



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

TURASCÁIL BAINISTÍOCHTA MANAGEMENT REPORT



Márta 2025

March 2025

COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The next LCDC committee will be meeting on Tuesday 8th April at 10.30 a.m. via MS teams. Items on the agenda include presentation on Empowering Communities and update on Community Recognition Fund.

LOCAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME 2025

Galway County LCDC received a total of 334 applications under the Local Enhancement Programme which must be assessed and approved by the LCDC Funding Evaluation SubCommittee, with recommendations submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development, by 28th March. Notifications to successful applicants will issue following formal announcement of the funding allocations by the Department in May 2025.

HEALTHY IRELAND

The Farmer's Health and Wellbeing Programme was launched in the first week of March 2025 across three regions: Roscommon, Galway, and Mayo. Healthy Ireland Local Government (HILG) for Galway, Roscommon, and Mayo have collaborated to bring the Farmer Wellbeing Initiative for 2025, which will support education in several areas, including physical health, cardiovascular health, mental health, financial planning, succession, and the subsequent stress on overall health. This regional programme is run by Healthy Ireland Coordinators in partnership with Teagasc, IFA, HSE, Croi, and Mental Health Ireland.



"Taking Stock of Farmer's Health" will be broadcast on radio throughout these three counties each Tuesday in March on the Agri Programme with Keith Fahy on Galway Bay FM. Each week, expert guest speakers will discuss various topics, including farm succession, financial planning, cardiovascular health, and work-life balance for farmers. The next broadcast will provide an overview of financial planning and its impacts on health, scheduled to air at 7pm, Tuesday, March 11th, on the Agri Show.

Additionally, the information will be available in the local Galway newspaper, The Connaught Tribune, as well as local newspapers for counties, Mayo and

Roscommon. This print media campaign will run each week in March to further promote

Farmer's Health, and flyers will be disseminated to farmers regionally to provide further information and to raise awareness of this very relevant and important initiative.

In March 2025, Healthy County Galway introduced the **Women's Health Programme** to provide an overview of health promotion information specific to women's health, aiming to promote health and wellbeing and empower women to seek health advice when necessary. The initiative began with a **series of talks from a panel of experts**, held in seven different locations around Galway County, including each of the Aran Islands, Leitir Mealláin, Cashel, and Ros Muc.



Throughout the month of March, women will convene in each location to view live-streamed talks by a panel of experts for five consecutive weeks, from Thursday, March 6th, until Thursday, April 3rd. The panel will discuss a variety of topics, including Nutritional Health, Gynaecological Health, Bone & Cardiovascular Health, Physical Activity, Pelvic Health, and Complementary Approaches to Health.



The objective of the programme is to provide education and service information on health challenges experienced by women, including menopause, mental health, bone health, and cardiovascular health. It aims to promote healthy lifestyles and wellbeing through nutrition talks, mindfulness, and movement activities. The programme seeks to educate women on health topics, empower them to take control of their health through informed

decision-making, and implement feedback mechanisms to gather and act on participant feedback to keep the programme engaging. Additionally, a Connect Café will be set up for women following the talk series in each location in collaboration with Comhar na nOileáin and Forum Connemara who have partnered on this initiative.



Throughout the series of live-streamed talks, there will be space for open discussion, refreshments, and opportunities for attendees to register and submit their questions to experts prior to the talks, followed by a 5–10-minute Q&A session.

The programme has been effectively promoted through a variety of communication channels, including print media, social media, and radio broadcasts on Connemara Radio and Raidió na Gaeltachta.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

An Age Friendly Alliance Meeting was held on 5th March 2025, with a presentation by Dara McGuigan, Regional Age Friendly Programme Manager, on projects and initiatives which are being delivered at national level. A presentation was also delivered by Hub Planning Consultants setting out the stages for the development of a new Age Friendly Strategy for the City and County. Focus Group sessions were held with member groups from the Public Participation Network representing various geographical and demographic sectors, and there were 434 responses to a public survey for over 55's seeking feedback and views on the major issues facing people as they age. These will be collated and form the basis of action planning workshops which will be held with Council staff and Age Friendly Alliance Members to identify actions to be implemented and monitored over the next 5 years. Training for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Older People's Council is also taking place on a regional level during March, which is aimed at building their capacity to manage meetings and events for Older People.

CATHAOIRLEACH AWARDS

It is intended to launch the Cathaoirleach Awards for 2025 in March, which is the annual initiative of Galway County Council and Galway Public Participation Network to collectively acknowledge and recognise the breadth and quality of community & voluntary activity in County Galway, and the significant impact it has on quality of life. The Awards will invite nominations for individuals or groups across a range of categories including Arts & Culture, Heritage, Irish Language, Environment & Climate Action, Social Inclusion and Sports. The closing date for receipt of nominations will be Tuesday 8th April 2025.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEMES

Funding recommendations under the Community Support Schemes for Economic Development, Community Development, and Cultural Development will be brought to the March Plenary Meeting for approval. As always, the schemes have been heavily over-subscribed and staff from across various departments have engaged in a robust assessment process to identify projects for approval. Applicants who have been unsuccessful or ineligible will receive feedback to enable them target more appropriate funding schemes for their funding proposals in future.

COMMUNITY CENTRE INVESTMENT FUND

Funding awards under the Community Centre Investment Fund have been announced by Minister Dara Calleary in March 2025. These Awards relate to Category 2 of the Fund which provides invaluable funding up to 100,000 for renovations, accessibility measures, and energy upgrades, to help build resilience of these important community facilities. A total of 14 projects with a value over 1m have been approved for community centres across the county.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

PPN Membership stands at 1,437 groups and organisations across the 3 pillars; 1,103 community & voluntary, 275 social inclusion, and 58 environmental. The March PPN newsletter was sent to all member organisations, council staff, and Elected Members. The newsletter is available on the PPN website - <https://www.galwaycountyppn.ie/> - and PPN social media - <https://www.facebook.com/GalwayCountyPPN/> . The PPN's weekly news bulletin, the 'PPN Weekly Digest' was sent every Friday to all members. The PPN sought nominations for a total of five vacancies on the Secretariat. The elected nominees will represent the Athenry/ Oranmore, Ballinasloe, Loughrea and Tuam Municipal Districts and the Social Inclusion Pillar.

ARTS OFFICE

ARTIST SUPPORT SCHEME 2025

Assessments of the Artist Support Scheme applications are complete. 14 artists were awarded €30,492 by a peer panel. This funding will support their professional development and create further opportunities for them in the future. Congratulations to the successful Artist Support Scheme 2025 recipients: Alannah Robins, Anne Marie Deacy, Brigid Mulligan, Ciara Broderick, Fiona Hanley, Fionnuala Quinn, Grace Dyas, James Skerritt, Jamie Toomey, Karen Dervan, Matthew Noone, Melisande Souef, Sinead Pokall and Sorsha Galvin. These



artists are working in circus, film, literature, music and visual art across the county.

HELMET BY BRIGID MULLIGAN,
2022. CYANOTYPE PRINT

STUDIO MÓR RESIDENCY AT LIMELIGHT CREATIVE ARTS

Studio Mór artists and their artist facilitator Amy Brannigan received and assessed 34 proposals for week-long residencies as part of the second year of our partnership.

Congratulations to Kristyn Fontanella (Dance), Ferdia Mac Aonghasa & Rosa Makeala



(Theatre) and Anthony Cullen (Visual Arts) who will spend time working at Studio Mór and with the studio's artists with disabilities.

MISS MARY BY KRISTYN FONTANELLA. MISS MARY WAS IN DEVELOPMENT WHILE IN RESIDENCE IN STUDIO MÓR.

IRISH THEATRE INSTITUTE WORKSHOPS

In partnership with Irish Theatre Institute (ITI), Galway City Arts Office and Galway County Arts Office announced new script development workshop series led by multi-award-winning playwright Caitríona Daly. Workshop Dates are Wednesdays on 5th March, 12th March, 19th March, 26th March, 2nd April and 9th April.

Congratulations to the theatre artists selected to participate: Aine Ni Laoghaire, Andrew Galvin, Aoibheann McCann, Emer Lyons, Emily White, Jacinta Fay, James Boylan, Jenni Nikinmaa and Rena Bryson.



GALWAY COUNTY ARTS OFFICER SHARON O'GRADY AND GALWAY CITY ARTS OFFICER RUTH MULHERN WITH PARTICIPANTS AT FIRST DAY OF ITI WORKSHOPS IN DRUID. PHOTO: EMILIJA JEFREMOVA

CREATIVE PLACES TUAM CULTURAL GROWTH FUND

€20,000 Funding Scheme for individuals, artists, and community groups to support cultural and creative projects in Tuam is now open.

In 2025 Creative Places Tuam is committed to further supporting the growth of culture and creativity in Tuam. This fund is to support arts, community and social groups, artists and

individuals alike to create! To make things happen; to take ideas further, to grow resources and/or deepen connection to communities.

Creative Places Tuam with support from Galway County Council Arts Office is now launching the Cultural Growth Fund with a total sum of €20,000 available. Applications can be submitted for the minimum amount of €1,000 to the maximum amount of €3,000 as dependent on their needs and ambitions.



WHAT IS IT FOR?

This fund supports creative development.

All practitioners and artforms will be considered in conjunction with how the proposal impacts the creative and cultural development of Tuam and its surrounds.

Applicants must be living in or working in Tuam or its surrounds. Applications must benefit Tuam and its surrounds.

The deadline for submission is 12pm, Friday 4th April 2025.

[Click here for more information](#)



VIEW FROM TOWN HALL TUAM BY
JENNIFER CUNNINGHAM.

BRANAR

Branar has been touring Clann Lir to schools around THE COUNTY WITH SUPPORT FROM THE ARTS OFFICE. By the end of the month, the show will have toured to 11 schools across and will have reached an audience of 582 students. The Clann Lir tour continues until April.



CLANN LIR BY BRANAR

We are currently working with Galway artist Miquel Barceló who will be touring his show “Ballad of a Bandit” to schools in Galway city and county in the coming months with support from Branar.

BALLAD OF A BANDIT BY MIQUEL BARCELÓ
PRODUCED BY BRANAR



CREATIVE IRELAND

CLÁR CRUTHAITHEACHTA DO CHLUBANNA ÓIGE

Galway County Council’s Creative Communities Engagement Officer has been working with GRETB’s Local Creative Youth Partnership Coordinator to establish a number of youth clubs with a creative focus in the Connemara region and on the Aran Islands. On Friday the 7th of March, a networking event was held at Áras Éanna, Inis Oírr. The purpose of this event was to launch an exhibition of all the creative work being done in these youth clubs. The exhibition will continue for the month of March, culminating in a ‘Voice of the Child’ day for young people from Galway City and County and Roscommon. This will take place on Saturday the 29th of



March and will be attended by a group of Tuam young people from Sparkcatchers!

CRUINNIÚ NA NÓG 2025

Programming and planning are underway for Cruinniú na nÓg 2025 which will take place on Saturday the 7th of June. The Open Call for funding closed on Friday the 7th of March with assessment to take place over the coming weeks. The response to the Open Call has been incredibly strong and we anticipate another jam-packed day of free events for children and young people throughout Galway County.

Additional funding of €10,000 has been secured to programme events for the Aran Islands. This is a follow on from last year's extremely successful islands programme. We are currently in conversation with groups from the islands to plan out this fun filled day.

An additional €3,000 has also been secured to programme a Night Time Economy event aimed at older teens. We are in the process of planning a series of DJ'ing and event planning workshops for teens culminating in a disco. This will be facilitated by Clifden based organisation, Sing Along Social.



MENDING HEARTS MEETING AT MISA

On Tuesday the 11th of March, the Mending HeArts team, consisting of Creative Ireland and Healthy Ireland staff in both Galway City and County travelled to Dublin to visit MISA, the Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing. The purpose of the journey was to meet with Roisín Nevin, Creative Life Coordinator at MISA to discuss her work in the Arts and Health realm. The Creative Communities Engagement Officer from Dublin City Council was also in attendance to discuss her Arts and Health programmes which are run in partnership with MISA at their hub in the campus of St James' Hospital. The aim of the day was one of networking and idea sharing.

The Mending HeArts programme is moving along at a strong pace. A panel of artists has been selected following on from a highly successful open call and training is well underway with workshops beginning shortly.

GALWAY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

CORE FUNDING 2025

The Department of Arts, Media, Communications, Culture & Sport and Sport Ireland have announced the Government will invest €31.3m in the sport sector including National

Governing Bodies for Sport (NGBs), the network of Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs), and other funded bodies for 2025.



This is the highest ever level of Core investment. It has increased by over €1.6m since 2024 and €13.5m over the lifecycle of the National Sports Policy 2018-2027.

This represents a 76% increase over seven years, with Core investment funding the day-to-day running of NGBs, the network of LSPs and other funded bodies.

Almost €12m has been invested in the network of 29 LSPs, with a significant increase to the Women in Sport allocation delivering initiatives for women in disadvantaged communities, older women and teenage girls, and those with a disability or from ethnic minorities.

Galway Sports Partnership is set to receive €402,023 in 2025 as part of the Local Sports Partnership Core Funding.

This funding will go towards:

- Supporting local sports initiatives
- Expanding access to sport for all ages and abilities
- Encouraging healthier, more active communities

VOLUNTEER IN SPORTS AWARDS 2025

Galway Sports Partnership were delighted to attend the Federation of Irish Sport Volunteer in Sports Awards in Dublin on 28th February 2025.

Francis Daly received the award for Galway for her work with the Special Olympics in Galway. Frances spoke on the day about how she became a volunteer and the importance of volunteers in making these activities possible.

Frances has been a dedicated volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland since 2002, tirelessly supporting athletes with intellectual disabilities for more than two decades. Her journey began as a volunteer at the 2003 World Summer Games, and since then, she has taken on numerous roles at local, regional, and national levels.

As the event manager for all local swimming events, Frances has been instrumental in organising many area and regional competitions. Her ability to inspire others is evident in her recruitment of students from Coláiste Iognáid as volunteers for her classes and Special Olympics Ireland events.

Her contributions go beyond swimming, having served as Swimming Head Coach for Connaught from 2006 to 2018 and as Assistant Coach for Team Ireland at the 2023 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Additionally, Frances has played key roles in operations

management for various golf events, organised Annual Collection Day fundraisers, and served as an advocate for Special Olympics within her local community.

Her unwavering commitment to promoting inclusion and empowering athletes is a shining example of the transformative impact volunteers can have on the lives of others.



All of us at Galway Sports Partnership would like to congratulate Frances on her well-deserved award.

L-R: MR. ANDREW MCBRIDE, GALWAY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP, MS. FRANCIS DALY, AWARD RECIPIENT, AND MS. ANNETTE MCGEENEY, SPECIAL OLYMPICS CONNACHT

GAMES FOR ALL

Games for All is a partnership with Atlantic Technological University and Galway Sports Partnership. Galway Sports Partnership through the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer is supporting a group of Sports Students to provide physical activity programmes for people with disabilities and older adults. The students work with each group for 4 weeks and then



swap over giving them experience with both groups. The participants are really enjoying the programme with the feedback each week very positive, and it is a credit to the students for making it an enjoyable programme for everyone while also getting hands on experience of how to adapt programmes for a variety of needs and levels.



ACTIVE ISLANDS

As part of the Active Islands Community Sports Hub all 4 Primary Schools on the Aran Islands and Inisbofin are taking part in Marathon Kids. Marathon Kids is an 8-week programme targeting 5th & 6th Class students. Students will perform four running sessions each week inching them closer to completing their first marathon as well as learning about the benefits of physical activity. The finale will see the students running their last mile and completing the marathon at the end of the 8 weeks.



PUPILS FROM INIS OÍRR
PRIMARY SCHOOL TAKING
PART IN THEIR FIRST
SESSION!

SPECIAL OLYMPICS INFORMATION MEETING

The Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub in partnership with Special Olympics Ireland held a Young Athletes Programme information meeting in Gullane's Hotel on 22nd January with 16 interested parents in attendance.



The Young Athletes Programme is about giving children with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to learn and develop their physical and sports skills in a fun and supportive environment by empowering parents to become Young Athlete Coaches. Since the meeting 10 parents have expressed an interest in training as Young Athlete Coaches, 3 have completed the Community Sports Hub's first aid course and 9 have

signed up for its safeguarding course next week in preparation and in accordance with the Young Athlete Coaching Course scheduled for 11th May.

BALLINASLOE COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB CLUB FORUM MEETING

There was a great turnout at the Ballinasloe Sports Hub Club Forum on 20th February in Gullane's Hotel with over 24 in attendance representing over 18 clubs in the town whereby further community needs were identified and numerous ideas were to be actioned e.g. Collate a Club Directory, produce an all town club Summer Camp Poster, teenagers'



engagement is needed to drive hub programmes for this group starting through our Youth Leadership Programme, Club Showcase Event at an evening time proposed on Thursday June 5th and increase awareness re Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub & Local Clubs.

Community feedback and commitment is a crucial element to a Community Sports Hub and it is great to see this coming to the fore at these meetings to help make Ballinasloe more active.

BALLINASLOE MEN ON THE MOVE

Ballinasloe Men on the Move group funded by the HSE and the Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub kick started their 10 week programme on Tuesday 25th February to run on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 10 weeks lead by Shirley Keating who has kept the Men on the Move programme sustained in Ballinasloe for the past 10 years. There were plenty of local men with personal goals along with two men from the Brothers of Charity Community House. The programme will involve a combined walking fitness with outdoor gym-based exercises over its term.



BALLINASLOE OLDER ADULT TASTER EVENT

We had a wonderful Older Adult Taster Event in the Emerald Ballroom on 25th February 2025 in collaboration with HSE Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons Team, Tennis Club, Bowls Club and Move Ballinasloe Group. There's was over 30 participants sampling Go for Life Games like Malai, Scildils and Flisk, Boccia, Scooch, Bowls, Tennis and Activator Walking Poles of course!! Lots of fun had by all!!



BALLINASLOE COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB WOMEN IN SPORT WEEK

Women's Hockey in collaboration with Hockey Ireland and Ladies Stretch Therapy with Claire O'Leary both started during Women In Sport Week with 12 and 20 participants respectively. With safe, fun and bring a friend environments being the focus of both programmes everyone is looking forward to the 5 weeks ahead.

Comhpháirtíocht
Spóirt Na Gallimhe
Galway Sports
Partnership
SPÓRT ÉIREANN | SPORT IRELAND

**Women in Sport Week
3rd-9th March 2025**

**Ladies
Stretch Therapy
6 Week Programme
Started this morning
in Ballinasloe Library**

Fully Booked Out!

#WomenInSportIre

#AccelerateAction

SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Comhpháirtíocht
Spóirt Na Gallimhe
Galway Sports
Partnership
SPÓRT ÉIREANN | SPORT IRELAND

**Women in Sport Week
3rd-9th March 2025**

**Women's Hockey
Come & Try
6 Week Programme
Kicked off on Saturday!**

**Spaces still available
Register on the day**

#WomenInSportIre

#AccelerateAction

SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND



INTEGRATION

Meetings with the Dept of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth took place in February to highlight issues in relation to the settlement of Ukrainians within the County.

Craft workshops continued with Ukrainians in An Spidéal in collaboration with Creative Ireland.

Information clinics for International Protection Applicants continued for residents of the 7 dedicated accommodation centres across the County. Clinics were held with Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection in Connemara and the Modular Homes in Ballinasloe.

Galway County Integration Team met with Integration Teams from across the country to share learnings and best practise at a conference organised by the LGMA.

TOURISM

SLOWDOWN INTERREG EUROPEAN PROJECT

Galway County Councils tourism team in collaboration with the BIA Innovator Campus, hosted the second Regional Stakeholder Group Meeting for the Interreg Europe Project



Slowdown at the BIA Innovator Campus in Athenry. The slowdown project promotes slow tourism as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism, encouraging a more meaningful travel experiences that emphasise cultural immersion, environmental consciousness and local engagement. These stakeholder meetings provide an opportunity in collaboration and engagement among key stakeholders in working towards

promoting slow tourism for regional development.

