



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Quality Customer Services Strategy

*Seirbhísí Custaiméara Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe –
Cultúr barr feabhais a chothú i ndáil le soláthar Seirbhísí Custaiméara*



*Galway County Council Customer Services –
To foster a culture of excellence in delivering Customer Services*

Galway County Council

Quality Customer Services Strategy

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Quality Customer Services Strategy

Introduction and Summary

This document sets out Galway County Council's Strategy to achieve excellence in Customer Service. Customer service is delivering on what is promised. Excellent customer service is delivering more than what is promised.

This Strategy has been prepared by the Councils Customer Services Officers Group with contributions from the Customer Services Unit and customer feedback through our Customer Experience Surveys and on-line systems for gaining feedback from customers.

- **Our objective is to foster a culture of excellence in delivering customer services**

We will apply the following strategies to achieve this objective;

Make it clear to all our Customers what level of service you should expect from Galway County Council and our staff;

Use the resources we have effectively, to deliver the best standard of services we can, based on customer needs;

Learn from situations when a service is not consistent or does not operate as well as we would like;

Let our Customers know if we are consistent in maintaining high standards by actively seeking customer feedback and reviewing our performance against recognised standards.

These strategies are set out in the following documents;

Our Customer Charter, which includes a Customer Code of Conduct
Our Statement of Quality Service Standards
Our Customer Complaints and Appeals Procedure

These documents make up our **Quality Customer Services Strategy** and are published and made available to the public at all our service points and on www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie . or by contacting customerservices@galwaycoco.ie. Copies can be made available in alternative formats on request.

Targets and Actions to deliver on our **Quality Customer Services Strategy** are included in our Annual Customer Services Action Plan. The Action Plan takes into account the priorities of the Galway County Council's Corporate Plan and targets of the Service Plans of each Unit. The Customer Services Plan is implemented by the Customer Services Officers Group which is comprised of staff from all major services areas and reports regularly to the County Council Executive Team.

Progress Reports on Customer Services are provided to our Elected Members and are published as part of Galway County Council's Annual Report and Annual Budget Documents.

- **The following information is provided in this document;**

A profile of Galway County Council and the services we provide;

A reference to who our Customers are;

Our Customer Charter, stating what our customers can expect from us;

Our Statement of Quality Service Standards;

Our Customer Code of Conduct;

Our Complaints and Appeals Procedure;

Our Commitment to Action and Evaluating our Performance;.

Maps of our Service Locations;

A copy of our Complaints Form;

A copy of our Form to Request Information and/or Assistance in an Alternative Format.

For Further Information on our Services or Our Quality Customer Services Strategy

Please Contact

COMHAIRLE CHONTAE NA GAILLIMHE GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway

www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie / [www.twitter.com/galwaycoco/](https://twitter.com/galwaycoco/)

www.facebook.com/GalwayCounty

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Telephone: 091 509000

Fax: 091 509010

SMS / Text: 087 77 99 888

Email: customerservices@galwaycoco.ie / Email: gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie

Áras An Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway

Tel: 091 – 509000

General Office Opening Hours:

Monday – Friday

9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Map Shop Office Hours :

Monday – Friday

09.15 am – 12.30 pm

About Galway County Council

County Galway is the second largest County in Ireland having an area of almost 6,000 sq. Kilometres and is served by two local authorities, Galway County Council and Galway City Council.

Galway County Council is the local authority for the County of Galway with a population of 175,124 (based on Census 2011 and excluding Galway City). The Council is a forum for effective, accountable and democratic representation and the delivery of a range of public services for the County. In 2014, the County Council was expanded to a total of thirty-nine elected members who represent five Municipal Districts. The Municipal Districts are Athenry-Oranmore, Ballinalsoe, Conamara, Loughrea and Tuam. Each year the Council nominates a Cathaoirleach (Chairperson) from among its members.

The Council undertakes its role directly and also in co-operation with national, regional and local organisations, local development groups and communities. Its functions are set out in Legislation (Local Government Act 2001) and in various Statutory Plans and Policies. An overview of our main aims, functions and strategies are included in our Corporate Plan.

Mission Statement and Values

Our Corporate Plan, includes the overall Mission and Values of Galway County Council and places a high level of importance on customer care and quality service. A core value of the Plan is to provide helpful public services.

Mission Statement

To provide civic leadership and effective democratic representation, while leading on sustainable economic, social, cultural and community development and delivering co-ordinated, effective and good value services, aimed at realising the full potential of the County of Galway

As a Council we value;

Democracy;
Being Helpful;
Being Progressive;
Accountability;
and Value for Money in all we do.

