



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Monthly Management Report
December 2022

CHANGES TO INCOME ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLDS

The social housing income eligibility bands, the respective thresholds, and the local authorities assigned to each band were introduced in 2011. They were developed with reference to the income needed to provide for a household's basic needs, plus a comparative analysis of the local rental cost of housing accommodation across the country, at that time. Notwithstanding an increase in the thresholds for a small number of local authorities in October this year, the thresholds have remained largely unchanged since 2011. In the meantime, accommodation costs have increased significantly nationwide.

For this reason, Government has agreed to increase the baseline income thresholds by €5,000 for all local authorities with effect from 1 January 2023. This significant change is being taken pending the development and roll-out of a revised income eligibility model (and income thresholds) in 2023. It will ensure social housing support is available to vulnerable households and will help protect those most at risk from the recent increase in the cost of living.

Band	Counties	Revised Threshold
1	Cork City, Dublin City, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, Galway City, Meath, South Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow	€40,000
2	Carlow, Clare, Cork County, Galway County, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Louth, Waterford, Westmeath, Wexford	€35,000
3	Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Longford, Mayo, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary	€30,000

The current income eligibility model includes allowances of 5% for each additional adult household member (subject to max. 10%) and 2.5% for each child. These adjustments have not been revised and will be considered in the context of the new income eligibility model. The revised thresholds for different household compositions are detailed in the table below:

Band	Single Adult	2 Adults	1 Adult 1 Child	1 Adult, 2 Children	2 Adults 1 Child	2 Adults 3 Children	3 Adults 4 Children
1	€40,000	€42,000	€41,000	€42,000	€43,000	€45,000	€48,000
2	€35,000	€36,750	€35,875	€36,750	€37,625	€39,375	€42,000
3	€30,000	€31,500	€30,750	€31,500	€32,250	€33,750	€36,000

IMPLEMENTING THE REVISED ARRANGEMENTS:

Applications assessed by the local authorities from 1 January 2023 should be assessed as per the revised regulations. Applications assessed and decided upon prior to this date, which were deemed to exceed the current thresholds, but which may meet the new income thresholds, can be resubmitted by applicants. In the interests of fairness, any such applicants removed from the social housing waiting list between 18 November 2021 and 31 December 2022 for exceeding the income limits but who now qualify under the new thresholds, can retain the time already accrued or which would have been accrued had they remained on the waiting list. Formal direction on this matter is set out in the enclosed Ministerial Guidelines.

HOMELESS – COLD WEATHER RESPONSE

The Connacht Regional Homeless response to an Extreme Weather Event was activated last week, in response to the Status Orange Weather warning. This response is activated when an alert is issued by Met Éireann of extreme weather conditions.

The Extreme Weather Response service is operating at Westside Community Centre from Tuesday 06th December until Wednesday morning 14th December 2022. This will be subject to ongoing review and may be extended dependent on weather conditions.

The service is for people who are rough sleeping in Galway City - it is not restricted to people who are eligible for social housing supports. It is open from 9.00p.m. to 8.00a.m. Any person who may wish to avail of this service should contact COPE Galway day centre any day at 091 525259 before 4.00 p.m. or the freephone number 1800 788 887 between 7.00p.m and 11.00p.m.

The service provides:

- Shelter
- A camp bed and bedding for the night
- A hot meal
- Referral to COPE Galway Day Centre for ongoing supports

The service was initially availed of by 8 clients, with this increasing to 27 by Saturday 10th December 2022. On Sunday 11th December 3 of the 22 clients were identified as having a centre of interest in County Galway. The number of clients with a centre of interest in County Galway availing of the service each night has varied between 1 and 5.

This is in addition to another 2 clients who avail of a rotational bed (ie not guaranteed availability depending on demand and usage) in our regular annual Cold Weather Response service based in the Fairgreen hostel. There are also 4 Galway County Council clients availing of a designated bed in the Fairgreen hostel. This bed is designated for their use, pending their move on to a Community Based House, Housing First or a standard tenancy as appropriate.

The number of presentations for homeless services is expected to increase in the coming weeks due to prison releases and hospital discharges coming up to Christmas.

HOUSING GRANTS

A total of €2,746,669.85 has been paid to housing grant recipients in 2022. €2.7m is claimable from the dept with €.5m from Galway County Council's Budget. 404 grants have been paid. 2023. It is proposed to spend as per Department advice up to a max of 65% of our 2022 allocation until the 2023 allocation is known (end of Q1 2023).

Grant Scheme	Total Amount	Dept: GCC Split	No of Grants
Housing Aid for Older People	€1.2m	€995K: €248K	225
Mobility Aids	€438K	€351K: €87K	102
Housing Aids (Private)	€1.063M	€850: €212	77
TOTAL	€2,746,669.85	€2.7: €.5m	404

HAP/RAS

There are currently 1464 Hap tenancies with Galway County Council. The number of properties under HAP currently with Galway County Council let to single occupants: **400** (plus 61 Single in shared accommodation).

The property type for the 400 HAP properties is as follows:

95	1-beds
182	2-beds
88	3-beds
25	4-bed or more
10	Block of 1 & 2 bed apartments

Of these 400 HAP tenancies, 195 are Male Tenants & 205 are Female Tenants.

The number of properties under RAS currently with Galway County Council let to single occupants: **40**

The property type for the 40 RAS properties is as follows:

4	1beds
29	2beds
4	3beds
3	4bed or more

Of these 40 RAS tenancies, 20 are Male Tenants & 20 are Female Tenants.

While single occupants may be occupying 3- or 4-bedroom properties their HAP payment amount is linked to their single status, and they may have the need for additional bedrooms for custody arrangements – weekend, foster arrangements etc.

HOUSING SUPPLY

The below table has been created to show the housing units of Galway County Council. This PowerBI will be a live feed off i-House and will have up to date and accurate information as to the status of all properties owned by Galway County Council.

The properties are listed as:

Occupied - 2515 tenancies

Under construction - 189 units

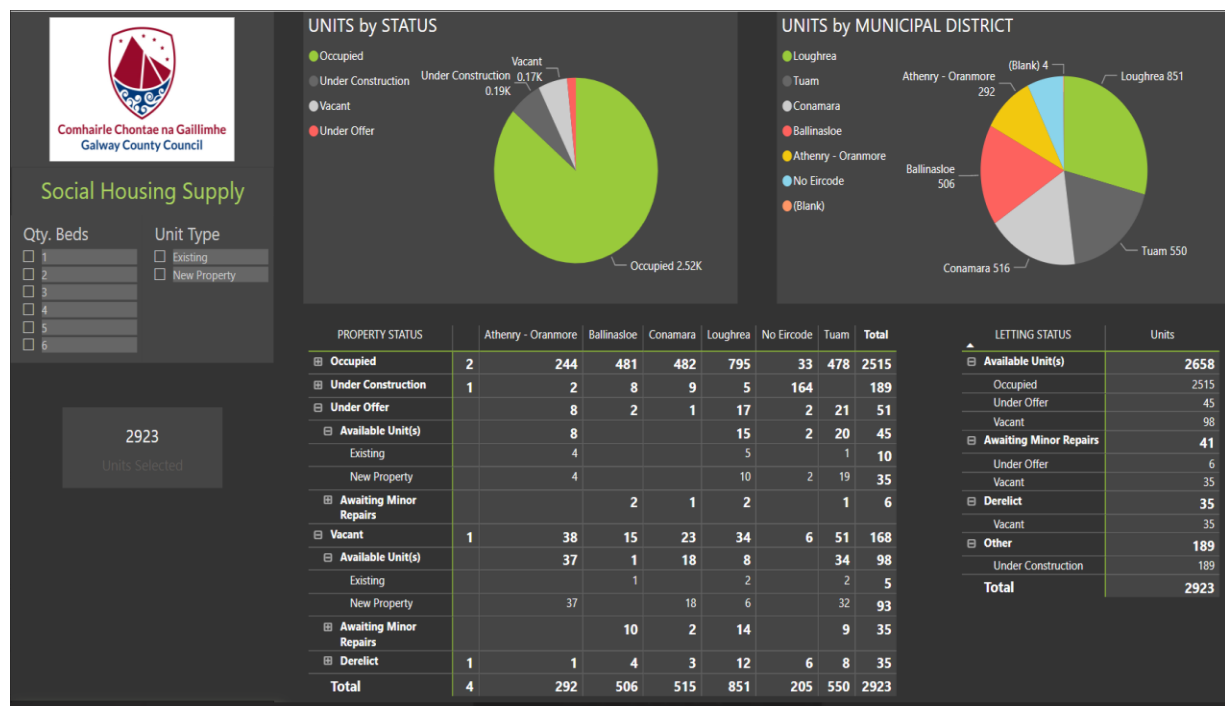
Under offer – 51

Vacant units - 168

The 168 vacant unit total includes new properties just in the process of being handed: for example, the total of 51 Vacant units in Tuam includes 32 new units at Fana Bhui in Tuam where keys will be handed over in January 2023, 2 units to be offered, 9 units with maintenance for repair and 8 derelict units (rurals/sites/demountables etc)

Vacant properties include 35 undergoing repairs and a further 35 derelicts which require decision on whether to sell, renovate or rebuild (including planning permission). The decision on how the 35 units will be progress will be based on funding available from the Department for individual properties, in 2022 we had funding for 6 single units to be rebuilt – all required p8 planning.

The table is laid out by units and Municipal District. It is intended to present this to each MD in early 2023 and to then provide the table as a live update on the website there after.



CROI CONAITHE

To date 42 applications for Croi Conaithe have been received of which 14 have been refused. The original Scheme specified urban properties only and 11 of these refusals were due to their rural location, these have since been contacted under the new Rural scheme with details of how to apply under that new programme.

Of the remaining three, one was withdrawn, one referred to a complete re-build and one application was substantially incomplete. 28 further applications are awaiting further information.

Consultancy Services have been acquired to assist with the inspection process. All properties require two inspections, one before and one after.

12 applications have been referred to the Consultants for inspection. The Inspections are taking place this week with a report and recommendation due back.

SOCIAL WORK

- Increase in referrals for South Galway and Tuam during November.
- Increase in referrals for Aftercare clients. Young adults leaving Foster or care arrangements
- Large volume of Disability referrals ongoing.
- Increase in Vulnerable Adult (HSE) cases requiring joint work with Housing with existing tenants.

Social Work cases:

Open cases (Dec 2022)	New Referrals	Total
128	16	<u>144</u>

TENANCY ENFORCEMENT

In summary the TEM team receive on average 15 calls a day, 5 letters and 10 emails. Of these contacts there have been 202 TEMs cases referred to the HLOs in the last six months. Below is a synopsis of the activity carried out by the Tenancy Enforcement Officer.

A Housing Task force for Ballinasloe Municipal District has been set up – the first meeting took place on the 05.12.2022. This is a multiagency response to support communities to maintain peaceful tenancies. Previously Housing taskforce was set-up for the Tuam area and the outcomes of this collaborative platform were a success. The Tuam taskforce is due to meet again in 2023 and it is envisioned that a Taskforce will be progressed for the Loughrea M.D. in 2023.

No. of Cases	202 Tenancy Enforcement cases referred to the team by Housing Liaison Officers in the last 6 months.
Seizures of Caravans / Mobile homes	7 – various locations in Gort & Ballinasloe
Unauthorised occupancy houses and caravans	4 cases of unauthorised occupancy in dwellings 1 case unauthorised occupancy – Halting Site 5 Cases -resolved
Break in and damage to GCC property	1 incident of non-accidental damage to welfare unit- Garda investigation ongoing

Serious Incidents	As a result of major incidents - related to Ballinasloe a taskforce was formed as a response to address the issues.
Exclusion orders	Currently 3 applications for Exclusion Orders before courts
Control of Horses	Ongoing investigations - Carrowbrowne/Headford rd

CAPITAL

PART 8 PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 10 UNIT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT ARDRAHAN



Picture showing proposed front elevation – east view

On Friday 9th December the Housing department lodged planning permission (in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended) for a 10 no. unit housing development at Ardrahan.

The development is to the rear of the existing Caisleán Raithin estate and comprises: 3no. single storey two-bed dwellings, 1no. two-storey three-bed dwelling, 6no. two-storey two-bed dwellings, car parking, connections to existing services and all ancillary site development works.

It will be on public display until Monday 16th January 2023. Plans and particulars are available for inspection during normal working hours (excl. public and bank holidays) at the public counter in the planning office at County Hall or at the public counter at the Loughrea MD office or online at <https://consult.galway.ie>.

Submissions or observations can be made thereafter for a period of 2 weeks until 30th January 2023. The CE Report will subsequently be prepared and presented to the elected members of Loughrea M.D. for consideration. It is envisaged that a decision will be made at the Loughrea MD Meeting scheduled for 11th April 2023.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In 2022, Galway County Council's Housing Maintenance completed 120 energy retrofits over 6 contracts on Council owned social housing stock.

Located in Roundstone, Clifden, Ardrahan, Athenry, Loughrea, Tuam and Portumna. All properties had solid fuel heating removed and replaced with an air to water heat pump. Energy efficient windows and doors and external insulation were installed, where required, attic insulation was topped up, and PV panels were supplied to lower the electricity costs to the tenants. The benefits to the tenants is a more comfortable, healthier and easier to heat home with lower running costs, whilst reducing the maintenance cost of the property.

The properties were all upgraded to **BER A rated homes**, ensuring that the tenants of these homes had lower energy demands and a reduced carbon footprint. Removing the burning of solid fuel will contribute to a healthier local environment and improved air quality.



Energy Retrofitting of group of OPDs in Clifden. Works included:

- External insulation & Attic Insulation Top up
- Heat Pump
- Solar PV Panels
- New Windows & Doors
- LED Lighting & Upgraded Fire Alarms

ECONOMIC, COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ERCD)

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

- Consultations are ongoing with various stakeholders to feed into discussions on emerging priorities for Healthy Ireland Fund Round 4 and a meeting of the LCDC Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee takes place in December to discuss and agree priorities for this next round of funding.
- A meeting of the LCDC Funding Evaluation Sub-Committee took place on 14th December to discuss and agree priorities for the Community Support Fund / Community Enhancement Programme which will provide support towards energy costs and small capital projects for community & voluntary groups – the fund will be advertised prior to Christmas break with a closing date around end of January 2023. The closing date for Pobal’s Community & Voluntary Energy Support Scheme for Community/Voluntary Groups registered as Companies, Cooperatives or Charities, was 2nd December, however, due to the large number of queries, Pobal have already noted that a further round of funding will open as soon as possible.
- Category 2 & 3 awards under the Community Centre Investment Fund were announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development and 19 community centres across the county were awarded funding up to €300,000. County Galway was one of the highest beneficiaries of the Fund nationally and this funding will enable much needed improvements and energy efficiencies in these vital community facilities. The Community Section will liaise with the PPN to identify how it can assist Community Centres to maximise funding from future iterations of this and other funding schemes, e.g., we are providing match funding for Energy Audits of Community Centres under the PPN’s Energy Masterplan to maximise the number of community centres covered under this initiative.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- The AGM of Comhairle na nÓg took place in the Galway Bay Hotel on Wednesday 7th December, with 2 topics selected by attendees from across the County to progress during 2023 – Mental Health and Places & Spaces for youth at local level. Normally, one topic is selected and progressed, however, the consultations identified that there were many cross-cutting issues across these 2 topics which will be further discussed to feed into priorities for relevant strategies and funding proposals in due course.
- A meeting of the Age Friendly Alliance took place on 13th December to consult with agencies and older people on emerging priorities vis-à-vis current funding schemes.
- A meeting of the Traveller Interagency Group took place on 14th December to discuss public sector duty requirements vis-à-vis Travellers, and to develop the progression of an Education Sub-Group to identify initiatives to retain & progress Travellers in education.
- The Council has been awarded €38,100 by the Department of Health and will invite communities hosting Ukrainian Refugees to apply for a small scale grant to develop and implement health & wellbeing and social integration measures under the Ukrainian Refugee Health & Wellbeing Support Fund. This scheme will close in early January and all projects must be completed by end March 2023.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

ACTING AS AN INFORMATION HUB:

- The PPN attended the Loughrea MD Meeting on 12th December to promote engagement and build awareness of the role of the PPN amongst Councillors and Council Staff
- The PPN sent out its Weekly Digest Info letters (each Friday), 1 Monthly Newsletter along with 16 emails to all 1146 Member Groups.
- The Galway County PPN sent out a 'Fundingpoint' Newsletter.
- The PPN has reorganised its 'Resources' tab on its webpage.