Further meetings will continue with collaboration, policy enhancement and innovative marketing strategies to position Galway as a leader in slow tourism. With combined efforts of Galway County Council, the BIA Innovator Campus and various regional and international partners, the Slowdown project is set to make a last impact on sustainable tourism in the area.

CAITN NETWORKING EVENT 2025

The annual spring networking event 'Stronger Together -Ní neart go cur le chéile' organised and supported by CAITN (Connemara & Arann Islands Tourism Network), Fáilte Ireland & Údarás na Gaeltachta was held in Wildlands, Maigh Cuilinn. This networking event is an opportunity to gather the tourism industry to foster collaboration opportunities and to strengthen the development of the region as a tourism destination. 120 businesses attended



from accommodation, restaurants, visitor attractions, activity providers, tour organisers, retailers and associated tourism enterprises.

As part of the Just Transition Activator roadmap for developing networks in East Galway, JTF applicants were invited to attend the CAITN Networking Event. This event provided a valuable opportunity for

applicants to connect and collaborate with an experienced network in supporting them on their tourism journey. Additionally, it offered an insight into the type of model network that the new DEDP for East Galway will develop.



DARK SKY TOURISM

With support from Údáras na Gaeltachta and Glow2.0 Connemara Dark Skies organised an event in March about the opportunities associated with Dark Sky Tourism.

<https://forms.gle/y8iog3QkX5DRgyt99>

HAVE YOUR SAY!

BEYOND MY PLATE

University of Galway are conducting a [research project about food and sustainability](#). Open to adults living in Galway City and County.

LAMA AWARDS



L-R: MS. EIMEAR DOLAN, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MR. GERARD MCLOUGHLAIN, LEENANE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF COUNTY GALWAY, MS. JACQUELINE O'CARROLL, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, AND MR. KIERAN COYNE, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER

NATIONAL TREE WEEK 2025

National Tree Week 2025 will take place this year from 9th March - 16th March 2025. The Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte are again partnering for National Tree Week and this year's theme is **'Planting Trees, Growing Together'** In conjunction with the Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte, Galway County Council distributed tree saplings free of charge to community groups, schools and other voluntary organisations in its functional area.



GREEN SCHOOLS

Visits and Assessments continue in with school visits to Creggs NS, Claddaghduff NS, Newtown NS , Abbeyknockmoy, Gaelscoil de hÍde, Uaran Mór, Cummer NS, Scoil Éinne, An Spidéal, Kilcoona NS, Portumna Community School, Tiernascragh NS, Cappataggle NS, Esker NS, Kiltartan NS and Lisheenkyle NS.



SOCIAL MEDIA- AWARENESS

Social media campaigns on Food Waste prevention, Cigarette Butt Litter, and Repair/reuse.



BURIAL GROUNDS

A number of the burial grounds in the county suffered damaged by Storm Eowyn resulting mainly in falling trees and damage to boundary walls. A schedule of remedial works has been developed which will be progressed over the forthcoming months.

DOG WARDEN SERVICE

841 dog licences were purchased during the month of February with 561 of those licences purchased at the local post office.

13 fixed penalty notices were issued by the dog warden service during the month of February.

1 case for offences under the Control of Dogs Act 1986 As Amended was heard at Gort District Court on the 27th February 2025. The dog owner was convicted of the offence of failing to keep his dogs under effective control, however, did not attend court on the day. The case was adjourned to the 24th April for the owner to address the court and finalise the case.

3 incidents of sheep worrying were reported to the dog warden service during the month of February, the areas in question were Killimor, Monivea and Bermingham Road, Tuam. These cases were subsequently posted on the Council's social media platforms to highlight the responsibility of dog owners and the vulnerability of sheep to dog attacks. These posts will continue to be shared throughout the lambing season.

CONTROL OF DOGS (XL BULLY) REGULATIONS 2024

The deadline in the regulations for an owner of an XL Bully Type dog to submit an application for a certificate of exemption to keep the dog to their local authority was 31st January 2025.

7 Certificate of Exemptions were issued to owners of XL Bully dogs by Galway County Council during the month of February. All these refer to applications received by the Council prior by the deadline of the 31st January 2025.

An injunction was granted by the High Court on the 31st January 2025 with regard to the XL Bully regulations, to prohibit the seizing and/or euthanising of any XL Bully type dogs in the shelters of registered dog rescues/charities until the 27th February 2025 when the Judicial Review was to be heard. This meant that any authorised officers/Dog Wardens could not seize and/or euthanise any XL Bully Dogs from those shelters between 31st January and 27th February 2025.

This was the only part of the regulation impacted by injunction and did not apply to members of the public.

Local Authorities have now been informed by the Department of Rural Community and Development that the case has now been settled and will be struck out by the Court in due course. In order for the case to be formally struck out, the Department will be introducing some minor amendments to the regulations to address some concerns raised. These regulations will provide for details of an appeals process, specifically in cases where a Dog Warden seizes a dog on the premise that it is an XL Bully type that has not obtained a

Certificate of Exemption, and the owner then wishes to appeal the determination of the Warden that the dog is an XL Bully type dog.

However, the injunction previously granted with regard to the XL Bully regulations **remains in place** until these regulations come into effect.

An update for the Plenary will be provided in regard to this matter in due course.

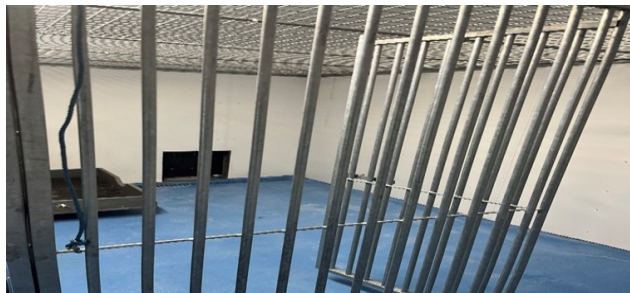
DOG SHELTER UPGRADES

Upgrade works carried out to the Council's dog shelter are now complete. The funding for these works was provided from the Department of Rural and Community Development as part of the Dog Control Initiative 2024. These upgrades centred around the increase in capacity at the shelter to deal with continued high number of dogs coming through the service with the addition of 7 extra kennels, two of which are safety kennels and capable of accommodating large dogs such as XL Bully's. In addition, to complement the additional kennel space, an outdoor enclosure was provided with improved exercise area and treatment facilities.

These upgrade works have complemented the work done last year and will greatly assist the quality of care of dogs coming through the service as well as the health and safety and working conditions on site for the shelter keeper and warden personnel.

Safety Kennels for larger dogs – A

sliding hatch is provided for between two kennels so shelter keeper can move the dog between two sides without entering enclosure and secure on one side while cleaning and servicing.



Outdoor enclosure – Each dog has access to own outdoor enclosure when staying with us.

RMCEI RETURNS AND PLAN FOR 2025

In February, staff completed and submitted to the EPA the Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) returns for 2024 and the Plan for 2025. All activities in 2024 must be reported on in the Progress Report. For the water area, the following are the headings to be reported on:

- Pressures from Agriculture (slurry/soiled water collection and storage)
- Pressures from Agriculture (slurry and fertiliser spreading)
- Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTS) / Septic Tanks
- Discharge Licences / Misconnections
- Local Priorities and Water Quality Issues

For waste the following are the headings to be reported on

- Tackling illegal waste activities & Multi Agency sites of concern.
- Construction and Demolition Activity
- End of life Vehicles and the waste Metal Sector
- Waste Collection – Household & Commercial
- Producer responsibility Initiatives and Additional Local priorities

BATHING WATERS

The EPA held a bathing water workshop in Portlaoise to discuss the possibility of extending the Bathing season.

A number of presentations were given, including:

- Findings of an extended season assessment utilising existing EPA guidance
- Bathing Safety – challenges of winter bathing
- Wastewater infrastructure implications
- Draft advisory document

An out of season bathing poster has been produced and this has been posted at bathing areas around the county. Details were also provided via the council social media pages.



CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

A number of meetings with LAWPRO took place during the month. The Western Local Authority liaison meeting was attended by staff from Roscommon, Galway city and county,

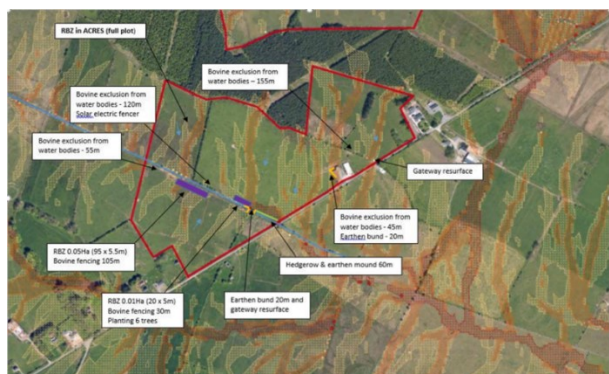
Mayo and LAWPRO. Actions from previous meeting were discussed along with updates from LAWPRO and a presentation on their work programme for the year ahead.

The quarterly Western Region Operational Committee meeting included presentations and discussions on:

- Update from Uisce Eireann on work in progress on the Urban Wastewater Plan
- Presentation from ASSAP on the European Innovation Partnership funding with examples of work carried out on farms in county Roscommon
- National and Western updates from LAWPRO
- Updates from committee members including the Western LAs, ASSAP, DAFM, EPA, Forest Service, IFI, NPWS, Uisce Eireann, etc.

A one-to-one meeting was also held between Galway County Council and LAWPRO with the following covered:

- 2nd cycle PAA and Agricultural inspections
- 3rd cycle work in Galway
- Proposed investigative work in Truskey Stream, Barna



EXAMPLES OF EIP MEASURES INSTALLED ON A FARM

AGRICULTURE

Galway County Council are involved in a working group with the EPA regarding the NAIP (National Agricultural Inspection Programme) and attended a meeting in February in relation to this.

Five farmers that were cross reported in December 2024 by GCC for breaches of the GAP Regulations were sanctioned by DAFM with fines of 10 to 15%. Two of the farmers received



15% penalties for spreading sewage sludge out of season and another for spreading slurry using a rain cannon from a public road close to a river.

SPREADING OF SLURRY FROM A PUBLIC ROAD, CLOSE TO A RIVER

WASTE MANAGEMENT NOTICES ISSUED

WASTE/AIR MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

10 litter fines issued by the Community Warden service during the month of February for offences under the Litter Pollution Act.

A case was heard in Gort District Court for offences under the Litter Pollution Act 1997. The defendant did not attend Court, but the judge convicted in their absence.

WERLA

Staff attended the quarterly Enforcement Officers WERLA meeting online.

Staff attended a meeting with Barna Recycling and WERLA staff in relation compliance with the Food Waste Regulations and the roll out of the food bin to all household in the County.

CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION WASTE

Ongoing investigation involving haulier transporting construction waste without a valid permit. Several trucks were following, and suspected dumping sites monitored. Nothing illegal was detected.

CORPORATE SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES, CITY & COUNTY LIBRARIES

CORPORATE SERVICES

US TRIP

DEXCOM VISIT



L-R: MR. MICHAEL STORAN, IDA, MR. DON ABBEY, VICE PRESIDENT, DEXCOM, CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF CO. GALWAY, MR. BARRY REGAN, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, DEXCOM, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, AND MR. IVAN HOULIHAN, HEAD OF WEST COAST USA, IDA



L-R: MR. BARRY REGAN, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, DEXCOM, CLLR. MARTIN KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF CO. GALWAY, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

L-R: MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MR. BARRY REGAN, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, DEXCOM, MR. DON ABBEY, VICE PRESIDENT, DEXCOM, CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF CO. GALWAY, MR. MICHAEL STORAN, IDA



APPLE PARK SITE VISIT



IDA



L-R: MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH COUNTY GALWAY AND MR. IVAN HOULIHAN, HEAD OF WEST COAST USA, IDA

ENTERPRISE IRELAND



L- R: CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH COUNTY GALWAY, AND MS. MARISA MANNION, ENTERPRISE IRELAND

TOURISM IRELAND

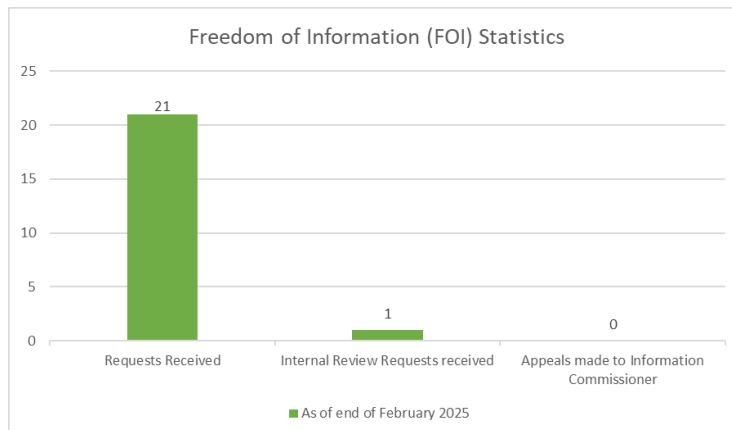


ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE, NEW YORK

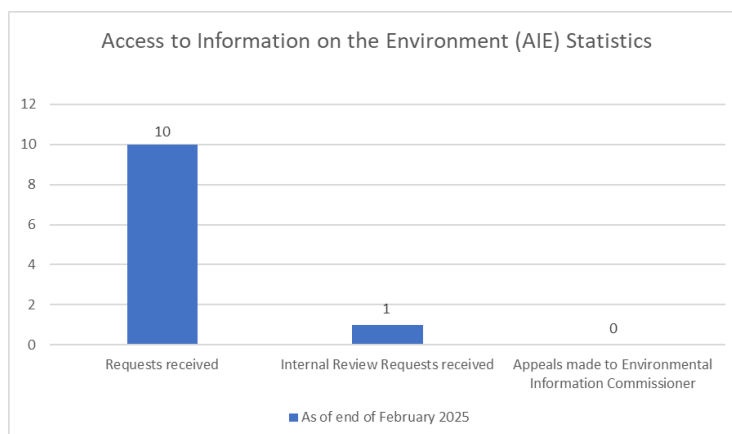


FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION & DATA PROTECTION

2025 YEAR TO DATE STATISTICS TO 28.02.2025



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

DATA PROTECTION

GDPR/Data Protection Training:

- Online Induction Training & GDPR Staff Awareness Training issued to all new Staff
- Online Refresher Training on Cyber Security & Data Breaches issued to all Staff Q1
- GDPR Induction Workshops provided for Lifeguards and Community Wardens
- Quarterly Data Protection Awareness Newsletters circulated to all Staff
- Online Data Protection/GDPR Training facilitated for the Elected Members of GCC
- Cyber Security Training Videos & Quiz assigned to all Staff Q4

LAW AGENT DEPARTMENT

- Croi Conaithe – Vacant Property Grant update – instructions received, and 47 files opened in the Law Agent Dept. since February 2024 (12 months).

- Payments have been issued on 24 files with 3 more due for completion and release by end of week 10-14th March 2025 (~60%)
- Some delays and difficulties experienced in terms of scheduled documents not enclosed in final stages and correspondence with applicant solicitors. Some documents have had to be returned as incomplete, unsigned or undated.
- Amendments made to covering letters highlighting issues in attempt to alleviate any such issues causing delays.
- The Vacant Grants represent a new area of practice for many private practice solicitors and efforts being made together by Law Agents and Housing to streamline the process and simplify whilst adhering to all departmental requirements and standard conveyancing practice
- Additional Law Agent Staff allocation planned and provided for with increase in Grant applications and instructions coming into the LA Department

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

DUNLO TRACK, BALLINASLOE

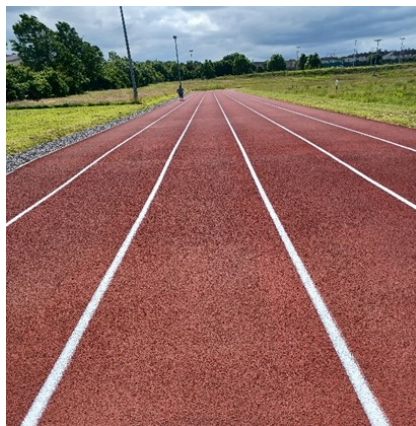
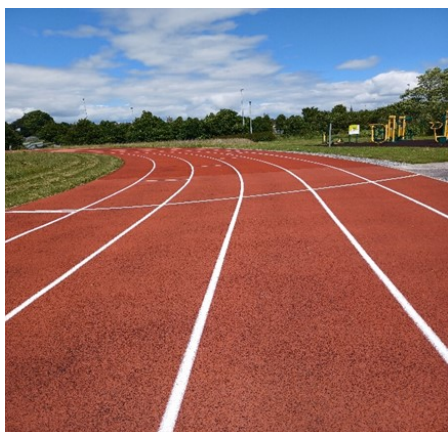
We are delighted to introduce a new online booking system at Dunlo Track, Ballinasloe!

While public hours remain unchanged and do not require online booking, we are pleased to offer an additional 54 hours per week outside of the core public opening hours. These new additional hours are available for a fee and include weekends and bank holidays. The track can be booked by groups, clubs, and individuals.



Booking includes access to the toilet and changing facilities and lighting. The site is also secured outside public hours. Our new online booking system is very user friendly.

Please register to set up your account today and book your next slot!



DUNLO TRACK
BALLINASLOE



DUNLO TRACK OUTDOOR GYM,
BALLINASLOE

SPORTS KEY ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM

Dunlo Track, Ballinasloe
Ballinasloe, Galway
Dunlo Recreational Park Facility has a 400m running track, 6-lane 400m oval, with an 8-lane 100m sprint lane. System is constructed in accordance with IAAF Guidelines. Changing room facilities on-site. The green area in the centre of the track is used solely for Biodiversity.
☎ 091-509024 ✉ Email 🌐 Website 📍 Map
Changing Rooms - Floodlights - Free Parking - Gym Equipment - Toilets - Wheelchair Accessible
Running track public hours from 10am-6pm Mon, Wed, Fri and 10am-5pm Tues, Thurs, Sat. No access code required upon entry.

Choose a date and facility to book

Mon 03/03/25 Tue 04/03/25 Wed 05/03/25 Thu 06/03/25 Fri 07/03/25 Sat 08/03/25 Sun 09/03/25

Mon 03/03/25	Tue 04/03/25	Wed 05/03/25	Thu 06/03/25	Fri 07/03/25	Sat 08/03/25	Sun 09/03/25
Unavailable	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00
Unavailable	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00
Unavailable	09:00 €10.00	09:00 €10.00	09:00 €10.00	09:00 €10.00	09:00 €10.00	Booked
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Booked
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	11:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	12:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	13:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	14:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	15:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	16:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	17:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	18:00 €10.00
Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	Public Hours	19:00 €10.00
20:00 €10.00	Booked	20:00 €10.00	Booked	20:00 €10.00	20:00 €10.00	20:00 €10.00
21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00	21:00 €10.00

WATER SAFETY

The recruitment of lifeguards is ongoing for Bathing Season 2025, applicants have applied for position of beach lifeguard for the joint service which will operate in 16 bathing areas, 10 in the County, 6 in the City.

Successful applicants will attend an induction day for training, contracts will be issued, lifeguards will start work during the bathing season, weekends in June, full-time July and August, and the first two weekends in September.

Signage is currently being updated in the bathing areas in the County, with improvement works and maintenance taking place on the lifeguard facilities.

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

On a daily basis the Customer Services team, located within Corporate Services, monitor and update the Council's social media content with creative output to enhance engagement with the public towards maintaining awareness of the great work of the Council.