Our Services

The Council works to progress the sustainable development of the County, protecting its landscape and environment while enhancing its infrastructure and economic resources and supporting its unique language and culture.

Some of our services and responses are easy to see, while others are less noticeable and may have longer term impacts. Although our outputs are more often recognised as physical 'things' such as roads, houses and libraries, playgrounds and parks we also have a role in developing communities and in facilitating local economic and cultural development. We provide over 100 different services and functions, many of which are provided free of charge.

Four Directorates and a Finance Unit have responsibility for providing the services delivered by Galway County Council. The Directorates are;

- Planning, Community, Enterprise and Economic Development;**
- Environment and Water Services;**
- Corporate, Housing and Emergency Services;**
- Roads, Transportation, Marine and General Services.**

Operating Environment and Limitations on Resources

National policies, funding programmes and associated compliance requirements including, requirements under European Union Directives will remain significant influences on the operating environment of Galway County Council. The economic climate and the funding of local government will continue to impact on our financial and staffing resources. These factors present a challenge to us to maintain high standards in service delivery within limited resources.

Galway County Council's Corporate Plan refers to limitations in our resources but, also sets out our aim to remain accountable, progressive, helpful and apply value for money in all that we do. In this context our objective is to foster a culture of excellence in delivering customer services.

Customer service is delivering on what is promised. Excellent customer service is delivering more than what is promised. Our Strategy is to use our resources effectively to implement actions so that, we can be consistent, as an organisation and public services provider, in delivering what is promised and in reviewing our progress towards excellence.

Serving our Customers

Our Customers

Our customers are people of all ages who live, work or visit County Galway or businesses or organisations that deal with us in any way.

If you have a reason to contact us we consider you our Customer.

We consider that our customers are not just recipients of services but, care about the community in which they live and how their local authority is working for their County.

We have extensive dealings on a daily basis with people living in the County and with Elected Members working on their behalf. We also deal with national representatives, community leaders and with various Government Departments, State Agencies, Local Development Groups and Sectoral Representative Groups.

The population of the County area is 175,124 (*excluding Galway City which has population of 75,529. Source: National Census 2011*). Our population profile is similar to Ireland's national population profile in respect of persons with a disability and ethnic groups however, Galway is unique in having the largest and most populous Gaeltacht or Irish speaking communities in the Country. The Gaeltacht is located for the most part in the South Conamara area in the West of the County and also includes Oileáin Árann, some of the suburbs of Galway City and the eastern hinterland of the River Corrib. The County also attracts a high number of tourists annually given its attractive landscape and unique cultural identity. The County has a number of prominent towns but, a large percentage of the population live in dispersed rural areas. There is an increasing population density in communities within a 20km radius of the Galway City.

Universal Access for all Our Customers

Our **Customer Charter** sets out our commitment to Customers. A fundamental part of this is inclusion and providing equal access to our services. This includes persons with a physical and/or an intellectual disability. **Universal access** to our services will continue in accordance with the Disability Act 2005 and implementation of our Disability Action Plan 2007-2015..In keeping with our Accessible Information Policy, where practicable and appropriate, all information available to the public will be made available in an accessible format on request e.g. large print, Braille and audio file. The '*Request for Information and Assistance in an Alternative Format*' application form is included in this Strategy and is available on our website. Complaints under the Disability Act 2005 can also be submitted to our Access Officer using our complaints procedure.

Galway County Council is also working with other public bodies and communities as part of **Ireland's Age Friendly City and Counties Programme**. www.agefriendlyireland.ie

Customer Involvement

Customer involvement in the planning and delivery of services is crucial. There are a number of ways in which you can shape and influence the delivery of services through our representative structures including, communicating with your Elected Representatives, attendance at public consultation meetings, using the comments systems on our web-site or as part of organisations in the Public Participation Network and Strategic Policy Committees (SPC's).

Customer Feedback

We value the opinion and feedback of our Customers. Customers can also make a comment, provide a compliment or observation about any aspect of our service using our **On-line Comments Service**. We have updated our comment system as part of our newly launched web-site, making it simple and easy to use. www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

Customers are also using the 'Fix Your Street' service to submit queries, issues and complaints about specific roads and other matters. Galway County Council's Social Media Policy available on our web-site, refers to how comments are dealt with as part of our Social Media presence.

The Customer Service team have undertaken Customer Experience Surveys and these have been reviewed in the preparation of our Quality Customer Services Strategy.