BUILDING CAPACITY:

- The PPN organised 2 training events with Saolta on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The first was held on 8th December for Community Groups in Ballinasloe, the second was targeted at Council Staff and Councillors and was held on 9th December in County Hall. These popular events discussed the 17 goals and how they applied to the work of these groups.
- The PPN hosted its first Steering Group meeting for the SEAI funded project: 'Energy Master Plan for County Galway'. The PPN has also launched a survey to identify eligible groups and buildings to available of free Energy Audits as part of this project.
- The PPN attended the GRD Well-being event in Oughterard Court House and informed attendees of the benefits of joining the PPN.
- The Galway County PPN launched its Consultation on the Galway Co PPN Workplan and Budget for 2023, inviting input from members to shape the PPNs work and budget for next year.
- The Galway Co PPN attended the Comhairle na nÓg AGM held on 7th December in the Galway County Bay Hotel. At the AGM the PPN had an info table and has agreed to meet the newly elected Committee in January 2023. The PPN aims to generate awareness and interest of the PPN among younger generations to increase the engagement of young people. To this effect, the PPN also held a meeting with Youth Work Ireland, Galway and other youth participation groups to discuss youth engagement with the PPN.
- The Galway County PPN hosted a Galway Disability Forum meeting to provide updates to groups on the Forums projects.
- The Galway County PPN launched its Training Needs Survey on a Regional Scale to ascertain groups' training needs for 2023.

PROMOTING REPRESENTATION:

- PPN Representatives were involved in a Transport and Infrastructure SPC meeting.
- The Galway County PPN completed a Consultation process and made a submission on the next Litter Management Plan for County Galway 2023-2026.
- The Galway County PPN prompted groups to engage with the consultation process on the Portumna Public Realm Enhancement Scheme.

ARTS OFFICE

- **Arts Council Funding:** Galway County Council Arts Office were successfully awarded €84,100 by the Arts Council towards the Arts Programme for 2023.
- **Artist Support Scheme:** 14 out of 15 artists have now completed their proposals.
- **Artist in Schools Scheme:** 4 artists delivered 24 workshops across 3 schools in Ballinasloe, Oughterard and Portumna involving 142 students aged between 5 and 17 years old from September - December. 1 artist was given an extension into 2023 due to the schedule at their allocated school.
- **Visual Artists' Ireland Lifelong Learning Programme Galway in partnership with Galway Culture Company, Galway City Arts Office, and Visual Artists' Ireland:** We received over 59 responses to a needs analysis survey for visual artists in county Galway. Over 40 artists attended a visual artists café on 30 November to contribute to the design of an upcoming programme of professional development supports that will be delivered in 2023
- **Macnas at School:** 1 artist delivered 10 workshops in Scoil Croí Naofa Athenry involving 30 students aged 10 and 11 years old, on the lead up to Con Mór at Fisheries Field at the end of October.
- **Tuam Youth Circus in partnership with Galway Community Circus:** 4 artists delivered 27 free classes and 3 showcases involving 48 children between 5 and 11 years old in Tuam between September and November. The response from participants and the community was overwhelmingly positive and Galway Community Circus intend to develop and sustain a circus programme in Tuam with our support.
- **Book It! Children's Book Festival in partnership with Galway County Library Service:** 8 artists and facilitators delivered 46 events across 16 locations including libraries and schools involving over 1,000 students aged between 3 and 17 years old in October – December.
- **Sea Week:** 10 artists delivered 13 events at Sea Week in Connemara involving 750 participants and audiences aged 4 – 24 years old at the end of October.
- **Community Support Scheme:** All drawdowns have been processed and completed.
- **Public Art:** RFQ has been prepared and published for services to project manage two flood relief Percent for Art Schemes on behalf of Galway County Council and the OPW.

CREATIVE IRELAND

- Arts Office presented the Draft Galway County Culture and Creativity Strategy to the Community and Culture SPC for consideration on the 6th of December.
- In December 2022, the Government confirmed Creative Ireland Programme will be extended for another 5 years to 2027 and the five pillars agreed will be: Creative Youth, Creative Communities, Creative Industries, Creative Health and Wellbeing and Creative Climate Action and Sustainability.
- Under the Creative Communities Strand, it is indicated that Galway County Council will receive an increase in Core Funding 2023 to €161,161 plus additional €30,000 for Cruinniú na nÓg activities next year.

CREATIVE IRELAND 2022 SUMMARY REPORT: TOTAL PROJECTS 2022 - 43

- Bursary Projects: 8
- Culture Team Projects: 6
- Rollover Projects: 1
- Legacy Projects: 1
- Other Projects: 3
- Creativity in Older Age Projects: 2
- Cruinniú na nÓg Projects: 22

Audience: 17,001 and Creative Practitioners Employed: 142

Total Expenditure: €208,452

- Creative Ireland Legacy Projects: €5,000 (2.5%)
- Other Projects: €14,902 (7%)
- Creative Ireland Bursaries: € 24,018 (11.5%)
- Cruinniú na nÓg: €29,990 (14.4%)
- Creativity in Older Age: €28,720 (13.5%)
- Project Mgmt., Marketing & Documentation: €29,704 (14.5%)
- Culture Team Projects: €76,118 (36.5%)

RURAL SCHEMES



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL - MAIN SCHEME

The work plan for this Scheme in QT4 has focussed on completion and recoups of expenditure on the 2019 and 2020 programmes. Working with Implementing Partners (Municipal Districts and Community Organisations) over €450k has been successfully recouped by the Council from the Department of Community and Rural Development in December 2022 for the following:

Scheme Year	Location	Amount Recouped – December 2022	Project Status
TVRS 2020	Castleblakney	€ 54,298.21	Works and Final Claim Completed.
TVRS 2020	Portumna	€ 97,455.00	Final Project Element to be completed and Final Claim Due in January 2023.

TVRS 2019	An Cheathrú Rua	€	80,000.00	Works and Final Claims Complete
TVRS 2019	Killimor	€	76,015.95	Works Completed – Final Claim January 2023
TVRS 2019	Oranmore	€	149,287.68	Works Completed – Final Claim January 2023
	Sub-Total	€	457,056.84	

An allocation of € 649,999.50 for the Town and Village Renewal Programme 2022 was announced on December 14th by Minister Heather Humphrey's. Seven out of nine applications were successful. Contracts will issue in early January 2023 with a 12-18 month timeline for completion of projects and recoupment by end of 2024.