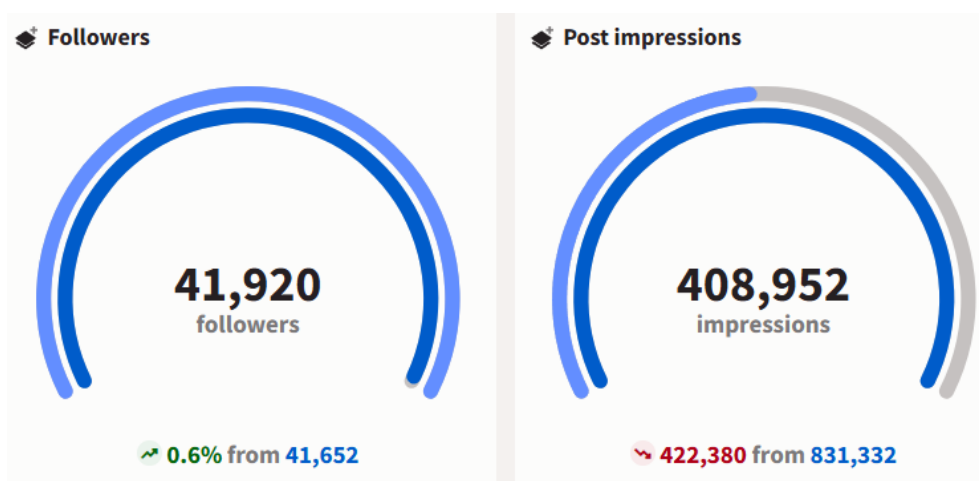
This year, for our first ever launch of Seachtain na Gaeilge events across Galway County








Council, we 'live' streamed the 2025 Gaeltacht Scholarships draw. This enabled the 228 applicants for 2025 (up from 86 applicants in 2024) to view the draw on our Facebook channel as it was happening...all very exciting! This 'live' stream received a staggering 2,550 views!

MR. MÁIRTÍN Ó DONNCHADHA, OIFIGEACH FORBARTHA GAEILGE, AT THE LAUNCH OF SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

FEBRUARY 2025 OVERALL MONTHLY STATS




***Posts Impressions** - The number of times that posts on our Galway County Council Facebook, X and Instagram accounts appeared on someone's screen. Content viewed includes posts, videos, and reels. *Ordinarily we'd be disappointed with the drop in impressions recorded from January 2025 but Storm Eowyn as an exceptional event produced exceptional numbers. A regular pattern of 400k+ impressions for February without any major event is very positive.*

Social Media Audience Metrics	Number of Posts	Monthly Post Impressions
 www.facebook.com/galwaycounty	171	334,433
 www.x.com/galwaycoco	137	35,740
 www.instagram.com/galwaycountycouncil	174	36,745
 www.linkedin/galwaycoco	13	2,034
Total Number of Posts	495 (162 posts in Irish – 33%)	
Fans & Followers across Social Media Platforms	41,920  0.6% from 41,652 Fans & Followers	

FACEBOOK


FEBRUARY'S TOP THREE POSTS

Top posts



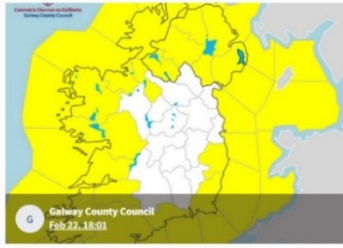
Galway County Council
Feb 28, 14:38

Construction of bus stops in Moylough & Mountbellew. The construction of bus stop infrastructure to accommodate the installation of a bus shelter and an accessible boarding area is in progress in Mountbellew and Moylough.



Galway County Council
Feb 12, 15:38

The construction of bus stop infrastructure to accommodate the installation of bus shelters and accessible boarding areas is in progress in Headford, Craughwell and Labane. Tá tógáil bonneagair stadanna bus chun freastal ar shuiteálai scáthláin bus agus áiteanna bordála inrochtana ar siúl in Áth Cinn, Creachmhaol agus An Lábhán.



Galway County Council
Feb 22, 18:01

Status Yellow - Wind and Rain warning for Galway. Met Éireann Weather Warning ⚠️ Very strong and gusty southerly winds together with spells of heavy rain. Possible Impacts: • Difficult travel conditions • Localised flooding • Fallen trees & loose debris • Poor visibility For updates: <https://met.ie/warnings/today> Valid: 02:00 Sunday 23/02/2025 to 15:00 Sunday 23/02/2025 Issued: 10:47 Friday 21/02/2025

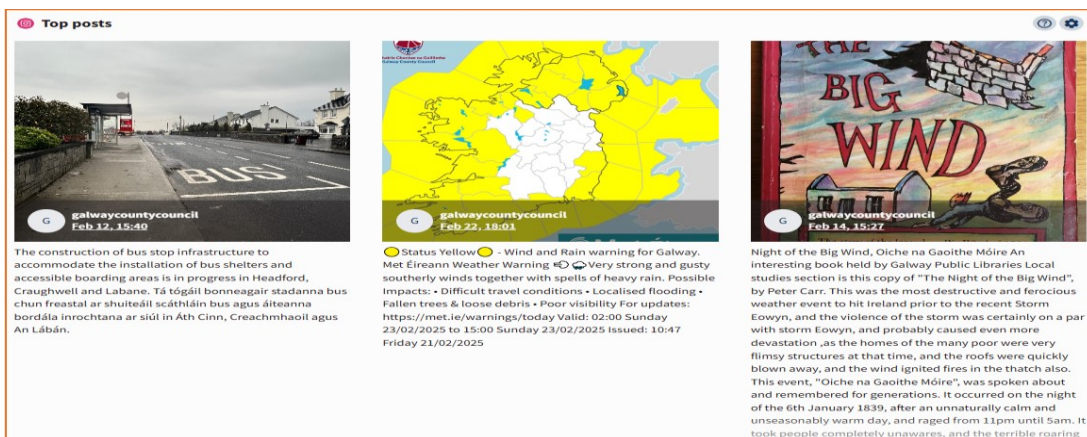
X (PREVIOUSLY TWITTER)

FEBRUARY'S TOP THREE POSTS



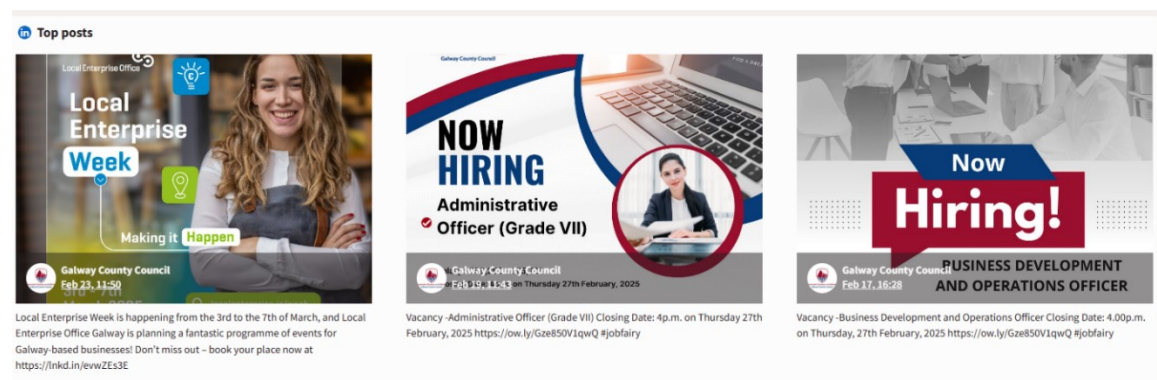
INSTAGRAM

FEBRUARY'S TOP THREE POSTS



LINKEDIN

FEBRUARY'S TOP THREE POSTS



LAUNCH OF SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Irish office organized an event in Áras an Chontae on the 24th February where we launched a calendar of events for Seachtain na Gaeilge that takes place every year from the 01st – 17th March. We also conducted a draw for the 2025 Galway County Council Padraig Pearse Gaeltacht scholarships where second level students from functioning areas of Galway County Council get an opportunity to attend an Irish college in the Connemara Gaeltacht during the summer. A recognition ceremony for the awarding of certificates for the 2024 Galway County Council Padraig Pearse Gaeltacht scholarships also took place.



AWARDEES OF THE 2024 GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PADRAIG PEARSE GAELTACHT SCHOLARSHIPS WITH MR. LIAM CONNOLLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF COUNTY GALWAY AND MR. MÁIRTÍN Ó DONNCHADHA, OIFIGEACH FORBARTHA GAEILIGE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL



GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STAFF AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE PADRAIG PEARSE SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION

GAELTACHT SCHOLARSHIPS

This year we managed to get another Irish college on board with which enables Galway County Council to offer 16 scholarships. The Irish colleges in partnership with Galway County Council are Coláiste Chonnacht, Coláiste Lurgan, Coláiste Chamuis, Coláiste Chiaráin, Coláiste na nOileáin, Coláiste Sheosamh, Coláiste Spleodar and this year we welcomed

Coláiste Cholumba. We received 228 applications from across the county for the scholarships (a huge increase over the 86 applications received in 2024)

During the launch on the 24th of February there was beautiful traditional music by Brian Mac Donagh and friends followed by the draw for the Gaeltacht scholarships. This was live streamed on the Galway County Council Facebook page where 2.6k viewed this event.



BRIAN MCDONAGH & FRIENDS



SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE

As part of Seachtain na Gaeilge events Galway County Council partnered with Brannar theatre Group where they brought a theatre show called 'Clann Lir' to schools in each Municipal District in the county. This was attended by 1400 primary school students where at least 2 shows were provided in each Municipal District and smaller schools were given the opportunity to attend the shows in their area.



BRANNAR SHOW IN ÁRAS CHOIS CUAIN, ROS A MHÍL, CO. NA GAILLIMHE

SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE CELEBRATIONS IN ÁRAS AN CHONTAE

We had a huge event in Áras an Chontae on Friday the 07th March 2025 where the county buildings were treated to traditional music performances by students from Coláiste Chroí Mhuire in An Spidéál, whose melodies echoed throughout the premises.



STUDENTS FROM COLÁISTE CHROÍ MHUIRE, AN SPIDÉAL

The celebrations continued in a packed Galway County Council chamber, where Certificates were presented to the successful recipients of the Pádraig Pearse Gaeltacht Scholarships. Sixteen students were awarded scholarships, granting them the opportunity to attend an Irish college in the Conamara Gaeltacht. Here, they will immerse themselves fully in the Irish language and culture within the vibrant heart of the region.



Following this, attendees were captivated by a theatrical performance by the Brannar theatre group, held in the council chamber. Students from Scoil Náisiúnta na bhForbacha and Scoil



Náisiúnta An Bhaile Nua Maigh Cuilinn were spellbound by the enchanting show, 'Clann Lir.' The event concluded on a high note with a lively musical performance by Máirtín Ó Dubhghaill. The chamber resonated with joyful sing-alongs, as the wonderful atmosphere lifted everyone's spirits. The day created cherished

memories that are sure to linger in the minds of the students for years to come.

CILLIAN & CAITRÍONA
FROM BRANNAR WITH
THEIR SHOW 'CLANN LIR'





MÁIRTÍN Ó DUBHGHAILL IN MUSICAL PERFORMANCE WITH STUDENTS FROM SCOIL NA BHFORBACHA AND SCOIL BHAILE NUA MAIGH CUILINN.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Galway Public Libraries provide an extensive array of services to the community and fulfil the key actions set out in national policy on the provision of an inclusive library service.



Read local, national and international e-Newspapers for free on BorrowBox! Extended contracts now mean that Galway Public Libraries users have access to the Tribune and the Tuam Herald at their fingertips with no charge.

If you haven't heard the news, your library membership gives you access to hundreds of e-Newspapers and e-Magazines on BorrowBox. All you need is your library card number and PIN. This month our online access increased to 20,000+ loans of Newspapers and Magazines.

Digital skills classes and one-to-one drop-in sessions are available in libraries to assist in accessing these services on your tablet, mobile phone or ipad.

With the focus for February on the development of reading Galway Libraries issued 20,695 children's books and welcomed over 34,000 visits to the libraries

IRELAND READS DAY

Throughout February and especially on Ireland Reads Day, February 22nd, people across Ireland are encouraged to celebrate reading. Ireland Reads is an initiative of the Government of Ireland to celebrate the joy of reading. It is funded by Healthy Ireland and

supported by public libraries to promote reading, literacy and the arts.



On February 22nd, Galway Public Libraries celebrated Ireland Reads Day, a national celebration of books and reading. Our network of 29 library branches,

hosted events such as storytelling, craft workshops and talks. Westside Library hosted a silent book club and former Galway Senior Hurler and All-Star, Tony Óg Regan called in to Athenry Library with a copy of his new book “MVP: Raise Your Game, Unlock Your Potential”. Acclaimed local poet, Rita Ann Higgins, held a poetry reading and discussion in Ballybane Library to mark Ireland Reads Day. Rita Ann shared her personal experience of books and what reading means to her.

Leenane Library hosted a Family Vision Board Night. Galway City Library launched a new Junior Book Club for children aged 9-10. The library service hosted a pop-up stand at the Atlantic Technological University, where students had the opportunity to sign up for library membership and hear about the range of library services on offer.



FISH & CHIPS - SUSTAINABLY! - GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, LIBRARY SERVICE, WINNERS AT THE RECENT LAMA AWARDS, FOR BEST ENVIRONMENTAL/ECOLOGICAL PROJECT.

Galway Public Libraries, utilizing Galway County Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024, focused on two key strategic aims:

1. Community Participation & Social Inclusion: Encouraging broad citizen participation in local decision-making and sustainable community development.
2. Protection of Environment & Heritage: Promoting and protecting the environment, culture, heritage, and language for current and future generations.

These aims were enhanced through partnerships with various sectors and institutions, focusing on sustainable community development and environmental protection.



(L TO R): MELIOSA MCINTYRE, A/SENIOR EXECUTIVE LIBRARIAN, ELIZABETH KEANE, COUNTY AND CITY LIBRARIAN, CLLR. MARTINA KINNANE, CATHAOIRLEACH GALWAY COUNTY AND LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL.

A thematic approach, guided by community feedback, led to the overarching theme of 'Science from land to sea'. Key events included the EMBL TREC Expedition, which combined ocean exploration with land-based research. Galway Public Libraries hosted workshops and educational campaigns during the expedition's stop in Galway. The only stop on the Island of Ireland.

Other initiatives included the 'Summer Stars' National Summer Reading Campaign, upcycling workshops, and partnerships with organizations like the Marine Institute and National Aquarium of Ireland. STEAM methodologies were used to establish Science Clubs and coding workshops, engaging children in environmental education.

Throughout the year, Galway Public Libraries participated in national campaigns such as Biodiversity Week, Ocean Day, and Bioeconomy Week, showcasing environmental impacts and sustainable practices. These all added to creating awareness of environmental challenges, the human impact on biodiversity and the importance of preserving and protecting the landscapes.

The submission took home gold for Galway County Council and was an opportunity to showcase the commitment, innovation and creativity of Galway Library staff.

HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

Healthy Ireland, a government-led initiative, is the national strategy to improve health and wellbeing, place a focus on prevention, individual awareness and keeping people healthy for longer. Public libraries are currently delivering the nationwide Healthy Ireland at Your Library programme and this is a valuable resource within the community for health information.

The initiative includes a comprehensive collection of books on health and wellbeing, extensive online resources incorporating eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines. In addition to this remit there is an extensive programme of events, workshops and talks with a focus on physical health, mental health, and health literacy.

Tuesday February 11th – Healthy Ireland talk by Amy Kelly ‘An overview of Crohn’s Disease, Ulcerative Colitis and Inflammatory Bowel Disease was held in Loughrea Library. Tuam Library also hosted a Healthy Ireland at Your Library funded talk given by Amy Kelly, Chief Operating Officer of Crohn’s & Colitis Ireland. Several people attended on a very wet morning in Tuam. Amy gave an interesting and informative talk about her personal experience and excellent advice for those who have a personal or family member with a diagnosis.

L-R: MS. AMY KELLY, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF CROHN’S AND COLITIS IRELAND, AND MS. MOIRA FOX, ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL



IRISH ASTRONOMY WEEK 2025 AT GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Irish Astronomy Week is a cross-border, national initiative dedicated to promoting astronomy and space science across Ireland. It takes place in schools, libraries, observatories, and science centres across Ireland. The purpose of the week is to enable people of all ages and all walks of life to explore the wonders of the universe together as well as learning the contributions of Irish astronomers through the ages, and their work now.

The range of activities offered during Irish Astronomy Week include:

- Public talks by prominent astronomers and astrophysicists, covering topics like black holes, planets, and stars.
- Stargazing sessions hosted by local astronomy clubs or observatories with telescopes set up for public use to view the conjunction of planets and Moon.
- Workshops and activities in libraries aimed at children and families, with fun and educational activities related to space.

- Planetarium shows and virtual reality experiences to help people explore space in immersive ways.

This year Irish Astronomy Week runs from 1st-8th March 2025. Galway Public Libraries hosted multiple events during the week in both Galway City and Galway County. Events between Saturday 1st March and Thursday 6th March were attended by a total of 186 people. The participating libraries were Ballybane Library, Westside Library, Galway City Library, Loughrea Library, Oranmore Library, and Gort Library. Leabharlann An Spidéil hosted a further talk on Saturday 8th March.

There were 100 Irish Astronomy Week events taking place across Ireland, the event listing for which can be viewed at <https://www.irishastronomyweek.ie/events-2025/>.

In addition to hosting guest speakers, a number of the libraries had displays of astronomy books. The events also provided the opportunity to promote the photography and astronomy e-magazines available via our BorrowBox online resource.



BALLYBANE LIBRARY HOSTED A TALK BY BRENDAN SPELMAN ON DEEP SKY ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY.

WESTSIDE LIBRARY HOSTED A TALK BY JOHN KEADY ON THE WONDERS OF THE NIGHT SKY



GALWAY CITY LIBRARY HOSTED A TALK BY DAVE MCDONALD ON PLANETS AND ASTEROIDS

LOUGHREA LIBRARY HOSTED A TALK BY RONAN NEWMAN ON CELESTIAL WONDERS

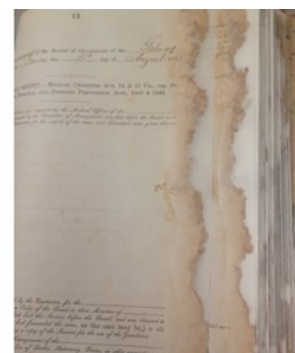
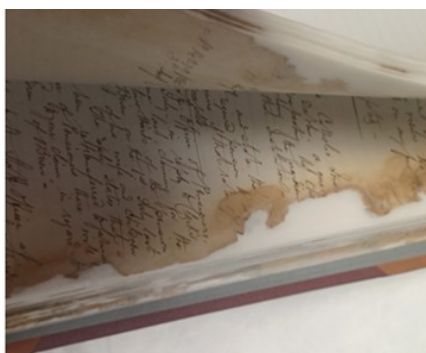


ORANMORE LIBRARY HOSTED TWO TALKS BY ADRIAN NOLAN ON PHOTOGRAPHING THE NIGHT SKY

In addition to hosting guest speakers, a number of the libraries had displays of astronomy books. The events also provided the opportunity to promote the photography and astronomy e-magazines available via our BorrowBox online resource.

ARCHIVES

Galway County Council Archives recently retrieved from conservators several items which was been away for conservation treatment. Six items from the Galway Poor Law Union collection, dating from circa 1864-1866, were repaired and are now safe to handle and are preserved for future generations of researchers. However, the complete collection of minutes, a wonderful rich research resource, charting social conditions in the town of Galway and surrounding areas, from 1839-1921, has been available free online since mid-2024.



Galway Poor Law Union minute books (GPL5/), post conservation. © Galway County Council Archives

Three interesting and varied drawings have been accessioned by Archives and added to the online catalogue. These include

- Drawing of 'Proposed Public Park, Salthill, Galway [1913] (GS25/002)
- County Buildings, Prospect Hill, Library (c.1930s) (G01/05/21)
- Imperial hotel, Galway, Survey Drawing [1980] (GS25/003)

Various collections were consulted by researchers and to assist with external and internal research queries, these included for instance, Valuation (GC/R1/) records, Burial registers (GC/ENV), and Pumps and Wells files (GC/WS/PW/).

