



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

# TURASCÁIL BAINISTÍOCHTA MANAGEMENT REPORT



Eanáir 2025

January 2025



LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The Community Development Section will support a meeting of the LCDC in February 2025 to progress the following programme areas:

SICAP

New contracts were signed for delivery of the Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) for the Galway Islands in December 2024. Contracts for the delivery of the programme were signed by the Programme Implementor, Comhar na nOileán, along with Galway County LCDC (Local Community Development Committee) and Galway County Council. SICAP is Ireland's primary social inclusion programme and is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development through the European Social Fund and managed at local level by the Local Community Development Committee with support from Galway County Council.

ATTENDING THE SIGNING OF SICAP GALWAY ISLANDS CONTRACT ON MONDAY AT



GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBER WERE (L-R) CLLR MICHAEL CONNOLLY, MARIAN UÍ CHONGHAILE, FINANCIAL OFFICER, COMHAR NA NOILEÁN CTR, LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MÁIRE UÍ MHAOLÁIN CEO, COMHAR NA NOILEÁN CTR AND KIERAN COYNE, CHIEF OFFICER LCDC, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL. PHOTO: MIKE SHAUGHNESSY

The SICAP Sub-Committee will also meet to consider in detail the Annual Performance Review for 2024 and the Annual Plans for 2025. The SICAP subcommittee recommendations will be presented to the LCDC for their final approval.

LOCAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME 2025

Galway County Council has received funding of €213,601 from the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Local Enhancement Programme 2025 (previously Community Enhancement Programme). This funding is comprised as follows:

- a) €175,000 in capital funding for carrying out necessary repairs and improvements to community facilities, energy efficiency type projects, purchase of equipment for community use, etc. In line with previous years, the LCDC will endeavour to allocate 30% of this fund towards small grants of €1,000 or less to maximise its benefit to small grassroots groups. Grants over €1,000 will be targeted at improving facilities in disadvantaged areas, projects which support improved access for people with disabilities/reduced mobility, enhancing community participation for other disadvantaged or marginalised groups, and improving energy efficiency of community facilities to reduce ongoing costs.
- b) €30,515 in current funding to support small grassroots groups such as Men's/Women's Sheds with their non-pay running costs, e.g. insurance, electricity, heating, etc.
- c) Galway County Council administration fee for the scheme - €8,086

The funding available under a) and b) is now open for applications with a closing date of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Funding recommendations of the LCDC will be submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development by the end of March 2025, for funding announcements by the Minister for Rural & Community Development in April 2025. All capital projects will be required to be completed and grants drawn down by end of 2025.

Applicants should apply via our online grants system at <https://galwaycoco.submit.com/>

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## HEALTHY IRELAND

A meeting of the LCDC's Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee will be held in January 2024 to agree a Workplan for the 2025 Healthy Ireland Fund allocation. Healthy County Galway is pleased to announce the rollout of a new lineup of programs for 2025, in partnership with local development agencies and community groups across the county. The core initiatives for the upcoming year will focus on Farmer's Health, Women's Health, and Dementia as the year unfolds. We look forward to sharing further details as the year progresses. Additionally, plans are underway to establish social digital hubs in designated areas throughout the county to deliver digital skills workshops to individuals over 50, in alignment with the Healthy Galway program outcome of increasing social and leisure activities for people over 50. These social digital hubs will assist participants in updating their digital skills or gaining a foundation in digital technology, while also fostering social connections within the community.



Other projects currently being supported in Galway County include social dancing in East Galway, fitness classes for farmers, and creative arts activities for older groups. These initiatives aim to provide opportunities for social connection and skill development, which are beneficial to overall health and wellbeing.

Healthy Galway will also support partnering agencies in rolling out programs and initiatives in 2025 that promote physical and mental health and encourage social connection through arts and crafts and upskilling seminars. These will include yoga and mindfulness workshops, nutritional courses, group art classes and funding social prescribing pursuits, which involves connecting people to community groups and services to support their practical, social, and emotional needs. Furthermore, we will collaborate with agencies in the county and offshore islands to organize and support themed health events throughout the year, as well as additional programs that support health and wellbeing within the local community.



In the meantime, there are programs currently underway including the 'Playground Markings' initiative for schools and clubs. The 'Playground Markings' initiative is a program which provides schools with stencils on loan to paint traditional playground games such as Hopscotch, A Maze, the Snail Game, and an Activity Circuit onto their playgrounds.

The goal of this initiative is to emphasize the importance of physical activity for a person's physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being. By integrating physical activity into children's daily routines, the initiative aims to foster lifelong healthy habits. This is particularly significant given the rising rates of physical inactivity and obesity among Irish children.



The playground games are designed for both group and individual participation, making them perfect for structured games and informal play. Research indicates that these activities can motivate and facilitate play, alleviate accidents and bullying in the school playground as well as securing organized games for children.

Schools are encouraged to seek assistance from various sources to implement the markings, including art teachers, senior primary school students, caretakers, secondary transition year students, or local community groups before leasing the stencils. Once schools have registered, they receive a stencil information pack. This pack outlines the required

equipment and preparation steps for using the playground stencils, as well as instructions on how to create the playground markings.



In December 2024 Healthy County Galway purchased an additional 4 square stencil which will be a further addition to the existing stencil pack due to the demand and popularity among children in schools. We look forward to hearing the feedback and updating you further on the progress of this program in

In the meantime, Healthy County Galway wishes you a healthy and vibrant year for 2025!

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

### AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME

Following a request for quotations, Hub Planning have been selected to develop an Age Friendly Strategy for Galway City and County, and a meeting held to agree a rollout schedule which will commence with development of a survey for older people, to be compiled in consultation with the Older People's Councils in the City and County by mid-February 2025. A Workplan for 2025 is currently being developed and submitted to Age Friendly Ireland setting out the main areas of focus for the Galway Age Friendly Programme in 2025. A Walkability Audit is being carried out at Kilcornan Trails in partnership with the local Older People's Group to identify accessibility improvements which can be carried out to their local walking route.

### COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Annual reporting for 2024 is being finalised for submission to the Department, and a Workplan and Budget is being agreed to implement the 2025 topic which is Mental Health, with a particular focus on the areas of homework and social media – these were chosen at the Annual Youth Conference held in October 2024. A Steering Group Meeting will be held to agree the main stakeholders and action areas to progress these topics during the year. Staff will attend a meeting of Planet Youth stakeholders to identify where emerging data can be utilized in Comhairle na nÓg and Community Funding priorities. Staff will also attend a Departmental Meeting on Play and Recreation to identify how the Community Section can contribute towards their requirements for Capital Grant Funding and National Play Day proposals.

### COMMUNITY FUNDING SCHEMES

Work is progressing on various funding schemes, i.e.,

- Drawdowns and final reporting on the Once-Off Christmas Support Fund will be completed and submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage by end January 2025.

- Support and advice is being provided to Community Groups regarding making application to the Community Support Schemes 2025 by the closing date of 24<sup>th</sup> January.
- A Funding Proposal is being collated for submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development under Window 3 of the Community Recognition Fund which is the final funding window under the 2024 allocation to Galway County Council.

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## TRAVELLER INTERAGENCY GROUP

Discussions will commence with Galway City Council in relation to establishing Terms of Reference for the City and County Traveller Interagency Group.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

A Galway County PPN Secretariat Meeting took place online on Thursday 9th January to begin discussions on a Budget and Workplan for 2025 and will be further progressed at the next PPN Secretariat Meeting prior to organising the Spring PPN Plenary Meeting of the full membership for ratification of proposals.

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## ACTING AS AN INFORMATION HUB

Galway County PPN circulate an e-newsletter currently on a bi-monthly basis, on the 1st and 15th of the month to all 1,348 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 newsletter contains information relevant to PPN Members, Community Groups and Non-Profits in County Galway, under the following headings: PPN News, Council & Government News, Consultations & Public Engagement, Funding & Grants, Training & Development, An Cúinne Gaeilge (Irish Corner), Supports & Resources, Notice Board & Events. The PPN continues to circulate information on consultations and funding opportunities from the Local Authority and other agencies to communities and all such communications can be sent to [ppn@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:ppn@galwaycoco.ie).

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## BUILDING CAPACITY

PPN SPC Representatives have been invited to attend training organised by the North-West Regional PPN Network on 7th February 2025. A training schedule for Galway County PPN Members will be rolled out later in the year following a training needs analysis of members.

## RURAL GRANTS SCHEMES

The CLÁR 2023 programme, which aims to support rural areas experiencing population decline, has successfully completed several projects towards the end of 2024. These projects include the development of community facilities, play and sports amenities. The

following projects were completed; Killimor GAA new Spectator Stand, St Brendan's Ballygar Pathway Lighting, Baile na Cille, Leitir Mealláin Viewing Area, Milltown Community Walkway, Ballinasloe Social Services Kitchen upgrade to assist delivery of services to the CLÁR areas, Comhar Chuigeal Teoranta's community hall upgrade, East Galway United Development Group's carpark facilities were completed to date. A Claim to the Department for Rural and Community Development was submitted in January 2025 for recoupment of €212,000. A Further 8 projects under the 2023 Programme are nearing completion at present with site visits scheduled in January and February.

Furthermore, the team are engaging with 15 projects, awarded funding of €724,755 by the Department of Community and Rural Development (DRCD) on 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2024 under the CLÁR 2024 Programme. Site Visits are scheduled in January and February with a further Webinar on Tuesday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, to advise Lead Applicants on procurement, governance and claims.



MILLTOWN RIVER WALK (SOUTH EXTENSION)



ST BRENDAN'S GAA CLUB WALKWAY LIGHTING

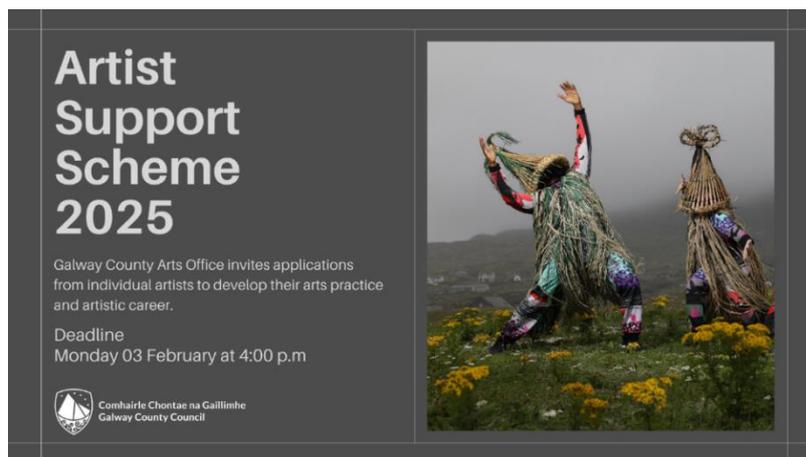


## PUBLIC ART COMMISSION BAILE CHLÁIR

A first meeting took place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025 with the local stakeholder group including nominations from PPN and Local representative to discuss plans to commission a Per Cent for Art programme for Baile Chláir. This project is funded by OPW Flood Relief Scheme and will be managed by Galway County Council Arts Office.

## ARTIST SUPPORT SCHEME 2025

The Artists Support Scheme 2025 is open, applications are online via Galway County Council



Submit Portal. The objective of this scheme is to assist individual artists to develop their arts practice and artistic career. The scheme is open to professional artists residing in County Galway at all stages of their career, working in any artform and context.

Artists may apply for support with:

1. Research, development or presentation of new work that will have a significant impact on the applicant's career.
2. Short-term mentorship or continued profession development supports that offer a demonstrable benefit to the artist's practice. This can include participation on short-term courses, residencies, specialist workshops, mentorships etc.
3. Materials, exhibition costs, equipment hire and fees towards third party expertise. These costs must be intrinsic to the creative process or to the production and dissemination of the proposal.

The maximum award offered is €3,000 and awards are often made for smaller amounts. The total fund available for 2025 is €30,000. New for 2025 - up to €9,000 will be awarded to artists in the early stages of their career. A webinar was held for Artists to ask questions on the 14<sup>th</sup> January.

## TINY MUTINY YOUTH ARTS OPEN CALL SHOWCASE

Tiny Mutiny is a trailblazing initiative of Galway County Arts Office led by Sparkcatchers, offering creative teenagers the opportunity to realise their artistic ideas with support from a



**TINY MUTINY!**  
THE MALL THEATRE, TUAM, Co. GALWAY, H54 Y773  
1st February 2025 at 3:00pm  
**FREE ARTS EVENT**  
Showcasing Teenage Artists, Filmmakers & Musicians  
from Tiny Mutiny'24 Project Awards & First Sparks:  
**TALLON**  
**CIARÁN MAHONY**  
**LAUREN CAINE & ESKE WALSH OLESEN**  
**THOMAS ROCHE & A.N. SAVILLE**  
**ALANNAH CANAVAN**  
**AFINA OSTAPENKO & LEV RULERSKYI**  
**ALEXANDRIA WILSON**  
**BREANDÁN Ó DONNACHA + NIAMH NÍ DHONNACHA**  
Free Tickets on Eventbrite.ie  
Scan QR code:  
Limited tickets on door.



Commissioned by Galway County Council Arts Office  
in partnership with Sparkcatchers! with support from  
Galway County Council and The Arts Council.  
First Sparks funded by Creative Ireland Galway County.  
Teenagers who wish to apply to the next Tiny Mutiny 2025:  
Tiny Mutiny Project Awards & First Sparks:  
<https://www.sparkcatchers.org/tiny-mutiny-25>



professional mentor along with a production budget. Teenagers from County Galway applied with an idea focusing on creative practices like theatre, visual art, dance, film, circus, writing, digital media, graffiti, music etc.

Each selected young artists were given a professional artist mentor, a budget and practical support from Sparkcatchers! from October to February 2024.

Sparkcatchers! are Jojo Hynes & Midie Corcoran; artists, producers, festival makers and disruptors that work with young people to make art. The final showcase of all the work takes place in Tuam on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025.

## OPEN CALL ARTIST RESIDENCY INTERFACE INAGH 2025

Galway County Council Arts Office in collaboration with Interface Inagh announce the opportunity for 1 artist from Galway County and apply for a 2-week residency at Interface.



**OPEN CALL**  
Galway Co. & City based artists  
Residencies 2025  
Deadline: 13th February 2025



Proposals are invited from practicing artists, writers, and musicians whose work explores intersections between scientific research, environmental concerns and the arts. Interface offers artists an opportunity to engage with a unique environment and to be inspired by the exciting research taking place in a spectacular landscape.

Time of residencies: May/June 2025: Deadline for application: Feb 13th, 2025.

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## OLDER YEARS ARTS WORKSHOPS

The Arts Office in Collaboration with the Galway County Integration Team and FORUM Connemara CLG present three workshops in Park Lodge Hotel, An Spidéal, from 2:00-4:00pm on Wednesday 29th January, Tuesday 4th February, and Tuesday 11th February.

These workshops in felt making, candle making, and ceramics will be a great opportunity for people over 50 and Ukrainian residents to get together for an enjoyable afternoon of creativity and chat.

**Ceardlainn Ealaíne Saor In Aisce**  
**Free Art Workshops**

Join us for **three creative art workshops** in felt making, candle making and ceramics.

Our Community Art Project aims to bring older people (over 50) in the community and Ukrainian residents together for an enjoyable afternoon of creativity and chat.



In **Park Lodge Hotel, Spiddal, H91 ETW1**  
From 2:00pm-4:00pm on  
**Wednesday 29 January**  
**Tuesday 4 February**  
**Tuesday 11 February**

If you would like to join us, please email Janet at [integrationsgalwaysoc.ie](mailto:integrationsgalwaysoc.ie) or call **087 2971105**. Places are limited, so early booking is recommended.

This project is a collaboration between the Arts & Integration teams in Galway County Council and Forum Connemara.



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## COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME – ARTS GRANTS 2025

The aim of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to voluntary arts groups/organisations to carry out an arts activity or project within their community. Funding will be prioritised for activities/projects which best meet the objectives of the Arts Act 2003 by:

- a) stimulating public interest in the arts
- b) promoting knowledge, experience, and practice of the arts, or
- c) improving standards in the arts throughout the county.

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### WHO CAN APPLY AND HOW MUCH WILL BE FUNDED?

Community & Voluntary Arts Groups/Organisations. A maximum grant of €2,500 will apply. Due to the high volume of applications, applicants should note that funding can only be provided as a contribution towards costs, rather than covering the full costs of a programme/event.

**Closing date:** Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 4 p.m. Online application available: [Galway County Council](https://www.galwaycouncil.ie)

## CREATIVE IRELAND

### CREATIVE IRELAND OPEN CALL 2025

The 2025 Creative Ireland Open Call is now accepting applications. The key objective of this open call is to offer community groups, organisations, venues, artists, performers and everyone involved in the culture and creative sectors an opportunity to develop high quality projects/programmes that enable groups and individuals to realise their full potential and encourage greater access, knowledge and appreciation of the arts, creative industries, heritage and the Irish language.

#### Who can apply and how much will be funded?

The fund is open to community groups, or individuals working with communities to produce and event, or project centred on creativity. The minimum fund amount is **€2,000** and the maximum is **€8,000**.



**Closing date:** Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 4 p.m. Online application available: [Galway County Council](#)

### MEITHEAL FOR MOLLY FILM

In 2025, Galway County Council commissioned Búlabosca films to produce a piece on a Creative Ireland project, 'A Meitheal for Molly'. The project involved over 200 members of the community, across all ages, taking to the stage as part of Headford's 'Something in the Water Festival'. Several music and dance groups performed their own renditions of a song of local historical significance, 'Mollaí San Seoirse' (Molly St George). The song narrates a tale of unrequited love for Molly, the patroness of the Heritage Lace industry.

The film was launched locally in Campbell's Tavern in December and can now be viewed on the [Galway County Creative Ireland Facebook Page](#).

## GALWAY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

### NEW COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB

Galway Sports Partnership through the Dormant Account Fund and Údarás Na Gaeltachta is delighted to be bringing a new Community Sports Hub which will cover the three Aran Islands and Inisbofin. The main goal of the Active Islands Hub is to increase the levels of

participation on the three Aran Islands and Inisbofin through the provision of new physical activity opportunities & the development of current activities. Rónán O Cuinn a native of Inis Meáin will be coordinating this project and started in the role in January. We look forward to officially launching this project in the coming months.

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### ST TERESA'S SPECIAL SCHOOL – INCLUSIVE PE WORKSHOP

Galway Sports Partnership through our Sports Inclusion Disability Officer was delighted to



facilitate an informative and practical workshop to 12 members of staff from St Teresa's School. This workshop will help the staff to provide inclusive games and provided adaptations that can be made to help deliver their PE Curriculum.

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### BALLINASLOE CHILDRENS INCLUSIVE SWIMMING PROGRAMME

Due to demand Galway Sports Partnership ran an additional Inclusive Swim Programme in partnership with Coral Leisure Ballinasloe. The participants aged 4-15 years of age were supported in the water by their parent/guardian to help give both the parents and children confidence in the water. This program was offered free of charge to participants through HSE funding and was partnered with the Community Sports Hub Ballinasloe. Feedback from the program is extremely positive from both parents and children. Coral Leisure hope to continue the offering in 2025 after this 4-week programme is complete.