Our Strategy has placed a priority on learning from situations when a service is not consistent or does not operate as well as we would like and on letting our Customers know if we are consistent in maintaining high standards by actively seeking customer feedback and reviewing our performance against recognised standards. We are committed under this Strategy to finding effective ways to gain our customers feedback and measure our performance.

Quality Customer Services - What we have delivered

The following services are an example of our enhanced approach to Customer Services delivered under our Customer Services Action Plan (2009-2014).

-
- **New Phone Service has been introduced.** The system provides options to callers to choose the service they need quickly and improved phone messaging options for staff and customers. We change the options you hear when you call our main numbers in response to specific deadlines and we can now monitor our call answering rates.
-
- **Text Message enquiry system is now operational.** Our SMS contact is 087 77 99 888 and keywords can be used for main service areas.
A Text and Email Alert System in South Galway was piloted – allowing customers in that area to register for either a text or email alert to be updated on road closures due to flooding or other weather events.
-
- **Revised Public Opening hours** were standardised across all sections in our Headquarters (9.00-4.00pm Monday to Friday) in resulting in Motor Tax being open an additional two and half hours per week.
-
- **Fix Your Street – on-line reporting system operational.** Galway County Council was the second Local Authority in the Country to introduce this system. Customer can log onto Fix Your Street to report road matters and other issues in their area and mark it on a map. All customers are responded to within 48 hours.
-
- A new **Customer Services Unit** and Team is now in place and using customerservices@galwaycoco.ie The front desk in the Atrium in Áras an Chontae now operates as a Customer Service desk with a query tracking system in place.
-
- A **Social Media Policy was adopted** and a Facebook page launched and we have increased our Twitter followers each month. Many services areas across the Council which target businesses, community groups and the general public have increased their use of social media, introduced new ‘apps’ and provide regular e-zines.
-
- **Staff workshops** were delivered on Customer Services, Irish Language, Freedom of Information and Records Management to ensure awareness among staff of the importance of Customer Services.
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- **Redesign of www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie** was completed.
-
- **A number of new public facing modules were launched** (Pre-Planning Report, eplan, Galway Graveyards and a new mapping interface allowing customers to find maps on important infrastructure and services including for example, Playgrounds.
-
- **A Framework Agreement in place for Irish language** to assist improve compliance with regulations and our phone system allows customers to choose to follow their call through with an Irish speaking staff member.
-

- **Public Adverts are now co-ordinated centrally** to reduce costs and Elected Members now have advance notice of all public adverts and deadlines.

- **Register of Applications Forms was established.** 150 applications forms were reviewed and standardised across all service areas with an agreed coding system. Any changes to forms will be included on a register so that customers can be confident they are getting the most up to date and relevant form.

- **What's Happening** is a weekly internal e-zine for staff on Council activities so that our staff are up to date on major service deadlines and events of the Council.

- A number of pilot projects were undertaken to provide staff with mobile devices to assist them to capture information they need when out on site and increase efficiencies.

- The Council adopted the **Age Friendly Strategy**.

- **Customer Experience Surveys** were undertaken in Áras on Chontae and on our-**On-line Customer Comment System** was upgraded.

Quality Customer Services - What We Plan to Deliver

The Customer Services Officers Group will draft and implement Annual Action Plans which enhance what is delivered to date and focus on the following;

- Implementation of **e-government initiatives**, to facilitate access to information on services on-line, to enhance the customer experience and increase efficiency and responsiveness.

- Introduction a **Customer Relationship Management System (CRM)** to co-ordinate our response to Customers more efficiently.

- Continue to expand our new **phone system** to our office network in the County.

- Increase our focus on gaining and acting on **Customer Feedback**.

- To provide, operate and **maintain consistent high standards** in customer services in line with the Customer Charter and Statement of Standards.

- To deliver on the Strategies as set out in the Introduction to the Quality Customer Services Strategy.

Annual Action Plans are developed and implemented by the Customer Services Officers Group which is comprised of staff from all main Service Units

Our objective is to foster a culture of excellence in delivering Customer Services.



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Customer Charter

What you can expect from Galway County Council

- **Quality Service Standards:**

We will publish a statement that outlines the quality of service you can expect from us. If we can't meet our quality service standards, we'll tell you and explain the reasons.

- **Equality and Diversity:**

We will treat all our customers equally and with dignity. We aim to make our services accessible to everyone.

- **Physical Access:**

We will provide clean, accessible public offices that meet all health and safety standards. This includes making sure that our offices are accessible for people with disabilities and others with special needs.