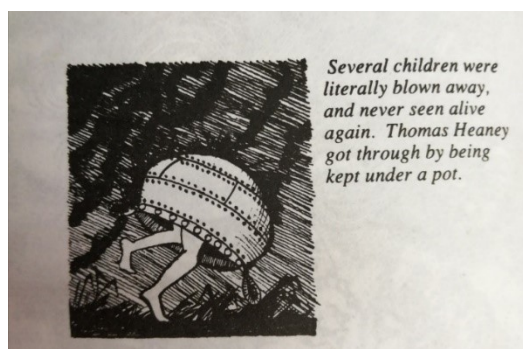
LOCAL STUDIES

THE NIGHT OF THE BIG WIND



An interesting book held by Galway Public Libraries Local studies section is this copy of "The Night of the Big Wind", by Peter Carr. This was the most destructive and ferocious weather event to hit Ireland prior to the recent Storm Éowyn, and the violence of the storm was certainly on a par with storm Éowyn, and probably caused even more devastation, as the homes of the many poor were very flimsy structures at that time, and the roofs were quickly blown away, and the wind ignited fires in the thatch also.

This event, "Oíche na Gaoithe Móire", was spoken about and remembered for generations. It occurred on the night of the 6th January 1839, after an unnaturally calm and unseasonably warm day, and raged from 11pm until 5am. It took people completely unawares, and the terrible roaring of the wind struck terror in people who thought the end of the world had come. Winds were in excess of 185 km an hour.



1. Oíche na Gaoithe Móire

The annals of Ireland do not furnish anything in the remotest degree parallel to this hurricane — nor has there ever been a visitation in this country attended with more tremendous, extensive, and calamitous consequences. *Dublin Evening Post*, January 8, 1839

The night of Sunday the sixth of January 1839 was a night of madness. On this night, the Twelfth Night, the night of Epiphany, Ireland was hit by what was perhaps the most cataclysmic storm to strike the country in the last six hundred years. It killed, maimed and ruined, threatening 'to sweep every obstacle before it from the centre of the earth'.¹

No-one living could remember its like. The violence of the storm, its sheer brutality, horrified those who lived through it; many of whom counted it the most extraordinary experience of their lives. It was likened to a 'tornado' and a 'West Indian hurricane', and its magnitude was such that it was widely seen not as an extreme version of the normal but as a supernatural event. Along the western seaboard, people made their peace with God, convinced that the end of the world was at hand.²

Many

believed the fairies were involved. There were many lives lost at sea in shipwrecks, and countless people made homeless. Unlike Storm Éowyn, this superstorm was centered off the Hebrides. There are many eyewitness accounts. Daniel O'Donovan, who was staying in Glendalough, while doing some of his Ordnance Survey work, had the window of his

hotel room blown in. When the old age pension was introduced in 1909, the qualifying age was 70, but as many people were undocumented and had no birth certificate to produce, they were asked if they were alive on the night of the big wind in order to qualify.

LOCAL STUDIES ENQUIRIES AND RESEARCH

1. DROP IN VISITS

Eight people dropped in with queries ranging from Maps, the Titanic tragedy, and Bruce Ismay's role in it, Valuation records for County Galway, and an enquiry on Galway Waterways, and Graveyards, and Newspaper Archives.

2. SCHEDULED VISITS

Several visits (About 10) by clients with enquiries on the Earls of Clanricarde, the encumbered Estates Court Rentals, the Valuation Records, Galway City Waterways, amongst others, and to view the Irish news Archive on P.C, and books in the Local Studies Section.

3. PHONE QUERIES

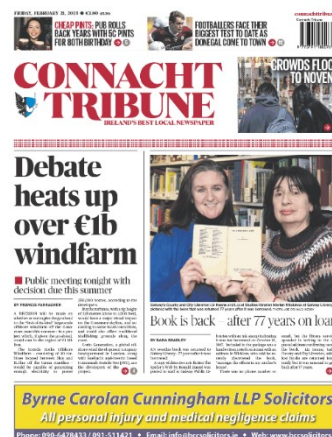
These included enquiries into the O'Malley Family History, Historic Graveyards in Galway City and County, and burial places of Famous Galwegians, Bishop Browne in the 1940's, and the resources available for family history research online, and a request for information on local private researchers, and the East Galway Family History Society.

4. EMAILS

17 emails answered, many on family research, including a detailed search request from the UK on information and death record for Major Laurie Gardner who was killed in a car crash in Cappataggle in 1969. Two emails concerning Journal Articles and books on the Earls of Clanricarde, queries about old maps for the Ragoon area, and several other enquiries.

5. INTERVIEW ON RADIO NA GAELTACHTA

As a result of the Connacht Tribune article of 20/02/25, Raidió na Gaeltachta asked for an interview in Irish to discuss the book that was returned after 77 years. This was on the Siúl Aniar programme on Friday Morning, 21/02/25, with the opportunity to also discuss the resources available in the Local Studies Section.



BALLYBANE LIBRARY

On Saturday February 8th Ballybane hosted the launch of the Anne Kerwin Art Collection exhibition. Anne is a resident of Galway in her 90's and was delighted to have over 80 people attend her first ever art exhibition.

The library Sensory ToverTafel area continues to perform strongly, this month attracting a class of 10 teenagers from the Lakeview school on Dublin Road.

Later in the month we had a group of 4 young wheelchair users from Rosedale school using the ToveTafel space. Library staff were able to clear floor space so they could leave the wheelchairs on one side for their fun-filled session.

Staff member Kitty Walsh completed a series of 5 workshops with 10 local ladies who enjoyed making Memory Teddies. This workshop was oversubscribed so there will be another 5 sessions starting in mid-March.



Ballybane Library has started an adult Chess Club on Thursday afternoons, and this is growing in popularity and includes much peer-to-peer learning among adults in the neighbourhood.

Staff member Zara continues to facilitate a Creative Writing group every second Thursday, this is well attended and growing in popularity.

Library staff continue to support the local ACE Afterschool club for local children from disadvantaged and Traveller communities. Each Wednesday afternoon a member of staff works with the children in the Maker Space. Resulting arts and crafts include Badge Making, Jewellery Making and Fabric Painting. These sessions are of great value to the children, and they enjoy their time in the library.

Staff member Margaret Fahy facilitated an enjoyable Block Printing Workshop where 10 local children from the ages of 8 to 12 years learned a new skill.

Ballybane Library hosted 100 children from Junior Infants and 3rd Class from the local Gael Scoil Dara in Renmore. They were entertained with a Storytime and library information session through Irish.

In association with AONTAS, as part of the Adult Learners Festival 2025, staff member Margaret Fahy, facilitated a Weaving Demonstration and Taster Session in the Maker Space.



BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

FEBRUARY 11TH: PARENTECHILD+ BALLINASLOE

ParentChild+ Ballinasloe hosted a Story, Art & Craft Morning for 0-5 year olds.

The ParentChild+ programme in Ballinasloe assists families in marginalized, underserved communities to prepare their children for school success.

ParentChild+ is a home-based literacy and parenting programme that strengthens families and prepares children to succeed academically and, in both towns, [Ballinasloe Tuam] its impact has been notable.



SENSORY CUBBY IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

FEBRUARY 14TH: VALENTINES DAY CRAFT EVENT WITH SCOIL AN CHROÍ NAOFA



Bríd led a Senior Infants class from local school Scoil an Chroí Naofa at a special Valentine's Day craft event. The children had a wonderful time creating cards for their loved ones.





FEBRUARY 15TH: TOWN TALKS SERIES: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS AMONG AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN EAST GALWAY 1920-1970. A TALK BY HANNAH DALY

Local historian Hannah Daly gave a talk about Social and Political Organisations in East Galway 1920-1970. The attending crowd thoroughly enjoyed the talk, along with the lively Q&A- not to mention the cheerful sound of "The Broken-Hearted Farmer" by The Saints Showband filling the Church Gallery!

Thanks also to the members of Ballinasloe and District Heritage Society for their help in organising, and to former Senator and Galway County Cllr. Michael Mullins for his support.

LOCAL HISTORIAN HANNAH DALY SPEAKING TO AN ENGAGED AUDIENCE



ABBIE MCGOWAN, GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, HANNAH DALY, BRÍD GREHAN, GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND AILEEN DALY

AILEEN DALY, ABBIE MCGOWAN,
GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, HANNAH
DALY, FORMER FINE GAEL SENATOR AND
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCILLOR,
MICHAEL MULLINS



EUROPE DIRECT @ BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

ATU OUTREACH EVENT

We had a great pop-up event at ATU where we spread the word about all the services libraries have to offer, including Europe Direct. This event was of particular interest to students planning summer trips throughout the EU and provided information on study trips that are available to students abroad.



MARGARET WALDRON, HEAD LIBRARIAN, ATU, AND
MARY HEALY, GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES AT THE
OUTREACH EVENT IN THE ATU

GALWAY CITY LIBRARY

Artist Caroline Coyne Concannon from Inishbofin opened a new art exhibition at Galway City Library. Her photographs capture the quiet beauty and lingering memories of island life and its forgotten spaces, where nature and time reclaim what was once filled with life. This is Caroline's first time exhibiting at Galway City Library.



GORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Hosted two book club sessions and held a wonderful story time on the 28th of February for the Busy Bees Creche.

MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library visited over 100 route stops in February, a welcome arrival for our patrons in many of the rural villages who were without power and resources after storm Éowyn. This emphasizes the importance of the community mobile library and what it means to have a communication point and social outlet every fortnight.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS

To celebrate Ireland's Reads Day 2025, the mobile library outreach team was invited to attend ATU campus Galway on 19th February. They set up a pop-up library information stand, showcasing the services of Galway Public Libraries and the Europe Direct programme. There were engagements with 53 students and 18 new registrations.



MARY HEALY, RUTH BROWNE AND COLETTE DEMPSEY, GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, AT THE ATU EVENT FOR IRELAND READS DAY

CLAREGALWAY ACTIVE RETIREMENT:

Colette gave an outreach library talk to the Claregalway Active Retirement group on 4th March, this included a presentation on the mobile library services and our digital resources.

It was enjoyed by all with an audience of 35 in attendance, with 9 new registrations and others who were going to sign up through the online portal.

COLETTE DEMPSEY PRESENTING TO CLAREGALWAY ACTIVE RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION



CLASS VISITS TO THE LIBRARY

Thursday February 13th – St. Ita's National School 4th Class visit

Wednesday February 19th – St. Brendan's Boys School 6th Class visit

Thursday February 27th – St. Ita's National School 5th Class visit

Friday February 28th – St. Ita's National School 2nd Class visit

Wednesday March 5th - St. Ita's National School 4th Class visit

Thursday March 6th – St. Ita's National School 5th Class

Thursday March 6th – St. Brendan's Boys School 6th Class visit

The library team welcomed 168 children and provided library inductions and showcased the services available to the children which is all free of charge.

CRAFT GROUPS

The Creative Craft Group continues to meet and socialize in the library on Thursdays sharing skills and ideas during the weekly sessions.

LEGO FREE PLAY

Lego Free Play and Board Game sessions continue to be really popular with each day long activity offering welcoming 40 children per day.

On Ireland Reads Day the library welcomed 50 children throughout the day for arts and crafts as well as LEGO and story times.

Craft sessions for World Book Day were also popular and the Monthly Toddler Storytime & Play and Fun sessions are gaining in numbers!



LEABHARLANN NA CEATHRÚN RUA



CUID DE NA PÍOSAÍ A BHÍ DÉANTA AG MNÁ CNIOTÁIL AGUS CRÓISEÁIL. / SOME OF THE PIECES MADE BY THE LADIES OF THE KNITTING AND CROCHETING GROUP.



SEOL DÉANTA AG MNÁ CNIOTÁIL AGUS CRÓISEÁIL, LE CÚNAMH Ó SCOLÁIRÍ SCOIL MHC DARA AGUS DAOINE ÁITIÚIL EILE. / A SAIL MADE BY THE LADIES OF THE KNITTING AND CROCHETING GROUP, WITH HELP FROM STUDENTS OF SCOIL MHC DARA AND OTHER LOCAL PEOPLE.

AN CRANN MAISITHE LE HAGHAIDH LÁ FHÉILE VAILINTÍN! / THE TREE DECORATED FOR VALENTINE'S DAY!



COINÍNÍ A RINNEADH SA SEISIÚN ÉALAÍNE A BHÍ AGAINN AR AN 15Ú FEABHRA. / BUNNIES THAT WERE MADE IN THE ART SESSION WE HAD ON FEBRUARY 15TH.

PORTUMNA LIBRARY

Ciorcal Comhrá continues in Portumna Library. The library staff hosted St. Valentine's Day card making workshops with children from ages 5 to 12 years old. The activities continued for World Book Day with children visiting from the local National School and enjoying time to pick up a book and start a new reading adventure.



MARIE MULLINS WITH CHILDREN WHO COMPLETED THEIR ST. VALENTINE'S DAY CARD



CHILDREN FROM THE LOCAL NATIONAL SCHOOL PORTUMNA ENJOYING READING TIME AND CELEBRATING WORLD BOOK DAY.

THURS 6TH MARCH WORLD BOOK DAY ' BOOKS & BUNS QUIZ ' SHORELINES ART FESTIVAL PORTUMNA

To support the Shorelines Arts Festival Teresa and the staff of Portumna library hosted a fantastic Quiz. This event was also a celebration of World Book Day.



TUAM LIBRARY

REGULAR EVENTS -

WEEKLY:

6. Our weekly craft group continues each Tuesday morning from 11am. It is proving popular with the community
7. Staff of Tuam Library continue to contribute a weekly article to the 'Library Corner' of the Tuam Herald. The articles are 500 words, on a topic that library members find interesting, e.g., the February 26th edition of the newspaper ran a piece on new crime books available in the library
8. Rhyme time – every Wednesday morning @11am. 4 sessions were held with children attending. Branch Librarian, Caroline facilitates. Great fun every week, no booking required, and all are welcome
9. LEGO is put out every Saturday in the children's area for free play all day. It is very popular with all ages and is of benefit in the development of gross and fine motor skills, creativity and imagination
10. Community Connects – every Friday 11-12pm. This is an open session for members of the public to come in, have a cup of tea and a chat. It is overseen by staff. The numbers attending vary but averages 4-8 each week. This is a lovely opportunity for those who experience limited socializing to come in and meet others
11. Trinity Primary School – a weekly class visit is facilitated each Wednesday morning 9.30-10.30am, with classes rotating their visits. It has proved very successful in

introducing primary students of all ages from this large school to the library and all we offer. An average of 20 students + teachers/SNAs come each week.

MONTHLY:

1. Adult Book Club – meets the last Friday of each month, facilitated by Branch Librarian, Margaret. There are 12 members in the book club. The February meeting took place on February 28th with 11 members attending. They discussed Robert Harris' 'Precipice'.
2. Due to demand a second book club for adults was set up, also facilitated by Branch Librarian, Caroline. It held its first meeting on March 6th at 12.30pm, with 7 members. They discussed Sarah Gilmartin's 'Service'.
3. Young Adult Book Club – meets the first Saturday of the month, facilitated by Assistant Librarian, Moira. There are 6 members in the book club. The March meeting took place on March 1st discussing Tolkien's 'The Hobbit'. They are an engaged group of teenagers
4. Audio Book Club – meets the second Thursday of the month and is facilitated by Library Assistant, Leigh. During the hour the member of staff reads aloud to the club. Members have the option to simply relax and listen or to follow along in their own book. Their next meeting will be March 13th, reading Marie O'Nolan's 'Tales of a long dry summer'
5. Soundbites – a gathering of local musicians, storytellers, singers and poets gather from 1-2pm on the last Thursday of the month for a lunchtime session. All are welcome, a member of staff remains to oversee. The numbers attending vary but average about 30 each month. This is a very special event in Tuam. For February the event took place on February 27th with 33 people attending. We had keyboards, a violin, guitars, singers and poetry reciters
6. Breast Feeding group – meet on the second Thursday of the month 10.30-11.30am. All are welcome to join, and the group manage themselves, they just require the space. It is facilitated by a local HSE public health nurse/midwife. The group met on February 13th with two new mothers attending. This is a beneficial time for new mothers to get expert advice from a midwife. Their next meeting will be March 13th.

STANDALONE EVENTS:

1. Parents Plus Tuam met in the library on February 11th. The facilitators, led by Shauna Somers, provide support for families with children with additional needs. They use the juvenile library space and the sensory hub for the session. On February 11th 12 parents and children attended. This is a very important event for the community, guiding parents through their children's early childhood to achieve the best possible outcomes.



2. A Valentine Craft event was held on Thursday, February 13th. Facilitated by Branch Librarians Margaret and Caroline. This was a booked event, with fifteen children signing up for the event. They each made a bookmark and card and had great fun.



3. To celebrate Ireland Reads on February 22nd Tuam Library hosted Cor an Dola Artist Emer MacDermot and local storyteller Midie Corcoran for an afternoon of storytelling and book making. This was a booked event, with eleven children signing up. It was a great success.



WESTSIDE LIBRARY

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Westside Library remains a vibrant hub for community engagement, supporting a diverse range of activities. Regular users of our auditorium space include the Ukrainian After-School Family Craft Sessions (Galway City Partnership), Parents' Health & Wellness Classes (organized by DEIS home school liaison officers from 5 schools, primary and secondary), the Speckled Eggs Dance Group, the Alzheimer's Support Group, Cuidiú Breastfeeding Support,

the Community Choir, and the newly established English Conversation Class for speakers of languages other than English (LOTE), run by Galway City Partnership.

We were also pleased to welcome back the highly popular Weaning Workshops, facilitated by the HSE, as well as Helium Arts with their art workshops for children with lifelong physical health conditions and disabilities.

All these groups continue to meet regularly, fostering connections and learning within our community.

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES

Our regular library activities, including the monthly book club, the Lego Free Play Session, Baby Rhyme Time, and Storytime, continue to be highly popular. A special mention goes to the growing success of the weekly Baby Rhyme Time in collaboration with Music Generation Galway City. This event has always been well-attended, but in recent weeks, participation has doubled, with up to 40 people now attending each session.

The Sensory Room continues to be a valuable and well-used resource, with 43 bookings recorded during the reporting period.

VALENTINE'S DAY CRAFT

A staff-led Storytime and craft activity to celebrate Valentine's Day proved very popular, with 35 children attending. Participants had the opportunity to create their own miniature bouquets of flowers using cupcake cases to take home.



INTERNATIONAL VISIT

Westside Library welcomed two staff members from Skive Bibliotek in Denmark, along with Eileen Kennedy from NUIG, for a tour of the Westside Maker Space. The Danish colleagues were visiting Ireland as part of an Erasmus+ Programme to explore Maker Spaces across the country and gather inspiration for their own programme. The visit provided a valuable networking and learning opportunity for all involved.

IRELAND READS DAY



To celebrate Ireland Reads Day 2025, Westside Library hosted a Silent Book Club. A Silent Book Club allows people to gather in a public space and read quietly together. The event welcomed readers of all ages and levels, with no pressure to finish a book or participate in a discussion.

CLASS VISITS

The following school visits took place over the course of the month:

Scoil Chroí Íosa 1st class

Scoil Bhríde 1st class

St John the Apostle National School 2nd class

Scoil Chroí Íosa 4th & 5th class

TY Students

Staff facilitated these visits with story times, library inductions and book recommendations as well as showcasing the online services to older students. Over 130 children visited the library during these planned sessions.

LEABHARLANN INIS OÍRR



Leabharlann Inis Oírr hosted an Ireland Reads Valentine's Day-themed event called 'Bualadh leis an leabhar ceart'. We had youth and adult sessions, with 17 total attendees, where readers sampled a selection of books without seeing the covers in a 'speed-dating' format. Participants had the opportunity to check out any book that caught their interest after the session, with many people commenting "I never would have picked this up on my own!"

'Seisiún Scéalaíochta agus Ceardaíochta: Teach Solais Inis Oírr' was held in cooperation with Tuismitheoirí na Gaeltachta, with 12 children attending sessions between two age groups. The local lighthouse attendant (Irish Lights), Michael, shared stories and answered questions about the Inis Oírr lighthouse and children decorated their own model lighthouses to bring

home. This was organised in response to feedback from children participating in storytime sessions held in 2024 requesting that some future sessions be focused on local points of interest and heritage. We hope to host more of these engaging sessions going forward.