GALWAY	Project / Location	Description	Allocation
Galway	An Spideal	The proposed project is a street enhancement scheme to upgrade and enhance shopfronts and street facades in the village of An Spideal and the installation of outdoor picnic benches, benches at key locations across village, to build on the development of public outdoor dining and recreation spaces.	€100,000
Galway	Ballinasloe	The project proposed is the refurbishment of a town centre long term vacant building and repurposing it to create a remote/co-working hub.	€250,000
Galway	Portumna	The upgrade and enhance of shop fronts/street facades in Portumna Co Galway. Vision is to bring about high quality attractive environment by delivering improving frontages and attend to any dereliction by painting and attending any works needed to improve the visuals of the town centre creating a sense of arrival in a major tourism centre.	€100,000
Galway	SEM - Tuam	Funding under the Streetscape Enhancement Measure in Tuam.	€100,000
Galway	PDM - Casla	Feasibility study for the development of Low Carbon Sustainable Centre of Excellence based in Casla. Include site selection survey, planning, EIA reports, Road traffic audit, TIA, NIA, procurement and development costs, admin costs.	€50,000
Galway	PDM - Athenry	Pre-planning assessment, and detailed design package for the proposed Athenry Community Hub (building to be purchased under BAM).	€49,999.50
TOTAL	GALWAY		€649,999.50

A PROGRAMME OF WORK IS ONGOING IN SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING

2019 TVRS – Ballyglunin – Community Hub

2020 TVRS – Claregalway/ Báile Chláir Leisure Centre Extension/Co-work Hub

2020 TVRS – Creggs Heritage Centre and Village Enhancements

2020 TVRS – Leitir Móir Community Park and Halla

2021 TVRS – Leenane Community Park

2021 TVRS – Bar na Dearg Enhancements

2021 TVRS – Village Checks

2021 TVRS – Woodford Courthouse Project Development



Castleblakney Community Playground. TVRS Funding 2020.

CLÁR SMALL SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

Final Recoupment and Completion of Projects under the 2021 CLÁR programme were advanced in December 2022 with grant funding recouped by Galway County Council. Project Completions and Final Recoupments were advanced for four projects. Three further projects in the 2021 programme are extended into 2023 – Glinsk and under the CLÁR Innovative Measure Oileain Árinn, Playgrounds Promotion by Galway County Council.

The 2022 programme (15 projects) have all accepted Grant Offers and commenced.

The following projects were completed and recouped in December 2022 under the CLAR Programme

C121G01 CLONBERN NS

Awarded: €50,000.00

Paid to Clonbern NS :€50,000

Details of the works carried out:

500 square metres of school car parking added. Excavate 400mm, provide substructure sub base, base course and wearing course to new section of car park. Also, necessary kerbing, gullies and bollards, including materials, labour and machinery hire. Provision of bicycle rack, disability parking and safe crossing point for external pedestrians.



C221G04 – ABBEY

Awarded: €27,000

Paid to Abbey Community Development : € 27,000

Details of the works carried out:

The initial phase of the project was the development of the MUGA court area, funded by local fundraising and Leader grant. The second phase, to which this Clár grant funding relates, was for the addition of floodlights to the whole space and the inclusion of a sensory and toddler play area with seating, adjacent to the MUGA development.



Abbey Community, CLÁR 2021 – Lighting MUGA area and Sensory Area

C221G01 LURGA NATIONAL SCHOOL

Awarded: €50,000

Paid to Lurga National School €50,000

Details of the works carried out:

- New entrance and gate
- Concrete kerbing
- Surfacing works including build up / Supply & installation Fencing
- Drainage works
- Supply & installation of 45m x 30m Astro pitch
- Completion of line markings on Astro pitch



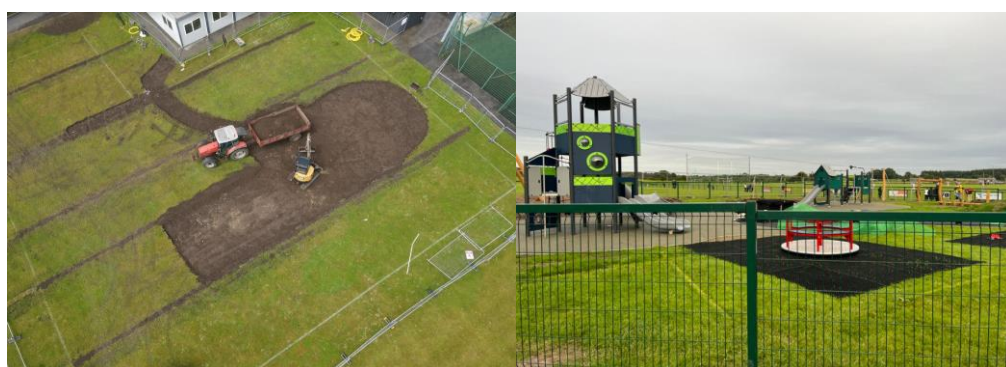
C221G02 SKEHANA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Awarded: €49,513.13

Paid to Skehana Community Development : €49,513.13

Details of the works carried out:

- Erected security fencing around the playground site
- Drained the site by installing shores/ develop tower areas
- Play equipment installed, Kerbing installed around pathway
- Playground inspected and issues resolved



Skehana Community Playground CLÁR 2021

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS) 2022

The Following Projects were approved by the Department of Rural & Community Development, under the 2022 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme.

Scheme Measure	Project Name:	Project Description (less than 30 words):	Amount Granted
M2	Creggs Mountain Walk	Develop Creggs Mountain Walk – an element of Beara-Breifne Way & Suck Valley Way	€200,000
M2	The Walks Loughrea	Upgrade of further Section of Walks Project	€200,000
M2	Killarainy Woods Trail	Upgrade of Killarainy Woods Trail	€103,950

M3	Western Way Trail	Upgrade of Sections of Western Way Trail	€425,25 0
Lead Contact			
Bernie Donnellan A/AO			

RURAL REGENERATION SCHEME

ATHENRY:

Cross Street and Market Square designs have been merged and have been shared with the Municipal District Engineering staff. The team have also taken on board the recent acquisition of the building on Burke's Lane and Cross Street together with feedback from some of the elected members and subsequent amendments are being updated.

LOUGHREA:

Following on from the request for an uplift in funding for the Town Hall the Department have sought additional information to support this request. Final commentary on this document is being incorporated with the intention of submitting to Department by the 16th December.

CLIFDEN:

The Car Parking review of Clifden has been completed and a draft report has been received and is being reviewed. This will be considered in conjunction with the teams in Planning and Infrastructure an Operations.

PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE:

O C & C Architects have been appointed and design meetings have taken place and are advancing. Assessment from Fire services is being scheduled. It is hoped to have Tender Docs prepared by end of Q1 2023. Negotiations are being finalised with Town hall trustees regarding Snooker Hall site.

PORTUMNA PUBLIC REALM:

Public Consultation has commenced and was to continue till December 24th. It is now anticipated that the consultation period will now be extended to at least mid-January 2023.

GORT :

Public Realm and Town Centre First Consultants met with Regen Team and members of Gort Town Team for the inaugural consultation meeting on Friday December 9. Further meetings are scheduled for early January 2023.

BIA INNOVATOR CAMPUS, ATHENRY

Progress has been made with the construction of the BIA Innovator Campus and it is expected that the first tenancies of the own door units will be progressed in January/February 2023. There continues to be strong work undertaken through the campus and recently published figures show significant activity even in advance of the buildings being completed.

The Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar TD visited the BIA Innovator Campus on Friday 9th December to see the ongoing work being carried out. Cllr Maher, Cathaoirleach of the County along with Jim Cullen, Chief Executive, Alan Farrell, Director of Services, Cllr Liam Carroll Chair Athenry MD, Peter Feeney, Chair BIA Innovator Campus and Elaine Donoghue, General Manager BIA Innovator Campus and a number of the partners including Frank O'Meara Director Teagasc, Breda Fox Head of Local Enterprise, the voluntary Board of Directors, GRETB, WDC and more met with the Tánaiste. The collaborative approach which is central to the development of the campus was highlighted to the Tánaiste and recognised as a key strength of the project.



Mr Jim Cullen CE, Ms Elaine Donoghue GM BIA, Cllr Michael Maher Cathaoirleach, An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD, Mr Peter Feeney Chair BIA, Mr Alan Farrell DOS & Director BIA

TOURISM

TOURISM NETWORKS:

- Lough Derg: The new Lough Derg Tourism Officer who has now been appointed will be working with the local authority Tourism Officers to the region and to manage tourism development projects.

