Bloom this Nursing Homes Week (or both) to Nursing Homes Ireland - so we can help to share ideas with the whole Membership!

Email: communications@nhi.ie

Online: nhi.ie/events/nursing-homes-week

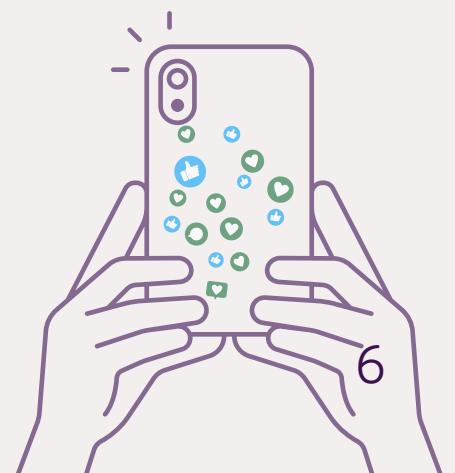


Celebrate on Social Media

"Share your Moments with your Community"

Use **#ConnectedWithNature**, **#LifeinFullBloom**, and **#NursingHomesWeek2026**, as well as the individual Themed Days #HashTags (outlined below) throughout the week to:

- Share short **Video Clips** of residents gardening & reconnecting with nature.
- Post **Photos** of nursing home gardens, flowerpots, window boxes, and/or nature walks, etc.
- Highlight **#Connected Moments** of residents (and staff) who have previously worked in the agricultural/horticulture sectors - show how this campaign has allowed them to reunite with their past passion.



Themed Days of the Week

Each day of the **NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026** is a chance to create memories, celebrate past lived experiences, and share in the joy and connectivity that nature brings to everyone - but how you decide to do this, is entirely up to you.

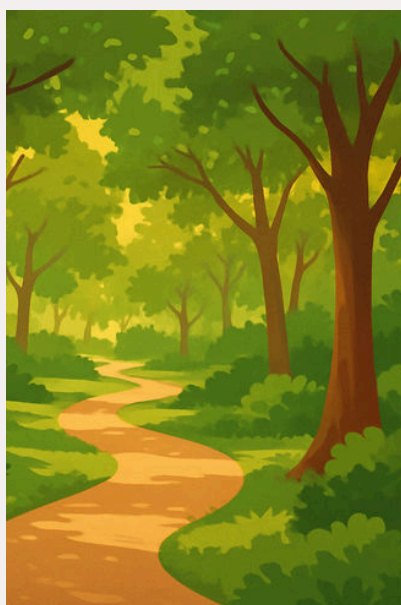
However, Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI) have developed some suggested themes to get you started, think of these as a source of inspiration, but please feel free to let your creativity take root and blossom into what you see is best for your residents.

Mix, match, adapt, or invent your own themed days - we want to see how your home brings **“Connected with Nature”** and **“Life in Full Bloom”** to life - in your own unique way!

Monday 17th August - Our Home in Bloom

#OurHomeInBloom Suggested Activity:

To kick-off the Week, residents and staff are encouraged to share the experience of potting herbs and/or flowers in pots and window boxes throughout communal and private settings in the nursing home. This can also be used as a platform to discuss what flowers, plants, herbs, and even crops residents and staff would like to focus their ‘green fingers’ on across the week – and into the future.



Tuesday 18th August - Trail Tuesday

#TrailTuesday Suggested Activity:

Celebrate the beauty of local nature by partaking in a trail walk within your community (to see the local flora and fauna) or a trail walk in a designated national park / woodland in the locality of your nursing home.

Wednesday 19th August - Weathering the Seasons Wednesday

#WeatheringTheSeasonsWednesday Suggested Activity:

Residents and staff could hold discussions (over tea and cakes of course) on what herbs, flowers, crops, and plants are traditional, local, and seasonal to them for the remainder of Lughnasadh and the coming of Mabon – and could discuss (or start) which autumnal gardening activities they would like to undertake as part of NHW 2026 and into the end of the year.



Thursday 20th August - Tea in the Garden Thursday

#TeaInTheGardenThursday Suggested Activity:

Arrange to take residents out for tea and cakes in the gardens/grounds of your nursing home - focusing on the smells, textures, and sounds (of the flowers, herbs, birdsong etc). This could also be used as a 'midweek' check-in to see how residents and staff feel the week is going and what they want to prioritise during 'Flower Power Friday.'



Friday 21st August - Flower Power Friday

#FlowerPowerFriday Suggested Activity:

Use Friday of NHW 2026 to afford a space to all residents to select and plant some of their favourite flowers in pots/window boxes throughout communal spaces and residents rooms to provide a practical activity for residents to engage in – while also allowing them to be involved in curating the decoration of their homes and wider nursing home community. - Link this with the #LifeInBloom / #LifeInFullBloom social media hashtag.



Saturday 22nd August - Sowing Saturday

#SowingSaturday Suggested Activity:

On the penultimate day of Nursing Homes Week 2026, we encourage all nursing homes to facilitate residents and staff to engage in the sowing of autumnal seeds/crops in their gardens so that they can mark both Lughnasadh (first harvest of the year) and Mabon (the autumn equinox) through working with seasonally appropriate plants/flowers/crops.