MICHAEL, LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER ON INIS OÍRR



Regular class visits by Scoil Chaomháin (32 students) and Naíonra Inis Oírr (12 students) have been established. There is also an improved collection of books for students of Coláiste Ghobnait for use during their daily 'free reading' time.

HOUSING

VACANT HOMES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



44 affordable homes are under construction in Baile Chláir (Claregalway) and are being made available for sale by Galway County Council. Applications for the 44 units, which comprise 2 two-bed, 27 three-bed and 15 four-bed houses, will be accepted via an online application portal until the deadline of Monday 17th March 2025 at 5:00pm. All applications will be initially prioritised in order of date and time received. Over 140 applications have been received to date.

GALWAY HOUSING DELIVERY TASKFORCE

The Galway Housing Delivery Taskforce met on Tuesday, 18th February 2025 at County Hall the meeting was chaired by John McCarthy, former Secretary General, Department of Housing.

The taskforce considered a range of housing matters including:

1) Updated Social and Affordable Housing Pipelines -

Information was shared in relation to social and affordable housing delivery in both the city and county, final 2024 outturns and pipelines for 2025 onwards.

2) Affordable Housing Working Group

A report on the affordable Housing subgroup was presented to the taskforce, outlining the barriers that can be overcome and unlocking difficulties with delivery.

3) Updated Indicators on broad Planning and Housing Activity

A report on the broader planning and housing situation in Galway, key statistics on planning and housing activity nationally and trends in activity in the Galway Local Authority areas were addressed.

4) Homelessness

An update on Homelessness figures and issues facing the two local authorities were provided to the Taskforce.

5) 2024 Galway Housing Taskforce Report to Minister

The chair advised he is preparing a report on the 2024 actions of the taskforce, which will be finalised in the coming months.

6) Traveller Accommodation

A report was provided to the taskforce by both Local Authorities with details of the Traveller Accommodation programme and specific targets met.

The next Taskforce meeting is due to take place on the Thursday 22nd May 2025.

ENERGY RETROFITTING

The Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme continues to carry out energy efficiency improvements across the County Councils social housing stock. Under the Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme a total of **70** houses were deep retrofitted in 2024. A mix of properties across a range of BERs were chosen for works to be carried out. These works included the following installations:

- Air to Water Heat Pumps
- Solar PV Panels
- Attic Insulation
- Windows & External Doors
- External Wall Insulation

All these houses have achieved a Building Energy Rating (BER) of A3 or better. The tenants will now enjoy more comfortable, durable, and healthier homes. These energy retrofits reduce heating costs and contribute to the national energy consumption reduction which will help mitigate the effects of climate change.

The 2025 programme with a budget of €2,278,000 will include works to be carried out on 67 properties in Gort, Carna, Leitir Mór, Ballinasloe, Portumna Woodford, Athenry, Cleggan and Clifden.

Galway County Council is also participating in an EnergyCloud Ireland scheme. They provide free hot water when wind curtailment occurs. Curtailment is when wind energy will potentially be wasted and with this EnergyCloud project, a smart immersion controller is used which will divert this energy to your home, heating your hot water tank for free.

In 2023, EnergyCloud heated water tanks for free on 117 nights, delivering a significant reduction in the energy bills of all the customers who are working with them.



- A Climote smart immersion controller will be installed in then tenants' home and that will be used to remotely control the hot water tank.
- Data is required to operate the Climote controller and to apply energy credits to the electricity bill when curtailed wind energy heats the tenants hot water tank.
- EnergyCloud, Galway County Council, and the Climote are jointly responsible for managing the data.

This Climote Device has been installed in houses in Tuam, Athenry, Monivea , Abbeyknockmoy & Athenry .

REGIONAL HOMELESS FORUM

Galway County Council hosted the Regional Homeless Forum on 12th March 2025 which included participation from Galway County Council, Galway City Council, Mayo County Council and Roscommon County Council and other agencies and organisations that provide support services to homeless persons. This included the Health Service Executive, COPE Galway, Galway Simon, Department of Social Protection, TUSLA and Threshold. Items discussed included

- Implementation of the Regional Homeless Action Plan,
- Housing First,
- Capacity of Emergency Accommodation,
- Section 39 funding
- Funding of homeless services

The next meeting of the Regional Homeless Forum will be hosted by Galway City Council on September 17th 2025.

GARBALLY DRIVE, BALLINASLOE

A Part 8 Planning Application was submitted in January 2025 for 2 no. semi-detached 3-bedroom housing units on a site owned by Galway County Council in Garbally Drive, Ballinasloe.

This proposal represents an ideal infill opportunity within the confines of the town 50 kph speed limit zones whilst the land benefits from close proximity to the town of Ballinasloe and existing water and power services.

The dwelling layouts are provided in accordance with the requirements of 'Design Manual for Quality Housing' House Type H5. Externally the dwellings reflect the design of the existing dwellings in the estate.

An AA Screening Assessment was carried out by Delichon Energy, and it was determined that the proposal does not require full Appropriate Assessment and can be screened out. An EIA screening was also carried out by Delichon Energy, and it concluded that the proposed

development works are not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment and consequently do not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

No submissions/observations were received within the allocated period which concluded on 3rd March 2025.

A Chief Executive Report was issued to the elected members of Ballinasloe MD recommending that the development should proceed as proposed. This report was considered at the Ballinasloe MD meeting on 12th March 2025, and it was approved to carry out the development as recommended in the report.



FIGURE: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 2 NO. 3 BEDROOM UNITS AT GARBALLY DRIVE, BALLINASLOE

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, FIRE & EMERGENCY & CLIMATE CHANGE

NRPO UPDATE

GREENWAYS AND ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEMES

Transport Infrastructure Ireland published the “2025 Grant Allocations to Local Authorities for Greenways and Active Travel” on 5th March 2025. Galway County Council received a total allocation of €3.5m for Greenway and Active Travel Schemes. The schemes which received funding this year include:

GREENWAYS

- Connemara - Clifden to Recess
- Connemara - Galway to Oughterard
- Connemara - Recess to Oughterard
- Galway to Athlone Cycleway

ACTIVE TRAVEL

- N63 Abbeyknockmoy Village
- AT - N67 Clarinbridge to Oranmore
- AT - N67 South of Ballinderreen Cycleway

N67 SOUTH OF BALLINDERREEN CYCLEWAY - ACTIVE TRAVEL

An application for the approval of a Compulsory Purchase Order was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on the 28th February 2025 to enable Galway County Council to acquire the lands

necessary for the proposed South of Ballinderreen Cycleway Active Travel Scheme. The proposed scheme is to provide a shared two-way cycle and pedestrian facility to connect to an existing active travel facility on the N67 National Secondary Road with the village of Ballinderreen. Development consent for the scheme was approved on the 8th April 2024 under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

GALWAY TO ATHLONE CYCLEWAY

The Galway to Athlone Greenway is a planned 140 km (approximately 87 miles) segregated walking and cycling route that will connect Ballyloughane Beach in Galway City to Athlone Castle. Westmeath County Council were the lead authority on the project and funded directly by Transport Infrastructure Ireland. After a consultation process, the preferred route for the Athlone to Galway cycleway was identified. This route passes through Shannonbridge, Ballinasloe, Clonfert, Meelick, Portumna, Woodford, Gort, Coole Park, Kinvara, Kilcolgan, Clarinbridge, and Oranmore before reaching Galway City. Due to the scale and complexity of the overall project it is now being delivered as two separate schemes: For the next phase of the project, to bring the preferred route environmental assessment and planning, the project was divided into two segments to facilitate progress:

- Scheme 1 - Galway to Portumna
 - 114km in length – Project Managed by Galway County Council
- Scheme 2 - Portumna to Athlone
 - 83 km in length – Project Managed by Westmeath County Council

A Framework with five consultants has been established and this will be used by both Councils to appoint consultants for their respective schemes.

As Westmeath County Council had been the lead authority, they are currently undertaking an assessment of the previous work done and evaluating recent developments in relation to policy and greenway project delivery. This process will assist with the preparation of thorough Briefs of Service and once complete both Councils will proceed with the call-off competitions.

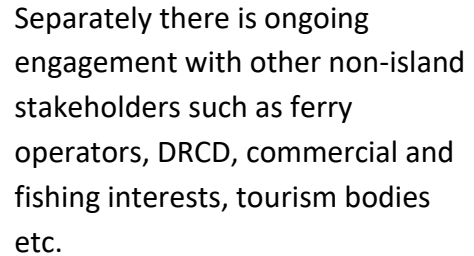
The Project Office are continuing to progress with landowner liaison and the preparation of the call-off tender documents.

INIS MEÁIN MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) approved a funding application for the preparation of a Strategic Assessment and Preliminary Business Case on options to upgrade marine infrastructure on Inis Meáin.

RPS Consulting Engineers were appointed in early February and have commenced their work. It is an eight-month commission with the final report including a recommended solution to be produced by the end of this year 2025.

The open consultation will be preceded by a series of meetings with various interested groups – this has been co-ordinated through the Comharchumman. The aim is to ensure that all voices are heard and opportunity to provide input is broadly offered.



TAKING IN CHARGE

The Table A hereunder outlines output for 2025.

Table A – Taking in Charge

<i>Estates Taken in Charge</i>		
<i>Estates pending Ratification of Minutes</i>		
<i>Estates for consideration at next MD meeting</i>		1
<i>Bond Release (Estates not Taken in Charge)</i>		
<i>Total</i>		1

In addition to the above, the following is position @ 06/02/2025

Estates – advertised for Taking in Charge	3
Estates – Works Complete – Pending Uisce Éireann agreement or Signed Final Report	6
Estates – TIC Led Estates – Works in Hand	15

Estates – Developer led Estates – List of Remedials issued awaiting notification of completion	36
Bond Claims -	2

The taking in charge of an estate is a process and at times can be quite protracted.

I wish to thank and acknowledge the Taking in Charge team for their work to date.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH & SAFETY SEMINARS

3 No. health & safety seminars were delivered to GCC employees who are predominately based in the Municipal Districts in February and March 2025.

They were held in the Connemara Coast hotel in Na Forbacha , the Shearwater hotel in Ballinalsoe and the Raheen Woods hotel in Athenry and were attended by over 250 employees from a variety of sections including Roads, Housing, Environment, Corporate Services, Fire Service, Rural Water.



Speakers included members of the H&S section who issued all staff a copy of the updated safety statement/safety management system and gave an overview of same, recent incidents that occurred were highlighted and a reminder on safety documentation requirements prior to completing work was discussed.

A talk & workshop session was also held on completing temporary traffic management plans.

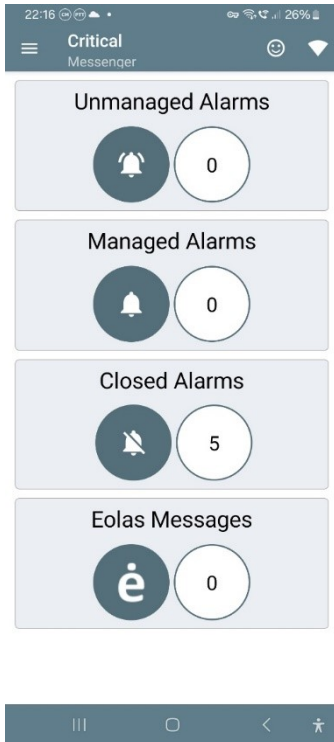
Also, speakers from IPA attended the seminars to discuss the topic of ‘Personal safety in the workplace’.

A presentation from Gas Networks Ireland on ‘Working safely near gas pipelines’ concluded the day.

All speakers were received very well, and the seminars were thoroughly enjoyed by all, while key health & safety messages were communicated to all.

COMMUNITY WARDEN UPDATE

This month following a trail period of three months the Community Wardens have moved their lone working communications to the new Isle System. This system will now replace Tetra Radios for all of the Community Wardens. This new system is an App that is used on their mobile phones and comes with Critical Messenger, SOS and PTT. Also, with the App



each Community Warden has been issued with a small discreet fob that can activate an alert. We had a day's training with Mark Hanly from Isle Systems and all of the Community Wardens were pleased with it. Mark spent time setting up each phone with the



App and setting up the fobs as well. He also gave instructions on how to use the different parts of the App.

Below are some photos of our day of training.



ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRAMME - ACTIVE TRAVEL FOOTPATH AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

GCO/24/0001 BUS STOP & SHELTER UPGRADE PROGRAMME

Construction of Labane and Craughwell bus stops are completed. Installation of 4 bus shelters in Moylough (1), Mountbellew (1) and Ballymoe (2) has commenced.



GCO/23/0012 BEECHLAWN ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

Kenny Civils, the contractor appointed as PSCS for this project commenced works on 24th February 2025. Measures involve 240m of footpath, 1 uncontrolled crossing, drainage, 4 entrances and associated accommodation works. Works are envisaged to be completed by end April 2025.



ROUND 1 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (ORANMORE AND ATHENRY SCHOOLS)

The schools are Calasanctius College, Oranmore, Gaelscoil de hÍde, Oranmore, Scoil Iósaif Naofa, Oranmore, Scoil Chroí Naofa, Athenry & Athenry Boys National School. Tender for consultancy services Phase 2-7 closed and following tender assessment the Preferred Tenderer (Clandillon Civil Consulting) has been determined and subsequently awarded the contract.

ROUND 2 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

There are 5 schools included in Round 2 SRTS for County Galway:

- Scoil Sailearna (Indreabhán)
- Scoil Na bhForbacha (Na Forbacha)
- Ballinderreen NS (Ballinderreen)
- Gort Community College (Gort)
- St Brendan's NS (Loughrea)

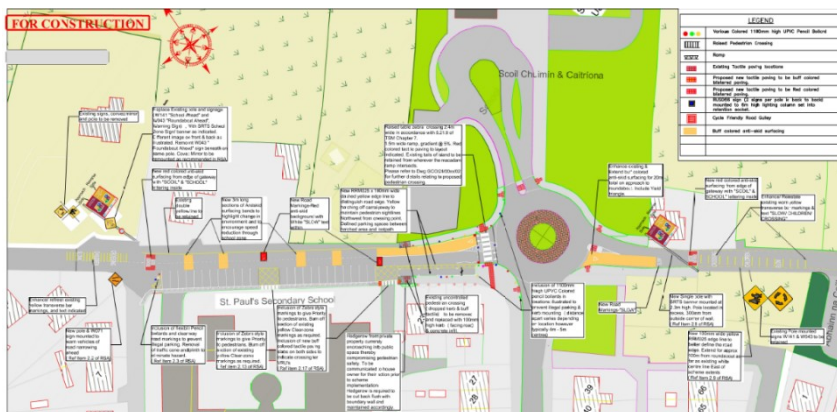


A tender for Phases 3-7 for consultancy services was ran on E-Tenders and closed on 7th March 2025. Tender Assessment is scheduled for 11th March with Contract Award anticipated by end March.



GCO/24/0004 - SRTS R1 ST PAULS OUGHTERARD

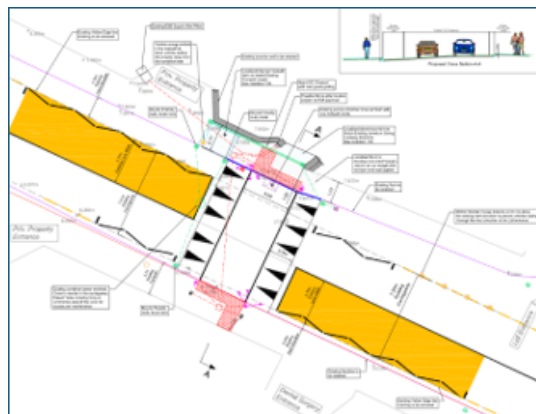
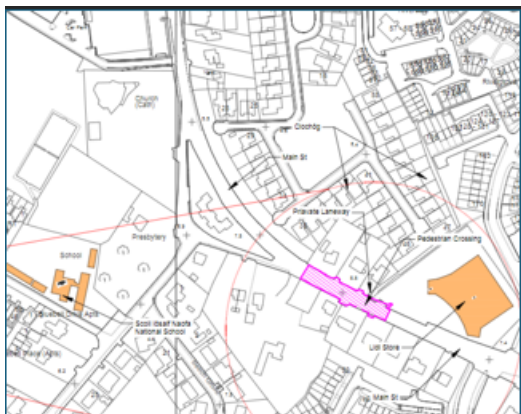
NTA Approval to move to Phase 6 construction has been received. Harrington Concrete & Quarries Ltd have been appointed as PSCS for the works and expect to commence at the



end March 2025. Measure include a pedestrian crossing, SRTS signage, bespoke road markings & pencil bollards all dedicated to improving safety within the vicinity of St Pauls Secondary school.

GCO/23/0015 ORANMORE ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME – PEDESTRIAN CROSSING, L4103, OLD LIMERICK ROAD (NEAR LIDL)

Contract was awarded to John Madden & Sons Limited. Construction works for the pedestrian crossing near LIDL plan to start end of March 2025. Anticipated duration of works 4-6 weeks.



GCO/24/0002 ATHENRY CHURCH ST TO TUAM RD (VIA STATION RD) ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME AND GCO/23/0021 TUAM ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

Topographical and Traffic Surveys & Walkability Audits for Tuam and Athenry AT schemes have been completed. Progressing to Phase 2 Preliminary Design.

CLIMATE CHANGE

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION

CLIMATE ACTION TRAINING



The six-week free online Local Climate Action Course for community and voluntary groups continued throughout February. The Climate Action Unit in partnership with Roscommon County Council and GRETB organised the course which covers the topics of Biodiversity, Energy, Food & Waste, Recycling and Transport. Denise Feeney, Community Climate Action Officer, also provided guidance to community groups on the Climate Action Fund.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ENERGY MASTERPLANS

The Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs) programme supports communities in the transition to a low carbon society. The Climate Action Unit works with SEAI mentors to

support the completion of community level Energy Masterplans (EMP) through the provision of Bridging Finance and procurement support and then recoups the funding from SEAI. Clifden Glen SEC will launch their EMP on the 29th of March and Kilcolgan / Clarinbridge will launch their EMP on the 10th of May.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY ROADSHOW

Local communities and construction professionals from across East Galway flocked to Ballinasloe in February to take up the offer of free training and information sessions on energy efficiency upgrades courtesy of a retrofit roadshow. The Climate Action Unit, in collaboration with Mount Lucas Construction Training Campus, facilitated the innovative Retrofitting Rig on its week-long visit to the Fair Green in Ballinasloe.



Members of the public, students, construction professionals and community groups explored the Solar PV powered rig, which is equipped with cutting-edge technology including working heat pump and ventilation

system, making it entirely self-sufficient. Its design lets participants see first-hand how emerging technologies are installed and function in real-world settings.

By hosting this initiative, the Climate Action Unit aimed to engage as many people as possible in understanding and implementing retrofitting measures. There was significant interest shown in Ballinasloe in accessing the accredited training and practical demonstrations provided by Mount Lucas and participants included GCC Engineers and Technicians. Links to media coverage below:

[Roadshow rolls into Galway to show how to upgrade energy efficiency - Connacht Tribune - Galway City Tribune](#)

[Energy efficiency roadshow to visit three locations in Galway | GalwayBayFM](#)

YOUTH CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

In conjunction with Youth Work Ireland Galway, the Climate Unit hosted our 2nd Youth Climate Assembly on the 26th of February in the BIA Innovator Campus in Athenry. These assemblies provide a space for young people from secondary schools and youth organisations across the county to gather to discuss Climate Action. The event was opened



by An Cathaoirleach, Martina Kinane, who gave a warm welcome to the young people of Galway, and the MC was Michelle Chiperi, a Youth Worker from Youth Work Ireland. Speakers included Rebecca Mooney, our Climate Action Officer, Letizia Gorini Coady, Climate Justice Youth Officer with SAUTI-Youth and Dr Lauren Devine, a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow with UCD's Institute of Food and Health. There was a strong focus on the day on food and food sustainability, with keen engagement from the participants. There was significant media interest, see Connaught Tribune extract and further links below:

[Advertiser.ie - Environmental action tops the agenda at Galway County Youth Climate Assembly](#)

<https://www.galwaydaily.com/news/environmental-action-tops-the-agenda-at-galway-county-youth-climate-assembly/>

[Students from across Galway flock to Athenry for Youth Climate Assembly | GalwayBayFM](#)

ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Climate Unit continues to work towards establishing an ISO 50001 accredited Energy Management System within the organisation including through the development of the necessary processes and documentation. "Significant Energy Users" have been identified as part of this process including Fleet, Public Lighting, Leisure Centres and other large buildings.