- The Lough Derg Discovery Points report has incorporated a conservation report and has been circulated for review to the three local authorities and Destination Lough Derg stakeholders, closing date for submissions 12 January.
- A rebrand exercise Destination Lough Derg has been adopted by the steering group on 13 December.
- Galway County Council presented on the Connemara Greenway to the Connemara and Islands Tourism Network on Friday 8th December

CORRIB BLUEWAY

- Outdoor Recreation NI is working on behalf of Galway City Council, Galway County Council and Mayo County Council to identify opportunities for the development of Blueways around Galway City, Lough Corrib and Lough Mask.
- A survey has been published and shared on Friday 8th December www.outdoorrecreationni.com/news/galway-mayo . The survey will close at midnight on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

UPDATE ON SOME ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS UNIT IN 2022 – (NOT INCLUDING ROADWORKS PROGRAMME OR ACTIVE TRAVEL PROVIDED PREVIOUSLY)

PIERS & HARBOURS

Works were completed on 7 projects funded under **BALAMI Tranche 1**. The projects and funding allocated are listed in the Table below. The funding provided covers 95% of cost with Galway County Council providing 5% matched funding.

Location	Funding Approved
Inishbofin Harbour	€85,500
Blackweir	€76,000
Inver	€20,900
Loughaun Beg	€11,875
Aircin	€35,150
Sconnsa	€29,450
Ballyconneely	€66,500

Two further projects approved under Tranche 1 will be completed early in 2023, these are at Cleggan and Spiddal with a combined funding allocation of €73,150.





Pictures above show Blackweir Pier before and after works undertaken

The funding allocation under **BALAMI Tranche 2** was announced on Wednesday 7th December 2022. The projects and funding allocation provided is as per the Table below.

Location	Funding Approved
Bealcarra	€80,750
Killeenaran	€38,000
Derryinver	€38,000
Maumeen	€23,750
Kilkieran	€26,600
Kilronan	€475,000
Roundstone	€52,250
Kinvara	€23,750
Garafin	€20,900
Cashel No. 1	€29,450
Pollagh	€19,000
	€827,450

As well as the specific BALAMI funded works, routine maintenance work continued across the approximately 200 landing places (Piers, Harbours and Slipways) in the county. There was also maintenance activity on mooring locations and onshore navigation lights.

BRIDGE REHABILITATION ACTIVITY

Rehabilitation works have been completed on 10 bridges funded under the Bridge Rehabilitation Works on Regional and Local Roads scheme. The locations and funding allocated is as per the table below

BRIDGE REHABILITATION PROGRAMME	
Location	Funding Allocated
BR R-364 Fiddaun, Moylough GC/22/28626	€35,000
BR R-363 Carrowmore, Ballybaun GC/22/28626	€15,000
BR L-6354 Cloonshivna, Ballygar GC/22/28626	€20,000
BR L-5229 Sruthaun Buí, Lettermore GC/22/28626	€70,000
BR L-5231 Coonawilleen, Lettermore GC/22/28626	€70,000
BR L7403 Ballintleva, Caltra GC/22/28626	€15,000
BR R-336 Doirriu, Rossaveel GC/22/28626	€80,000
BR L2212 - Ballymary, Milltown GC/22/28626	€15,000
BR R-359 Woodlawn, Killaan GC/22/28626	€20,000
BR L-53211 Baile Dhulocha, Corrnamonga GC/22/28626	€20,000

Work also advanced on design and regulatory permits on 2 other locations funded under the 2022 programme (Formwheel, Shannapheasteen and Suck Bridge). Construction works in both instances will be completed in 2023.

There was also significant activity funded under the Discretionary Grant Programme. Galway County Council were in receipt of €395,000 and it was expended across 25 different locations.

The type and variety of works undertaken across these two funding programmes include; full realignment where geometry is deficient and which might include new foundations/abutments, deck widening or replacement, parapet replacement or repair, repointing of masonry arch bridges, skirt repair or replacement to prevent or remediate scour erosion, installation of warning signage.

An application has been submitted to the Department of Transport for funding to the tune of €790,000 under the 2023 Bridge Rehabilitation Programme. The proposal covers a total of 19 different locations. The Discretionary Grant funding application will be submitted early in 2023, the number of locations covered by this will be similar to 2022.



Pictures above show bridge at Sruthaun Buí, Lettermore before and after works undertaken

HEALTH & WELLBEING SEMINARS



Three seminars with the theme of ‘Health & Wellbeing’ integrated throughout, were arranged for GCC employees and long-term hire contractors working in the Municipal Districts. These were held in Ballinasloe, Claregalway & Furbo to facilitate staff from all locations across the county including the islands and were attended by over 300 employees from a variety of sections including Roads, Water Services, Fire Service, Environment, Corporate Services, ERCD & Housing. Speakers included the DOS of Operations & Infrastructure, who gave the opening address, the H&S section who reminded staff of the safety management system and the importance of incident reporting, the Irish Cancer society who emphasised men’s cancers, the ESB who’s focus was on working safely near their overhead and underground electrical networks and an overview of GDPR by the DPO. The keynote speaker of the day was Dr Eddie Murphy, more commonly known as the clinical psychologist from Operation Transformation, who discussed wellbeing with a particular focus on mental wellbeing. All speakers were received well and the opportunity to gather after a hiatus of almost 3 years was thoroughly enjoyed by all, while key health & safety messages were communicated to all.

Irish Cancer Society

- The Irish Cancer Society is the national charity in the Republic of Ireland dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem and improving the lives of those who have cancer.
- Founded on October 10, 1963, by Austin Darragh
- Austin Darragh was an Irish medical practitioner, entrepreneur, broadcaster and writer. He is also known for being the radio doctor on The Gay Byrne show
- Speaker today: Sarah Egan





Dr Eddie Murphy

- Dr Eddie is a clinical psychologist, author & health advocate
- Dr Eddie is the psychologist on RTE's Operation Transformation
- Dr Eddie is an engaging, dynamic and entertaining public speaker and has given many seminars and training events on mental health, wellness to the general public, schools, professionals, organisations and companies.
- Author of best-selling book 'Becoming your real self'



ISO45001 SURVEILLANCE AUDITS

The Council continued with the maintenance of the external health & safety certification (ISO450)1 of the safety management system in December. Surveillance audits took place by BSI in Water Services in early December, focusing on the Water Conservation area. Further surveillance audits took place in mid-December by NSAI, who focused on other areas in the council including Roads, Fire Service, Libraries Housing and the Regional Office in Tuam. Both audits were successful and noted a continuing high level of compliance across all sections.

N59 MOYCULLEN BYPASS

This scheme involves the construction a Type 1 single carriageway road of length 4.3 kms from Clydagh to the east of the village towards Drimcong to the west of the village. The main elements of the proposed scheme include 4.6km of type 1 single carriageway, realignment of the Knockferry roads over 850m, 1.7km of farm/accommodation roads, 2 no. at-grade roundabouts and 8 structures consisting of 5 bridges, 2 underpasses and 1 culvert.

The contract was awarded in October 2021 with Wills Bros Ltd mobilising and commencing works on site by the end year. Wills Bros have progressed the construction works throughout 2022 with the main areas of work progression being site clearance (95%) earthworks (80%), structures (75%), drainage (45%), utilities (25%) and accommodation works (10%). It is anticipated that construction works will achieve substantial completion by Q3/Q4 of 2023 with the scheme being opened thereafter to traffic, bypassing the village of Maigh Cuilinn and removing traffic congestion through one of Galway's most congested villages.

The majority of construction works to date have taken place off-line with minimal impact to traffic on the national and local road network.