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### WOMEN IN SPORT NETWORK EVENT

Our Community Development officer attended a Women In Sport Network Event on 15th January 2025 in Sports Ireland's National Indoor Arena. The session was interactive with up-to-date information on Her Moves Campaign, Irish Sports Monitor, Research Insights – “Female participation, minority trends, Women In Sport Week Plans (March 3rd – 9th), Coaching Teenage Girls Workshops, Her Outdoors Week, Sport Ireland Women In Sport Leadership programme and Gender Representation in Irish Media Research Project.

These events help Galway Sports Partnership ensure that our work in this area is affected and using best practice aligned to research and trends.

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## BALLINASLOE COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB



Galway Sports Partnerships Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub which was officially launch in October has had a significant impact in this short time and below is an overview of some of the programmes that have been taking place in recent weeks.

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### BUGGY MOMS

Buggy's Mom's Move Fitness Class is taking place in the Emerald Ballroom with 10 registered participants for 6 weeks. Buggy Mom's Move Fitness Class aims to support new mothers to make time for exercise and get back to fitness in a safe and social environment. The sessions included a variety of full body exercises to build strength, get your heart rate up and help feel your best always incorporating a post-natal friendly approach.



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### YOUTH REACH PICKLEBALL

This programme started on 6th November in the Emerald Ballroom for 6 weeks aiming to give an opportunity to Youth Reach students to experience alternative physical activity



options. Galway Sports Partnership collaborated with Youth Reach and Galway County Pickleball Club to deliver the initiative. 12 youths registered for the programme with an average of 10 attending weekly. Youth Reach principal Rita Coen relayed it was great to be able to give the students this opportunity of taking part in something different and not a mainstream sport.

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## INVOLVE YOUTH CLUB INTRO TO RUGBY SESSION

Galway Sports Partnership and Ballinasloe Rugby Club hosted 20 members of Involve Youth Club for a taster session in the rugby club. The young people thoroughly enjoyed the session.



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## TEEN GIRLS WEIGHTLIFTING PROGRAMME – ARD SCOIL MHUIRE

Students in Ard Scoil Mhuire took part in a 6-week programme aiming to give an alternative physical activity opportunity to teen girls. 66 girls took part in the programme and were all fully engaged throughout. Galway Sports Partnership collaborated Weightlifting Ireland to



deliver the programme. Ard Scoil Mhuire PE Teacher Karen Usher said it was brilliant and the tutors really connected with the group which lead to full engagement.

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## WALK AND TALK PROGRAMME

Galway Sports Partnership collaborated with Galway Rural Development Empowering Communities to deliver a 4 week Walk & Talk programme which aimed to get participants in the local area out walking in their community, highlighting the fabulous Dunlo Athletics Track facility and enjoying a social cup of tea and chat after on physical activity and social needs of their communities.



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## BALLINASLOE COUCH TO 5K

On 14<sup>th</sup> January Galway Sports Partnership in collaboration with Ballinasloe Road Runners Group started a 6-week Couch to 5km Programme in Dunlo Athletics Track facility through the Ballinasloe Sports Hub Initiative. 89 participants registered with 10 run leaders and 15 running buddies supporting the newcomers on the beginning of their running journey. The hub co-ordinator Loraine and the Road Runners Committee are working on various initiatives during the programme to ensure engagement is maximised and participants continue running after the programme finishes.



## INTEGRATION

The Integration Team continued to deliver support, including information clinics and follow-ups with local services, to migrants in accommodation centres and living in the community from the following groups in County Galway:

- 1,234 Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection
- 387 International Protection Applicants
- 239 Programme Refugees

We linked with the following organisations in December alone to collaborate on successful integration solutions for our target groups:

- Doras
- GRETB
- Local Secondary Schools
- Irish Red Cross
- Conamara Láir
- Forum Connemara
- Galway Rural Development

SLOWDOWN

In November, Caravaca de la Cruz in Spain hosted the second Interregional Thematic Workshop (ITW2) of the SlowDown project. Supported by the Interreg Europe programme and co-funded by the EU, this event gathered representatives from nine European countries



to advance sustainable tourism strategies. Galway County Council, represented by John Neary, Tourism Officer, played a significant role as a project partner. The workshop emphasized collaboration, combining theoretical insights with hands-on

experiences. Participants engaged in strategic planning, explored innovative methodologies, and immersed themselves in the cultural and natural heritage of the host region.

Key discussions focused on stakeholder engagement, aligning local and regional tourism policies, and developing a roadmap for implementation. A knowledge exchange session featured presentations and speed-dating rounds for idea sharing. Study visits highlighted the region’s commitment to sustainability, including tours of natural landscapes, cultural sites, and demonstrations of sustainable practices.

The third day centred on governance and financial management, with partners aligning on thematic tasks and policy improvements. Galway County Council involvement underscores its commitment to aligning sustainability goals with tourism strategies, positioning slow tourism as a viable alternative to mass tourism. The insights gained will shape future sustainable tourism policies across County Galway.



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## THE EU JUST TRANSITION REGENERATIVE TOURISM AND PLACEMAKING SCHEME 2023-2026

Phase 2 of the application process for the EU Just Transition Regenerative Tourism and Placemaking Scheme 2023-2026 (Scheme B) closed on January 13, 2025, at 12 noon. A total



of 10 applications were submitted to Fáilte Ireland for evaluation.

The Activator is now providing support and guidance to successful applicants as they progress through the next phase of procurement and funding drawdowns. For those who did not submit an application or were unsuccessful due to factors such as planning or other constraints, the Activator will continue to engage through networking, training and identifying funding opportunities that may arise.



In 2025, the activator will work across the JTF area to implement cluster tourism development initiatives. These initiatives will support start-ups and enhance the growth of existing businesses.

To date, three applications have been approved. Training will continue to assist these applicants in the following phases. All applicants will be supported in ensuring their projects move forward with funding from the JTF or other available sources.

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## COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME FESTIVAL AND EVENTS

Community Support Scheme for 2025 was advertised in the local papers in December. Applications can be submitted online. A significant number of applications are being received.

**Closing date 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

The Tourism Department is dedicated to supporting festivals and participative events by grant funding and promoting a range of events across the County that will provide a great visitor experience and support the social and economic contribution of tourism to the County.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING SITES



13 sites are set up in the county where Christmas trees can be recycled for free from 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

ECO-UNESCO YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST AWARDS 2024/25

Galway County Council have provided financial support to the Eco-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards 2024/25. The YEA programme is a youth-led initiative, rewarding young people for their commitment to raising environmental awareness and for taking hands-on action. There are 15 projects in progress in Galway.



ANTI-LITTER POSTER COMPETITION 2025



Due to the continuous success of the competition, all schools in the County have been invited to take part in the Anti-Litter poster competition 2025. Closing date is 7<sup>th</sup> March. The winning entries from last year competition were used as part of the design for the posters.

BURIAL GROUNDS

Part 8 planning application for burial ground extension at Leitir Móir was approved by the Councillors of the Conamara MD.

## DOG CONTROL

536 dog licences issued during the month of December, 379 of which were purchased at the post office with the remainder got online.

5 fixed penalty notices issued by the Dog Warden Service for offences under the Control of Dogs Act 1986 As Amended.

## WATER QUALITY AND ENFORCEMENT

### AGRICULTURE

Planned agricultural inspections continued in November and December with 24 being carried out in the Kilcolgan\_020 and Owenriff (Corrib)\_010 waterbodies. Together with inspections that were completed in October 14 warning letters and 22 compliant letters were issued to farmers. The council is waiting on information from 4 additional farmers which will result in another 4 compliant letters being sent.

Two farms were inspected in relation to 2 red dot notifications received previously from the EPA. These farms were in the Kilcrow\_010 and Kilcrow\_020 waterbodies, which lie north of Portumna. These notifications were in relation to cattle crossings, but these crossings are not in use anymore. No other issues were identified on the day of the inspections in relation to the 2 farms.

2 farmers were cross reported for allowing sewage sludge to be spread on their land during the closed season. Notices under the Waste Management Act were also issued to obtain information on the contractor who transported the material.

6 farmers were cross reported in December. These related to complaints received by the environment section. One case was against a farmer who was in court for mention and the case was adjourned for hearing in January 2025.

Contact has been made with Teagasc in relation to the council giving a presentation in relation to water quality and waste management at their knowledge transfer events that will commence in Q2 of 2025.

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### SEWAGE SLUDGE SPREAD DURING CLOSED SEASON





DIRECT DISCHARGE OF  
SLURRY TO  
WATERCOURSE

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## NATIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAMME

18 re-inspections of properties were carried out where there are open advisory notices, but the property ownership has changed since the original inspection had taken place. 11 verification inspections were completed, and 8 advisory notices were issued.

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## CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

Environment staff attended the LAWPRO Western LA liaison meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup> in the offices of Roscommon County Council. Several items were discussed at this meeting including:

- On-going business case for new LA posts dedicated to work catchment work and development and implementation of LA water action plans.
- New LA water action plans to be developed by each local authority in 2025. These will be strongly aligned with the RMCEI plans.
- Presentation by new LAWPRO LA support and coordination team
- Training courses to be run in 2025.



2 separate meetings occurred with LAWPRO, 1 in relation the Truskey Stream waterbody in Bearna and the Dawros 020 and 030 waterbodies near Letterfrack. LAWPRO are to assist in Bearna with a sampling and monitoring programme to try to establish a clearer picture of where pollution is entering the stream. Once completed, GCC will follow-up with enforcement or liaison with the personnel involved. In the Dawros 020 and 030, invertebrate analysis in 2024 has shown some deterioration compared to previous checks. GCC continues to liaise closely with Kylemore Abbey as the main licensed wastewater discharge in the area. LAWPRO are investigating whether farming activities are an issue as sheep dip was detected in recent water testing on the Dawros river.

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## BATHING WATERS

8 Blue Flag applications were submitted to An Taisce in December and included a new application for Céibh an Spidéil in An Spidéal. Water quality has improved substantially here since the commissioning of the new public wastewater treatment plant by Uisce Eireann in 2023. Awards for these beaches will be finalised in May 2025.



CÉIBH AN SPIDÉIL

- The lake, river and Discharge License sampling programmes for 2024 were completed in December.
- 2 staff members attended the RMCEI coordinators event on the 27th of November in Portlaoise. The RMCEI Plan for 2025 and the returns for 2024 will need to be submitted to the EPA by the end of February 2025.

- A number of algal blooms were reported to the council in November due to unusually warmer temperatures for the time of year. All areas reported have permanent signage already in place in relation to algal blooms. Social media posts were also posted on the council's social media pages.



ALGAL BLOOM AT  
GOLDEN BAY ON  
LOUGH CORRIB

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## WASTE/AIR MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

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### MULTI AGENCY CHECKPOINTS

Two checkpoints were carried out in Oranmore and Carnmore in co-operation with the Gardaí, Galway City Council and members of WERLA. Whilst no major illegal activity was detected, a large number of vehicles were checked. To date this is the busiest checkpoint. One of these checkpoints was carried out close to a known dumping blackspot.

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### CHECKPOINT AT ORANMORE



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## COURT CASES / PROSECUTIONS



One notable case was in Tuam District Court. A prosecution was secured under Section 32 of the Waste Management Act against an individual for operating an unauthorised scrap yard. He was fined 1000 euro plus 750 euro in costs. A Section 58 Court Order was also secured directing the individual to clear the site by March 2025.

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## NOTICES ISSUED / FILES SENT FOR PROSECUTION

2 Section 55 Notices were issued in December under the Waste Management Act and 4 files were sent to the law agent for prosecution under various waste legislation.

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## DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME

The first round of inspections was carried out in December in relation to the Deposit Return Scheme for cans and plastic bottles. A number of retailers were inspected to ensure they were compliant with the scheme.

## CORPORATE SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES, CITY & COUNTY LIBRARIES

### CORPORATE SERVICES

#### CORPORATE SERVICES OPERATIONS - CANTEEN SERVICES

Staff appreciation week ran from 16th Dec to 23rd Dec 2024. It is managements way of expressing heartfelt gratitude to our incredible team at County Hall.

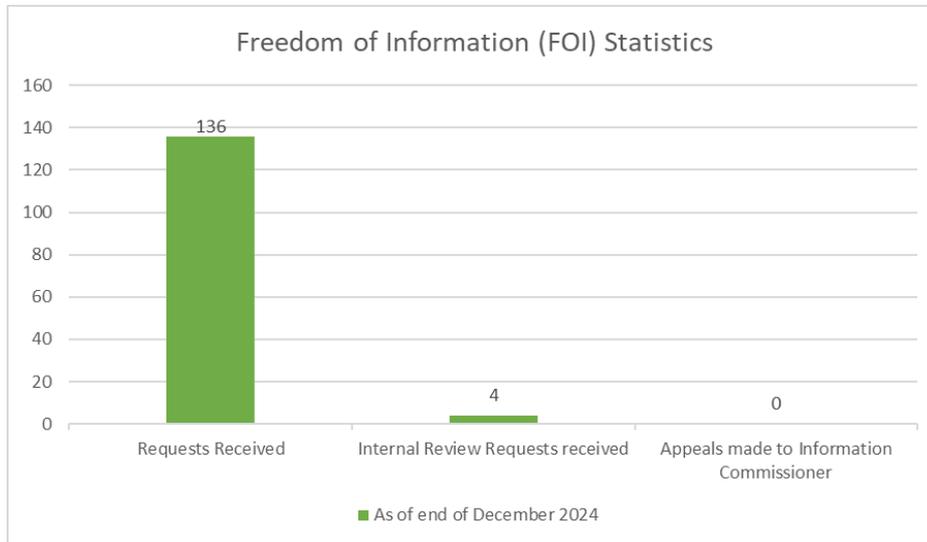
This appreciation week is dedicated to celebrating the hard work and positive impact each staff member brings to our organisation. By recognising their contributions throughout the year, it gives a sense of belonging and appreciation, ensuring everyone feels valued and motivated.

We continue this tradition each year to enforce a commitment to a supportive and appreciative workplace culture. It helps strengthen the bonds that make the team at County Hall exceptional.

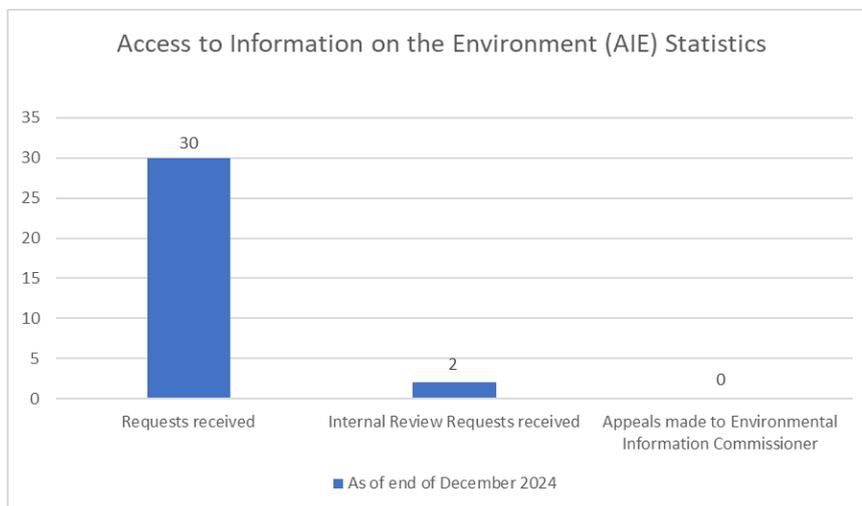
# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION & DATA PROTECTION

2024 YEAR TO DATE STATISTICS TO 31.12.2024

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



## ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT



## DATA PROTECTION

2024 YEAR TO DATE STATISTICS TO 31.12.24

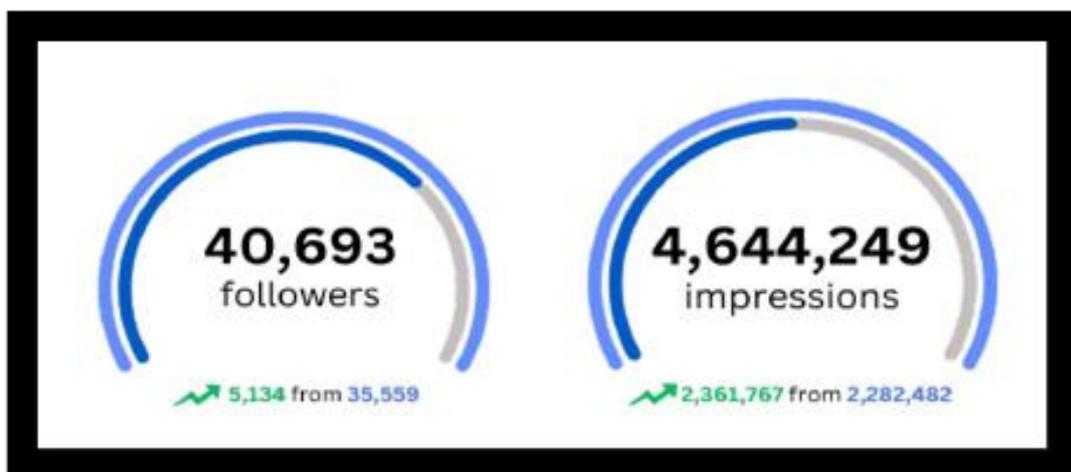
- **21 Data Access Requests:**

- 15 Data Subject Access Requests
- 6 Third Party Access Request, e.g. An Garda Síochána
- **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

## SOCIAL MEDIA

### 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. Based on the below...our engagement is soaring!



## DECEMBER OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

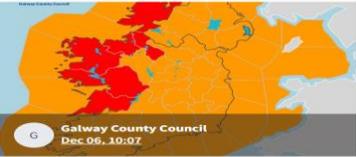
Social Media Audience Metrics	Number of Posts	Monthly Post Impressions
 <a href="https://www.facebook.com/galwaycounty">www.facebook.com/galwaycounty</a>	132	245,652
 <a href="https://www.x.com/galwaycoco">www.x.com/galwaycoco</a>	126	40,615
 <a href="https://www.instagram.com/galwaycountycouncil">www.instagram.com/galwaycountycouncil</a>	132	37,139
 <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/galwaycoco">www.linkedin.com/galwaycoco</a>	5	409
<b>Total Number of Posts</b>	395 (128 posts in Irish)	
<b>Fans &amp; Followers across Social Media Platforms</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>40,792</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">↑ 0.6% from 40,560</p>	

\*Posts Impressions - The number of times posts on your Facebook, X and Instagram accounts appeared on someone's screen. Content includes posts, videos, and reels.