Ongoing projects under this program include:

Project / Deadline	Update
Provision of Automated Energy Data Collection and Management System	Contract signed Sept 2024. Roll-out to 7 buildings complete. Training to be scheduled Mar 2025.

OPERATIONS

The information below is based on February data from West Regional Control Centre (WRCC). Galway Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) had 136 turnouts to 113 Incidents. This is a decrease of 102 incidents on 215 the previous month. 48 were fire incidents, 64 were special service incidents (road traffic collision (RTC), Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's), flooding, storm damage, etc.) and 1 was standby either in station or at a central location. Of those incidents, 41.44% were attended by Fire Service resources within 10 minutes of alert, 41.44% were attended between 10 and 20 minutes and 17.12% were attended in over 20 minutes. The average turnout time for the Full-time station in Galway City was 2 minutes and for county retained stations was 6.05 minutes.

There was a significant decrease in incidents and turnouts in February by comparison to January. This is accounted for due to the 2 significant events in the latter part of January – Storm Éowyn and the fire/incident at Xerotech in Baile Chláir, both of which did not feature in the February Stats.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

LOUGHREA FIRE STATION

Following Senior Management Team approval, the revised application under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations for the proposed Loughrea Fire Station was submitted for publication on 11th October 2024. The public consultation process ended on 22nd November 2024. The Chief Executive's report was submitted to the Loughrea Municipal District meeting on the 9th December 2024 and the Part 8 application was passed by the elected members. The final design will now be completed, and it is hoped to tender for the main contractor in Quarter 1 2025.



PROPOSED NEW FIRE STATION
LOUGHREA

BRIGADE MECHANICS WORKSHOP ATHENRY

A Request for Tender for the Design Team has completed and was received on the 13th September 2024. The tender assessment board met on the 2nd October 2024 to consider submissions, and the Most Economically Advantageous Tender has been identified. All required information has been submitted by the preferred tenderer, and the Design Team Contract is scheduled to be signed by Quarter 1 2025.

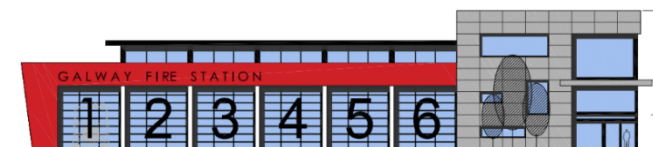


(Indicative Only)

PROPOSED NEW BRIGADE
MECHANICS WORKSHOP
ATHENRY

HEADQUARTERS AND GALWAY CITY FIRE STATION

The preferred site has been identified with Galway City Council. An initial independent planning and flood risk assessment is underway, and it is hoped that this will be completed presently. The capital appraisal is 99% complete and will be submitted to the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management once Chief Executive approval is confirmed.



(INDICATIVE ONLY)

PROPOSED NEW HEADQUARTERS AND
CENTRAL FIRE STATION GALWAY CITY

TRAINING

One new firefighter recruit has commenced the Initial Training Firefighting Skills course in Carnmore Training Centre and commenced the training on 24th February 2025 and is due to complete training on 14th March 2025. The newly trained recruit, once successful, will be stationed at Loughrea Fire Station.

The following training also occurred recently:

Rope Rescue Course, 27 February 2025, Tuam Fire Station.

Effective Decision-making Course, 12 -13 March 2025, Fire Training Centre, Clonmel, Co Tipperary.

Compartment Fire Training Course, 3 -7 March 2025, Clifden Fire Station.


Firefighting Skills Training Course, 24 February – 14 March 2025, Carnmore Training Centre.

MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

COLAS (CBE WEST) ORANMORE

A multi-Principal Response Agency review commenced of the Upper Tier COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) Site at Colas in Oranmore, with a Principal Response Agency & relevant stakeholder meeting early in April. The required statutory exercise was conducted on the 23 May 2024 in Oranmore and led by Galway FRS. The updated External Emergency Plan was advertised for Public Consultation on the 11th October 2024 and latest date for

submissions is the 15 November 2024. As there were no submissions the EEP has now been adopted and was signed and circulated by the PRAs at the end of December 2024. A further blind mobilisation test is scheduled for the site in early 2025 and will further test the response of the Local Competent Authorities and GFRS.



An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Galway County Council

Public Notice under S.I. No. 209/2015 - Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015

An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and Galway County Council are each required by the above mentioned regulations to prepare plans to deal with effects off-site and to assist, where relevant, with the emergency response on-site in the event of a major accident at the Upper Tier COMAH Site:

CBE West Ltd. (Colas), Deerpark Industrial Estate, Oranmore, Co. Galway

A draft copy of the External Emergency Plan for CBE West Ltd. (Colas) is available for examination for a period of 4 weeks between 10:00am - 12:30pm and between 2:30pm - 4:00pm from 14th October 2024 until 11th November 2024 excluding weekends and bank holidays at the following locations:

- Galway Fire Station, Fr. Griffin Road, Galway, H91 P306
Phone 091-509070
- Regional Emergency Management Office, HSE West, Clinical & Administration Block A, Merlin Park Hospital, Galway, H91 N973
Phone 091-775933
- Oranmore Garda Station, Coast Road, Oranmore, Co. Galway, H91 D562
Phone 091-388080

Viewing is **strictly by appointment** only. Appointments can be arranged by calling one of the aforementioned phone numbers or by emailing fireservices@galwaycoco.ie and including your preferred viewing location.

Submissions and observations with respect to the proposed external emergency plan may be made in writing **only** to the COMAH Planning Group, Galway Fire Station, Fr. Griffin Road, Galway or by emailing fireservices@galwaycoco.ie not later than 4:30pm on 15th November 2024.

CBE WEST EXTERNAL EMERGENCY PLAN PUBLIC NOTICE

TYNAGH ENERGY / TYNAGH POWER STATION

Tynagh Power Station is a lower tier COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) site. Work is continuing on the finalisation of the external emergency plan and a preliminary site meeting was held on the 06 November 2024. An inter-agency training session on-site was conducted on the 19 December 2024 with a multi-agency exercise scheduled for early in

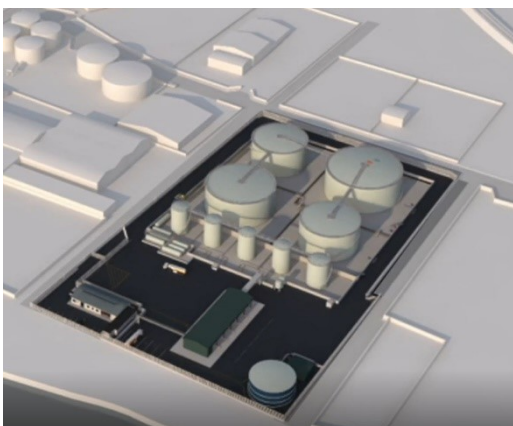


2025.

TYNAGH ENERGY LOWER TIER COMAH SITE – TYNAGH, CO GALWAY

CIRCLE K FUEL TERMINAL – GALWAY PORT

The Circle K terminal is an upper tier COMAH site. Work has commenced on the review of the external emergency plan which must be completed by 2025. An initial inter-agency meeting led by Galway FRS was held on the 16th December 2024. It is planned to hold a table-top exercise and a large practical exercise in March/April 2025.



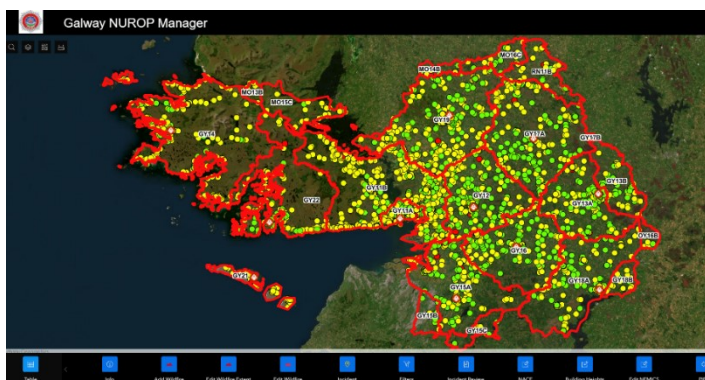
CIRCLE K UPPER TIER COMAH SITE - GALWAY HARBOUR

CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL RADIOLOGICAL NUCLEAR & EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS EXERCISE (CBRNE)

A CBRNE exercise led by An Garda Síochána and Galway Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) was conducted at Galway airport on the 12th December 2024. The exercise was designed to test response to a large CBRNE event in a large shopping centre and to test GFRS remote capability and GFRS / National Ambulance Service (NAS) decontamination procedures. Participants included the HSE /NAS, Defence Forces Explosive Ordnance Disposal and An Garda Síochána Emergency Response Unit. Further inter-agency discussions and additional exercises will be conducted in Quarter 1 2025.

NUROP AND SEVERE WEATHER EVENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Work continues on the NUROP (National Unified Risk Operating Platform) and SWEMS (Severe Weather Event Management System). A new NUROP Manager Application has been released which includes risk scores for every domestic and non-domestic building in the county. SWEMS has recently been extended to Galway City Council. SWEMS was successfully used in Galway County Council for recent numerous storms.



PREVENTION

The information in the following is based on the February 2025 figures. The Fire Authority received 18 Fire Safety Certificate applications and issued decisions on 24 applications. 10 Disability Access Certificate applications were received, and decisions made on 19 applications. 2 new licences were issued in February and 29 inspections were conducted.

GRANT AID FROM THE NDFEM

GFRS have taken delivery of a midi Fire Appliance for Cill Rónáin Fire Station. The appliance is fully equipped with an array of firefighting equipment including ladders, portable pumps, breathing apparatus and modern battery-operated cutting equipment. The new appliance can carry a crew of five firefighters and will increase the resilience and operational capacity on Cill Rónáin, which will now have two midi fire appliances in addition to a 4WD jeep and Crew Van, and allows the crew of 12 firefighters to respond, assist and support the community on Inis Mór during emergencies.



MIDI FIRE APPLIANCE

WD JEEP & CREW VAN



CIVIL DEFENCE

Subsequent to recent storms, Galway Civil Defence Officer and Assistant Civil Defence Officer (ACDO) have attended online meetings with the National Emergency Coordination Group and Galway County Council Community Forum.

The CDO and ACDO attended a Volunteer Management CPD Seminar in Tullamore, at the invitation of the Civil Defence Branch. It was a very informative seminar with Volunteer Ireland providing a valuable insight on Volunteering in Ireland and common traits with Civil Defence volunteers.

A group of volunteers from the City and Oranmore completed their assessments in Cardiac First Response (CFR-A) and Emergency First Response (EFR). All candidates were successful. Training continues for our new members as they undertake their First Aid Response (FAR) course in preparing for their assessments shortly.

On the 24th February 2025 at approx. 21.00hrs., a call was received by the CDO from Gort Gardai seeking assistance with a search for a missing person near Coole Park Nature Reserve.

13 members from Galway City, Loughrea and Ballinasloe Civil Defence units responded to the request. Clare Civil Defence were also requested by Galway CDO to respond in order to assist the Galway Civil Defence ground and drone units in the search area.

This was a multi-agency response with An Garda Síochána, Irish Coast Guard, SAR Dog Association, Killaloe Search and Rescue and local volunteers. At approximately 01.00hrs the Clare Civil Defence Drone team located the missing person with assistance from the Search & Rescue Dog Association, the person was then assessed by Galway Civil Defence medics and reunited with family members.

Galway Civil Defence also provided ambulance crews and First Aid cover at numerous events in the Tuam, Loughrea, Oranmore and City areas over the past number of weekends.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GALWAY'S LEADERS GATHER TO SECURE GOVERNMENT BACKING FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Senior officials and Elected Members from Galway County and City Councils and Galway Chamber of Commerce met at The Galmont Hotel on Wednesday, 5th March, to discuss opportunities for leveraging government support for key strategic priorities for Galway and the wider North-Western Region.

The joint briefing and workshop event follows an opening meeting held in October 2024 and featured presentations from the Chief Executives of the three organisations on the priority lists prepared for the recently published Programme for Government.



L-R: MR. LIAM HANRAHAN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, MR. LEONARD CLEARY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY CITY COUNCIL, CLLR. PETER KEANE, GALWAY CITY MAYOR, MS. CAIT NOONE, PRESIDENT GALWAY CHAMBER, MS. CAITRIONA MORGAN, GALWAY CITY COUNCIL, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNCIL AND MS. DEIRDRE MAC LOUGHLIN, INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE GALWAY CHAMBER



MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DATA

KEY Statistics: 1 st JANUARY – 28 th February 2025	
Applications Received/Valid	250/215
Granted	243
Grant Rate	86%
Refused	40
Breakdown of Decisions Granted Outline (2)	
Permission (195)	
Retention (40)	
Permission Consequent (2)	
Extension of Duration (4)	
Percentage of applications received via Portal/Hardcopy	87%
Stage 1LRD	0
Stage 2 LRD	0
Major Meetings	5
SID Meetings	1

- SID Meeting held on 13th February 2025 with Bord Gáis Energy regarding the Development of Cashla Peaker Plant for a 325 to 340 ME open cycle gas turbine (OCGT) plant and associated infrastructure, including grid connection to Cashla Sub-station (Rathmorrissy and Pollnagroagh, Athenry, Co. Galway). Pre-planning consultation has commenced with An Bord Pleanála (ABP-320975-24).

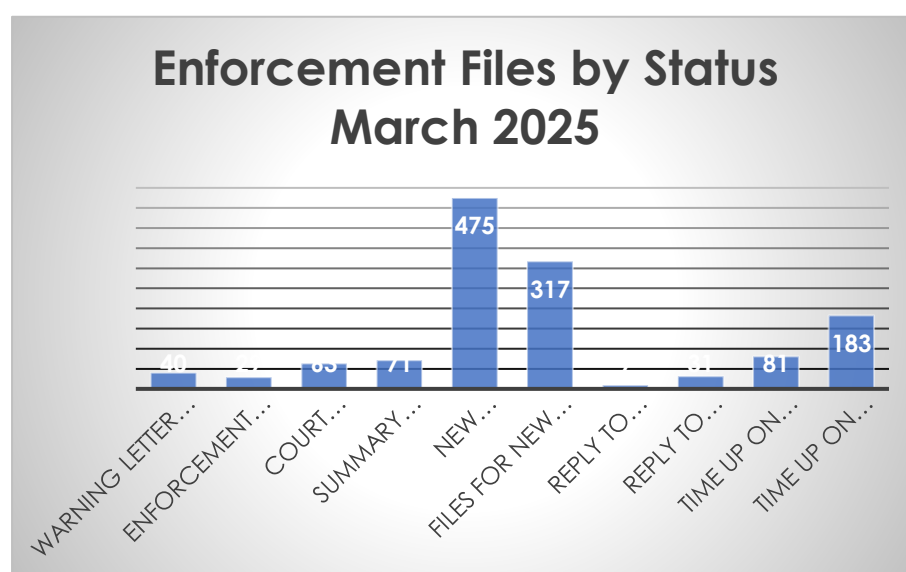
COMMENCEMENTS AND COMPLETIONS 1 st JANUARY – 28 th February 2025 NOVEMBER 2024	
Submitted and Validated Commencement Notices	88
Submitted and Validated Certificates of Completion	8

- According to the information from the International Protection Procurement Service (IPPS), any proposal under Class 20F (temporary use under S.I. No. 376 of 2023) must also undergo the Declaration of Exempted Development under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 Process.

PRE-PLANNING MEETINGS

PPM per MD per Month	January		February
Ath/Oranmore	3		7
Ballinasloe	2		2
Connemara	3		4
Loughrea	8		9
Tuam	1		6
Total per month	17		28

EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT 1 ST JANUARY 2025 –28 TH FEBRUARY 2025.	
Exempted Development Applications Received	25
Exempted	4
Not Exempted	7
Further Information	
Withdrawn	
Decision Pending	14
Appealed	



32 Warning Letters and 17 Enforcement Notices have been served to the end of February 2025 and 50 files have been closed.

ORANMORE TRAIN STATION PLANNING APPROVAL

24/61261 – Iarnród Éireann – Permission granted for the development consisting of: • A c. 820m section of a parallel railway track (passing loop) to facilitate passing trains and 1 no. rail buffer; • A railway platform c. 185.5m in length and a minimum of 4m in width, with associated infrastructure including, access ramp, stairs, lift, passenger shelters, ticket vending machines, ticket validator poles, information display and wayfinding; • A pedestrian and cyclist underpass c. 10m in length and c. 6m wide to connect the existing and proposed platforms; • Alterations to existing underbridge (UBG164); • Signalling, electrification and telecommunication compound (maximum c. 3.4m in height) to accommodate a generator building (c. 20sqm), an electrical building (c. 26sqm) and a fuel storage room (c. 6sqm); • 3 no. advertising stands (c. 5.4sqm in total); and • All associated ancillary works including track drainage and fencing, removal and reinstatement of boundary walls, gated accesses, embankment widening, temporary construction compound, signage, lighting, landscaping and all site works. A planning application for a section of the parallel railway track (passing loop) to facilitate passing trains and associated works located in Galway City Council administrative area is being made to Galway City Council concurrently with this planning application. This application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement. Gross floor space of proposed works: 52.00 sqm

There was a concurrent application with Galway City Council and both decisions issued on the 17/02/2025.

GORT LOCAL AREA PLAN

Gort Draft LAP and LTP published on Thursday 9th January. Closing date for submissions was on 20th February 2025. A total of 121 submissions have been received (one of which was withdrawn). The submissions are available for public viewing on the Council's consultation portal <https://consult.galway.ie/>

A public consultation event was held on 5th February in the Lady Gregory Hotel in Gort which saw an approximate attendance of 50 members of the public.

In addition, the webinar event held on 12th February had approximately 23 attendees.

The Forward Planning Team are now in the process of examining the submissions and preparing the Chief Executive's report. It is anticipated that this will be completed in early April. It will be circulated to the Loughrea Municipal District Members, and it will be available to the public thereafter.

JOINT RETAIL STRATEGY

Second draft JRS submitted on Friday 28 Feb for review. Bi-weekly meetings are ongoing.

URDF

Contract for design of local centre, eco park and density typology study was signed on 17 Feb last with inception meeting with consultants Brady Shipman Martin also held on that date.

Planning permission has been granted for the rail passing loop, platform etc on 17th February. Note that the appeal period is four weeks.

RZLT (RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX)

The Residential Zoned Land Tax aimed at increasing housing supply came into effect on 1st February 2025.

Galway County Council has published two **separate** maps regarding RZLT in 2025: the annual final map and the draft annual map.

THE ANNUAL FINAL MAP -PUBLISHED ON THE 31/01/2025

Scoped-in sites mapped in the annual final map will be liable for RZLT **from the 1st of February 2025**.

Landowners liable for RZLT, will be able to register with Revenue from January 2025. Landowners will be required to make an annual return to Revenue and pay any RZLT liable by the **23rd of May of each year, beginning 2025**.

If the landowner feels the economic activity that is taking place on their land does not reflect the current zoning, they may seek a rezoning of their lands (Rezoning Request). Such requests must be made to Galway County Council by **the 1st of April 2025**. Rezoning requests may provide an opportunity for an exemption from the RZLT on the Final Map.

THE ANNUAL DRAFT MAP - PUBLISHED ON 1ST FEBRUARY 2025

Scoped-in sites mapped on the annual draft map **will not** be liable for **RZLT until 2026**.