Rock Breaking at Cut 02 Adjacent Knockferry Road



Parapet Railing Installation to ST04 Ballyquirke Canal Overbridge



Installation of Steel Reinforcement for ST07 Lough Kip River Bridge Deck Pour



Ariel View of ST07 Lough Kip River Bridge



Kerbing & Utility Ducting Installation at Eastern Roundabout at Clydagh

CPO FOR THE WESTERN SECTION OF THE ATHENRY NORTHERN RELIEF ROAD WAS PUBLISHED ON 2ND DECEMBER.

Part 8 planning permission is already in place. The CPO documentation has been sent to An Bord Pleanála for their consideration.

Notices have issued to the affected landowners. It is open to them to make a submission to An Bord Pleanála who may decide to hold a hearing.

In the interim we will start work on the construction tender documents. In the event that ABP does approve the CPO we will be in a position to move faster towards publishing the construction tender.

If the CPO is approved, I would expect construction to start before end 2023. The eastern section of the Athenry Northern Ring Road is still under detailed design as the ground conditions there are more complex and we are engaging with Irish Rail on a new structure at the railway crossing.

TAKING IN CHARGE – OUTCOME FOR 2022

The following housing estates were taken in charge this year or have been queued for consideration at January MD meetings.

TIC19/18	Caiseal Riada, Clarinbridge	TIC - 11/04/2022
TIC 04/15	An Chrannog & Loch na hOillean	TIC - 9/05/2022
TIC16/03	Sarsfield Crescent, Ballinasloe	TIC - 25/05/2022
BW 16/02	The Dales, Moylough	TIC - 25/05/2022
TIC21/16	Stonehaven, Athenry	TIC - 14-6-2022
TIC 04/10	Caheroyan Park, Athenry	TIC - 12/7/2022
TIC 12/006	The Punchbowl, Gort	TIC - 11/7/2022
BW13/008	Sliabh Carron, Gort	TIC - 11/7/2023
TIC 13/12	Elmwood Moycullen	TIC - Date to be confirmed
TIC21/03	The Cloisters, Loughrea	TIC - November pending ratification of minutes
TIC05/14	The Maltings, Loughrea	TIC - November pending ratification of minutes
TIC13/010	Sli an Bhradain, Claregalway	For inclusion on next Agenda
TIC08/016	Church View, Claregalway	For inclusion on next Agenda

A working group was established in Q3 of this year to formulate a Sustainable Plant Protection Plan. A first draft of the plan is expected in January 2023. A briefing will be provided to the relevant SPCs when the draft is ready for circulation.

A Cooperation Agreement was signed with the NTA in respect to the provision of Bus Shelters at locations which qualify for NTA funding. The cooperation agreement will ensure a strong and close working relationship between Galway County Council and the NTA in this area.

An Executive Technician joined the Broadband team in December. This will help us centralise the processing of NBI licences for new poles to carry the broadband fibre network and will free up resources in the Municipal Districts to focus on the Roads Programme and related works. The processing of broadband licences is a key priority for the Council to ensure faster connectivity for our citizens to the internet and related services.

L-4512 ROAD RAISING AT BALLYBOY, ARDRAHAN

The L-4512 has been flooding to a depth of 300-500mm over a length of 500m on a regular basis for over twenty years and has remained unpassable to passenger cars for several weeks during these events. Long duration flood events are common in ground water susceptible areas. The road serves the busy local National School of Ballyglass with several parents being inconvenienced several times a day during drop offs and pickups, in addition to commuter traffic.

The most recent flood event occurred in March 2020 when the road was unpassable for a two-week period. Representations have been received by Galway County Council since the early 2000's and locals were very keen to see action on the issue when the Dunkellin FRS was progressing through planning (2015) and again when the FRS was substantially completed in 2020.

No feasible flood alleviation works could be identified under the Dunkellin FRS and the location was outside of the study area of the South Galway / Gort Lowlands FRS. Road raising was the only feasible solution at this location and this required significant engagement with affected adjacent landowners to get their agreement to facilitate same.

The works included:

- Raising 500m of road by an average of 330mm, with a maximum raise of 600mm required
- Construction of 650m of rock armour walls to retain the new road. The rock armour option negated the requirement to purchase any additional lands at the location
- Improvement works on the bridge under the road
- Provision of additional road culvert capacity



Receding Flood Levels of March 2020. The road flooded over a total length of 400m to a maximum depth of 500mm

Notes:

- *Total cost of works €275,000. Majority of funding from 'Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Works'*
- *Compensation paid to three landowners where boundary walls replaced with rock armour*
- *Bord Gais trunk main under raised section of road*



Rock armour walls under construction – August 2022



Works in progress - photo of the 'Pond', where crash resistant blocks and pedestrian rail have been installed to maintain the public visual amenity of the pond. Concrete reinforcement placed on top of existing 2m stone wall to support blocks. Rock armour walls substantially completed.



September 2022 – Rock armour works completed. Road raising works pending.



December 2022 – Road raising, and surface dressing works completed



December 2022 – Road raising and surface dressing works completed

Iron works to be raised and road to be lined before Christmas 2022.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT)(NO. 4) REGULATIONS 2022 [S.I. 605/2022]

These new Regulations amend provisions in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (the Principal Regulations), to assist the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (MCEDIY) in meeting Ireland’s legal obligation to provide accommodation to international protection applicants.

NEW CLASS OF EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT

The Regulations amend Part 1 of Schedule 2, entitled ‘Exempted Development - General’, to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, to insert a new Class 20F exemption.

This new Class permits the change of use of the following structures for the purpose of providing the necessary facilities for international protection applicants:

“school, college, university, training centre, social centre, community centre, non-residential club, art gallery, museum, library, reading room, sports club or stadium, gymnasium, hotel, convention centre, conference centre, shop, office, Defence Forces barracks, light industrial building, airport operational building, wholesale warehouse or repository, local authority administrative office, play centre, medical and other health and social care accommodation, event and exhibition space or any structure or part of structure normally used for public worship or religious instruction.”

This provision is a temporary measure and will expire on 31 December 2024; the use of such structures shall cease on the expiry of the regulation.

Where a proposed change of use would materially affect a protected structure, the exemption is removed and planning permission is required in accordance with Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

A planning authority must be notified in writing of the details of the development prior to the commencement of the proposed change of use.

COMPLIANCE WITH BUILDING REGULATIONS

In this context, as with the planning system generally, neither the granting of planning permission or the provision of an exemption from the requirement to obtain planning permission, removes the requirement to comply with any other code, particularly in relation to the Building Regulations, including fire safety. The aim of the Building Regulations is to provide for the safety and welfare of people in and about buildings. It is important to note in the context of these exempted development

provisions that compliance with the Building Regulations 1997 to 2021 must still be achieved and Building Control procedures will still apply.

Under the Building Control Acts 1990 to 2020, primary responsibility for compliance with the requirements of the Building Regulations rests with the owners, designers and builders of buildings. In particular, the Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (where they apply) require greater accountability in relation to compliance with Building Regulations in the form of statutory certification of design and construction by registered construction professionals and builders, lodgement of compliance documentation, mandatory inspections during construction and validation and registration of certificates.

Appropriate measures to ensure the protection of unrecorded burials associated with institutions operated by or on behalf of the State (or in respect of which the State had clear regulatory or supervisory responsibilities) in Development Plans, in circumstances where there is a possibility that unrecorded burials may have taken place, on foot of the publication of the Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes.

Further to publication of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission's final report, the Government prepared a Strategic Action Plan. Under Action 22 of the Action Plan, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage committed to issuing a circular to all planning authorities advising of the precautionary approach to be taken in County and City Development Plans to the proper safeguarding of burial sites from potentially harmful development.

Circular Letter: NRUP 05/2022 issued in November 2022 detailing the planning issues related to the protection of sites associated with institutions operated by or on behalf of the State (or in respect of which the State had clear regulatory or supervisory responsibilities), in circumstances where a planning authority, on the basis of information before it, considers that there is a reasonable possibility that unrecorded burials associated with the former institutional use of the site may have taken place and where it considers that any such burials would be of social and / or cultural significance.