## DECEMBER 'S TOP POSTS

### FACEBOOK

**Top posts**



**Galway County Council**  
Dec 06, 10:07

🚨 Status Red - Wind warning for Clare, Galway  
🚨 Met Éireann Weather Warning Storm Darragh: Extremely strong and gusty northwest winds. Impacts: • Fallen trees • Damage to power lines • Dangerous travelling conditions • Structural damage to temporary structures • Wave overtopping For up to date info please see: <https://www.met.ie/warnings/today/galway> Valid: 22:00 Friday 06/12/2024 to 02:00 Saturday 07/12/2024 Issued: 09:49 Friday 06/12/2024 The Galway Advertiser Galway Bay Fm News Connacht Tribune - Galway City Tribune Connemara Community Radio #Gallimh #Galway



**Galway County Council**  
Dec 12, 13:00

The construction of bus stop infrastructure to accommodate the installation of bus shelters and accessible boarding areas is in progress in Maigh Cullinn. #gallimh @rsa



**Galway County Council - Local Co-Ordination Group Update**  
Saturday 07th December 2024 at 10.30am Storm Darragh Causes Significant Disruption Across County Galway Galway, Ireland - Storm Darragh passed across Ireland overnight, bringing with it destructive winds and triggering a Red Weather Warning for Galway from 9pm yesterday until 2am this morning. Galway County Council met this morning at 9am and respective local areas reported impacts on the ground. The aftermath of the storm has left a significant number of trees uprooted, causing widespread road closures across the county. Major

## X (PREVIOUSLY TWITTER)

**Top tweets**



@GalwayCoCo  
Dec 07, 11:05

Galway County Council - Local Co-Ordination Group Update: Saturday 7th Dec 2024  
10:30am Storm Darragh Causes Significant



EW ORD

The Housing Department of Galway County Council handed out a record 502 keys to tenants of Local Authority Approved Housing Bodies, Rental Accommodation, and Mortgage to schemes during 2024.

@GalwayCoCo  
Dec 23, 14:40

https://twitter.com/GalwayCoCo/status/1871204143270076425/photo/1



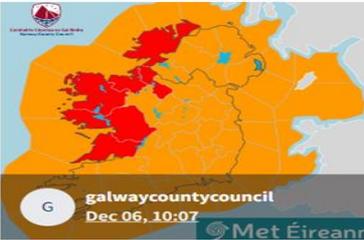
UPDATE

@GalwayCoCo  
Dec 07, 12:37

Update: Galway Roads Reopening Following Storm Darragh Cleanup Significant progress has been made in the aftermath of Storm Darragh

## INSTAGRAM

**Top posts**



galwaycountycouncil  
Dec 06, 10:07

Met Éireann

▲▲▲ Status Red - Wind warning for Clare, Galway  
▲▲▲ Met Éireann Weather Warning Storm Darragh: Extremely strong and gusty northwest winds. Impacts:  
• Fallen trees • Damage to power lines • Dangerous travelling conditions • Structural



galwaycountycouncil  
Dec 07, 11:01

Galway County Council - Local Co-Ordination Group Update: Saturday 07th December 2024 at 10.30am Storm Darragh Causes Significant Disruption Across County Galway Galway, Ireland – Storm Darragh passed across Ireland overnight, bringing



galwaycountycouncil  
Dec 05, 09:53

Met Éireann

▲▲ Status Yellow ▲▲ Wind warning for Clare, Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal Met Éireann Weather Warning On Thursday afternoon and evening, strong and very gusty west to northwest winds. Possible impacts:  
◆ Falling branches ◆ Localised

## LINKEDIN

**Top posts**



Year End Deadline - Temporary Development Contribution Waiver

Light of the above, the Department wishes to ensure that relevant "Commencement Notices" or "7 Day Notices" are submitted by the applicant to avail of the Development Contributions waiver in a timely manner to allow adequate time for their processing (validation) where appropriate.

Accordingly, it is therefore advised that relevant "Commencement Notices" or "7 Day Notices" should be submitted on or before 17th December 2024.

Galway County Council  
Dec 16, 17:55



Year End Deadline - Temporary Development Contribution Waiver

Light of the above, the Department wishes to ensure that relevant "Commencement Notices" or "7 Day Notices" are submitted by the applicant to avail of the Development Contributions waiver in a timely manner to allow adequate time for their processing (validation) where appropriate.

Accordingly, it is therefore advised that relevant "Commencement Notices" or "7 Day Notices" should be submitted on or before 17th December 2024.

Galway County Council  
Dec 09, 17:55



Spríodhátáí Dheireadh na Bliana Tarscaoileadh Ranníocaíocht Forbairt

I bhfianaise an mhéid thuas, is mian leis an Roinn a chinntiú go gcuirfeadh na h-ádhaithe a bhaint as tarscaoileadh na Ranníocaíochtaí bartha "Fágairí Tosaithe" nó "Fágairí 7 Lá" ábhartha a chur isteach thall chun dóthain ama a thabhairt dá bpróiseáil (ballochtu) de réir mar is iomchuí.

De réir sin, moltar mar sin gur chóir "Fágairí Tosaithe" nó "Fágairí 7 Lá" a bhforseáil arís isteach roimh an 17 Nollaig 2024.

Galway County Council  
Dec 16, 17:50

## SCOLÁIREACHTAÍ GAELTACHTA PHÁDRAIG MHC PHARAS 2025 (PÁDRAIG PEARSE GAELTACHT SCHOLARSHIPS 2025)



Applications are now open for the Galway County Council Pádraig Pearse Gaeltacht Scholarships Program.

The scholarships are open to second level students from the functioning areas of Galway County Council across the entire county. There are 14 scholarships available.

This is a great opportunity, to attend one of the seven Gaeltacht colleges this summer, through participating in this program where the scholarships are valued at approx. €1200 each.

The seven Gaeltacht colleges are Coláiste Chonnacht, Coláiste Lurgan, Coláiste Chamuis, Coláiste Chiaráin, Coláiste na nOileáin, Spléodar and Coláiste Sheosamh.

Further information can be accessed on [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie)  
<https://www.galway.ie/en/news/name.50198.en.html>

**Closing date for completed applications is Friday, 24 January 2025 at 4:00p.m.**

## SCÉIM TACAÍOCHTA POBAIL/ COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS

Applications are invited from Community and Voluntary Groups for funding towards Irish language activities and events which benefit local communities throughout the County.



Applicants should apply for Irish Language Promotional Activities which are available from [gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie](mailto:gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie)

**Closing Date for receipt of completed applications is 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 4pm**

## IRISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY SURVEY

An Irish Language Competency Survey will be distributed to all Staff within the next few weeks through our Irish Development Office.

This survey will assist Galway County Council efforts and planning, for the provision of services through Irish as required to comply with language legislation.

We would encourage co-operation from all Staff to complete the questionnaire.

## 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.

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.

## RIGHT TO READ

'Right to Read' is a national programme to promote literacy and reading development for people of all ages and backgrounds. It currently includes four national programmes that are designed to promote children's reading and literacy. Celebrating family engagement and participation, libraries offered extensive programming under the 'Family Time at Your Library' initiative.

Libraries hosted over 70 events for families which were attended by 1,174 participants for Family Time At Your Library.

Events included carol singing from local schools, storytimes, decorating the library Christmas tree, music



recitals, Duplo and Lego free-play, craft workshops for all ages, sensory play and more.



Sea Garden Creche made a special visit to Leenane Library where they enjoyed Christmas stories and special crafts.

## 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.

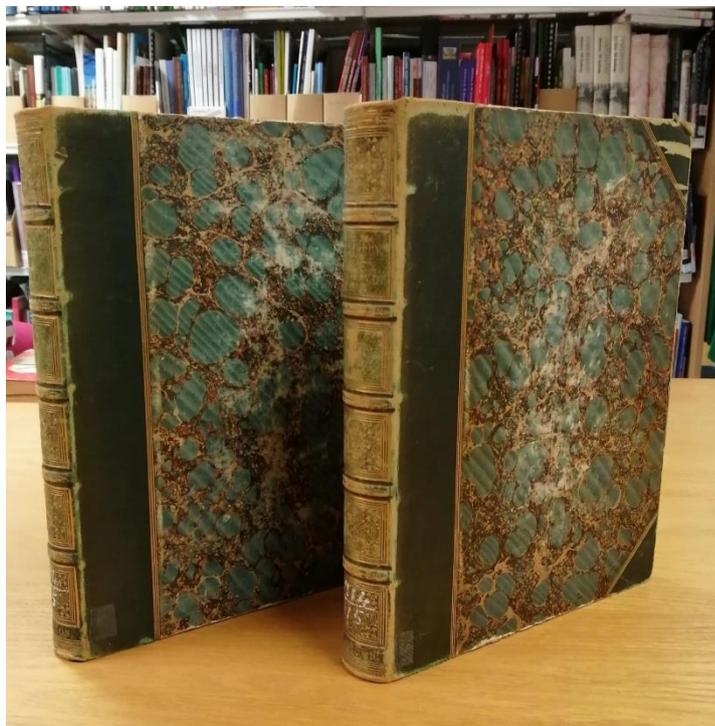
## LOCAL STUDIES

The Local Studies department at the County Library HQ specializes in providing information on a variety of topics, with a focus on local history, genealogy, and general reference queries. It serves as the primary repository for the library's local history materials, which include books, newspapers, and maps.

The department plays a crucial role in preserving and providing access to information about the specific locality. Key functions include historical research, genealogy, community information, preservation, educational support, and digital access.

Galway Public Libraries' Local Studies Section holds an original and rare 1842 two volume set of "The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland" by N.P. Willis, and J. Stirling Coyne. It is beautifully illustrated by W.H Bartlett, with drawings of scenes from all around the country, with some especially fine ones of Connemara, such as the drawing of Killary Harbour. The descriptions of life in Ireland in 1842 are also very vivid and interesting. He commented, " I

noticed here particularly, what I had frequently remarked, the readiness of the Irish smile, even on faces furrowed and pale with misery". He describes Galway: "As you approach Galway, the universality of Red Petticoats, and the same brilliant colour in most other articles of female dress give a foreign aspect to the population, which prepares you somewhat for the completely Italian or Spanish look of most of the streets of the Town".

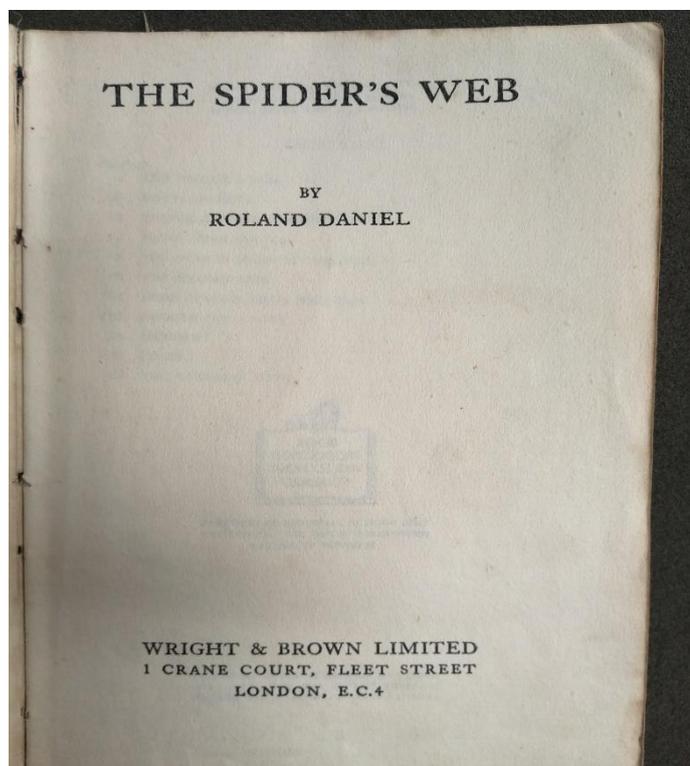


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AN ORIGINAL AND RARE 1842 TWO VOLUME SET OF 'THE SCENERY AND ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND' BY N.P. WILLIS, AND J. STIRLING COYNE.

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THIS LITTLE GEM WAS RECENTLY DONATED TO GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES BY A DESCENDANT OF THE LADY WHO ORIGINALLY BORROWED IT...77 YEARS AGO! THIS LITTLE BOOK IS A CRIME NOIR, THAT WAS ALL THE RAGE BACK IN 1947. BECAUSE SO MUCH TIME HAS ELAPSED, IT IS NOW OF HISTORIC INTEREST, AND WILL BE ADDED TO OUR LOCAL STUDIES' RARE OLD FICTION COLLECTION.



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## LOCAL STUDIES QUERIES, DECEMBER 10TH -DECEMBER 30TH

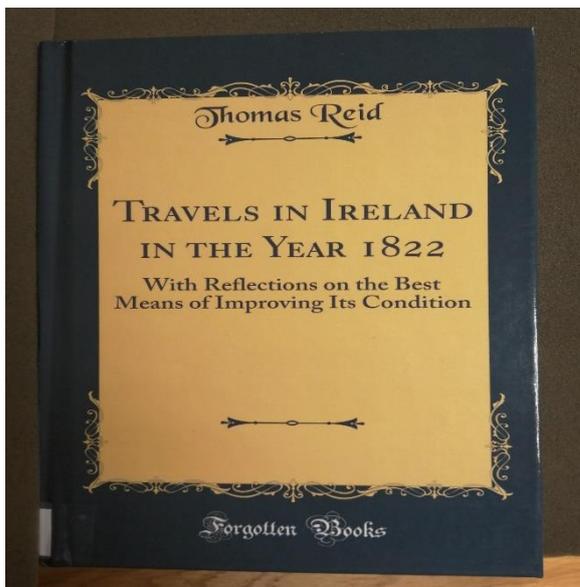
1. 5 emails received requesting information on various families for genealogy research.

Information forwarded to the enquirers on the sources available in Ireland for research into family history including search results for the genealogy query.

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## LOCAL STUDIES QUERIES, JANUARY 2025

- 1 Phone call requesting print outs of junior under 16 Castlegar Hurling match reports from 1974.
- 2 In person query and request for print out of a hurling match report from Connacht Tribune, 1978.
- 3 Email request for information on the history of the O’Nolan family.
- 4 Acquired a reprint copy of a rare old Book, “Travels in Ireland in the Year 1822”, for a client who was unable to obtain a copy elsewhere for research and had been in email correspondence with Local Studies about this matter.



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A REPRINT COPY OF A RARE OLD BOOK, 'TRAVELS IN IRELAND IN THE YEAR 1822'

## BALLYBANE LIBRARY

In association with the Home School Community Liaison Officers from local Deis schools on the eastside of the city, Ballybane Library hosted two workshops for parents on consecutive Thursdays. The workshops were attended by 13 parents in all, and they enjoyed making Christmas treats and tabletop decorations.

The Library Lore Creative poetry writings continue weekly and are mentored by Galway poet Gerry Hanberry. These are attended by 10 budding writers.

In association with Music Generation Galway, we continue to host the popular Parent and Toddler group every Friday morning, a valuable resource for new parents who can feel isolated at home. These are attended by on average 15 parents with approx. 20 children each week.



Family Time at your Library in Ballybane was hosted in the Maker Space by library staff:

We had two Christmas Craft sessions, and these were attended by 17 local children aged 7 to 12 yrs.



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OISIN BOYLE, OUR "TOP READER" WHO READ OVER 300 BOOKS THIS YEAR WAS AWARDED A SPECIAL PRIZE THIS DECEMBER.

Our story times at noon on Saturdays included a special Family Day on the 21st where families from different countries took turns to describe their unique Christmas customs, this was enjoyed by a group of 42 people both children and adults.



In association with Ruth Kelly from the GRETB our adult computer and smartphone classes continue on Tuesday mornings.

Also, the new mother and baby meetups continue in association with the local Public Health Nurses every Tuesday at 11am.

Amnesty International held a sign up and information session for the public on Saturday 14th of December.

Himalayan Meditation Ireland held three sessions on Saturday afternoons in the library and these will continue in January.

Our Children's, Teen and Adult book clubs continue to meet monthly, and these are attended by approx. 40 people of all ages from 8yrs to 85yrs. and are facilitated by library staff.

Our English conversation circle for new arrivals to the Eastside continue on Wednesday mornings, again hosted by library staff, each session is attended by approximately five people.

Supported by Creative Ireland, Galway City Council, our Art Therapy classes continued in December with Joyce Little and were attended and indeed much appreciated by 10 local residents.



In association with the Eastside Ladies' Crochet group who meet in the library every Friday we hosted one of their 3 community Christmas trees, which are a community effort, with many different people from the area creating crochet squares.



## BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

We had a very successful day promoting library membership, online services, the Archives Service, and opportunities for volunteering, studying & working in the EU, at ATU in Galway City.



Scoil an Croí Naofa had a story time and arts and crafts sessions with our very own Mrs Claus (staff member Bríd) Special thanks to ParentChild+ Ballinasloe for their Sensory Santa event.



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#### BOOK CHRISTMAS TREE AT BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

Our staff created a wonderful Christmas tree from books, complete with lights which delighted all our patrons.





VISIT FROM CREAGH NATIONAL SCHOOL – DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

We had a visit from Creagh N.S. They had a lovely time and even sang us a Christmas carol at the end of their visit to say thank you.

GALWAY AUTHOR CATHERINE DOYLE'S BOOK AVAILABLE IN MULTIPLE EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

Galway author Catherine Doyle's "The Storm Keeper's Island" is available in Spanish, Finnish, Greek, Italian and Dutch, all available to borrow from Ballinasloe Library.



GALWAY CITY LIBRARY

Getting the Christmas season started with some creativity, staff at Galway City Library ran a Christmas card making workshop for children ages 7-12. We had 7 participants.





What has now become an annual event, the Christmas Family Storytime, was attended by a large audience. Even with Storm Darragh impacting on numbers, we had 65 participants.

Our monthly Maidin Chaife, bilingual coffee morning, in conjunction with Gaillimh Le Gaeilge, took place on the second Thursday of the month. Majella from Gaillimh Le Gaeilge taught the participants the Irish lyrics for a number of Christmas songs and the group sang some traditional Irish carols. We had 12 participants.



Mercy Primary 5<sup>th</sup> class students, who visit the library on a regular basis, dropped in for their final visit of the year and checked out the Christmas books on offer. We had 25 participants.



We held two 'Jigsaws for Grown-ups' sessions which saw intense silence in the Event Space as adult participants took some time out from busy lives and hectic streets to enjoy some peace, quiet and mindfulness. We had 14 participants.




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ANIME/MANGA WITH FORÓIGE. THIS TEEN EVENT HAD 8 PARTICIPANTS MAKING JEWELLERY AND ARTWORKS OF VARIOUS TYPES.

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ROLE-PLAYING GAME SESSIONS WITH FORÓIGE. THIS MONTHLY TEEN SESSION HAD 12 PARTICIPANTS.



### Weekly events

The final two Music Generation Rhyme Time sessions took place with 19 people attending between the two sessions. These collaborations are with GRETB.

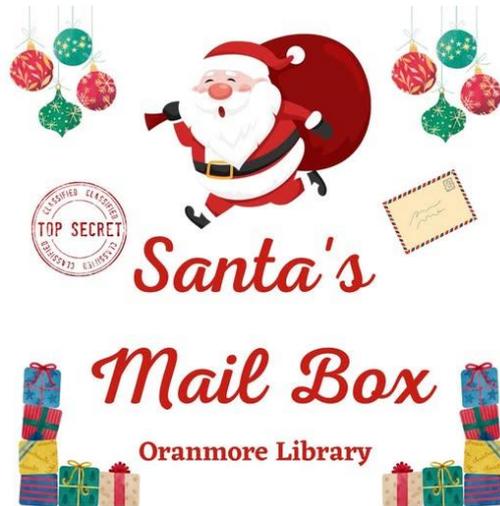
There were three Creative Crafters sessions in December with 20 participants attending.