Sunday 23rd August - Showcase Sunday

#ShowcaseSunday Suggested Activity:

End your weeklong #NHW2026 Campaign by promoting residents, staff, and families to come together to share in their connection with nature. Either through viewing the work done in your nursing home's grounds/garden across the week, or by communal involvement in a nature activity (walk, talk, outdoor dining etc).



Tip: Make the Themes Work for You!

These daily themes are just a starting point, feel free to adapt, rename, or create your own!

- Combine two ideas into one celebration;
- Focus on a single concept of nature for the week and build daily activities around it;
- Invite residents to name the day based on their favourite plant, herb, or animal;
- Keep it simple, a shared afternoon over a meaningful and approachable activity is better than a big event.

There is no right way to take part, just moments to celebrate and share.

Resident Engagement Ideas

There are so many ways residents can take part in **NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026**, whether sharing a story about their favourite local flora or fauna, enjoying a shared moment in nature, or simply reflecting on the special memories and grounding effects that engaging with the outdoors brings. The theme of Connected with Nature has something for everyone of all abilities.

To help your creativity for Nursing Homes Week 2026 bloom, please see the below ideas that NHI has developed for you to use.

These ideas are flexible, inclusive, and easy to adapt to your individual resident community and/or care setting - please see the NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026 Resident Engagement Ideas below.



Gentle Gardening

Residents and staff could share the experience of potting herbs and/or flowers in pots and window boxes to kick-off Nursing Homes Week 2026.

This relatively low-threshold activity can also act as a 'screening' opportunity for residents and staff to discuss their experience(s) with gardening and nature to identify 'thought leaders' who could help to lead and curate any future projects relating to gardening and nature, throughout Nursing Homes Week, and into the rest of 2026.

Through gentle gardening activities, residents and staff could also discuss and identify what specific gardening / planting projects they would like to priorities throughout Nursing Homes Week 2026 - as well as identifying the types of plants/flowers/herbs they want to work with and grow in their home.



My Nature Memories

Activity Coordinators could lead short reminiscence sessions where residents can share stories about their childhood gardens, farms, favourite flowers, and local flora and fauna.

These reminiscence sessions would help to facilitate a good communal discussion on key elements of the NHI 2026 theme - and provides a low threshold activity for residents who may not be able to participate in outdoor nature / general planting and gardening, to speak about their connections/memories with the seasons and gardening - in line with the Celtic Wheel of The Year.

Resident Engagement Ideas

Sensory Garden / Nature Trails

Staff and residents could go on a group walk (or series of group walks) which focus on the smells, textures, and sounds of local flowers, herbs, and birdsong - the possibilities are endless. These 'trail walks' could be held across a multitude of venues/options and align with 'Trail Tuesday' - as outlined above.

Possible venues/options for these sensory nature trails, include:

- Within your nursing home's gardens / grounds;
- Within the local community or surrounding public parks (etc);
- In national parks and/or woodlands in the locality of your nursing home;
- In private estates/parks - at the permission of landowners.

Reconnecting With Our Seasons

Activity Coordinators could lead engagement workshops and discussions on Ireland's ancient ceremonial seasons (in line with the Celtic Wheel of the Year) - specifically, Lughnasadh (1 Aug - 31 Aug, which is the Celebration of the First Harvest) and Mabon (September / specifically 21-24 Sept, which is the Celebration of the Autumn Equinox).

During these workshops/discussions, residents and staff can talk about which herbs, flowers, crops, and plants are traditional, local, and seasonal to them for the remainder of Lughnasadh and the coming Mabon. They could then decide which Autumnal Gardening activities they would like to undertake as part of NHW 2026 and into the End of the Year. These workshops/discussions would provide both residents and staff:

- The opportunity to learn about local and seasonal nature in their community;
- The opportunity to learn more about Lughnasadh and Mabon;
- A chance to reconnect with past experiences of gardening, farming, and nature activities based around the Irish seasons;
- A chance to share their own nature/seasonal stories, as well as a chance to discuss the traditions and history centre around the Celtic seasons and local nature - through anecdotal insights and storytelling.

Resident Engagement Ideas

Postcards From Our Garden

Residents and staff could decorate plain/branded postcards with the petals of their favourite flowers from their communal gardens, window boxes, potted plants etc – these could then be sent to friends, families, loved ones, and neighbours.

This offers another good communal and creative activity in line with key elements of the NHW 2026 theme – and provides a low threshold activity for residents who may not be able to participate in outdoor nature / general planting and gardening activities. It will also help to (a) harbour community within the nursing home through shared creativity, and (b) facilitate connection between residents/staff and their families, and the wider community which the nursing home is situated within.

Our Feathered Friends'

Staff could lead a session discussing the local wildlife around your nursing home, additional discussions on previous pets and/or livestock residents kept throughout their life could also be facilitated.