Submission can be made on the annual draft map to exclude or include parcels from being liable to RZLT for 2026 by **1st April 2025**.

Submissions on the Annual Draft Map may be made as follows:

- In writing and addressed to: "RZLT", The Planning Department, Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91H6KX

OR

- By email to: rzlt@galwaycoco.ie;

OR

- Online by visiting: <https://consult.galway.ie>;

not later than 1 April 2025.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE GALWAY

LEO Galway is the first stop shop for anyone seeking information or advice on starting, growing, or expanding a business in both Galway City and County.

This month LEO Galway continued to support small and micro businesses through their range of financial/soft supports and advisory services outlined below:

TRAINING COURSES & PROGRAMMES

SHORT TRAINING COURSES

To assist the small business community in meeting the challenges of the business world, LEO Galway provides a wide range of high-quality training supports which are tailored to meet specific business requirements.

MARCH SCHEDULE:

4th & 11th March	How to Start a Podcast.
5th March	Grant Aid and Funding 101 Workshop.
14th March	Etsy & Shopify.
18th March	Assertive Communication.
21st March	How to Use the New Canva AI Tools.
25th March	How to write a Business Plan.
27th March	How to sell on Amazon.



BUSINESS ADVISORY CLINIC

Our business advisory sessions enable clients to speak with one of our business advisors who will offer general advice to help on starting a new business or expanding on an existing business. Our advisor will discuss LEO related supports, training, mentoring and any other relevant services that may be available to aspiring or existing business promoters.

A business advisory is a free 30-minute consultation and runs weekly throughout the year. Our sessions are both in person and by phone. Please keep an eye on our website for the next upcoming available dates.



MENTORING

Our mentoring programme is designed to match up the knowledge, skills, insights, and entrepreneurial capability of experienced business practitioners with clients who need practical and strategic one to one advice and guidance. The mentor contributes independent, informed observation and advice to aid decision making.

The Mentor Programme is open to both new and existing businesses located within the Galway region. Areas of mentoring include business strategy, financial planning, market



research, marketing & promotion, distribution, exporting, production planning, social media. A mentoring session consists of 3 hours support from the mentor.

DIGITAL FOR BUSINESS

For the Digital for Business, our expert digital consultants assist through the analysis of existing digital systems in the business and to identify potential gaps in meeting business needs. They also explore opportunities to optimise existing systems and to integrate with new solutions to enhance business operations and provide guidance on the implementation of new or enhanced digital solutions.

It has helped businesses in many ways such as reducing stress in running their business, improve business results, eliminate paperwork, and reduce time spent on administrative tasks.

Our Grow Digital Voucher offers small and medium businesses with up to 50 employees financial support to embrace their digital technology. Funding up to €5,000 is available to invest in software and training/IT configuration.



START YOUR OWN BUSINESS PROGRAMME (SYOB)

LEO Galway organizes a SYOB programme monthly with up to 14 participants on each programme. The February SYOB evening programme finished on 27th of February 2025. Our March SYOB programme commenced on 3rd of March and will run until the 27th of March.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LEAN LAUNCH

The Spring Lean Launch programme commenced on 27th February 2025. This programme is ideal if you are starting out with your business idea or just need that guidance to point you in the right direction to start making or increasing customers and sales. Our expert trainers will support you in carrying out real world sales and market research

to see if there is a business in your business. Market research is key in any business and while this programme is very hands on, you will get to see if your idea is viable. The programme will run as follows:



Module 1	Thursday 27 th February 2025	9.30am – 4.30pm
Module 2	Thursday 13 th March 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 3	Thursday 27 th March 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 4	Monday 28 th April 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 5	Friday 23 rd May 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 6	Wednesday 18 th June 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 7	Wednesday 16 th July 2025	9.30am – 4pm

STUDENT ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME FINAL

The Student Enterprise Programme is an Enterprise Education programme for second level students and is organized by each of the 31 Local Enterprise Offices for the past 23 years. The programme runs from September to May. The students get to set up their own business and do everything a real-life entrepreneur would do, from coming up with the business idea to marketing and writing a business plan. The winning team from each 31 Local Enterprise Office goes forward to take part in the National Final which will take place in the Mullingar Park Hotel on 8th May 2025. The Galway Student Enterprise Awards final will be held in the Clayton Hotel on 20th March.



IPO OPPORTUNITIES FOR IRISH SCALE-UPS & SME'S

There will be an event on 'IPO Opportunities for Irish Scale-Ups & SME's' in Platform94, Mervue Business Park on April 2nd from 8.30am to 10.30am. Insights on the day will include:

- Navigating the Euronext Access process for sub-10M investment.
- Adopting an alternative approach to listing.
- From Seed to Scale – your funding journey explained

Please note you must register if attending.



PAST EVENTS

LOCAL ENTERPRISE WEEK 3RD – 7TH MARCH

Local enterprise week is an annual event that showcases the achievements and opportunities of small businesses in the region. Each of the 31 LEO's featured workshops, seminars, awards, networking sessions, and exhibitions that aimed to inspire, inform, and support entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners. Local enterprise week is a chance to learn from experts, connect with peers, and discover new possibilities.

Locally, LEO Galway organized three Growth & Networking Lunch and Learns in Ballinasloe, Tuam and Clifden. There were also one-to-one outreach business advisory sessions held in both Loughrea and Gort. LEO Galway, in conjunction with LEO Roscommon and LEO Mayo held a regional event in BIA, Athenry to provide extensive information on the rapidly growing use of Artificial Intelligence in businesses. Other brilliant events included the celebration of International Women's Day in the Radisson Red Hotel and designing the future – innovation in CREW, Galway.



L-R: MS. NOREEN DONOHUE & MR. EOIN CONNAIRE,
LEO GALWAY

GROWTH & NETWORKING LUNCH AND LEARN CLIFDEN

Our first Growth and Networking Lunch and learn of Local Enterprise Week 2025 was held in the Woodfield Hotel, Clifden on March 3rd. This Lunch & Learn session highlighted the LEO services & supports available to those looking to start or grow their business in County Galway. Such topics included: Mentoring, Training, Grant aid, Green for Business, Lean for business, Digital for business etc. The audience got the chance to meet our LEO Galway team to discuss their business needs and got their business questions answered.

GROWTH & NETWORKING LUNCH AND LEARN BALLINASLOE



Our second Growth and Networking Lunch and learn of Local Enterprise Week 2025 was held in the Ballinasloe Enterprise Hub, on March 4th.

L-R: MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, GALWAY LEO, MS. LYN DONNELLY, BACD MANAGER AND MR. EOIN CONNAIRE, LEO GALWAY

MR. EOIN CONNAIRE AND MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, LEO GALWAY PRESENTING LEO SUPPORTS



GROWTH & NETWORKING LUNCH AND LEARN TUAM

Our third Growth and Networking Lunch and learn of Local Enterprise Week 2025 was held in the Ard Rí House Hotel, Tuam on March 6th.



L-R: MR. PADDY COYNE, ACTION TUAM, MR. EOIN CONNAIRE, LEO GALWAY, ROSIE AND STEPHEN, ALLIED IRISH BANK STAFF AND MR. DANIEL HARDIMAN, ACTION TUAM

MR. EOIN CONNAIRE, LEO GALWAY, AND MR. DANIEL HARDIMAN, ACTION TUAM, PRESENTING LEO AND ACTION TUAM SUPPORTS



AI ADVANTAGE: TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES FOR STARTUPS AND SME'S ATHENRY

Our AI event was held in the BIA Innovator Campus, Athenry on March 5th. This event provided insightful information on how to tackle real-world business challenges and unlock growth with AI in startups and SME's.

This free event was ideal for Startup Founders and SMEs who needed to identify operational bottlenecks, streamline processes and make actionable plans to integrate AI tools into daily operations. This helped to explore the specific challenges within their businesses and helped to discover ways to simplify complex processes using AI.

This event was co-delivered by experts who work directly with businesses to help them navigate challenges using AI.



L-R MR. DEREK DUNWOODY, BIA, MS. YVONNE COMER, PORTERSHED, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL & MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, GALWAY LEO

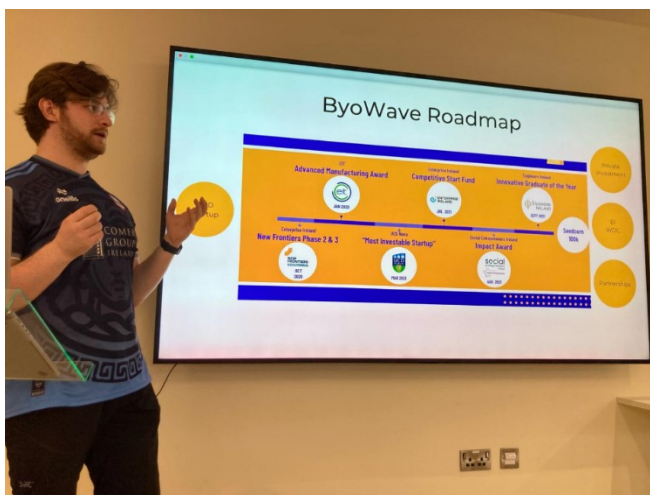
MR. ROB O'SHAUGHNESSY, SWITCH DIMENSION, MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, MS. ROSEMARY GALLAGHER PORTERSHED, MR. DARAGH JORDAN, MAGNATE



DESIGNING THE FUTURE: INNOVATION, IMPACT AND ENTERPRISE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CREW

Our Designing the Future: Innovation, Impact and Enterprise event was held in Crew, Galway on March 6th.

Guest speaker on the day was Brandon Blacoe - CEO of ByoWave. He is a leader in game



accessibility through the design of innovative, customisable modular devices. He was recently awarded Best Assistive Technology at the 2024 Game Development Conference.

MR. BRANDON BLACOE, BYOWARE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



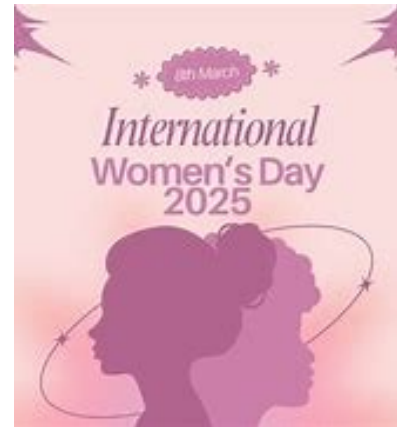
MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH,
HEAD OF ENTERPRISE,
PRESENTING LEO SUPPORTS

LEADING THE WAY: CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WITH NETWORK GALWAY

Our International Women's Day 2025 event was held in conjunction with Network Galway in the Radisson Red Hotel, on March 7th. This free event was open to all women across the business community. Our guest speaker on the day was Emily Brady – Serial Entrepreneur & Digital Media Innovator.

Emily Brady is a dynamic entrepreneur and a strategic leader in next-generation software solutions and digital media. With a background as a Partner at global consulting giant Unisys, she brings deep expertise in IT and business strategy to every venture she undertakes.

In 2017, Emily founded Elcaso Network Ltd, making a bold move into the world of Over-The-Top (OTT) content creation. Under her leadership, Elcaso has successfully designed, produced, and marketed two major online kids' shows—the globally acclaimed Elena and Clara Show and Doll Time HD Show. These series have garnered over 1.5 million followers, 800 million views, and 80 million watch hours, earning YouTube's prestigious Gold and Silver Play Awards. Available on platforms like YouTube, Roku, Amazon Fire, Apple TV, and HappyKids, Elcaso's content captivates young audiences worldwide.



Operating from its Galway-based studio, Elcaso has established an international footprint, with 99% of its audience outside Ireland, including key markets in the USA, UK, Canada,

Australia, and the Middle East. The company has also collaborated with global toy giants such as Disney, LEGO, Mattel (Barbie), MGA (LOL), Moose Toys, and Zuru to create engaging branded content.



Emily's expertise in entrepreneurship, digital content strategy, and global brand partnerships makes her an inspirational speaker for women in business and media.

MS. EMILY BRADY, ELCASO NETWORK LTD

MS. MICHELLE RYAN, NETWORK GALWAY



L-R: MS. MICHELLE RYAN, NETWORK GALWAY, MS. EMILY BRADY, ELCASO LTD, AND MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, LEO GALWAY

GROW DIGITAL: A NEW ERA OF SUPPORT

Our free online briefing was held in the Connacht Hotel on Tuesday 18th February 2025. It was designed to give small businesses a clear understanding of how digital tools can help streamline their operations, improve efficiency, and drive growth in key business areas.

It was hosted by Michael FitzGerald founder and CEO of OnePageCRM. A multidisciplinary engineer by profession and a product guy at heart, Michael works closely with all stakeholders, from users to developers, making sure the operations stay agile and the product effective. Before several entrepreneurial ventures, Michael worked in various roles; starting as a Sports Science Technologist in an Olympic Athlete Test Centre, to Sports Product Design (SRAM), to Snr Research Engineer in a Medical Device Company Bio Medical Research.

Our goal was to support you with actionable steps to move forward on your digital journey.

What was discussed:

- An overview of the digital supports available from the LEO, aligned to improved internal processes/operations

- Eligibility for the €5,000 Grow Digital Voucher
- The next best step for your business on its digital journey



L-R: MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH
HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, LEO
GALWAY, MS. MARIE KENNEDY,
ATU AND MR. MICHAEL
FITZGERALD, FOUNDER AND
OWNER OF ONEPAGECRM

JOYCE COUNTRY AND WESTERN LAKES GEOPARK BUSINESS NETWORK EVENT

Caroline McDonagh (Head of Enterprise) recently attended the Joyce Country & Western Lakes Geopark annual early season network event on February 17th in Cong Crossroads Community Centre.

This was planned as an annual event to gear up for the new tourist season which attracted around 40 businesses operating in the Geopark region of 1560sq km – including representatives from hospitality, outdoor experiences, training, heritage and the arts.

Additionally, a range of agency and project service providers for businesses were also important contributors to the event. Progress updates from the Geopark, then outlines of business supports were provided by Fáilte Ireland, Mayo and Galway County Council tourism officers and Local Enterprise Offices, Údarás na Gaeltachta, the Education and



Training Boards (ETBs), Inland Fisheries Ireland and local development companies.

L-R: MS. CAROLINE
MCDONAGH, HEAD OF
ENTERPRISE, LEO GALWAY,
PAUL, LEO MAYO, MR,
MICHAEL HEGARTY,
GEOPARK MANAGER, AND
MAYO COUNTY COUNCIL
STAFF MEMBERS

DESIGN MINGLE WITH JOACHIM DAVY



Joachim Davy spoke about his inspiring journey to success in CREW on Friday 21st February at 10.30am.

Joachim Davy is a seasoned creative leader and media specialist with over a decade of experience in video production, content strategy, live event production, and visual design, primarily within the sports industry.

Design Mingle is a vibrant networking event tailored for craft and design entrepreneurs. It serves as a dynamic platform where creative minds come together to

share ideas, collaborate, and foster meaningful connections.



JOACHIM DAVY (MEDIA SPECIALIST)

LAMA AWARDS



L-R: CLLR. MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH OF COUNTY GALWAY, MS. MAEVE DEASY, MR. ANDREW DEASY, SOLAR STRUCUTRES, AND MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

L-R: MR. ANDREW DEASY, MS. MAEVE DEASY, SOLAR STRUCTURES AND MR. EOIN CONNAIRE, LEO GALWAY



SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

Facebook:

7.4k likes

Reach year-to-date: 43.6k

Instagram:

3.3k followers

Reach year-to-date: 6.3k

LinkedIn:

1.3k followers

Reach year-to-date: 3k

X (Twitter):

5942 followers

REGENERATION SCHEMES

ATHENRY

TOWN CENTRE FIRST (TCF)

The Athenry Town team have been working closely with the TRO and Consultants LUC in the initial stages of evidence gathering for the TCF plan. An online survey has been published and can be accessed on <https://athenry-town-centre-first-plan.com/>. A total of 36 responses were received and the results have been circulated among the Town Team. The next public consultation is being held on Thursday the 20th of March between 5 – 8pm in the New Park hotel. The Regeneration Team and Town Champion are in contact with various stakeholders to ensure the event is promoted.

RRDF PROJECT



Following a detailed application by the Regeneration Team, Athenry was granted €6,075,518.40 Rural Regeneration Development Funding for the Athenry Public Realm Enhancement Scheme Phase1 and the redevelopment of Somers House Burke's Lane to provide a Community and Enterprise Hub. The regeneration team has progressed the project with the appointment of consultants for the Public Realm project. Current programming forecasts construction to commence late-2025. As part of the contract a community liaison officer will be appointed to manage engagement with local stakeholders both prior to and during works. The tender process is now

completed for the appointment of consultants to deliver the construction of the Somers House redevelopment. OC&C architects due to sign contracts in the coming days. Once appointed the design team will deliver the process through detailed design, tender and construction phases. The contracts have been signed, and a booking deposit has been paid the purchase the site from the OPW to provide off street parking.



LOUGHREA

LOUGHREA TOWN HALL

Finna Construction are progressing with demolition works ongoing and an offer has been made to purchase the neighbouring property.



INTERNAL
DEMOLITION





DEMOLITION OF REAR ANNEX

LONG POINT

The Regeneration team are working with Consultants Helena McElmeel Architects to deliver the redesign of the Long Point swimming area in Loughrea Town. An Bord Pleanála have issued a request for further information. The consultants have issued the Regeneration Team a revised fee proposal to undertake this work. It is estimated to be in the region of



€30 -€40,000. Once we have confirmed the final figure we will request the additional funds before our Director of Services. An Board Pleanála have granted an extension until May 2025 to respond to further information request.

BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE LONG POINT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT INCLUDING THE VIEWING PLATFORM

CLIFDEN

A Part 10 planning application has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála for the Public Realm project for Clifden Town Centre, Harbour Park and Beach Road Quay. Plans and particulars can be viewed online at <https://consult.galway.ie/en/consultation/clifden-public-realm-enhancement-scheme> . To date there has been no request for further information. The case is due to be decided by 01/05/2025.



BEACH ROAD QUAY



MARKET SQUARE AND MARKET STREET



HARBOUR PARK

PORTUMNA

PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE



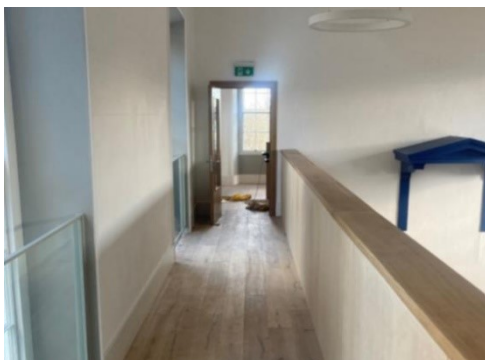
Works are currently progressing ahead of programme at Portumna Courthouse. ESB connection has been made. Building is due to be snagged, and final commission will take place in 3 weeks.

Funding is in place through the DRCD for the appointment of a 3-year temporary post of Business Development and Operations Manager

for the facility. This post has now been advertised with a closing date of the 27th of February. This post will also manage the Loughrea Town Hall and Tuam Town Hall once completed.



VIEW OF COURTYARD



INTERNAL VIEW OF MULTI USE SPACE.

PORTUMNA PUBLIC REALM

The Portumna Public realm enhancement scheme part 8 planning application is approaching submission readiness.

Engagement is continuing with a view to purchasing town centre lands to increase the provision of off-street parking to support town centre businesses.

GORT

GORT PUBLIC REALM

The Gort Public Realm scheme is ready to be submitted as a part ten planning application to An Bord Pleanála. We are engaging with our Law Agents to purchase lands in the town centre for additional car parking space.

TUAM

TOWN HALL

Two tender responses were received and after evaluation, OC&C architects were deemed to be the preferred tender. Contracts are due to be signed with OC&C architects. Once appointed the design team will deliver the process through detailed design, tender and construction phases.