## Monthly Events

Three library-run book clubs took place in December – Total participants 26.

### ORANMORE LIBRARY

#### DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>: SANTA'S MAILBOX ARRIVED.



Staff at Oranmore Library created a Mailbox to post Letters to Santa. Templates for letters were provided and children could post their letters in the Mailbox provided.

#### DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>: CHRISTMAS ARTS & CRAFTS SESSION



Oranmore Library held a Christmas Arts & Crafts Session - Making Christmas Tree Decorations. The children hung their completed creations on our Library Christmas Tree. We had 20 children and 13 adults in attendance at this event.



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## DECEMBER 13TH: CHRISTMAS CAROLS



Parents and children from Gaelscoil de hÍde sang Christmas Carols outside the front entrance of Oranmore Library. It was very atmospheric with the Christmas Lights and the Church setting. Over 70 people attended.

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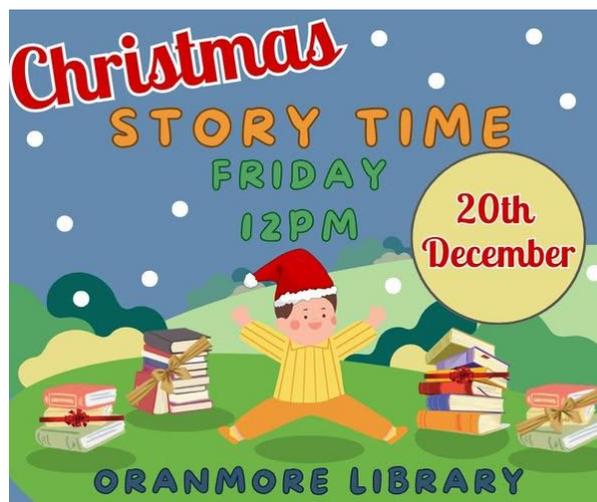
## DECEMBER 18TH: CHRISTMAS PIANO RECITAL

Avital's Young Musicians' Christmas Piano Recital was hosted by Oranmore Library at lunchtime. It was a full house with 80 in attendance.



## DECEMBER 20TH: CHRISTMAS STORIES

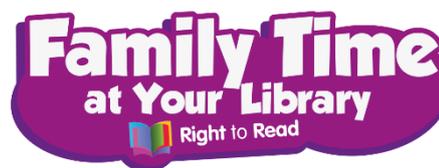
Anne-Marie read some Christmas Stories to an audience of 15. Children engaged with the colouring pages and LEGO and brought some Christmas books home to read over the Christmas break.



## PORTUMNA LIBRARY

Celebrating Family Time at your library in Portumna

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Dec 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Adult & young Adult Christmas Workshops 'Paint a beautiful Bauble' This workshop was fully booked out (8persons) |
| Dec 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Children's Christmas Activities Workshop. Fully booked out (10 persons)  |
| Dec 12 <sup>th</sup> | 12 Adults attended our final Adult Bookclub of 2024  |
| Dec 13 <sup>th</sup> | Adult and Young Adult Christmas Printmaking Workshop   |
| Dec 13 <sup>th</sup> | Children's Brilliant Christmas Craft Workshop (12 persons)   |
| Dec 13 <sup>th</sup> | Lego Freeplay Duplo and regular Lego (7 children)  |
| Dec 17 <sup>th</sup> | Final Ciorcal Comhrá of 2024(8 persons)  |
| Dec 18 <sup>th</sup> | St Brendan's National School Senior Infants' Classes Christmas Visit with activities (38 children)               |





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CHRISTMAS CRAFT WORKSHOP

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SAMPLES OF CHRISTMAS CRAFTS MADE IN PORTUMNA LIBRARY



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CHRISTMAS STORYTIME AT PORTUMNA LIBRARY

## TUAM LIBRARY

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### REGULAR EVENTS

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#### WEEKLY:

1. 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., a newly published book on an aspect of local history.
2. Rhyme time – every Wednesday morning @11am. 4 sessions were held with 63 children attending. Library staff facilitate. Great fun every week, no booking required, and all are welcome.

3. Storytime – every Friday afternoon @3.30pm. 3 sessions held with 5 children attending. Library staff facilitate. This is aimed at children aged 5 yrs+, no booking is required, and all are welcome to sit in and listen.
4. LEGO is put out every Saturday in the children’s area for free play all day. It is very popular with all ages.
5. Youth Reach – every Wednesday 2-3pm. 2 sessions were held in December. A Youth Reach facilitator accompanies the young adults, they use the space to relax and become familiar with the library.
6. 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 4-10 each week.
7. 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.

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#### MONTHLY:

1. Adult Book Club – meets the last Friday of each month, facilitated by a staff member. There are 12 members in the book club.
2. Young Adult Book Club – meets the first Saturday of the month, facilitated by a staff member. There are 6 members in the book club.
3. Audio Book Club – meets the second Thursday of the month and is facilitated by a staff member. 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. There are 8 members.
4. 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 40-50 each month. This is a very special event in Tuam.
5. Breast Feeding group – meet on the second Thursday of the month 10.30-11.30am. All are welcome to join, and the group is self-facilitating.
6. Digital Skills with Niall ran weekly from 10.30-1pm, as a drop-in session to assist older members of the community with any digital questions. It was very popular, with average attendance 6 people.

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#### STANDALONE EVENTS:

1. Health Ireland at your Library event – on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Clinical Psychologist Dr. Malie Coyne gave a talk in Tuam Library entitled ‘A Compassionate Approach to supporting children and teenagers with anxiety’. 28 members of the public attended this very interesting and helpful talk.
2. Dec 14<sup>th</sup> was a fantastic fun family day in Tuam Library with Christmas Story time and face painting from 11am. It was a staff led event, with 41 children attending.
3. Artist Ella Ward’s exhibition ran from November 25 – January

4. Artist Emer MacDermott's exhibition was installed on January 4<sup>th</sup> and runs until January 25<sup>th</sup>.

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#### DOOR COUNTER:

2,768 people visited Tuam Library between December 3<sup>rd</sup> and January 4<sup>th</sup>.



We had a wonderful family Christmas story time for all ages on Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup>. There were treats for the children and the grown-ups too.

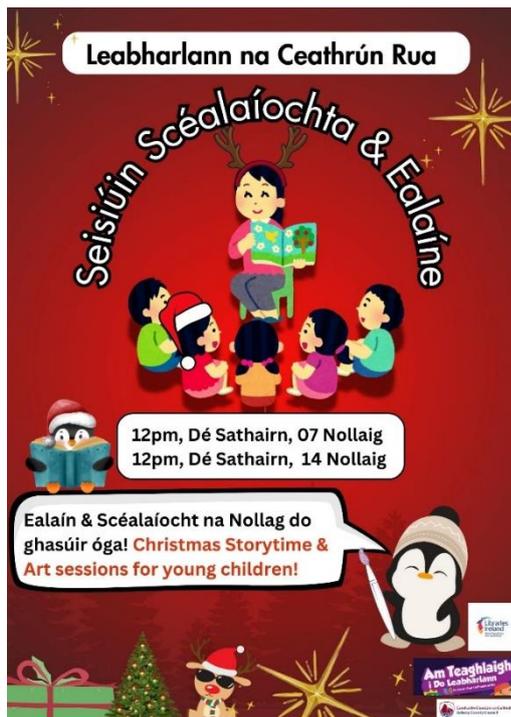
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#### CHRISTMAS SOUNDBITES SESSION

Our monthly lunchtime music session with a festive twist was well attended with a number of the audience joining in for a singalong.



## LEABHARLANN NA CEATHRÚN RUA



I measc na buaicphointí i mí na Nollag i Leabharlann na Ceathrún Rua, bhí cuairteanna seachtainiúil againn ó ranganna as Scoil Náisiúnta Mhic Dara, An Cheathrú Rua. Chomh maith leis sin tháinig Scoil Speisialta Tí Nan Dooley isteach againn, agus bhí an-spraoi ag an Club Suaimhneas leis an Bord Céadfach. Ag an deireadh seachtaine roimh Nollaig bhí Seisiún Scéalaíocht agus Ealaíne againn do ghasúir óga agus rinne muid ornáidí deasa le cur ar an gcrann Nollaig.

Rinne na gasúir an-jaib ar Ornáidí Nollaig a réiteach ag ár Seisiún Scéalaíochta agus Ealaíne i Leabharlann na Ceathrún Rua i mí na Nollag.

## LOUGHREA LIBRARY

Loughrea library hosted 5 class visits from the local national school throughout the month for book exchanges and craft activities.

The GRETB digital pop-up clinics with Niall Dempsey took place every Tuesday between 10.30am-1.00pm, with the last on 17<sup>th</sup> December.



Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December:  
Decorate a Christmas Tree star workshop. 18 children took part in a short workshop to decorate stars to hang on the library's Christmas Tree.



## FRIDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER: CHILDREN'S SLEIGH WORKSHOP AND MOVIE NIGHT

Fifteen children brought in boxes and took part in a 'make a Christmas sleigh' workshop, and stayed on with an additional 15 children, plus their parents, to have juice and popcorn and watch the movie 'Curious George: A Very Monkey Christmas'.



## MOBILE LIBRARY

During the month of December, the mobile library visited all route stops, including nursing homes, creches and afterschools. We welcomed Dee Collins to the team to assist with the outreach projects and the planned expansion of the service.



Providing an outreach service to the community is a core part of our delivery of service. As it was the month of bringing festive cheer, on December 12<sup>th</sup> the staff of the Mobile Library made an extra special visit to the residents of Caiseal Geal Care Home. We enjoyed some Christmas readings and poetry, had fun with a Christmas quiz and shared a few Christmas songs. A lovely morning was had by all.

Delivery of books to the rural Creches and Childcare facilities that do not have access to a local library is a vital service to provide them with updated literacy material. We also used this opportunity to have some very special Christmas Storytimes on the Mobile Library.



On December 11<sup>th</sup> we visited the children from Newtown Kids' Club in Abbeyknockmoy. It was cold outside, but it was warm and cosy inside and Mrs. Dee Claus was delighted to tell some Christmas stories and have a jolly old festive time.

On December 12<sup>th</sup> the children of the Old School House - Tynagh Afterschool, came on board the mobile and delighted us by singing some of their Christmas songs that they had performed in their nativity play. As a reward for their lovely singing, we presented them with a little gift, a make and do craft bag that we had made up as an extra special treat for the children attending the mobile library.



On December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Mobile Library was visited by the children of Young At Art preschool in Kilconnell. Colette delighted the children with stories of red nosed reindeers and naughty robins who tried to steal Christmas, but we were all delighted when the good guys won, and Christmas was saved!



On December 18<sup>th</sup> there was an outreach story time for the Little Stars Creche in Maigh Cuilinn. There were bells jingling all the way and Dee was reliably informed that there were only seven more sleeps until Santa Claus came to town!

January brings fresh ideas, renewed energy and planning for the year ahead. We are looking at doing a review and overview of the current routes and at the planned expansion for further service delivery.

## WESTSIDE LIBRARY

### ONGOING EVENTS:

We continued to provide support for a variety of community activities, including the Ukrainian after-school family craft sessions (Galway City Partnership), Helium Arts, Speckled Eggs dance group, HSE baby weaning workshops, the Alzheimer's Support Group, and Cuidiú breastfeeding support, all of which utilized our auditorium space.

Family support groups convened weekly, facilitated by Home School Liaison Officers from both primary and secondary schools within our catchment area.

### FAMILY TIME AT YOUR LIBRARY

For December's Family Time at Your Library Westside Library recorded 14 events with 156 children and 87 adults attending.

Below are a few pictures of events.

First Class from Scoil Bhríde, Shantalla visited the library for some winter stories.

Scoil Chroí Íosa Presentation Primary's First Class came in for a book swap and GETNS visited us for a storytime with their ASD class.





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JULIE ANNE DE BRÚN VISITED FOR A VERY SPECIAL SCÉALAÍOCHT AGUS CEOL NA NOLLAG.

---

WESTSIDE LIBRARY OFFERED A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS LEGO WORKSHOP AS PART OF THE WESTSIDE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS MARKET DAY ON THE 5TH OF DECEMBER.



The Scoil Bhríde, Shantalla Christmas Choir performed lots of festive songs for a big crowd in the library. We had a wonderful crowd which included students from St. Joseph's School.

A staff-led Christmas family craft event was a huge success. The children had a huge choice of different crafts, from Christmas cards and bookmarks to beautiful handmade peg doll decorations.



## MISCELLANEOUS

 Westside Public Library  
January 3 at 3:17 AM · 🌐

Many thanks to Trish Niland for creating and filming this short video as part of her MA in Public Advocacy and Activism at the University of Galway. We are delighted she chose to highlight the library service with her project. [Libraries Ireland](#) [Galway Public Libraries](#) [Galway County Council](#) [Galway City Council](#)



Tish Niland, a student of Public Advocacy and Activism (MA) at NUIG, created a short video in Westside Library to highlight the library service to members of the public. This short movie can be found on the Westside Library Social Media presence.

The Library Lore project came to a close with the last workshop in December. The creative writing groups in Westside Library and Ballybane Library, under instruction of renowned poet Gerry Hanberry, each created a collaborative poem to capture the essence of the Library Centenary. The official launch will be announced soon.

WESTSIDE LIBRARY STAFF WERE IN ATTENDANCE AND ENJOYED THE FESTIVITIES AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF SCOIL CHROÍ ÍOSA PRESENTATION PRIMARY'S BRAND-NEW SCHOOL LIBRARY, THIS FURTHER STRENGTHENS THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND WESTSIDE LIBRARY.





## VACANT HOMES

There continues to be a high level of interest in the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants (Croí Cónaithe Scheme). The number of applications submitted to date is 479, 320 applications are finalised, 102 applications were withdrawn, and 14 Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants were down by applicants, the above represents over 16million investment in local communities.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Galway County Council Affordable Housing Survey, which was conducted from September 4<sup>th</sup> to October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, revealed strong public interest for Affordable Housing in County Galway. Designed to gauge public interest and gather input on preferred locations for affordable housing within County Galway, the survey received 467 unique responses. The top three first-choice locations for affordable housing in the county were

Oranmore, Baile Chláir, and Athenry, which collectively highlight the demand for housing in these key areas.

To maximise participation, the survey was promoted through various channels, including print media, social media, online platforms, and local radio. The feedback received will play a crucial role in shaping future housing strategies in the county.



## SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

- **Housing Preferences:** A significant 69% of respondents expressed a preference for a house, with 4% preferring an apartment, and 27% open to either option. This highlights the strong demand for family homes in the county.
- **Property Size Preferences:** Respondents favoured larger homes, with 50% preferring a 3-bedroom property, 27% opting for a 4-bedroom, and 22% seeking a 2-bedroom property. Only 1% expressed a preference for a 1-bedroom home.
- **Readiness to Apply:** A positive 51% of respondents indicated they are ready to apply for an affordable home immediately, with an additional 38% able to apply within the next 12 months. This suggests a significant demand for affordable housing in the short to medium term.
- **Accessibility Needs:** 90% of respondents did not require properties with accessibility modifications, with 10% indicating such modifications would be necessary for their needs.
- **Housing Waiting List:** 82% of respondents are not currently on the housing waiting list, while 18% are listed, further indicating the growing need for affordable housing options.
- **Interest in Cost Rental:** 39% of respondents expressed interest in Cost Rental properties, indicating a level of interest in alternative housing models to support affordability.
- **Income Range:** The survey revealed a diverse income range among respondents, with 38% earning between €30,000 and €50,000, and a combined 43% earning between €50,000 and €90,000 annually. These income levels suggest a clear demand for affordable housing tailored to middle-income households.
- **First-Time Buyers:** 88% of respondents were first-time buyers, demonstrating a strong desire for affordable homeownership opportunities.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTARY

The results of this survey offer valuable insights into the preferences and needs of prospective homeowners in Galway County. The widespread engagement and detailed responses affirm the demand for affordable housing, particularly in popular areas such as Oranmore, Baile Chláir, and Athenry. The high number of respondents ready to apply for housing immediately further underlines the urgent need for affordable housing solutions in the region. Galway County Council will use these results to inform the development of future affordable housing projects, ensuring that they meet the needs and expectations of residents. This survey marks an important step toward addressing the housing challenges in the county and working towards creating sustainable, affordable living options for Galway's communities.

The first affordable homes in County Galway since 2013 are nearing completion in Baile Chláir. The Garraí Na Gaoithe development will provide 61 affordable housing units. The initial phase includes 17 modern homes, with nominations completed by year-end. Interest has been high, with 165 applications received. Construction on 44 additional homes will be completed in 2025.

## SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK



### Housing Stock

Galway County Council exceeded the 3000 local authority-owned property mark in November for the first time ever.

There are currently no vacant available properties in our stock with 56 units under offer, repair, derelict or approved for sale.

LETTING STATUS	Units
 Available Unit(s)	3
 Awaiting Minor Repairs	18
 Derelict	24
 Major Refurbishment	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>



# Social Housing



Two local authority Social Housing projects were completed during 2024 at:

- Pairc na Cille, Weir Rd. Tuam (31 units)
- Darach, Ballymoe (8 units)

Under the Government's Housing for All plan, Galway County Council is on track to deliver 231 new social housing units over the next two years, including Local Authority construction projects in Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Tuam and Ardahan in 2025.



## Record number of new housing tenants for Galway County Council in 2024

A RECORD 502 keys were issued to tenants of Local Authority, Approved Housing Bodies, Rental Accommodation, and Mortgage to Rent schemes during 2024, according to the Housing Department of Galway County Council.

The past twelve months have also seen the number of local authority-owned properties exceed the 3,000 mark for the first time ever.

Under the Government's Housing for All plan, Galway County Council is on track to support the delivery of over 600 new social housing units over the next two years, including local authority construction projects in Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Tuam and Ardahan in 2025.

Two such local authority social housing projects completed during 2024 were at Pairc na Cille, Weir Rd, Tuam (31 units) and Darach, Ballymoe (8 units).

Galway County Council's Croí Cónaithe grant scheme is continuing to transform vacant and derelict properties into vibrant homes.

In 2024, 465 applications



Elected members and representatives of Galway County Council, with staff from Renaissance Property Ltd and the local community at the recent official opening of the 22-home Lakeview social housing scheme at Glenamaddy.

have been received of which 283 have subsequently been approved to enter the Vacancy/Dereliction Activation Programme in Athenry/Oranmore (31), Ballinasloe (60), Connamara (61), Loughrea (71) and Tuam (60) representing a €16 million investment in the local communities.

Galway County Council Chief Executive Liam Conneally said that the local authority was focused on providing security of

tenure while addressing homelessness, increasing supply, and making efficient use of existing stock to build sustainable communities across the county.