- **Information:**

We will provide clear, accurate and up-to-date information about our services at all our office locations and on our website. Also, we will continually work to make our forms easy to understand.

- **Correspondence:**

If we need to write to you, we will make sure to give you a contact name in all correspondence.

- **Timeliness and Courtesy:**

We will deliver our services with courtesy, sensitivity and, if possible, without delay. If there is a delay, we will do our best to keep it to a minimum.

Also, we ask our customers to treat staff and other members of the public with courtesy and respect.

- **Complaints:**

We accept there could be times when a service might not operate as well as we would like it to. Therefore, if you have a complaint about a service or about accessibility, we will provide a transparent and simple-to-use complaints procedure to deal with your issue. We will provide details of this procedure at all service points and on our website.

www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

- **Consultation and Evaluation:**

We value your opinion and feedback – it helps us to make improvements to our services. We will do our best to make it as easy as possible for you to be included in consultations and discussions about services.

- **Choice:**

If possible, we'll give you a choice of how you can access a service. We will use technology to provide online access to services where we can. Also, if it's possible, we will offer you a choice of ways to pay for services.

- **Official Languages Equality:**

We will provide our services to customers through Irish or English in accordance with our language policy – Scéim Teanga

- **Working with others – partnerships:**

We will work closely with other public service organisations to make sure that you get a better public service.

- **Internal Customers**

We recognise our staff as internal customers and we value their opinion and feedback. We will use our Customer Services Officers Group and other communication channels to include staff in discussions about services.

For more information, please see our Statement of Quality Service Standards and Customer Services Strategy available at any office, or on:

www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

Contact 091-509000 or customerservices@galwaycoco.ie or gaeilge@cocogaillimh.ie



Statement of Quality Service Standards

This statement outlines what standards you can expect from us and is based on our Customer Charter. Our Customer Charter is displayed at all our public points of service and is available on www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

This Statement is for any person, business or organisation that Galway County Council provides a service to. If you have reason to contact us we consider you a customer.

Our objective is to foster a culture of excellence in the delivery of Customer Services. We will use our resources to the best of our ability to deliver and maintain a consistent and high standard of services.

We know that on occasion, services will not operate as we would hope. If we are unable to meet a standard in this statement, for any particular reason, we will make this known and explain the reasons.

Standard of Service you can expect from Galway County Council

In Person: If you visit one of our offices we will

- Provide a clean and safe office and all public signs will be in Irish and English.
- Meet you punctually if you have made an appointment.
- Respect your privacy and provide private meeting facilities if necessary.
- Deal with you in a polite, courteous and fair manner.
- Deal with your enquiry and provide relevant information as quickly as possible.
- Use our staff resources effectively to keep queuing times for services to a minimum. If on occasion queues are unavoidable we will make this known and explain the reasons;
- Facilitate access for people with disabilities.

If you visit one of our Libraries we will

- Respect our readers' needs and make everybody feel welcome.
- Treat every reader with dignity and respect and offer a generous amount of attention.
- Provide additional support if it is your first time in the Library.
- Help you to access material in different formats to suit your requirements.
- Make each of our libraries a special place for children and make all our services open and accessible to all.

In Writing: If you write or email us we will in our written reply

- Use clear and simple language and keep technical terms to a minimum.
- Acknowledge all correspondence (letter, fax, e-mail) within 5 working days and endeavour to reply within 15 working days or less.
- Include the writer's name, contact number, e-mail address and file reference number.
- Notify you by 'out of office' e-mail response if a staff member is absent for more than 3 working days and provide you with an alternative contact number.

By Telephone**If you telephone us we will**

- Be available to take your call 9.00am to 5.00pm (Monday to Friday).
- Answer calls as quickly as we can and respond with courtesy.
- Call you back if we cannot deal with your query immediately.
- Be helpful and clear and direct you to most appropriate person to deal with your query without delay.
- Always provide you with a contact number if you need to call us back.
- Direct you to a member of staff who can deal with your query in Irish.
- Make every effort to return your call within 24 hours.
- Update messages recorded on our phones to let you know that the staff member is absent.

By Application Form**If you apply for one of our services we will:**

- Explain precisely what is required to avail of a service
- Make the application form easy to find and provide accurate and precise instructions on how to fill it up
- Only ask you for information that, is essential to a fair and prompt assessment of your application
- Ensure that personal data acquired by us is used only for the purpose for which it was sought
- Acknowledge that we received your application and deal with your application within agreed time limits.
- Write to you with a decision on your application or your appeal and give reasons if it was unsuccessful.