STATION QUARTER THRIVE FUNDING

Galway County Council is working in partnership with Iarnród Éireann and to deliver a transformational masterplan for the Tuam Station Quarter. Reddy Architecture and Urbanism have been formally appointed to develop the masterplan. The first public consultation has taken place. The findings are being collated by the consultants and a follow up meeting will take place in due course.



PHOTOS FROM THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

TUAM STATION BUILDING: REPURPOSING, RENOVATION AND EXTENSION

The renovation and extension of the Tuam Station Building has been designed inhouse by the Regeneration Team with a view of submitting a part 8 planning application on the 21st of March. The design has been presented to the MD members and showcased at the public consultation event.



17 North-West Elevation - Proposed
(1:100)

THE PURPOSED DESIGN

HERITAGE OFFICE

IRISH WALLED TOWN NETWORK

The Irish Walled Town Network was founded by the Heritage Council in 2005. The role of the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) is to unite and co-ordinate the strategic efforts of local authorities and community groups involved in the management, conservation and enhancement of historic walled towns in Ireland, both North and South. The towns of Athenry and Loughrea are members of the Irish Walled Town Network. Both Athenry and Loughrea are beneficiaries of funding for events such as Athenry Town Walls Capital Works, Athenry Walled Town Day, *Loughrea Past and Present* publication and heritage trail brochures for both towns. Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer represented the towns of Athenry and Loughrea at the Irish Walled Town Network AGM which was held in Cashel in Tipperary on Tuesday 25th February.



ABBEYGORMICAN CHURCH CONSERVATION PROJECT



**Irish Construction
Excellence Awards 2025**
Finalist

Client: Abbeygormican Cemetery Group & Galway County Council

Architect: 7L Architects

Engineer: John Britton Consulting



ABBEYGORMICAN, BEFORE WORKS WERE UNDERTAKEN



ABBEYGORMICAN, AFTER WORKS WERE UNDERTAKEN

On 27th February Fergal McNamara, 7L Architects, Laurik Mathieu, Conservation Contractor and Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer were interviewed in the Convention Centre, Dublin by a panel of judges for the Irish Construction Excellence Awards.

The Abbeygormican conservation project is a finalist in the Irish Construction Excellence Awards 2025, it showcases the recently conserved Augustinian friary, an amalgam of C12th.,



C15th. & C17th architecture within an earlier ecclesiastical site. Located within a graveyard, this sensitive monument required urgent repairs to ensure safe access for burials and prevent further deterioration of the medieval church exposed to the elements. Conservation works carried out in collaboration with Galway County Council, the local community, and the National Monuments Service, were guided by a Conservation and Management Plan prepared by a multidiscipline team. Dependent on annual grant funding from the Community Monuments Fund, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage works were carried out in three phases under challenging weather conditions,

adhering to Wildlife Acts, National Monuments Legislation and ICOMOS Standards. The site, now accessible, features visible medieval elements. Abbeygormican is a lesson in perseverance, commitment and pride. Crumbling masonry did not deter the contractor's perseverance in preserving the piscina, conserving the ivy-clad transept chapel, supporting the Hannon Tomb, and stabilising the transept and chancel walls.

BIODIVERSITY

ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING WORKSHOP FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES



Artificial lighting is invaluable to businesses, homes, roads and recreation, however inappropriate and excessive use leads to light pollution which alters the natural night light levels for humans, animals and plants. This has adverse effects on the environment, health, biodiversity and climate both through individual development and cumulative impact. In response to this, the Connacht Local Authority Biodiversity Officers have developed a workshop aimed at enhancing the understanding and implementation of dark sky-friendly lighting practices for staff. This workshop is crucial for promoting energy efficiencies and responsible lighting practices.

Workshop Details:

- Date: 7 April 2025
- Location: Connacht Hotel, Dublin Road, Galway H91K5DD
- Time: 9.30am - 3.30pm

The workshop will cover the impacts of artificial lighting on the environment, health, and biodiversity. It will provide practical guidance on developing and implementing policies to mitigate these effects. Topics will include:

- The adverse effects of light pollution.
- Strategies for reducing light pollution through better lighting practices.
- Case studies and best practices from local authorities and organisations.
- The opportunities for local authorities to integrate responsible lighting into projects.

Our distinguished speakers include:

- Kerem Asfuroglu, Lighting Engineer and author of Dark Sky Guidelines.
- Miriam Crowley, NPWS Divisional Ecologist.
- Georgia McMillan, Mayo Dark Park and Dark Sky Ireland.
- Peter McLoughlin, Mayo County Council Lighting Engineer.
- Tina Aughney, Bat Ecoservices.

This workshop series is a partnership project between the Biodiversity Offices of Galway County Council, Galway City Council, Sligo County Council, Mayo County Council, Roscommon County Council and Leitrim County Council. It is funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service's Local Biodiversity Action Fund and is an action of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 - 2030.

THE HARE'S CORNER

Galway landowners can apply for support to create wildlife ponds, mini-woodlands, wildlife hedges, mini-orchards and 'plans for nature' on their land through The Hare's Corner partnership initiative with Galway County Council and Burrenbeo Trust. The application window runs from 6th until 20th March.

Inspired by the term 'The Hare's Corner' - an old farming expression for an awkward section of a field which wasn't intensively farmed and so was 'left to nature' - the aim of this project is to help create habitats that have proven benefits for biodiversity, for climate-action as well as for the well-being of participants.

The Hare's Corner project offers landowners practical support to carry out simple but impactful actions for nature such as creation of a wildlife pond, a native mini-woodland, a wildlife hedge, a heritage mini-orchard, with apple trees from Irish Seed Savers Association and/or a bespoke 'plan for nature' for their site. This support is offered in the form of materials (mixed species of native trees and heritage apple trees), micro-funding (towards machinery costs for pond digging), professional services (such as a hydrologist's visit to help plan a pond, or an ecologist's visit to 'plan for nature') and guidance.

The Hare's Corner initiative in 2025 will be funded through a combination of public and private sector funding, including the National Parks and Wildlife Service's Local Biodiversity Action Fund and is an action of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030.

Landowners, farmers, community groups, and schools with land, or with permission to undertake work on a site, are welcome to apply. However, those participating in the ACRES or NPWS Farm Plan Scheme, as well as landowners with sites in designated areas (SACs, SPAs etc), are not currently eligible.

It is a wonderful opportunity for people to make a real difference for biodiversity right across County Galway and you are encouraged to apply.

For full details please visit burrenbeo.com/thc



The Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Forum met in February to discuss the collaborations and plans for the year, including the launch of the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024 – 2030.

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ROADS PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT – MARCH 2025

1. Restoration Improvement –2025 RI Contract gone out to tender

- a. Old Church St, Athenry (**2024**) – Surfacing Works complete, covers and line marking to be completed
- b. RI R347 Laraghmore 2025 – RI Contractor
- c. RI R348 Derrydonnell 2025 – RI Contractor
- d. RI L4105 Millplot (Station Road) 2025 – RI Contractor
- e. RI L3106 Ballinvohar 2025 – RI Contractor
- f. RI L2129 Drumgriffin 2025 – RI Contractor
- g. RI L3107 Tysaxon (Monivea Rd) 2025 – RI Contractor
- h. RI L2119 Baunmore 2025 – RI Contractor
- i. RI L6214 Clogher/Cahergowan 2025 – RI Contractor
- j. RI L2134 Castlegar 2025 – City Contractor
- k. RI L3117 Cormacuagh 2025
- l. RI L6195 Liscananaun 2025
- m. RI L6117 Mullaghtruttery 2025
- n. RI L7115 Carheenlea 2025
- o. RI L31026 Moor 2025
- p. RI L71102 Carnmore East 2025
- q. RI L81031 Rinn 2025
- r. RI L71523 Toorkeel 2025
- s. RI L31078 Carrantarramud 2025

- t. RI L7168 Knockroe/Rafort 2025
- u. RI L7130 Farravaun 2025
- v. RI L7114 Kiltroque 2025

2. Restoration Maintenance/Improvement

Surface dressing –

- a. RM R354 Lackaghbeg 2025
- b. RM L7139 Corrafaireen 2025
- c. RM L3110 Farmhill 2025
- d. RM L31104 Stonepark 2025
- e. RM L71761 Gortnahultra 2025
- f. RM L3118 Cappanasruhaun 2025
- g. RM L31043 Rathmorrissey 2025
- h. RM L7108 Castlelambert 2025
- i. RM L2124 Ballybrone 2025
- j. RM L7104 Cregboy 2025
- k. RM L2117 Annagh West 2025
- l. RM L6194 Cregduff 2025
- m. RM L6202 Roanmore 2025
- n. RM L6197 Waterdale 2025
- o. RM L31021 Cahernashilleeney 2025

Recycling Contract – Planning works for September

2025 Roads Programme under review

3. Safety Improvement Works

- a. Derrydonnell Beg Junction Contractor completed Tarmac works removing Slip-Lane is ongoing, Line marking and other works to be completed when temperatures increase
- b. Oranbeg (Furey's Cross) Tarmac completed – Line marking and other works to be completed when temperatures increase

4. Climate Change

- a. CC2024 N67/R446/L4105 Carrowmoneash GC/24/35508 – works to connect storm water completed, reinstatement works ongoing
- b.

5. Community Involvement Scheme

Maree Road @ Church – - Complete

New Line Junction Pedestrian Crossing – Contractor has confirmed they are starting in two weeks

Ryehill Church – Road widening – Complete

Coolarne – Road setback ongoing

Caraun – Road bend - Complete

Ballyboggin – Edge drainage – LO Issues

6. Other Items

Belville Road realignment Issuing Planning consent forms for	Meeting with Landowner to discuss issues with design proposal, marking out Fenceline and centre line to help them understand design better.
Hydrological study Clarin River	Application made for Further funding to progress to Phase 1 consultation requirements OPW requested further information and updated application
Pedestrian Crossing Lidl Oranmore	Tender awarded pre-start meeting held with contractor. Items ordered and plan to start in around a months' time.

Figures and Pictures



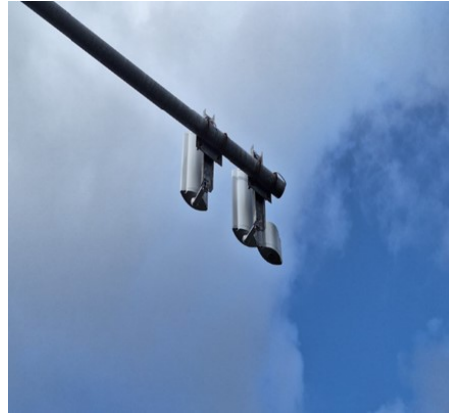
OLD CHURCH STREET
ATHENRY – SURFACING
WORKS



STORM CLEAN UP – GAEL
SCOIL ORANMORE



SWAN GATE STREET ATHENRY



CARNMORE
LIGHTS REPAIR
BEFORE / AFTER



CARROWMONEASH DRAINAGE
REPAIR THROUGH ESTATE





STORM CLEAN UP

BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

Ballinasloe MD outdoor crews in conjunction with specialist contractors, have continued during early parts of February to clean up and undertake repairs as a result of Storm Éowyn.

Ballinasloe MD technical team have been preparing contract documentation in advance the procurement process for the primary elements of the roadworks programme, following the publication mid-February of Circular RW 02 of 2025 Regional and Local Roads Grant Allocations 2025 by Department of Transport.

From February 22nd to 28th Ballinasloe Enterprise Hub hosted to the Mount Lucas Retrofitting Rig - a fully equipped mobile Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) unit to deliver training on energy upgrades and retrofitting in communities across Ireland. Over the course of the week, a range of formal and informal training was delivered from the mobile rig, including NZEB Fundamental Awareness, Retrofit for Homeowner courses, and information on a range of topics including insulation, solar panels and heat pumps.

RETROFITTING RIG IN BALLINASLOE



On the 7th February 2025 the new local road speed of 60km/h was implemented across the country. Ballinasloe MD crews worked in advance if this date to install the new signage where

required, in particular at the speed limits on approach to and leaving built up areas.

LOCAL ROAD SPEED LIMITS IN BALLINALOE MD

The NTA funded Beechlawn Phase 3 Active Travel project has begun construction works. This project involves provision of a new safe accessible footpath walkway in the



Beechlawn area of Ballinasloe. This project has been designed, procured and managed directly by Ballinasloe MD staff.

BEECHLAWN PHASE 3 ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECT, BALLINASLOE



Works have begun in several locations in Ballinasloe MD on the NTA funded Bus Stop Upgrade Programme. Bus stop upgrades are to be undertaken at Moylough, Mountbellew and Ballymoe under the current funding tranche.



MOYLOUGH BUS STOP –
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

MOUNTBELLEW BUS STOP – UNDER CONSTRUCTION



CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

In recent weeks the Conamara Municipal District has continued its primary focus on Storm Éowyn. Significant damage has occurred throughout the MD however the clean-up is coming to an end. Focus will now turn to road drainage works such as opening water tables, cleaning gullies and upsizing culverts where there were capacity issues. Other maintenance works include hedge trimming, gritting roads during prolonged winter weather, sign maintenance.

The Conamara MD has already sought tenders for Road Pavement Surface Dressing Contract 2025 and Road Pavement Overlay Contract 2025. Tenders received will be assessed and the award criteria will be based on the Most Economic Advantageous Tender.

The Conamara MD will also focus on preparatory works on sections within the roads programme later this year. This will include road design based on several factors including traffic volumes. Improving drainage networks and traffic signage along the sections to be resurfaced.



N59 GLENGOWLA STORM
ÉOWYN BEFORE AND
AFTER CLEAN UP



RECENT RESURFACING WORKS AT SEANCHEIBH AN SPIDÉAL CARPARK

R336 MUINTIR EOUGHAN RECENT ROAD OVERLAY WORKS



LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

PRIMARY FOCUS OF ACTIVITY

The repair and clean-up in the aftermath of Storm Éowyn has almost reached a conclusion with just a few outstanding issues to resolve. Again, I think it is important to highlight the scale of the additional works undertaken by the Gort, Loughrea and Portumna Area outdoor and office staff over the last six weeks.

As previously noted, the 2025 Roads Programme and Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Grant (RIG) Programme (2025-2027) was presented to the elected members in January and agreed in principle. Early start roads have been identified and works have already commenced where appropriate.

Since January, we have received confirmation of Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations for this year and changes on foot of this announcement have been communicated to all Councillors.

The announcement will see an increase in the Restoration Improvement Grant (RIG) for the Loughrea Municipal District resulting in a 2025 allocation of €6,600,905 i.e. an increase of €538,974 over 2024.

We have updated the 2025 RIG programme accordingly and the following changes will now be included in addition to those presented and agreed at the January MD meeting:

- 47 RIG projects to be completed at an anticipated budget of approximately €6,600,905.
- 22 Restoration Maintenance Grant (RMG) projects to be completed at an anticipated budget of approximately €1,553,951.
- 8 Local Tertiary Roads with an anticipated budget of €244,109.

In addition to the RIG funding there is also an additional amount of €1,752,000 for the Loughrea MD broken down as follows:

Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Scheme - €463,500

1. R-942, Bride Street, Loughrea – Drainage project to alleviate significant surface water issue on primary access to Loughrea Town adjacent to the IDA entrance - €135,000
2. L-4512, Grannagh - 240m of road raising and installation of a culvert - €185,000
3. L-8582, Aughinish – Repairs to existing Rock Armour - €45,000
4. R-350, Lackalea – Road Drainage project subject to landowner agreement - €54,500
5. L-4506, Loughcurra North - Repairs to existing retaining wall structure - €44,000

Bridge Rehabilitation - €375,000 – Managed directly by HQ

1. L-42025, Allendarra Bridge, Woodford - €20,000
2. L-8211, Drum Bridge, Ballinakill - €20,000
3. L-8766, Moat Bridge, Killimor - €160,000
4. L-8229, Derrygarraff Bridge, Curra, Ballinakill - €175,000

Low-Cost Safety Improvement Works- €143,500

1. R446, Craughwell Village – Traffic calming by way of introduction of gateway build-out at eastern approach to Craughwell Village featuring planting and new signage as per Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) Advice Note. Intention is to reduce traffic speeds on approach to Craughwell Village after a Vehicle Speed and Traffic Volume Survey indicated 85th percentile speeds of 85kph in adjacent 60kph zone with a maximum speed of 159kph recorded - €28,500
2. R350, Kanargad, Bushfield – Localised widening and realignment of the regional road, to include drainage works, boundary and set back of utility poles subject to landowner agreement. Works will improve drainage, sightlines and alignment - €60,000

3. R458, Bridge St. /Georges St., Gort - Upgrade and renewal of existing controlled pedestrian crossing to include raised table and more defined VRU pathway. Existing pedestrian crossing is not immediately obvious to motorists due to current at-grade crossing and adjacent parking. Reconfiguration will address this issue and make the crossing more visible - particularly at night. This is a primary crossing point located in the Town Centre and a raised table will slow traffic speeds immediately prior to Market Square which is the subject of a current public realm redesign proposal - €55,000

Former Nationals - €770,000

1. R-942 (650m), Loughrea Town - Primary eastern entrance to Loughrea Town in poor condition - €600,000
2. R-380 (210m), Loughrea Town Primary western entrance to Loughrea Town - €170,000

An overview of other works on-going is as follows:



REMOVAL OF ILLEGAL DUMPING ON R460, GORT –
BEFORE AND AFTER IMAGES





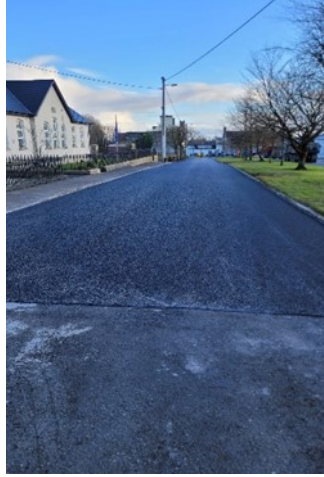
REMOVAL OF FALLEN TREE AT THE GROVE, LOUGHREA
FOLLOWING STORM ÉOWYN



SURFACE RESTORATION WORKS AT EYRECOURT NATIONAL SCHOOL AND CHURCH



DURING WORKS



AFTER WORKS ARE COMPLETE

COMPLETION OF RETAINING WALL WORKS AT LOUGH CURRA



WORKS CARRIED DURING THE MONTH IN TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

During the month of February Tuam MD staff were involved in the following Projects

SAFETY IMPROVEMENT WORKS R333 CAHARNAHEENY

The aim of the Regional Road Network Safety (RR NSA) Analysis Pilot study is to target funding by the Department of Transport on sections of the network with the most prevalent safety issues that have identifiable engineering-based interventions. The first Regional Road Network Safety Analysis (RR NSA) was undertaken by the Department of Transport support office (DoTSO), commencing in 2020. It has been developed through collaboration with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) road safety team and adopts a similar approach to their network safety analysis process. The RR NSA supports Vision Zero, a target of zero fatalities on Irish roads by 2050, adopted in the Road Safety Authority (RSA) Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and supports actions 51 and 52 within that strategy.

As part of the scheme Headford (N84) to Claretuam (R333) at Caharnaheeney showed up a number of safety issues. Funding was allocated in the 2024 Safety improvement grants for

his scheme. The road in this area is particularly narrow and contains a severe bend. Advanced signage, line marking and anti-skid measures on the approach will help to reduce the risk of collisions at this location.



BEFORE SAFETY MEASURES



AFTER SAFETY MEASURES

MAINTENANCE WORKS

Following the impacts of Storm Eowyn clean-up operations continued throughout the District. Contractors commenced the removal of 123 fallen trees in the Palace Grounds in Tuam town which is expected to take up to three weeks. A biodiversity plan is also being put in place for the replanting of new native species trees and hedging in the park over the coming months.



The Tuam Town roads crew also commenced a tidy up of the River Nanny in the town next to the Shop Street Bridge. Working alongside the OPW and Inland Fisheries a full cleanup of the riverbank occurred with removal of litter and vegetation. A full spring clean was also undertaken at the Old Mill house area.



Mise, le meas,

Liam Conneally

**Chief Executive
Galway County Council**

18th March 2025