"I very much welcome the recent approval by the Elected Members of the Local Authority's housing borrowing requirements," he added.

"Approval of loans totalling €66.5 million is required to fund critical housing projects and schemes, aimed at addressing

housing shortages, promoting affordable and cost rental options, regenerating communities by bringing vacant properties back into use and investing in existing social housing.

"The borrowing approval will enable Galway County Council to deliver the first affordable cost rental homes and advance three affordable housing schemes in Baile Chláir and Athenry."

Galway County Council Di-

rector of Housing Michael Owens pointed to what he called considerable progress made in utilising all housing stock available to Galway County Council.

"For example, there are currently no vacant available to let properties in our stock with 56 units under offer, repair, derelict or approved for sale," he said.

"Elsewhere, the first affordable homes to be developed in

County Galway since 2013 are nearing completion in Baile Chláir and have been made available for sale, he added.

"The highly anticipated Garraí Na Gaoithe development will provide 61 affordable housing units, 17 in early 2025 and 44 additional units later in the year. This is the first turnkey housing scheme to include affordable housing in County Galway under the Government's Housing for All policy," he added.

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## Record number of 502 new housing tenants for Galway County Council in 2024

by Páraic McMahon  
parai@galwaycc.ie

A RECORD 502 keys were issued to tenants of Local Authority, Approved Housing Bodies, Rental Accommodation, and Mortgage to Rent schemes during 2024, according to the Housing Department of Galway County Council.

Over the past twelve months, the number of local authority-owned properties have also exceeded the 3000 mark for the first time ever.

Under the Government's Housing for All plan, Galway County Council is on track to support the delivery of over 600 new social housing units over the next two years, including local authority construction projects in Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Tuam and Ardahan in 2025.

Two such local authority social housing projects completed during 2024 were at Pairc na Cille, Weir Rd, Tuam (31 units) and Darach, Ballymoe (8 units).

Galway County Council's Croí Cónaithe grant scheme is continuing to transform vacant and derelict properties into vibrant homes. In 2024, 465 applications have been received of which 283 have subsequently been approved to enter the Vacancy/Derection Activation Programme in Athenry /



● HOUSING FOR ALL: Clare/ Galway Housing

Oranmore (31), Ballinasloe (60), Connemara (61), Loughrea (71) and Tuam (60) representing a €16 million investment in the local communities.

"Galway County Council is focused on providing security of tenure while addressing homelessness, increasing supply, and making efficient use of existing stock to build sus-

tainable communities across the county," explained Liam Conneally, Chief Executive of Galway County Council.

"I very much welcome the recent approval by the Elected Members of the Local Authority's housing borrowing requirements," he added. "Approval of loans totalling €66.5 million is required to fund critical housing

projects and schemes, aimed at addressing housing shortages, promoting affordable and cost rental options, regenerating communities by bringing vacant properties back into use and investing in existing social housing. The borrowing approval will enable Galway County Council to deliver the first affordable cost rental homes and advance three affordable housing schemes in Baile Chláir (Claregalway) and Athenry".

Michael Owens, Director of Housing, Galway County Council stated, "Considerable progress has been made in utilising all housing stock available to Galway County Council. For example, there are currently no vacant available to let properties in our stock with 56 units under offer, repair, derelict or approved for sale".

"Elsewhere, the first affordable homes to be developed in County Galway since 2013 are nearing completion in Baile Chláir and have been made available for sale, he added. "The highly anticipated Garrai Na Gaoithe development will provide 61 affordable housing units, 17 in early 2025 and 44 additional units later in the year. This is the first turnkey housing scheme to include affordable housing in County Galway under the Government's Housing for All policy".

### SOCIAL HOUSING APPLICANTS 2024

The Following web page contains GCC's live statistics for 'Housing Supply' and 'Housing Demand'. ( [Galway County Council](#)) Both dashboards are completely interactive and can be filtered in many ways to get the required information. This information is updated twice daily.



Don't forget to hold the CTRL key on your keyboard when selecting multiple filters and

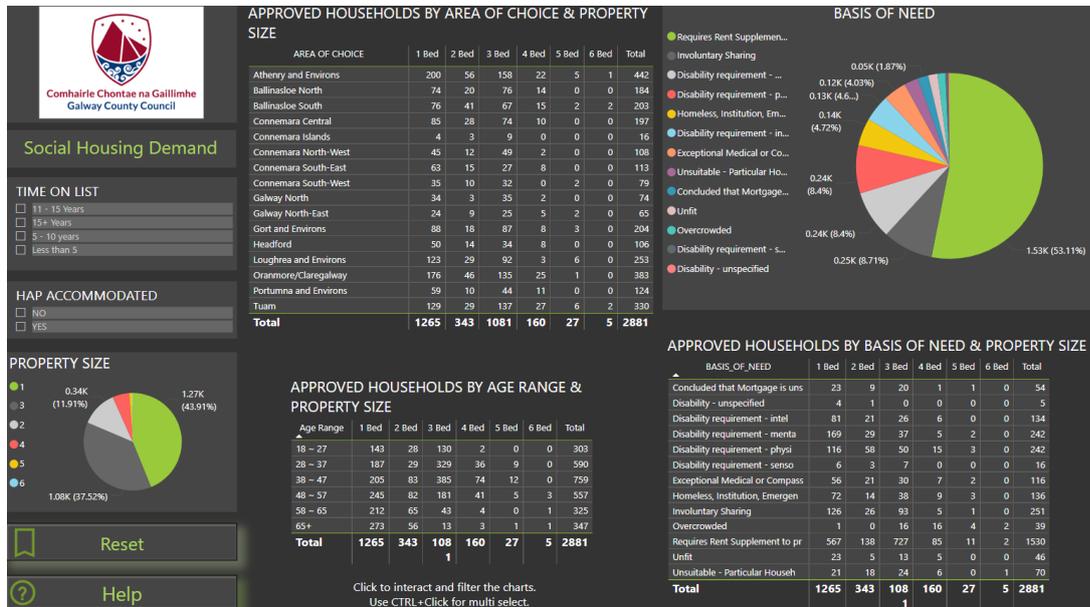
use the reset button when you want to do a new search.



### DEMAND

Search demand by...

- Applicant's Area of choice
- No. of bedrooms required by the applicant
- Applicant's time on the waiting list
- Basis of need of the applicant's household
- Applicants currently accommodated via the HAP scheme



**ASSESSMENT OF ALLOCATIONS & VACANT STOCK - SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS:**

**1. Significant increase in LA housing units let:**

- In 2024, Galway County Council successfully let 358 Local Authority Housing units, a remarkable 75% increase from 205 units in 2023. This was largely driven by the addition of 293 new units.

**2. Improved Efficiency in Letting:**

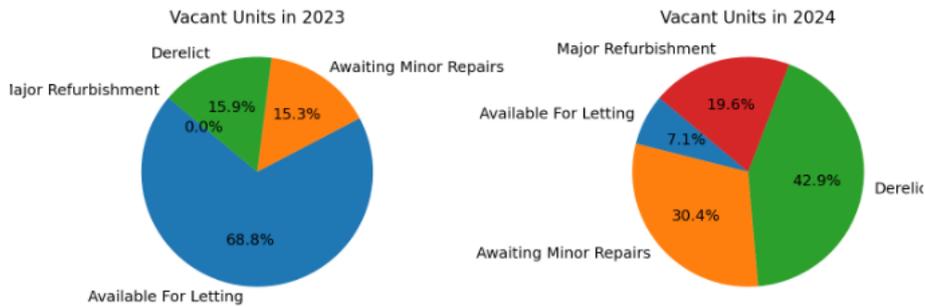
- The average weeks vacant for new units decreased from 11.34 weeks in 2023 to 8.88 weeks in 2024, indicating a more efficient letting process.
- Casual vacancy units also saw a reduction in average weeks vacant from 55.77 weeks in 2023 to 45.86 weeks in 2024.

**3. Reduction in Vacant Units:**

- The number of vacant Local Authority Housing units dropped significantly from 171 in 2023 to 56 in 2024. This reduction highlights the council's efforts in addressing vacancy issues.

	Available For Letting	Awaiting Minor Repairs	Major Derelict	Major Refurbish ment	Grand Total
<b>Vacant Units 2024</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Vacant Units 2023</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>171</b>

## Vacant Units



### Additional Allocations:

- In addition to the Local Authority Housing units, a further 143 units were allocated under Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) and the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS).

### Observations and Insights:

- The council's strategic planning and management practices have shown positive results, particularly in the efficient letting of new units.
- The significant reduction in vacant units is a testament to the council's proactive approach in addressing housing needs.
- Continued focus on reducing vacancy durations and addressing units awaiting repairs or refurbishment will further enhance efficiency and financial performance.

## CHOICE BASED LETTING

Choice-Based Letting (CBL) is a system used by local authorities in Ireland to allocate social housing. It aims to give applicants more control and choice over where they live. Galway County Council advertised a total of 31 properties under Choice based letting and received a total of 755 valid bids during 2024.

## TENANCY AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The Housing Unit continued to work with vulnerable families in assisting them in sustaining their tenancies.

- Following planned Estate management visits in 2024, several referrals have been forwarded to our social work department and Tenancy sustainment officer on foot of observations and concerns over ability to sustain Tenancies. These referrals will

open further exploration into these cases and will provide interventions where required around ensuring Tenancy support.

- The Tenancy Enforcement Officer and Housing Liaison Officers continued to work intensively in a number of areas across the County, this is done in conjunction with the Gardai, other Departments of the Council and other relevant stakeholders from outside agencies.

The Council's Tenancy and Estate Management Strategy involves active community engagement and participation at local level.

Presently The Tenancy and Estate management section are exploring with 3 separate tenant groups interested in establishing residents' associations in the following areas.

- 2 in the municipal district of Tuam
- 1 in the municipal district of Connemara.

On an ongoing basis with an emphasis on the early identification of Anti-Social Behaviour and breaches of Tenancy Agreements. The Councils Housing liaison Officers and Tenancy Enforcement Officer continue to engage with An Garda Síochána and regularly discusses problem areas, on how both organisations can work together to address anti-social behaviour.

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#### LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

- There will be a strong emphasis on ensuring strong linkages with the Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) in order to work in a collaborative means to foster sustained community involvement in identifying issues in our estates and assisting in co-designing solutions with external agencies to address these issues.

---

#### TENANCY AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT VISITS

Planned estate management visits carried out in Q4 2024 proved to be very effective in terms of identifying the following:

- Non-compliance with household waste management.
- No. of domestic pets and non-dog licence holders
- Restricted breeds

For 2025 The Tenancy and Estate management staff will visit 4 estates per quarter, accompanied by:

- Dog warden service
- Maintenance staff
- Traveller Liaison Officer
- Housing liaison Officers
- Community Wardens
- Tenancy Enforcement Officer

---

## TEM TRACKER COMPLAINTS

Total number of complaints January 2024 to present –

Total 150 cases –

- Closed - 115
- Cases open and currently under investigation – 34

---

## POSSESSIONS ORDERS

S. 12 Possession Orders - 2 possession order applications were successful in the district court in 2024.

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## SUCCESSION TO TENANCIES PROCESSED BY TEM 2024

Tuam	3
Loughrea/Gort	3
Connemara	2
Ballinasloe	3
Traveller Specific	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

---

## END OF TENANCIES PROCESSED BY TEM 2024

Tuam	11
Loughrea/Gort	9
Connemara	10
Ballinasloe	19
Athenry/Oranmore	3
Traveller Specific	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>

## CAPITAL BUILD PROGRAMME

Under the Government’s Housing for All plan, Galway County Council is on track to support the delivery of over 600 new social housing units over the next two years, including local authority construction projects in Ballinasloe, Loughrea, Tuam and Ardahan in 2025. Two such local authority social housing projects completed during 2024 were at Pairc na Cille, Weir Rd, Tuam (31 units) and Darach, Ballymoe (8 units).



### Future Delivery

The Elected Members of Galway County Council approved in November, the Local Authority’s housing borrowing requirements.

Approval of loans totalling €66.5 million is required to fund critical housing projects and schemes, aimed at addressing housing shortages, promoting affordable and cost rental options, regenerating communities by bringing vacant properties back into use and investing in existing social housing.

The borrowing approval will enable Galway County Council to deliver the first affordable cost rental homes and advance three affordable housing schemes in Baile Chláir (Claregalway) and Athenry.

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## CONTRACT SIGNING – APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTORS TO UNDERTAKE INFILL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AT HILLCREST, LOUGHREA AND PARKMORE, TUAM

A Tender for construction of 7 housing units, under the Open procedure for Works Contractor, was advertised on e-Tenders with a closing date of 22 November 2024.

The 7 housing units comprise:

- 2 no. 2 bed single storey semi-detached units and 1 no. 2 bed single storey detached unit at the existing Hillcrest Estate, Loughrea, Co. Galway.
- 2 no., 2 bed x 2-storey semi-detached units at the existing Parkmore Estate, Tuam, Co. Galway.

Both proposals represent ideal infill opportunities within the confines of the respective towns' 50 kph speed limit zones whilst both sites benefit from direct access onto the main road and existing water and power services.

Jada Construction were assessed as the Most Economically Advantageous Tenderer. A contract signing to appoint them as Works Contractor took place in County Hall on 19th December 2024.



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PRESENT: BACK L-R BRIAN FAHY, VHA LEAD ARCHITECTS, JASON LAVALLE, ASSISTANT ENGINEER GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AND EITHNE MURPHY, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

FRONT: DAVID MCINERNEY, CONTRACTS DIRECTOR JADA CONSTRUCTION AND JEAN BRANN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

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## PART 8 FOR 2 NO. HOUSING UNITS AT GARBALLY DRIVE, BALLINASLOE

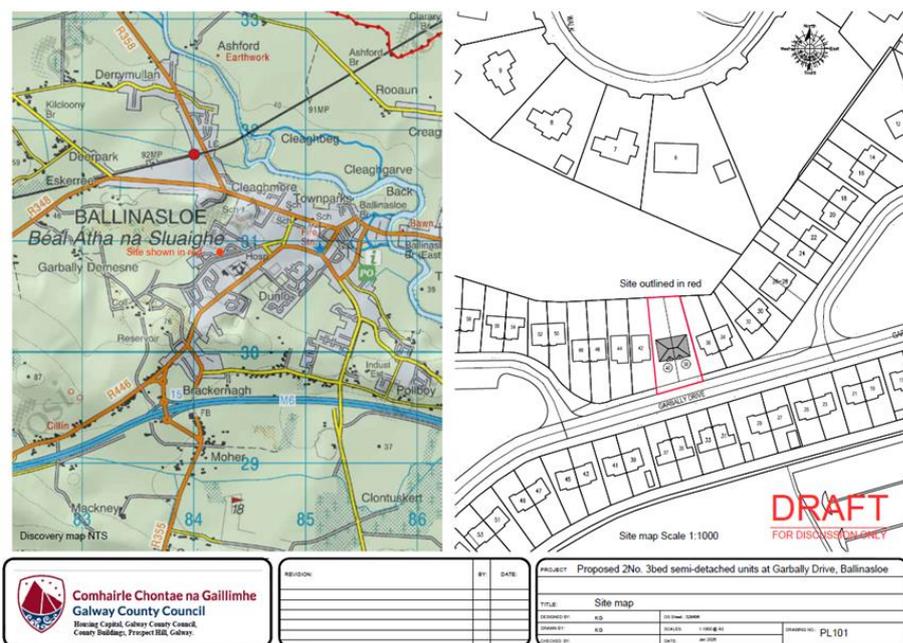
A Part 8 is due to be lodged on Friday 17th January for 2 no. 3bed 2-storey dwellings, together with connections to existing public services, including all other ancillary site works and services at Garbally Drive, Ballinasloe.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development, will be available for inspection or purchase at planning department of County Hall in Galway city or at the Ballinasloe Area office.

Plans and particulars of the above proposed development are also available for viewing on our online consultation portal at <https://consult.galway.ie>.

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, can be submitted online at <https://planning.localgov.ie/en/search/application> or by e-mail [planning@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:planning@galwaycoco.ie) or in writing to the Senior Planner, Planning Section, Planning Department, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91 H6KX **not later than 03/03/2025**.

This proposal is an ideal infill opportunity on a vacant site in the established Garbally Drive development.



LOCATION OF PROPOSED INFILL DEVELOPMENT AT GARBALLY DRIVE, BALLINASLOE

## SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION OF 8 NEW SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS, BALLYMOE

In December 2024, Finan construction, working on behalf of Galway County Council, substantially completed a new social housing development at Durrow in Ballymoe.

The development consisted of 8 no. housing units and associated site works and services, comprising 2 no. two bedroom bungalows and 6 no. two bedroom units, all of which are semi-detached.

The development fronts the main street footpath on the R360 road on approach to the village.

Tenants will be selected as per the housing allocations policy and a key handover will take place early in the New Year (2025).



PHOTO WITH VIEW OF FRONT FAÇADE OF NEW HOUSES FROM R360 ROAD TAKEN 18TH DECEMBER 2024.

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## PROJECT STATUS UPDATE -DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND OUTBUILDINGS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF 2NO. 2-BEDROOM DWELLINGS IN WOODFORD

An Initial Part 8 application (LA09/23) was lodged for the demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of 2no. 2-bedroom dwellings, together with connections to existing public services, including all other ancillary site works and services at Bark hill, Woodford, Co Galway.

One submission was received from the Heritage Section of the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), by the closing date of 29th April 2024, recommending that we seek: ‘the advice of a suitably qualified conservation architect/professional to consider the adaptive reuse of surviving historic vernacular structures on site’.

A conservation report was procured, and it concluded that: In consideration of the significant interventions required to the external envelope of the existing outbuilding including structure, ventilation, waterproofing, inaccessibility and unusable upper level in accordance with accommodation requirements, the existing outbuilding is unsuitable for the provision of social housing to universal design standards.

A subsequent Part 8 application (LA04/24) was lodged, with the conservation report attached, for the demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of 2no. 2-bedroom dwellings, together with connections to existing public services, with a closing date of 2nd September 2024.

A submission was again received from the Heritage Section of the DHLGH with the recommendation that the demolition of these vernacular structures should be resisted, and that an appropriately qualified conservation architect should be engaged to advise on how to achieve the use envisaged while retaining to the extent possible the structures’ historic fabric, embodied carbon, and vernacular character.

Galway County Council's Conservation Officer concurred with this view stating that Objective AH.6 of the County Development Plan does not support the demolition of these buildings.

Given the limited viability of adaptive reuse, the resources associated with a re-design to provide accommodation that is in compliance with building regulations, are prohibitive.

The project is therefore not proceeding, at this time, and the DHLGH have discharged relevant costs to Galway County Council.

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## ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION WITH THE HOUSING AGENCY

The LA Build section of the Housing Department of Galway County Council met with the Projects & Procurements Team of the Housing Agency on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, with a view to activating renewal projects of vacant properties in the Galway County area.

This was an opportunity for Galway County Council to leverage the knowledge and experience of the Housing Agency team.

An overview of current and potential social housing projects was provided by Galway County Council and the housing agency provided an overview of the activities of the projects and procurements team, with information shared by both teams.