It highlighted that in particular, Section 10(d) as well as Section 10(f) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 are each mandatory requirements, which state that objectives shall be included in a development plan for the purposes of:

“the integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population”, and

“the protection of structures, or parts of structures which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest”.

Accordingly, the circular outlined that there is scope to formulate objectives in development plan review or variation processes for the purpose of preserving and protecting unrecorded burial sites

pending further investigation, in circumstances where the planning authority (on the basis of information before it) considers that there is a reasonable possibility that unrecorded burials associated with the former institutional use of the site may have taken place and that such burials would be of social, community and / or cultural significance.

The statutory process of preparing or varying the development plan includes opportunities for public participation and consultation. Such input to the process provides scope for local knowledge and information gathering that may contribute to the identification and assist with the subsequent protection of such burial grounds.

The *Institutional Burials Act 2022* was enacted in July 2022. This legislation allows for the excavation, recovery, and analysis of remains at any institutional sites where evidence emerges that there have been manifestly inappropriate burials. Government has approved an intervention under the Act at the site of a former Mother and Baby Institution.

In addition to the development plan objectives set out above, local authorities, acting in their capacity as planning authorities in respect of individual planning applications, may also attach such conditions to potential development as considered appropriate in the circumstances.

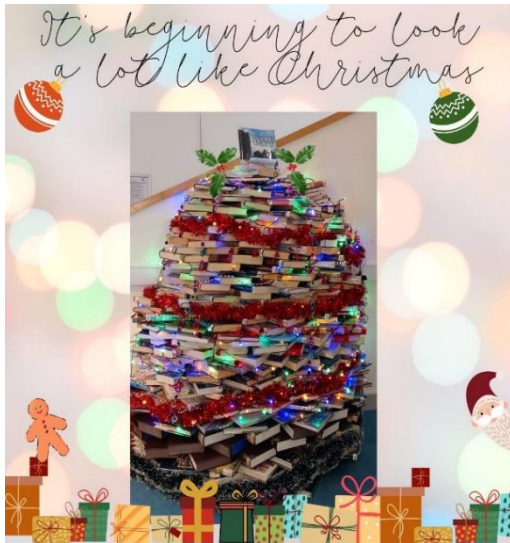
The circular requested that Planning Authorities ensure that locations where there may be evidence of unrecorded burial sites, are preserved and protected through the development plan review or variation process, to both enable public consultation and to allow for further investigation and any subsequent action that may be required. It is also noted that in assessing planning applications at such locations pending development plan review or variation, evidence of unrecorded burial sites should be treated as a material consideration.

The above will be taken into consideration in the context of the preparation of Local Area Plans and in any future variation process for the County Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Library Ireland Week ran from the 4th to the 10th December. Each year Library Ireland Week (LIW) invites libraries across Ireland to host events, campaigns, activities or exhibitions to celebrate an annual theme. **The 2022 theme was Libraries as Places of Sanctuary**, in recognition of how libraries and library staff promote libraries as places of refuge, solace and sanctuary. Galway Libraries continued to host events, decorate libraries and welcome community all through the week and the following pages are filled with some examples of same.

TUAM LIBRARY



This very colourful Christmas Book Tree greets customers in Tuam Library, made with books, some tinsel and adorned with lights.

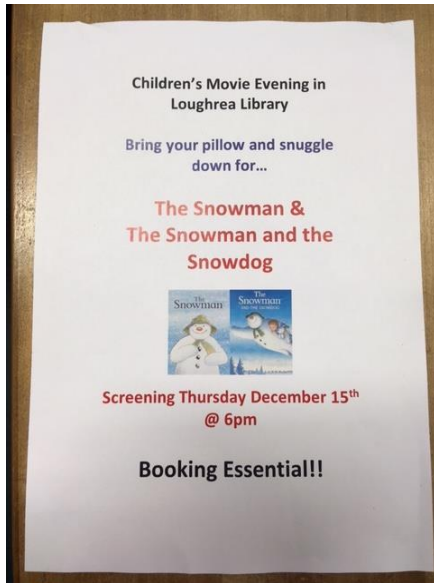


Staff and the public had some fun getting into the Christmas spirit on Christmas Jumper Day.

The Christmas Lucky Dip has proven very popular with the public as they rely on the Librarians for reading guidance and suggestions.

LOUGHREA LIBRARY

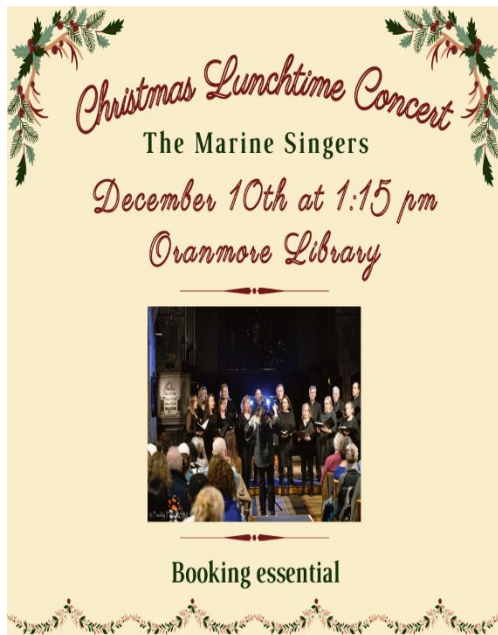




Wishing Tree in Loughrea.... the children were invited to decorate a star with a Christmas wish and hang it on the Library Christmas Tree. It is very effective, and they had lots of fun.

ORANMORE LIBRARY





Lots happening in Oranmore Library with a lunchtime concert, some German Recipe ideas and an art exhibition during December.

LEABHARLANN NA CEATHRÚN RUA



Tá Daidí na Nollaig le feicéal ag doras Leabharlann na Ceathrún Rua agus é ag léamh.


INISHBOFIN LIBRARY

Family Time at Your Library
Libraries as places of Sanctuary



Drop into Inishbofin library
 and colour a bauble
 to add to the library Christmas tree
 (during the Inishbofin Christmas Market)
 on Saturday 10th December.
 Open 1-4pm

Lyrics in the Library



Come along and get ready for the Christmas celebrations
 With carol practice lead by Cathy O Halloran

On Saturdays @ 2pm
 19th and 26th November 2022


Refreshments will be provided by the
 Inishbofin Community Services Programme





All Welcome!

BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

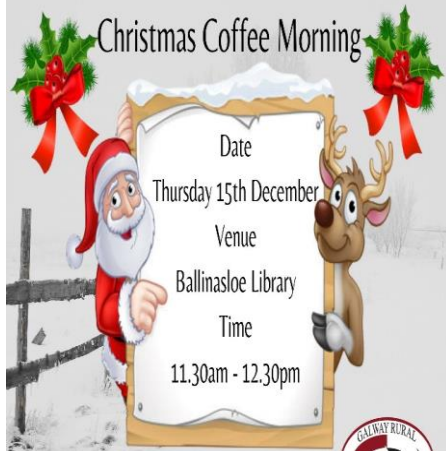
THE ARTISANS
 An exhibition by
 Alan Scott




Saturday December
 10th at 2.30pm in
 Ballinasloe Library

Ballinasloe Women's Group & Crafty Girls Group
 Christmas Coffee Morning



Date
 Thursday 15th December
 Venue
 Ballinasloe Library
 Time
 11.30am - 12.30pm




BALLYGAR LIBRARY



Lovely festive display in Ballygar Library window. What a lovely place to come in from the card and relax.

EYRECOURT LIBRARY



No matter how small the library, librarians have managed to bring some festive cheer by decorating a corner and adding some Christmas books. This is the cheery sight awaiting you in Eyrecourt Library.

WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN OUR LIBRARIES THIS MONTH?