This provides another low threshold activity for residents who may not be able to participate in outdoor nature / general planting and gardening activities. This could also be another opportunity for nature walks (a Wildlife Trail), focusing on the local wildlife of the surrounding areas; parks, ponds, farmland, natural trails etc.

'Pet' / Furry Neighbour Visits; depending on the individual policies of your nursing home and associated infection prevention control measures, the pets of residents, families, and staff members, could come into the home to meet residents and staff alike.

Create a 'Bird Garden'; staff and residents could undertake a project to erect bird feeders of different types around the gardens/grounds of your nursing home - to entice local bird life into your nursing home setting. This would provide a creative project for residents and staff to develop, design, create, implement, and then monitor – leading to great discussions for months to come.

Next Steps

How to bring the theme of Connected With Nature to life in your nursing home - ensuring the celebration of #LifeInFullBloom

There's no one way to take part in NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026, whether you are sharing stories about local wildlife, enjoying a shared moment in nature, or simply reflecting on the special memories and grounding effects that engaging with the outdoors bring - it is your contribution that matters. Here are some suggestions for how you could get started with Nursing Homes Week 2026:

Promote the Theme

- Display a NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026 Poster(s) [see below] and announce the week's theme to staff, residents, and families.
- Add a note to your newsletter - share far and wide.



Choose Your Activities

- Pick from our Themed Days or Create Your Own, be sure to let NHI know your plans if you are creating any Themes of your own - this way we can share your ideas with other Members.
- Plan a simple event, a tea morning, gentle gardening, or a nature trail, to get started and show your residents the benefit of being #ConnectedWithNature.



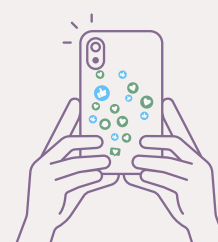
Register Your Participation

- Let us know you're taking part by registering with NHI directly, by emailing communications@nhi.ie

REGISTER NOW

Celebrate & Share

- Post stories, photos, or short videos on your social media channels using **#ConnectedWithNature, #LifeInFullBloom, #NHW2026, #NursingHomesWeek2026, #NHI.**
- Send your photos, videos, inspirations, and ideas to:
 - **Email:** communications@nhi.ie
 - **Online:** nhi.ie/events/nursing-homes-week



Resources & Downloads

Everything You need to Help You Take Part

To help bring **NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026** to life in your home, we've created a set of printable and digital materials for you to use as you see fit.

Connected With Nature Poster(s) - Download

Display in common areas to promote the week and get conversations started.

- [A4 \(Purple\) - Download](#)
- [A4 \(White\) - Download](#)
- [A3 \(Purple\) - Download](#)
- [A3 \(White\) - Download](#)

Social Media Posting Template: During NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026, you'll have the opportunity to share some amazing moments and images of your celebrations on social media. To help you with this, please see the below 'Post' Template which you can use as a basis/inspiration for your posts - if you require any further assistance on this, please do not hesitate to reach out!

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Post Template for Tea In The Garden Thursday: ☕🌻🌸 Today as part of #NursingHomesWeek2026 our staff and residents took the time for some tea and cakes outside, as part of #TeaInTheGardenThursday. This was a fantastic way for us all to stay #ConnectedWithNature and enjoy the natural surroundings in which are home is based ❤️ #LifeInFullBloom #NHI #NHW2026

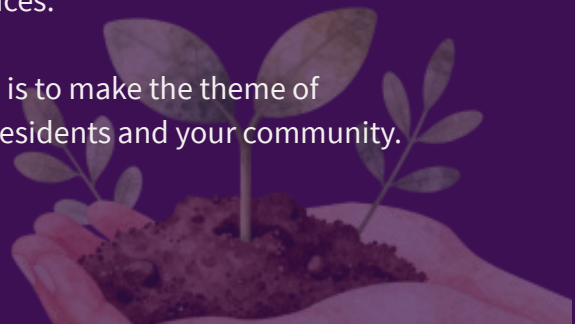
—
Tips to Remember; use emojis, use hashtags, be clear and concise, include pictures as often as you can, and please remember to tag Nursing Homes Ireland in all your posts.

Tip: Make it your own

The resources provided are here to support you, but there's no "right way" to take part in NHW 2026.

Feel free to customise any of the templates to suit your own home's unique personality and care needs. Add your logo(s), translate into Irish (or other languages), print in large format, or adapt the content to reflect your residents' personal preferences.

Creativity and adaptation are encouraged, the goal is to make the theme of **#ConnectedWithNature** feel meaningful for your residents and your community.



Thank You

“Together, we celebrate care, connection, and community.”

To every nursing home, resident, staff member, and family taking part in NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026, we want to say - Thank You! Your enthusiasm, creativity, and care are what make this week such a special celebration.


Whatever you have planned for NHI Nursing Homes Week 2026, your participation will shine a light on the richness of nursing home life in Ireland. This is a celebration of nature, connectivity, people, and of the shared lives that continue to shape our nursing home communities nationwide.

We can't wait to see all of your celebrations come to life - so don't forget to share your moments using **#ConnectedWithNature**, **#LifeInFullBloom**, and **#NursingHomesWeek2026**.



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