A follow up meeting is to be scheduled for January 2025 with the objective of identifying a project for collaboration and delivery.

## SOCIAL WORK TEAM

The Social Work Team continue to respond to referrals and ongoing cases that have been referred to the team for intervention. This consists of a broad base of referrals to the team. Referrals are received from housing and Galway County Council staff, and externally from stakeholders such as the HSE, TUSLA, S38. S.39 organisations etc. In addition to client's who self-refer.

Kieran Keon, Senior | Principal Social Worker in partnership with the Corporate directorate have begun the process of reviewing the organisation's Child Protection policy, procedures and structures. This will likely be in process for the duration of Q1 and Q2 of 2025.

In January 2025, Kieran Keon, was invited to represent Galway County Council and Local Authority Social Workers nationally to be part of the newly established 'Social Inclusion Advisory Board' with the Housing Agency. The aim of this group is to advise the Housing Agency on issues related to vulnerable client groups which such as Young people leaving

care, People with a Disability, Homeless, Elderly, Traveller etc. The first meeting is to take place in February 2025.

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, FIRE & EMERGENCY & CLIMATE CHANGE**

**WINTER SERVICE PLAN UPDATE**

In accordance with our Winter Service Plan, Galway County Council responded to the extended cold weather period from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2025. During this period, all priority routes were treated nightly by our winter maintenance crews.

A total of 1,300 km of primary routes were treated each night to ensure road safety. On particularly cold nights, additional treatments were provided, with pre-treatment at 4pm and follow-up treatments at 4am.

In total 18 separate treatment runs were completed over 11 nights. This involved the spreading of just over 3,000 tonnes of salt across the 15 routes included in the Winter Service Plan.



Through our area offices, additional treatments were carried out on specific routes to address local area issues such as access to schools and other isolated areas. Salt storage bins were also available for prescribed locations through the area offices and salt stockpiles also provided.

**TAKING IN CHARGE**

The Taking in Charge target each year is to have 12 estates processed for Taking in Charge and/or for Bond Release. The Table A hereunder outlines output for 2024.

Table A – Taking in Charge

<i>Estates Taken in Charge</i>		12
<i>Estates pending Ratification of Minutes</i>	3	
<i>Estates for consideration at next MD meeting</i>		

<i>Bond Release (Estates not Taken in Charge)</i>		2
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>

In addition to the above, the following is position @ 31/12/2024

Estates – advertised for Taking in Charge	1
Estates – Works Complete – Pending Uisce Éireann agreement or Signed Final Report	5
Estates – TIC Led Estates – Works in Hand	14
Estates – Developer led Estates – List of Remedials issued awaiting notification of completion	37
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.

## ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRAMME - ACTIVE TRAVEL FOOTPATH AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

### GCO/24/0001 BUS STOP & SHELTER UPGRADE PROGRAMME

The Section 38 consultation has been fully completed for the bus stop updates at Ballymoe, Moylough, Maigh Cuilinn, Craughwell, Mountbellew and Headford.

Two new bus stops finished construction in Maigh Cuilinn on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The works involved footway buildouts, new pavement surfacing, bus shelter installation works and line marking.



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## ROUND 1 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Round 1 SRTS remaining 5 schools tender is now live for consultancy services for Phases 3-7. The tender is due to close on 17/01/2025. The schools are Calasanctius College, Oranmore, Gaelscoil de hÍde, Oranmore, Scoil Íosaif Naofa, Oranmore, Scoil Chroí Naofa, Athenry & Athenry Boys National School.

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## GCO/23/0020 BALLINASLOE R446 BRIDGE ST. JUNCTION TO HARRIS RD JUNCTION ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

A four-week non-statutory public consultation on the Preferred Option was held on <https://consult.galway.ie> from 22/11/2024 and closed on 20/12/2024.



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## GCO/23/0013 ORANMORE TO THE TRAIN STATION ACTIVE TRAVEL PROJECT

A four-week non-statutory public consultation on the Preferred Option was held on <https://consult.galway.ie> from 22/11/2024 closed on 20/12/2024.



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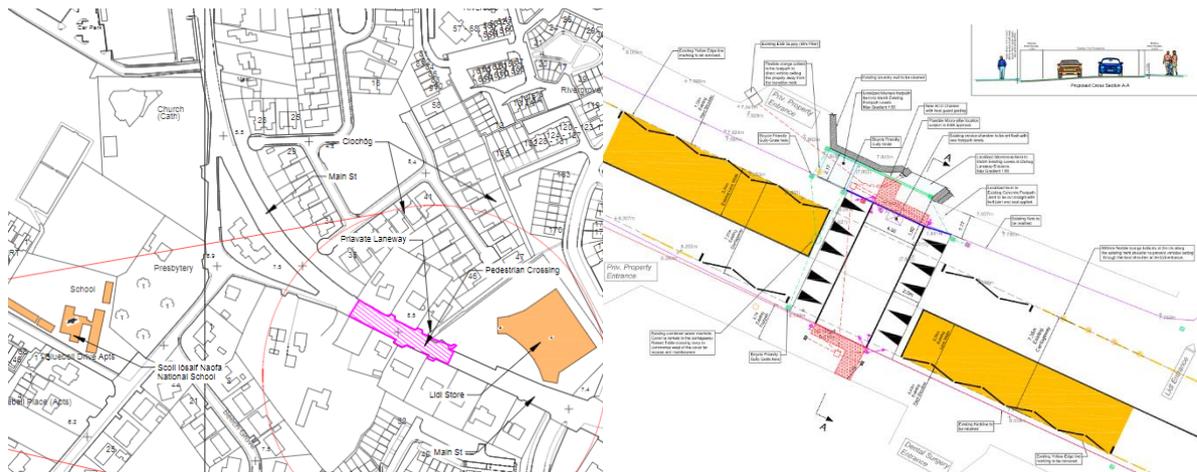
## GCO/24/0004 - SRTS R1 ST PAULS OUGHTERARD

The Section 38 consultation has been fully completed for SRTS R1 St. Pauls, Oughterard. Phase 6 Construction is anticipated to commence in Q1 2025.

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

The Section 38 consultation has been fully completed for the pedestrian crossing at Old Limerick Road (near Lidl), Oranmore. We are tendering construction works for this pedestrian crossing.



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## GCO/23/0012 BEECHLAWN ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

The implementation of the third and final phase of this three-year scheme will provide much-needed pedestrian connectivity between Brackernagh and Poolboy. With over 200 residential properties in the area, the new 480m<sup>2</sup> footpath on L4600 and the uncontrolled crossing at the junction of L4600/L36035 will greatly enhance safety and accessibility for all.

Funded by the National Transport Authority and delivered by Galway County Council, this project will not only improve residential connectivity but also boost the commercial, educational, recreational, social, and community facilities in Ballinasloe. It is great to see such initiatives that prioritize both safety and community development.

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LOCATION OF RECOMMENCEMENT  
FROM BEECHLAWN PHASE 2



VISUAL STORYTELLING & BROADBAND CONNECTION POINTS (BCPs)



Several Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) across the county recently participated in a 'Visual Storytelling' course organised by the Broadband Office and facilitated by Ken McHugh of Lefthand Productions.

The course provided training on utilising online visual storytelling tools to enhance the BCPs' online presence and empower the Broadband Connection Points to self-promote their locations in County Galway.

These tools help showcase the BCPs' unique identity and values through compelling imagery and narratives on social media and the course received positive feedback from its participants.

This pilot initiative was partially funded by the Department of Rural & Community Development.

CLIMATE CHANGE

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION

On 11 December, ATU hosted a thought-provoking Food Sustainability Think Tank event as part of their ErasmusPlus funded 'Train to Sustain' project. Dr Lisa Ryan highlighted the wide range of important research underway in ATU on sustainability in the food sector and Dr JP McMahon provided insights on the practicalities of food sustainability for those involved in food businesses. The event closed with a talk by Tina Ryan, Climate Action Coordinator, who discussed the many initiatives being implemented by

Galway County Council



to support sustainability in this sector and presented information on the Interreg Europe CIBUS project. The event was a great opportunity to share strategies, foster partnerships, and prioritise food sustainability for our community.

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## ENERGY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Display Energy Certificates (DECs) are required to be displayed in public buildings with a floor area greater than 250m<sup>2</sup> that are frequently visited by the public. Aramark Energy Solutions were engaged in 2024 and delivered DECs for 20 of our buildings in December. These certificates will be displayed within the respective buildings to provide clear information on the energy performance of our buildings to the public. The DECs range from a D2 rating in Oranmore Library and Clifden Library to a B1 rating in Aughrim Interpretative Centre.

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## UPCOMING CLIMATE ACTION EVENTS

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### YOUTH CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

In conjunction with Youth Work Ireland Galway, we will be hosting our 2nd Youth Climate Assembly on the 29th of January in Athenry. Our 1st Assembly, which was held in May 2023, was one of the first events of its kind to happen at a local level in Ireland. These assemblies provide a space for young people from secondary schools and youth organisations across the county to gather together to discuss Climate Action. The participants will be introduced to policies, projects and research being undertaken in County Galway to tackle the Climate and Biodiversity Crises and will be encouraged to initiate positive change through their school/youth group/community.

## FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### OPERATIONS

The information below is based on December data from West Regional Control Centre (WRCC). Galway Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) had 191 turnouts to 159 Incidents. That is a increase of 35 incident on 124 the previous month. 57 were fire incidents, 91 were special service incidents (road traffic collision (RTC), Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's), flooding, storm damage, etc.) and 11 were standby either in station or at a central location. Of those incidents, 39.22% were attended by Fire Service resources within 10 minutes of alert, 39.22% were attended between 10 and 20 minutes and 21.57% were attended in over 20 minutes. The average turnout time for the Full-time station in Galway City was 2.04 minutes and for county retained stations was 6.23 minutes.

## 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 has been submitted for publication on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024. The public consultation process ended on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024. The Chief Executive's report was submitted to the Loughrea Municipal District meeting on the 09<sup>th</sup> December 2024 for members consideration and approval was granted.



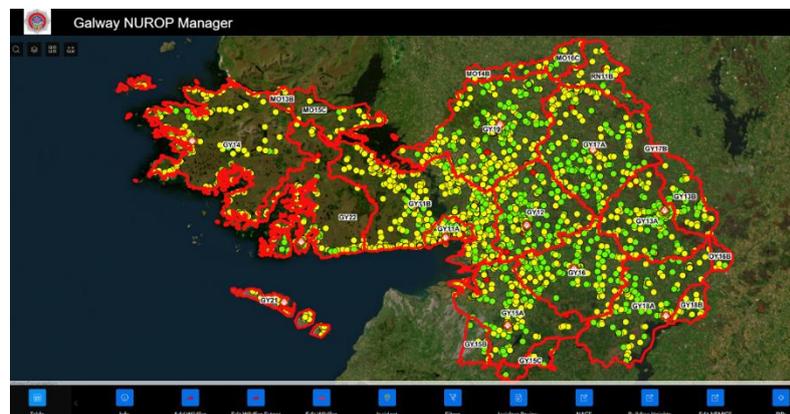
PROPOSED NEW FIRE STATION  
LOUGHREA

## PREVENTION

The information in the following is based on the December 2024 figures. The Fire Authority received 35 Fire Safety Certificate applications and issued decisions on 10 applications. 20 Disability Access Certificate applications were received, and decisions made on 9 applications. No new licenses were issued in December and 48 inspections were conducted.

### 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 storms Ashley and Bert.



## GRANT AID FROM THE NDFEM

Galway Fire & Rescue Service have received delivery of 13 sets of battery-operated Hydraulic Rescue Equipment, manufactured by Holmatro at cost of circa €600,000, fully funded by the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management. Each station in Galway will be allocated one set of this equipment, in addition, a more comprehensive heavy-duty rescue set for the two Emergency Tenders based in Galway City and Loughrea will be provided.

The consignment of equipment will be operational once training is completed in each station. This equipment is the most modern available and is specifically designed for improved ergonomics and improved speed of operation to better effect the rescue of trapped casualties.

Galway FRS is the first Fire Service in Ireland to operate this equipment.

## CIVIL DEFENCE

The Galway Civil Defence Officer and Assistant Civil Defence Officer participated as observers at the Major Emergency Management exercise in Galway Airport, Carnmore on the 6th December 2024.

The Assistant Civil Defence Officer attended Induction Training and CPC Training with the Civil Defence Branch in Roscrea and Portlaoise, respectfully.

Galway Civil Defence units continue to cover events each weekend throughout the county.

Cardiac First Response Community Training (CFR-C) and Emergency First Response (EFR) training with volunteers, along with those requiring recertification remains ongoing.

## PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DATA

<b>Key Statistics: 1<sup>st</sup> January – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b>	
Applications Received/Valid	2184/1779
Granted	1448
Grant Rate	85%
Refused	252
Breakdown of Decisions Granted Outline (8)	

Permission (1106)	
Retention (312)	
Permission Consequent (4)	
Extension of Duration (18)	
Percentage of applications received via Portal/Hardcopy	83%
Stage 1LRD	5
Stage 2 LRD	2
Major Meetings	14
SID Meetings	4

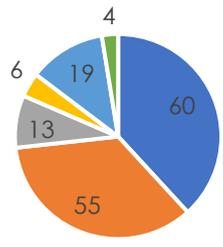
<b>Commencements And Completions 1st January – 31st December - November 2024</b>	
Submitted and Validated Commencement Notices	995
Submitted and Validated Certificates of Completion	135

#### PRE-PLANNING MEETING 2024

PPM per MD per Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total per MD
Ath/Ora	4	3	0	3	3	7	4	0	7	6	4	3	44
Ballinasloe	4	4	2	0	2	3	7	5	3	6	7	1	44
Connemara	8	1	11	6	11	5	12	4	13	12	8	5	96
Loughrea	6	1	13	9	7	4	8	5	10	4	8	8	83
Tuam	5	0	2	6	7	2	5	0	3	5	3	0	38
Total per month	27	9	28	24	30	21	36	14	36	33	30	17	305

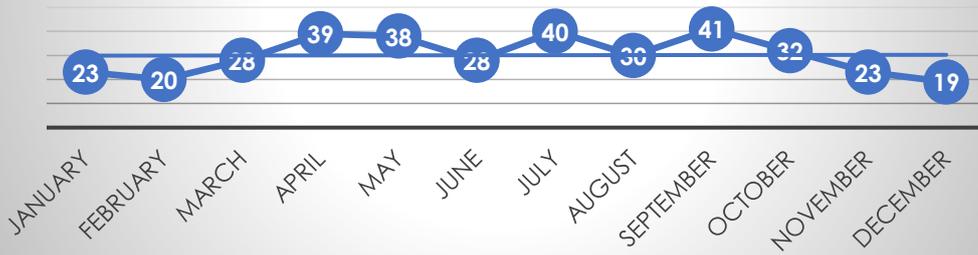
	<b>Total per MD 2024</b>
<b>Athenry/Oranmore</b>	44
<b>Ballinasloe</b>	44
<b>Connemara</b>	96
<b>Loughrea</b>	83
<b>Tuam</b>	38
<b>Total 2024</b>	<b>305</b>

### Exempted Development Key Statistics 1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024

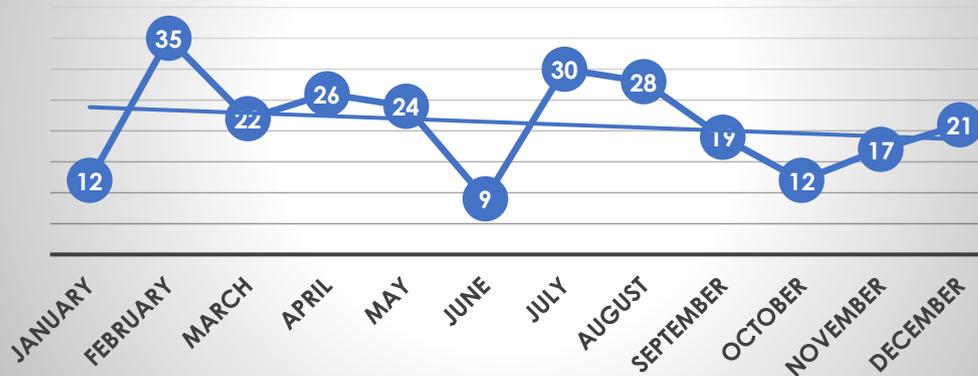


- Exempted
- Not Exempted
- Further Information
- Withdrawn
- Decision Pending
- Appealed

### Planning Enforcement Complaints Received January- December 2024



### Planning Enforcement Cases Closed January-December 2024



## KEY PLANNING UPDATES

### GORT LOCAL AREA PLAN

Gort Draft LAP and LTP to be published on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January. Closing date is 4pm Thursday 20 Feb 2025. Public consultation event will take place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2:30-7:30pm in the Lady Gregory Hotel. Webinar event will take place on 12<sup>th</sup> February 6-7pm. Registration details will be published on the Council's websites and on social media.

### JOINT RETAIL STRATEGY

First draft of the Joint Retail Strategy was submitted to City and County Council's in December. Work ongoing to review the initial draft. Further meeting on this scheduled for Wednesday 16 January.

### LOUGHREA LOCAL AREA PLAN

Ministerial Direction deleting MA 35 (Community Facilities zoned lands) from Loughrea Local Area Plan was received on 9 December 2024.

### URDF

Publication of tender documents on eTenders for detailed design of local/nodal centre; Eco park and Density Typology Study at Garran. Closing date was 20<sup>th</sup> December. Tender responses are scheduled for assessment on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Further Information Response on Planning applications for the rail works (City and County) re. Archaeology has been submitted. Application due for decision on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

### RZLT

Work underway for preparation of draft maps for public display in early 2025 – Loughrea and Athenry maps have been returned to the Department. Gort is now removed from Map as existing LAP has expired. The Final Map will be published on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025. The Annual Draft Map will be published on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE

### 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.

### 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. 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 January SYOB evening programme commenced on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2025 and will run until the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2025. Please keep an eye on our website for the next upcoming SYOB course.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### LEAN LAUNCH

LEO Galway is currently running a Lean launch programme which commenced on 14th October 2024 and will run until 10th March 2025. The 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	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	9.30am – 4.30pm
Module 2	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2024	9.30am – 4pm
Module 3	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	9.30am – 4pm
Module 4	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	9.30am – 4pm
Module 5	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 6	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	9.30am – 4pm
Module 7	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	9.30am – 4pm

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## LEAN FOR BUSINESS WORKSHOP

LEO Galway will host a Lean for Business workshop in the Menlo Park Hotel, Galway on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The workshop is aimed at people interested in taking part in the Lean for Business programme. The workshop will be facilitated by Paula McNicholas and will give an insight into the concept of Lean in business, applying these principles and gaining positive results.

The LEO Lean for Business Programme helps to:

- Identify issues and potential improvement areas.
- Provide support to implement.
- Achieve savings and improvements in capability and capacity to deliver.

Lean tools and techniques are helping companies across the globe to address competitiveness issues within their businesses, building the capability of their people to



identify issues and improve their operations.

Lean for Business is designed to encourage clients to adopt Lean business principles in their organisations to increase competitiveness.