- The latest addition to Galway Public Libraries suite of online resources is **Nessy.com**. This is an online learning platform best known for providing learning supports to children with dyslexia. The platform uses games to help children aged 5-11 with reading and spelling. This is a free service.
- **Family Time at your Library** continues during December with lots of family friendly storytimes taking place all over the County.

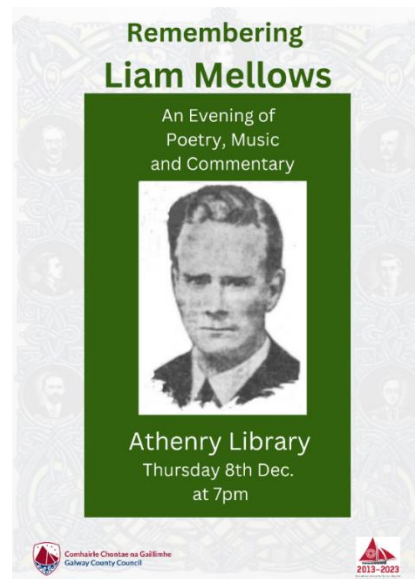
- **Artists and Activists 1922: Women in a changing cultural landscape** was a series of talks which highlighted the role of women as artists and creatives in early twentieth century Ireland. Talks took place in **Oughterard, Ballinasloe, Tuam, and Gort Libraries** over the last few weeks.
- The Library Service launched its new **podcast series** recently entitled **Fierce Close: climate in crisis**. There are 6 episodes available and they can be found on podomatic and spotify. This project provided opportunities for young people to engage in philosophical dialogues and build an understanding of how and where perspectives need to shift in order to think and act productively in relation to Climate Change.
- **Soundbites lunchtime music session takes** place once a month in **Tuam** Library whereby members of the public can join in and play or sing and generally have a break from the busy world. It's an Informal get together and all are welcome.



REMEMBERING LIAM MELLOWS:

Athenry Library hosted an evening entitled '*Remembering Liam Mellows: An evening of Poetry, Music and Commentary*' on Thursday 8th December to mark the centenary of the execution of Liam Mellows.

The event was organised by Galway County Council as an action of the Decade of Commemorations 2013 – 2023.



THE LIAM MELLOWS CENTENARY PROJECT:

Athenry Tidy Towns & the Relatives and Friends of Galway 1916 to 1923 with the support of Galway County Council hosted an event on Thursday 8th December 2022 at 12 noon at the Athenry 1916 Commemorative Garden as part of the Liam Mellows Centenary Project.

The project has provided new additions to the 1916 Garden in Athenry to mark the centenary of the execution of Liam Mellows. The additions include a cast bronze replica of the 1916 Proclamation. The Proclamation will be set in carved limestone mounted on a drystone wall plinth featuring artistically carved stone pillars.

In addition, grant funding was provided by Galway County Council for a new commemorative stone.

The Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr. Eileen Mannion represented Galway County Council with a large attendance at a community commemoration with pupils from Athenry Boys National School participating in the raising of the flag, reading of the Proclamation and the laying of a wreath.



ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

EIR/EasyGo have been provided with contact details for Area Engineers and will be meeting with them to identify suitable locations to install public EV chargers. In terms of our own staff and visitors to Galway County Council, EV chargers have recently been installed at County Buildings and we are in the process of organising the installation of an EV charger at Centrepont.

INTERNAL ENERGY USE

The Energy Bureau is continuing to gather data on our highest energy-use buildings with a view to putting forward initial projects for Pathfinder funding by end of January 2023. We are investigating the purchase of an IT system for managing, viewing, and reporting on energy data. We are also reviewing the requirements of ISO50001 with a view to reapplying for certification if approved. We are continuing to roll out the national Reduce Your Use Campaign to promote energy efficiency behaviour at work, at home, and as we travel.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Background work is ongoing on the development of the GCC Climate Action Plan. We submitted a funding application to DECC for 2022 Phase 1 deliverables (July to December 2022) which included 100% of salary for Climate Change Coordinator, 20% of salary for the Energy Officer and 100% of our contribution to the Energy Bureau. CARO have applied for the full cost for the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment and Risk Assessment on our behalf. A few workshops and meetings were held with staff throughout the organisation to feed into these assessments and we are awaiting the final drafts.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND JUST TRANSITION

LIFE Project funding has been awarded for *Local Energy Agencies in Peripheral Regions*. The aim of the project is to create multiple local social enterprise “integrated home renovation services” in the North and West of Ireland. Galway County Council will sit on the steering group and has been asked to nominate a director to the Islands and the Gaeltacht Local Energy Agency which will be managed by the Aran Islands Energy Coop. We are currently reviewing this request and will continue to engage on this project.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A very interesting workshop on the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals into the work of GCC was held on the 9th of December. It was open to staff and local representatives.



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Environment Social Media Campaign continues with promotions on waste prevention, management, and food waste at Christmas.

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

13 sites in the County are available for Christmas tree Recycling in January 2023.

WASTE MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION

A presentation and advice on waste management was presented to the Athenry Women's Group.

SCHOOLS

4 schools were visited in relation to the Green Schools programme.

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Adverts were placed in Tuam Herald and Connacht Tribune in relation to Illegal dumping at bring banks.

Water bottle filling station was installed at Long Point in Loughrea.

We hope this will reduce the amount of single use plastic bottles being used.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

- Under the National Inspection Plan for septic tanks, 36 inspections took place in County Galway. These inspections were in Castletaylor north, Ardrahan and Cloonmoylan, Portumna in Zone 2 areas based on risks to human health. 6 advisory notices were issued during November.
- 13 facilities with discharge licences were inspected and samples taken to check compliance with conditions.

- 10 farm inspections were carried out in the Abbey Ballyshrule area due to deteriorating water quality identified in the EPA river monitoring programme. LAWPRO have also liaised with the council on this. 2 farm inspections were also carried out on foot of complaints received.
- 14 river monitoring sites were sampled as part of the Water Framework Directive monitoring programme.
- The annual RMCEI coordinators event was in Portlaoise on the 30th of November. A RMCEI report for 2022 and plan for 2023 will require completion in January. The plan sets out the number of environmental inspections to be carried out in 2023. Two members of staff from the environment section attended the event.
- A member of the water quality team spent 2 days in the Owenriff catchment area of Oughterard working with LAWPRO staff, Inland Fisheries and a Salmon Hatchery identifying issues of concern in relation to water quality. More follow-up work is required here.

OIL POLLUTION

- Pollution and Waste Services Ltd have been employed to develop an Oil Spill and HNS Response Plan for Galway County Council and provide one-day training to staff as part of this agreement. The one-day training took place in Galway on the 16th of November 2022 at Council Offices in Liosbaun.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

Waste enforcement inspections completed to date are above target for the year as many inspections were carried out earlier in the year.

Further Data Validation of figures submitted on the NWCPO portal by permitted waste collectors and waste facility permit holders in the County was completed in November- namely full audits of 1 waste facility and 1 Certificate of Registration holder. Data validation is over 98% complete.

Enforcement Notices under the Waste Management Act 96 as amended, issued in November were 2 Section 55 Notices, 3 Section 14 Directions and 7 Warning letters.

Two Multiagency inspections were carried out, 1 with the NTFSO and a further day of inspections with the WERLA and EPA at a Metal Recycling facility and an Authorised Treatment Facility.

Two Waste Facility Permits were granted in November. One a review permit for an infilling site and one a new permit also for infilling.

Two Waste facility permits are due to be granted in December also.

There were two matters relating to waste enforcement before the District Court in November,

One related to Non-compliance with a Section 55 Notice, matter was adjourned until 2023 as majority of the site in question has been cleared.

The second case was struck out as site is now clean.

WASTE PRESENTATION BYE-LAW INSPECTIONS

The number of inspections carried out to date for the year are in excess of the target set for WPBL's. However further inspections were carried out in Gort town estates of Coole Haven and The Grove on the 8th of December. Approximately 100 households were asked for evidence of their waste disposal.

Mise, le meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

16th December 2022