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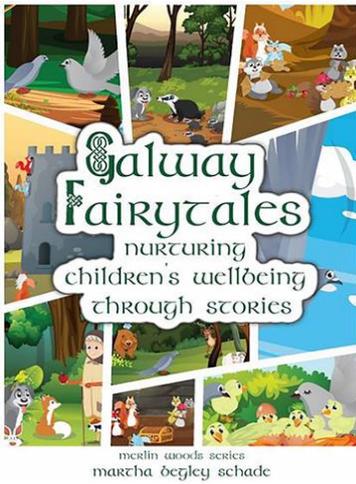
## SHOWCASE

Ireland is globally renowned for its craft and design and the Showcase trade fair is the international launchpad for so many Irish makers to achieve this recognition. Showcase is celebrating its 50-year anniversary from January 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 in the RDS, Dublin.



With more than 380 exhibitors at the show across Fashion, Jewellery and Home & Gift, the three-day trade fair expects to welcome more than 4,000 registered trade buyers from Ireland and UK, Europe, Japan and the UAE. The Local Enterprise Network has 105 stands, and LEO Galway has six clients taking part.

These include:



GALWAY FAIRYTALES



WILD ATLANTIC WICKS



DOBOS CERAMICS

ÚNA HEANEY DESIGNS



MY TRIBE

THE WONKY WOOLINS



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#### FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF SHORT TRAININGS

11 <sup>th</sup> February	Beginners Guide to social media.
12 <sup>th</sup> February	How to master your VAT return.
17 <sup>th</sup> February	Business Model Canvas.
25 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> February	Marketing Techniques for your Business.
27 <sup>th</sup> February	Employing for the first time - what you need to know.
28 <sup>th</sup> February	AI Tools For Business.

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#### FOOD INNOVATION EXPO – ‘EXPLORE, EXPERIENCE, INNOVATE’

The Food innovation Expo at BIA Innovator Campus is designed to offer attendees an immersive experience of BIA Innovator Campus’s service, supports, facilities and space, while also offer a 360 showcase of internal and external supports available to Food producers, hospitality and tourism locally and nationally. The Food innovation Expo presents a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships and build awareness.



The event will encompass all that BIA Innovator campus offers, with each revenue stream showcased to reflect the capabilities of the Campus. Also facilitating engagement and networking with our stakeholders. The event will also provide information, education and updates around Innovation within the Agri-Food industry for 2025.

The Expo will run ‘opportunities’ simultaneously throughout the day where attendees can attend talks in the auditorium, get advice and updates from national agencies through

prebooked clinics, speak with relevant suppliers and also have the opportunity to visit a production operation of an onsite food business and experience innovation first hand.

## PAST EVENTS

### DESIGN MINGLE

Shane McCluskey spoke about his inspiring journey to success in CREW on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December. Shane is an award-winning illustrator from Galway. He told his story in pictures using dynamic composition with bold and deliberate use of colour.

He studied at the National College of Art and Design (N.C.A.D) and furthered his education at the Illustration Academy in Kansas City and School of Visual Arts in New York. Shane's work has garnered recognition from the Society of Illustrators, American Illustration, and Communication Arts. Notable clients include The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal and Atheneum Books.

His latest work can be seen on the cover of 'The Riddle of the Disappearing Dickens' by Alan Nolan, published by O'Brien Press. The book has been shortlisted for Children's Book of the Year - Senior at the An Post Irish Book Awards.

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.



SHANE CLUSKEY PRESENTING SOME OF HIS AMAZING WORK

## SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

### Facebook:

Reach year-to-date: 28.6K

### Instagram:

Reach year-to-date: 39.1K

### LinkedIn:

11,120 Impressions  
42370 reached

### X (Twitter):

6052 followers

### LOUGHREA

#### LOUGHREA TOWN HALL

After securing additional funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development, Galway County Council has appointed Finan Construction to undertake the works. A formal contract signing took place in the Loughrea area office on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> of January. Finan Construction have commenced work onsite with a completion date of Q3 of 2026.



#### 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. A Part 10 planning application has been lodged to An Bord Pleanála, and full details can be viewed on <https://consult.galway.ie/en/consultation/loughrea-long-point-amenity-enhancement-project-part-10-planning-application> The period of submissions is now closed. An Board Pleanála have issued a request for further information. Return submission is currently being prepared for the submission deadline 21.02.2025. The reference number for the file is JP07.320946 and is provisionally due for decision on 24/03/25.

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## 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>. The deadline for observations has now passed and 43 submissions were received. Case is due to be decided by 01/05/2025.



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BEACH ROAD QUAY

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## PORTUMNA

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### PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE

Works are currently progressing ahead of programme at Portumna Courthouse. The building will be open to the public in Q2 2025. An Expression of Interest for operators of the Café in the Courthouse was published mid-October, a total of 4no. operators expressed an interest. Formal tender documents are set to be issued in the coming days.

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. We are currently engaging with our Human Resource Department to finalise job specification; with the hope this role will be filled before the building is open to the public. This post will also manage the Loughrea Town Hall and Tuam Town Hall once completed.

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## 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.

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## GORT

The Gort Public Realm scheme is ready to be submitted as a part ten planning application to An Bord Pleanála.

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## TUAM

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### TOWN HALL

The Regeneration Team has completed the first stage of the tender process for Tuam Town Hall. Two tender responses have been received and initial evaluation has taken place. Once appointed the design team will deliver the process through detailed design, tender and construction phases.

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### STATION QUARTER THRIVE FUNDING

Galway County Council is working in partnership with Iarnród Éireann, CIE and in consultation with Action Tuam to deliver a transformational masterplan for the Tuam Station Quarter. Reddy Architecture and Urbanism have been formally appointed to develop the masterplan. The design objectives for the Tuam Station Quarter are centred around transforming a derelict area into a vibrant, mixed-use development with a strong sense of place and local identity.

A work programme is in the process of being developed with the consultant with an expectation that a public engagement event will take place next month. Engagement is ongoing with our partners in Irish Rail and CIE to determine the footprint of available lands for inclusion in the master planning process.

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### 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 in February/March 2025 once all the public and stakeholder consultation has been completed. Surveys of the station house building are currently taking place; topographic surveying of the study area will also progress. Capital funding will be applied for the Tuam Station House project in May 2025 through a final round of THRIVE funding subject to financial viability of the proposal.

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## BALLINASLOE

Another town team meeting took place to the 16.01.2025 at the newly opened enterprise centre operated by BACD on Society. Regular updates will be provided to the MD meetings on the progress of the plan as well as presentations of draft proposals to Councillors for input. It is anticipated that a public engagement event will take place in the coming weeks.

## HERITAGE OFFICE

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### GALWAY COUNTY HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY PLAN 2024 – 2030

Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030 was adopted by Galway County Council on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

The Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030 celebrates the rich diversity and importance of Galway's heritage and biodiversity. It acknowledges the essential role of heritage and biodiversity in our society, well-being and economy.



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GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST, BERNIE DOHERTY INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO THE RICH ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE COUNTY

This plan serves as a framework for furthering the awareness, protection, conservation, promotion and management of Galway's heritage and biodiversity over the next six years and beyond.

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### WILDFLOWER WALK AND TALK AT BRIDGET'S GARDEN

The contributions of a wide range of individuals, organisations, community groups, schools, further educational institutions and government partners have helped shaping the vision, actions, objective and key performance indicators of this plan. One of the key strengths of this is having this extensive network of heritage and biodiversity partners who can effectively drive the implementation of the plan in the coming years.





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## ART WORKSHOP PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR THE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This document outlines the vision for the plan and briefly describes the collaborative process used to develop it, emphasising the partnership approach taken. The plan has established a shared set of actions across the disciplines of Biodiversity and Natural Heritage, Built

and Archaeological Heritage and Cultural Heritage.

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## SOME MEMBERS OF GALWAY COUNTY HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY FORUM



### **The actions of the plan are organised under six themes:**

- Community Engagement
- Education and Training
- Research, Monitoring and Conservation
- Galway County Council People, Property and Works
- Stakeholder Engagement and Collaborative Opportunities
- Climate Action

The implementation of the plan will be guided by the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Forum providing key expertise and oversight. The Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan will be delivered through a series of annual work programmes which will be subject to available funding and resources.

The plan stands as a powerful testament to the vital contributions of Galway County Council's Biodiversity, Conservation and Heritage Offices, along with The Heritage Council and project partners.

By working together, it paves the way for a vibrant and sustainable future for heritage and biodiversity through to 2030 and beyond.

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## LAUNCH OF THE BI-LINGUAL GARDA CHILDREN'S WORKBOOK

The launch of the Garda Children's bi-lingual workbook took place in Garda Northwestern Region Headquarters on 15<sup>th</sup> January. The workbook was a joint initiative of the Heritage Office, Galway County Council and Galway Gardaí. Children and teachers from Oughterard National School, Kiltiernan National School, Barnaderg National School, Moylough National School, Radharc na Mara National School and Gaelscoil de hÍde, Oranmore attended the event.



STUDENTS FROM OUGHTERARD NATIONAL SCHOOL AT THE LAUNCH OF THE GARDA CHILDREN'S BI-LINGUAL WORKBOOK

FROM SEAN LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER

STUDENT FROM KILTIERNAN NATIONAL SCHOOL AND SERGEANT AOIFE CURLEY AT THE LAUNCH OF THE GARDA CHILDREN'S BI-LINGUAL WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER



STUDENTS FROM MOYLOUGH NATIONAL SCHOOL WITH INSPECTOR OLIVIA MARKHAM AT THE LAUNCH OF THE GARDA CHILDREN'S BI-LINGUAL WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER



The bilingual workbook not only traces the rich history of An Garda Síochána but also highlights the invaluable work they do in our communities. This resource aims to empower 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class children with knowledge and appreciation for our national police service, fostering a deeper understanding of its role in maintaining safety and justice.

STUDENTS FROM  
BARNADERG NATIONAL  
SCHOOL AT THE LAUNCH  
OF THE GARDA CHILDREN'S  
BI-LINGUAL WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN  
LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER



In the bi-lingual workbook children will learn about the history of the Gardaí as well as getting an insight into the work of the Gardaí today including special Garda units such as the Garda Dog Unit, the Garda Public Order Unit, as well as the equipment they use, the Garda uniform and Community Policing.



STUDENTS FROM GAELSCOIL  
DE HÍDE, ORANMORE AT THE  
LAUNCH OF THE GARDA  
CHILDREN'S BI-LINGUAL  
WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN LYDON  
PHOTOGRAPHER

STUDENTS FROM  
OUGHTERARD NATIONAL  
SCHOOL AT THE LAUNCH OF  
THE GARDA CHILDREN'S BI-  
LINGUAL WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN  
LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER



Speaking at the launch Cllr Martina Kinane, Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway said, “You’ll also find a variety of activities in the workbook – from word searches and quizzes, puzzles and YouTube video links that will tell you more about the life and work of the Gardaí. Each aspect is designed to help you understand not just the duties of the Garda, but also the values they stand for: respect, integrity, and compassion”.

STUDENTS FROM  
KILTIERNAN NATIONAL  
SCHOOL AT THE LAUNCH  
OF THE GARDA  
CHILDREN'S BI-LINGUAL  
WORKBOOK

PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN  
LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER



Cllr Kinane also said “To our fantastic 6th class students who will primarily be using this workbook: remember, each exercise is more than just words on paper. It's an invitation to think critically, act kindly, and dream about the positive impact you can make. I invite all of you to dive into this adventure with enthusiasm and curiosity. May this workbook inspire you to learn, to ask questions, and perhaps even consider how you might serve your community in the future”.

Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services – Economic Development & Planning thanked everyone who contributed to bringing the workbook to life, including Superintendent Damien Flanagan, An Garda Síochána and Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Galway County Council who developed the concept and oversaw the production of the workbook. He also thanked Galway County Council administrative staff Gina O’Shaughnessy, Martina Creaven, Ita Gordon, Anne Power and Eileen Keaveney for their input.



PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN LYDON PHOTOGRAPHER

L-R: BRIAN CORCORAN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE PLANNER, VALERIE LOUGHNANE, SENIOR PLANNER, CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT SEÁN COLLERAN, MICHAEL OWENS, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, HOUSING, CLLR MARTINA KINANE, CATHAOIRLEACH COUNTY GALWAY, SUPERINTENDENT PAUDIE O'SHEA, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER CLIONA RICHARDSON, CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT GERARD ROCHE, MARIE MANNION, HERITAGE OFFICER, ITA GORDON, CLERICAL OFFICER, LIAM HANRAHAN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING, SUPERINTENDENT FINBARR PHILPOTT, GINA O'SHAUGHNESSY, STAFF OFFICER, SUPERINTENDENT DAMIEN FLANAGAN, EILEEN KEAVENEY, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER AND MAÍRTÍN O'DONNCHADHA, OIFIGEACH FORBARTHA GAEILGE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL.

Michael Owens, Director of Services-Housing, also attended the event and represented the Chief Executive. The project was funded by the Decade of Commemorations Unit, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Muirne Lyons, Assistant Principal Officer represented the Decade of Commemorations Unit at the event.

## PLANNING

## BIODIVERSITY

### HARE'S CORNER – TREE DISTRIBUTION DAY

Woodland trees and heritage orchard trees were distributed to over 100 community groups, organisations and private landowners as part of the Hare's Corner project in partnership with BurrenBeo Trust through the Local Biodiversity Action Fund in December and January.

The distribution days were hosted by Galway City Biodiversity Officer Paula Kearney, who was also ran a Hare's Corner Project under the same scheme.

Once planted, these new woodlands and orchards dotted around the county will create additional habitats for biodiversity in Galway and are an example of a practical climate action. Species distributed were all native trees and of local provenance and included black poplar, elder, oak, hawthorn, buckthorn and also some wych elm trees propagated and donated by Oranmore Tidy Towns. The tree distribution days were hugely positive and hopefully the project will continue to develop in the coming year.



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## ALPINE NEWT MANAGEMENT

Work is continuing on the management of Alpine Newt in County Galway in a partnership project between Galway County Council, UCD, Herpetological Society of Ireland and ATU. This is a Local Biodiversity Action Fund project and is supported by NPWS. Both Smooth and Alpine Newts are already emerging this year and were recorded, with the Alpine Newts captured under licence. Beta testing of a new underwater camera has commenced, with the camera recently deployed and it is hoped that the footage captured will lead to a greater

understanding of the impact of Alpine Newts on Smooth Newts and other species found in the water.



THE BIODIVERSITY OFFICER JOINED DR. JAN ROBERT BARS AND ROBERT GANDOLA OUT ON SITE IN JANUARY 2025.

MIA GANDOLA PRESENTED HER FINDINGS ON THE ALPINE NEWT MANAGEMENT PROJECT IN GALWAY AT THE RECENT BT YOUNG SCIENTISTS EXHIBITION.



## CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

Citizen science biodiversity projects involve public participation in scientific research to monitor and protect biodiversity, enhancing data collection and fostering community engagement in conservation efforts. The Biodiversity Office promotes these research and community engagement initiatives as an action of the *Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030*. Over recent weeks, two such monitoring schemes have been highlighted at a county level. These schemes were the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland's *New Year Plant Hunt* and Irish Peatland Conservation Council's *Hop to It National Frog Survey*. The Biodiversity Officer submitted records to Botanical Society of Britain and



Ireland *New Year Plant Hunt* which helps monitor climate change through the phenology of flower plants and provides a better understanding of the impact of our changing conditions on botanical species. Records of frog activity observed in January during the Alpine Newt project in Connemara were also submitted to the IPCC survey.

GROUNDSEL *SENECIO VULGARIS* IN FLOWER IN THE ATHENRY/ORANMORE MD AS RECORDED DURING THE BSBI NEW YEAR PLANT HUNT.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

### Facebook:

Views last 28 days: 43,557

### Instagram:

Views last 28 days: 1,735

## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

### ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

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## ROADS PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT – JANUARY 2025

### 1. Restoration Improvement –2024 Contractor on Site

- a. Old Church St, Athenry – Delayed due to archaeological issues

### 2. Restoration Maintenance/Improvement

- a. **Surface dressing** –

2025 Roads Programme under review

- b. **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 to be Completed in January, Line marking and other works to be completed Section 38 CE order issued for works

- b. Oranbeg (Furey’s Cross) Tarmac completed – Line marking and other works to be completed Section 38 CE order issued for works

### 4. Climate Change

- a. CC2024 N67/R446/L4105 Carrowmoneash GC/24/35508 – Site investigation complete no room in station road to bring new service After site investigation only route available in through Tudor Vale housing estate. In discussions with residents

- b. CC2024 Lackagh Flood Relief GC/24/35508 **Complete**

- c. CC2024 L2119 Cloonboo GC/24/35508 **Complete**

### 5. Community Involvement Scheme

Maree Road @ Church – - **Complete**

New Line Junction Crossing – Contractor plans to start in January

Ryehill Church – Road widening – **Complete**

Coolarne no 1 – Road widening ongoing

Caraun – Road bend - **Complete**

Ballyboggin – Edge drainage - **Complete**

### 6. Other Items

Belville Road realignment Issuing Planning consent forms for	Landowner planning consent letters issued to all landowners. Some completed
Hydrological study Clarin River	Application made for Further funding to progress to Phase 1 consultation requirements

Pedestrian Crossing Lidl Oranmore	Placed on SupplyGov framework for tendering closing date for receipt of tenders 23 <sup>rd</sup> January
Section 38 Chief executive orders	<p>S38 Chief executive order number E4625 received for R446 Derrydonnell junction without modifications</p> <p>S38 Chief executive order number E4626 received for R446 Furey's cross with modifications outlined in report S38 Report R446 Fureys Cross</p>

## 7. Figures and Pictures



TREE FELLING AFTER STORM

CARAUN CIS





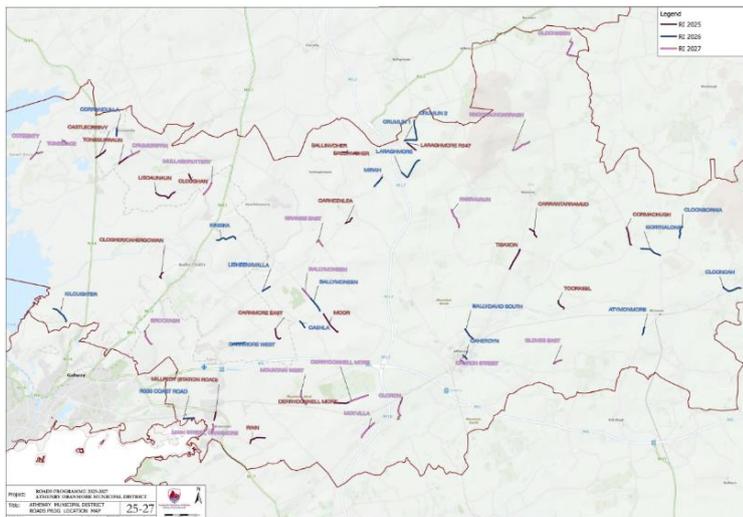
CLOONBOO DRAINAGE

STORM CLEAN UP



DERRYDONNELL JUNCTION  
REINSTATEMENT

## FUREY'S CROSS REINSTATEMENT



3 YEARS ROADS PROGRAMME  
PROPOSED AT MD MEETING  
14TH JANUARY 2025

## BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

During December 2024, Ballinasloe MD staff, and contractors and consultants on its behalf, have been working to complete and deliver several wide-ranging projects;

- Discretionary works & Councillor Notice of Motion
- Former National Road Restoration Improvement
- Hedge cutting, pothole repair, and drainage maintenance.
- Climate Change Adaption & Resilience
- Flood Relief Scheme Studies at Ballinasloe, Glenamaddy, Clonfert and Mountbellew

MD technical teams have been drafting the primary elements of the 2025 roadworks programme, for presentation to MD Councillors at the January MD meeting. This programme of proposed works includes year one of the 3-year multi-annual plan for restoration improvement roadworks, along with the proposed surface dressing restoration maintenance and discretionary tertiary roadworks for 2025.

Ballinasloe MD have worked with Corporate Services and Facilities sections to install a new user access system at Dunlo Recreational Track, BALLINASLOE, which will enable greater

opportunities for groups to gain wider access to the facility. (via [www.sportskey.com](http://www.sportskey.com) ). This facility is due to launch before the end of January 2025.

Ballinasloe MD is working with Ballinasloe Cycling Club to prepare for the Irish National Championships Cyclocross Ballinasloe 2025, being held on the Fair Green on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> January.

Below are examples of some of the works being undertaken in December 2024, throughout Ballinasloe MD.

**Dunlo Recreational Track**  
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 onsite. The green area in the centre of the track is used solely for Biodiversity.

091-509074 Email Website Map

Changing Rooms Floodlights Free Parking Gym Equipment Toilets Wheelchair Accessible

Running track public hours from 10am-8pm Mon, Wed, Fri and 10am-5pm Tues, Thurs, Sat. No access code required upon entry.

Sign In Sign Up

Choose a date and facility to book

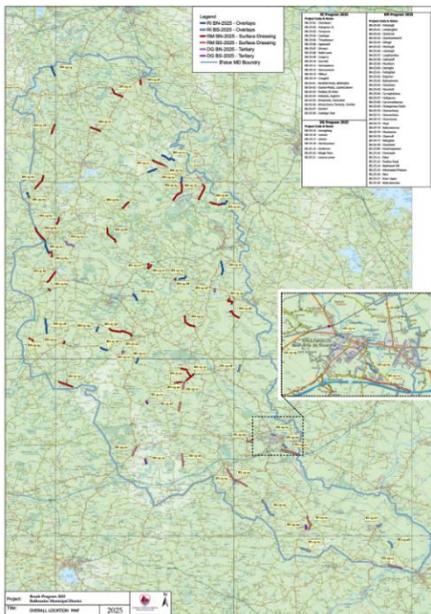
Jan 19, 2025

**Dunlo Recreational Park**  
SYNTHETIC RUNNING TRACK  
ATHLETICS / TRACK & FIELD, RUNNING

Sun 19/01/25	Mon 20/01/25	Tue 21/01/25	Wed 22/01/25	Thu 23/01/25	Fri 24/01/25	Sat 25/01/25
07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00	07:00 €10.00
08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00	08:00 €10.00
Booked	Public Hours					
Booked	Public Hours					
11:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
12:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
13:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
14:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
15:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
16:00 €10.00	Public Hours					
17:00 €10.00	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	17:00 €10.00
18:00 €10.00	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	18:00 €10.00
19:00 €10.00	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	Booked	Public Hours	19:00 €10.00
20:00 €10.00	20:00 €10.00	Booked	20:00 €10.00	Booked	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

IMPROVEMENTS BEING MADE TO ACCESS SYSTEM AT DUNLO RECREATIONAL TRACK, BALLINASLOE.

CREATING GREATER USAGE OPPORTUNITIES VIA [WWW.SPORTSKEY.COM](http://WWW.SPORTSKEY.COM)



BALLINASLOE MD DRAFT 2025 ROADWORKS PROGRAMME

TREE REMOVAL AFTER STORM DARRAGH AT CLOONCULLAUN IN BALLINASLOE NORTH



COMPLETED 2024 FORMER NATIONAL ROAD RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WITHIN THE BALLINASLOE SOUTH AREA - R446 AUGHRIM TO BALLINASLOE



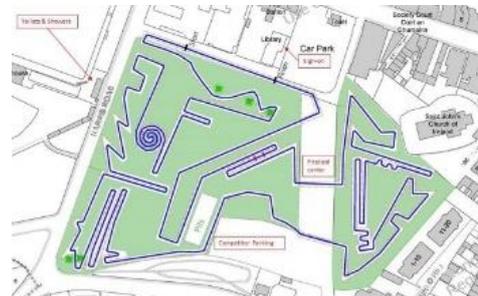
DRAINAGE CLEARANCE MAINTENANCE TO PREVENT FUTURE FLOODING OF R360  
DERRYVODE, WILLIAMSTOWN – BALLINASLOE NORTH – BEFORE & AFTER



IRISH NATIONAL 2025 CHAMPIONSHIPS CYCLOCROSS - FAIR GREEN, BALLINASLOE –  
RUN BY BALLINASLOE CYCLING CLUB



<https://www.facebook.com/ballinasloecyclingclub/>



CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

Conamara MD is currently preparing a DRAFT 2025 Roads Programme.

Below is a non-exhaustive list:

Restoration Improvement (RI)

Restoration Maintenance (RM)  
Discretionary Grant (DG)  
Safety Improvement Works  
Specific Improvement Grants  
Strategic Regional and Local Roads  
Drainage Works  
Community Involvement Scheme  
Former National Roads  
Rural Limit Speed Sign & Housing Estate Signage  
Cycle “Safe Passing” Signs  
Climate Change Adaptation & Rehabilitation Grant  
Council Own Funding Regional & Local Roads  
DRCD - Local Improvement Schemes  
NTA - Active Travel Programme 2025

Other Conamara MD activities include:

- Assessing 78 local Improvement Scheme submissions.  
These include 7 applications from the 3 Aran Islands. No applications received from Inishbofin.  
44 applications from mainland Conamara South Engineering Area and 27 applications from mainland Conamara North Engineering Area.
- Preparing tender documents for the roads programme.
- Tendering for annual plant hire and materials on a national framework.
- Developing the Annual Health and Safety Plans for our Direct Labour Crews.
- Due to recent prolonged Winter Weather the Conamara Outdoor crews were busy gritting roads throughout the MD.
- Oughterard Coach Park works are ongoing.
- Commenced installation of the National Speed Limit changes on our Road Network as part of the upcoming local road speed limit reductions.



OUGHTERARD  
COACH PARK  
CIVIL WORKS

RECENT DELIVERY  
OF POLES AND  
SIGNAGE FOR  
UPCOMING  
NATIONAL SPEED  
LIMIT  
IMPLEMENTATION



LP-1311 SEANADH PHÉISTÍN  
DURING RECENT WEATHER EVENT

## PRIMARY FOCUS OF ACTIVITY

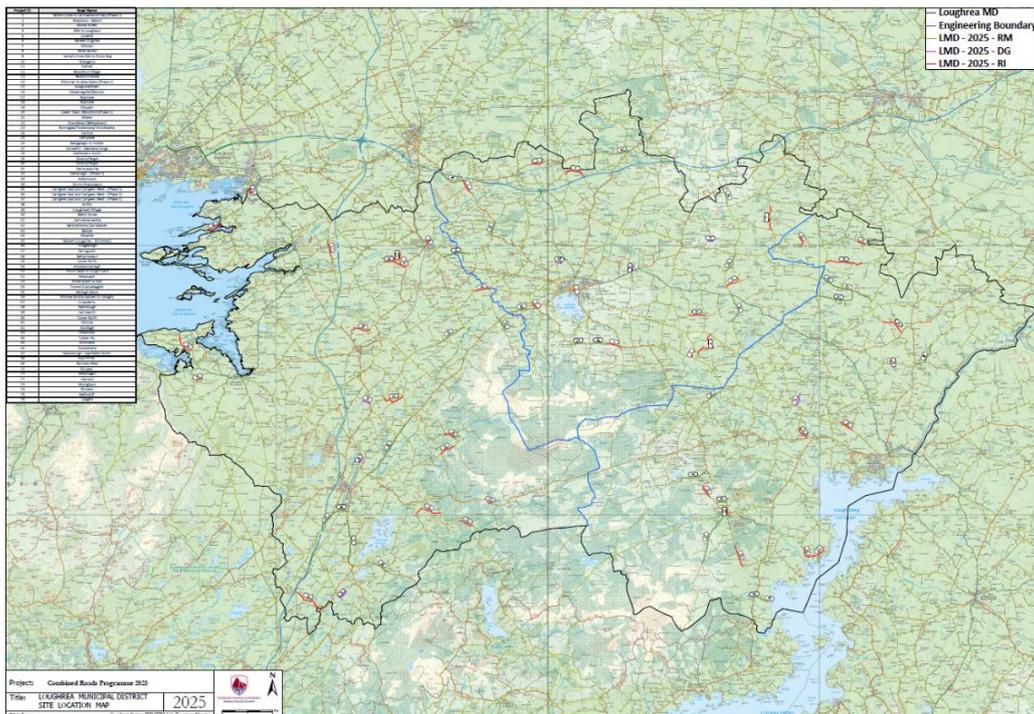
The 2025 Roads Programme and Multi-Annual Restoration Improvement Grant (RIG) Programme (2025-2027) was presented to the elected members early this month and agreed in principle.

Early start roads are currently being identified and works will commence once the weather allows.

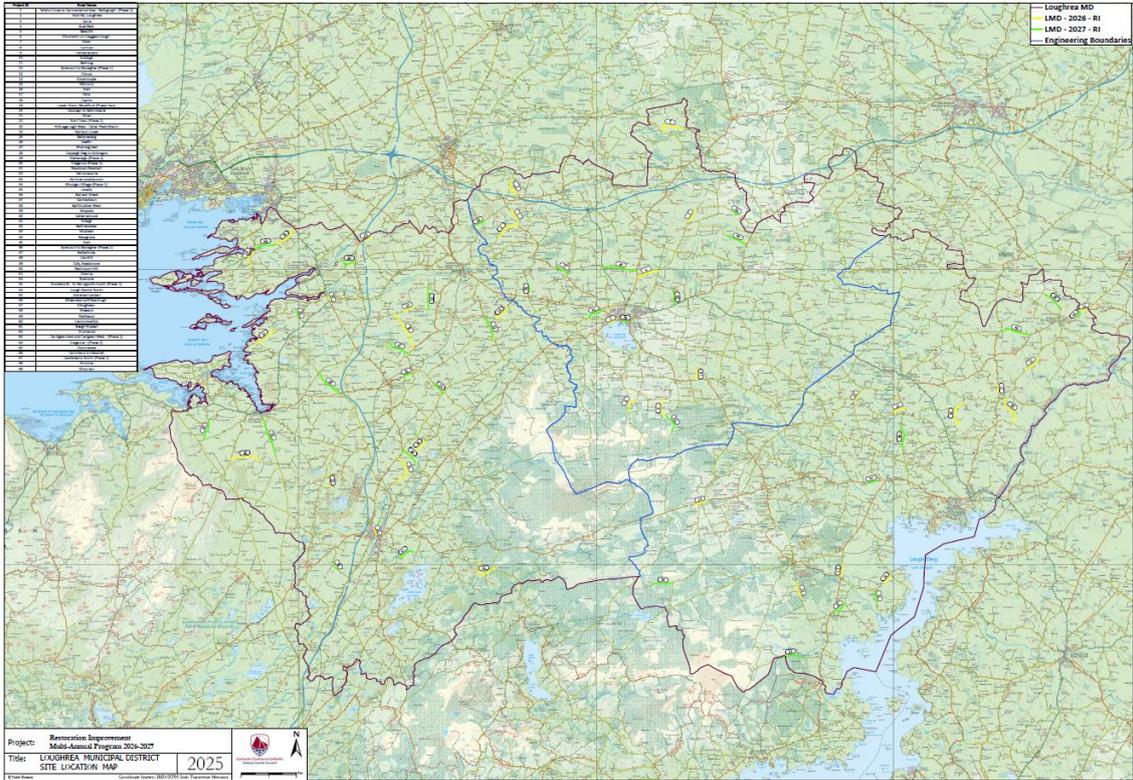
We are awaiting confirmation of Regional and Local Road Grant Allocations later this year and any changes required at that point will be incorporated within the current Road Programme.

A high-level overview of the 2025 Programme is as follows:

- 41 RIG projects to be completed at an anticipated budget of approximately €6,061,931.
- 22 Restoration Maintenance Grant (RMG) projects to be completed at an anticipated budget of approximately €1,554,211.
- 8 Local Tertiary Roads with an anticipated budget of €244,109.



A further 35 RIG projects have been identified for 2026 and 34 RIG projects for completion in 2027.



A SAMPLE OF OTHER ON-GOING WORKS IS AS OUTLINED BELOW



PLANTING OF 6 LARGE SPECIMEN TREES IN LOUGHREA TOWN. A RECENT TIDY TOWNS AUDIT OF LOUGHREA HIGHLIGHTED THE ABSENCE OF MATURE TRESS IN THE TOWN AND WE HOPE THAT THIS IS THE FIRST STEP IN RECTIFYING THIS.



ERECTION OF 10 LARGE PRINTED IMAGES AT LOUGHREA PLAYGROUND.

The images have been produced in a collaboration between Loughrea camera club and Gaeilge Locha Riach and the aim is to promote the Irish language, promote biodiversity and to make the public aware of the beauty of wildflowers in the local area. Each print highlights the Latin and Irish name for the flower with a link to the Gaeilge Locha Riach

website where more information on the plants can be found.



ONGOING WORK TO OPEN WATER TABLES ON THE REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK, LOUGHREA MD

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CONTINUOUS ISSUES WITH ILLEGAL DUMPING AT BOTTLE BANKS, STATION ROAD CAR PARK, LOUGHREA. OUTDOOR STAFF ARE REGULARLY ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE.



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REPAIR OF FOOTPATHS AT MAIN STREET, LOUGHREA



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REPAIRS TO COLLAPSED CULVERT ON LOCAL SECONDARY ROAD (L-8523)  
HOLLYMOUNT, PETERSWELL



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R353 DERRYBRIEN, AND CURHOOR,  
LOUGHREA. FALLEN TREES AND SNOW  
AFFECTED SALTING OPERATIONS IN THE  
RECENT COLD SPELL.



### WORKS CARRIED DURING THE MONTH IN TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

#### WINTER SERVICE PLAN

The first week of January brought very cold weather to the Municipal District with the area under orange and yellow warnings for snow and ice and low temperatures. Given the scale of the resources involved in delivering the winter maintenance service it is not possible to provide the service to all parts of the network. Galway County Council ordinarily treats 623 km of road which equates to 100% of the national primary network, 100% of the national secondary network and 20% of regional roads.



As this event was severe and prolonged all roads crews in the Tuam MD were tasked to carry out additional winter services. The town centre streets, footpaths and carparks in Tuam were all gritted by the crews throughout the week. Crews also gritted problematic hill areas in the MD. Stockpiles of grit were made available for use by the public around schools, estate and footpaths which generally would not be treated.



The MD provided salt at specific public locations over the week

#### ROAD MAINTENANCE

The last few months have indeed been tough for the Tuam Municipal District (MD) due to a combination of prolonged rainfall, storms, and freezing temperatures. These adverse weather conditions have significantly impacted road conditions, making maintenance a challenging task.

Despite these difficulties, the MD staff have been proactive in their response. They have worked diligently to ensure that roads remain passable, prioritising the safety and accessibility of the community.

This includes:

- **Regular Monitoring and Maintenance:** The staff have been continuously monitoring road conditions and performing necessary maintenance to address issues such as potholes, flooding, and ice formation.

- **Snow and Ice Removal:** With the low temperatures, snow and ice removal has been a critical task. The MD staff have been using salt and grit to treat the roads, reducing the risk of ice-related accidents and ensuring that vehicles can travel safely.
- **Emergency Response:** During storms and heavy rainfall, the staff have been on high alert, ready to respond to emergencies such as fallen trees, blocked roads, and other hazards. Their quick response helped to minimize disruptions and maintain access to essential services.
- **Communication with the Public:** Keeping the community informed about road conditions and any necessary precautions has been a key part of the strategy. This includes updates on road closures, detours, and safety tips for driving in adverse weather.
- **Collaboration with Other Services:** The MD staff have been working closely with other services, such as schools, to ensure that access is maintained. This collaboration helps to coordinate efforts and ensure that critical services remain operational.

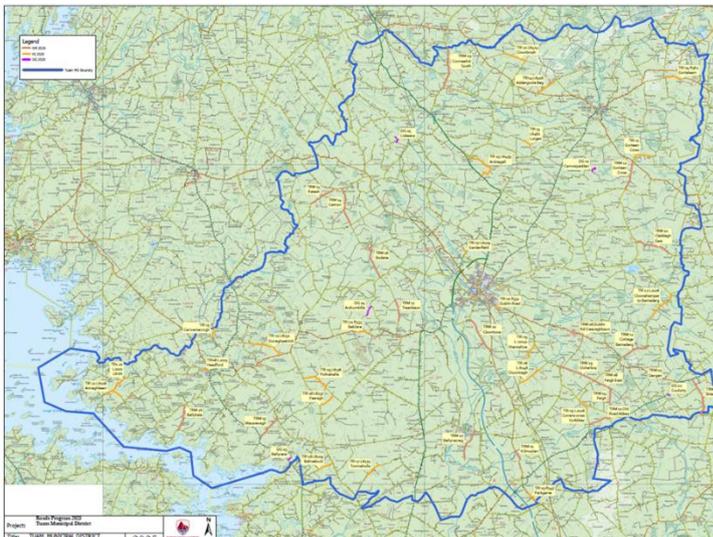


Overall, the dedication and hard work of the Tuam MD staff have been crucial in managing the challenging road conditions and ensuring the safety and accessibility of the community. Their efforts are a testament to their commitment to public service and community well-being.

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## MULTI ANNUAL RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2025-2027

The multi-annual programmes in respect of restoration improvement projects have been



prepared and implemented by local authorities since 1996. These programmes are funded through the Restoration Improvement (RI) Grant which is provided to meet expenditure on surface restoration works, road overlays and road reconstruction works.

In the past few weeks, the Tuam technical staff and supervisors have prepared a prioritized

Restoration Improvement Programme for the period 2025 to 2027. The Roads Agenda item was given a presentation at the January MD meeting of the proposed 2025 Annual Road Resurfacing Programme (Year 1) together with Years 2 and 3 of the proposed Three-Year Roads Programme.

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## OTHER NEWS

After Peter Roche, the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District, succeeded in the General Election, Cllr Andrew Reddington was elected as his replacement during the January meeting. Reddington will serve as Cathaoirleach from January until June 2025. Siobhan McHugh was co-opted to Pete Roche's vacant seat in the Tuam MD



**Mise, le meas,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Liane Conneally". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

**Chief Executive  
Galway County Council**

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2025**