On- line**If you visit our website we will:**

- Give you information on Services and on how to find out more about our Services.
- Publish copies of our Annual Reports and Major Plans and Budgets.
- Let you pay for as many services as feasible on-line.
- Have a copy of all our application forms.
- Offer alternate accessible formats of our publications on request. (e.g.: Large Print)
- Make it easy to submit a comment and promptly update our site.
- If you contact via **our Social Media** we will respond in line with our Social Media Policy.

As Gaeilge**If you wish to use our services through Irish we will:**

- Provide our brochures, information leaflets, application forms and policy documents in Irish to comply with the provisions of *An Scéim Teanga 2014-2017*
- Reply in Irish to any correspondence received in Irish.
- Establish to the greatest extent possible, a dedicated Irish Language telephone service for those who wish to conduct their business in Irish.
- Ensure that any new interactive Information Systems (IS) service will be fully bi-lingual.
- Let you know when you visit our offices what services are available in Irish at each public counter and the extent of the service available in Irish.

Customer Service Delivery Response Targets

The Statement of Quality Service Standards applies to all service areas and states that we will;

- Acknowledge all correspondence (letter, fax, e-mail) within 5 working days and endeavour to reply within 15 working days or less.
- Reply in Irish to any correspondence received in Irish.

Our Complaints and Appeals Procedure states that all complaints will be responded to within 15 working days.

The following tables provide customer service delivery response target times for specific service areas.

Our Quality Customer Services Strategy has noted that our operating environment as a Council is placing significant demands on our resources. Our objective is however, to foster a culture of excellence in the delivery of Customer Services. We will therefore, use our resources to the best of our ability to deliver and maintain a consistent and high standard of service.

We know that on occasion, services will not operate as we would hope. If we are unable to meet a standard in this statement, for any particular reason, we will make this known and explain the reasons.

HOUSING SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Acknowledge receipt of housing application/transfer request and advise of procedures	Within 10 working days
Acknowledge receipt of housing loan application and advise of any omissions	Within 10 working days
Arrange to interview loan applicant where all details supplied.	Within 10 working days
Acknowledge applications and advise of any omissions for Disabled Persons Grant/Mobility Aids Grant	Within 10 working days
Acknowledge application for Housing Aid for Older Persons Grant	Within 10 working days

EMERGENCY SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Fire Service response to an Emergency Mobilisation	Full –time in City within 1-2 minutes. Retained in City & County within 5-6 minutes
Senior Fire Officer on call assistance at fires or other emergencies including Major Emergencies	Respond Within 10 minutes and attend within one to two hours if required
Fire service inspection of premises following written complaint from public	Complaint prioritised and response within 10 working days or less depending on priority Life Critical complaints prioritised respond within one working day
Consultative appointment with member of the public/ consultant on fire safety matters	Prioritised and within 2 weeks of request
Dangerous substance (petroleum) tests	Prioritised and within 1 week of request
Fire safety inspections of public assembly venue at annual licensing	Applications prioritised. Within 4 weeks for annual licensing inspections of selected licence applications
Fire safety certificate applications processed	Within 2 month statutory period

ROADS & TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
<p>Pothole Repairs</p> <p>(a) National Roads & Roads where daily traffic exceeds 5000</p> <p>(b) Regional Roads (daily traffic between 3000 - 5000)</p> <p>(c) Regional, Local Primary & Secondary Roads (daily traffic between 250 – 2999)</p> <p>(d) Local Tertiary & Local Roads (daily traffic less than 250)</p> <p>* The ability to achieve the response targets detailed will be directly influenced by the level of resources available to the Council to undertake routine road maintenance at any given time.</p>	<p>(a) Within 2 working days of notification *</p> <p>(b) Within 5 working days *</p> <p>(c) Within 10 working days *</p> <p>(d) Within 20 working days *</p>
Acknowledge requests during emergencies & advise complainants of planned action.	As soon as possible.
Response to emergency flooding in houses/structures.	On priority basis.

PLANNING SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Issuing of planning decisions	Before statutory deadline
Building Control Inspections	Comply with the requirements of the Building Control Regulations 2014
Planning consultation meetings for the Conamara North / South, Tuam/Ballinasloe Oranmore/Loughrea areas held in Aras an Chontae	Once per week
Registration and acknowledgement of planning applications	Within 7 working days
Referral of applications to statutory bodies	Within 14 working days
Submission of documents to An Bord Pleanála	Within 14 working days
Acknowledge complaints of unauthorised development	Within 14 working days

WATER SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Water Services Requests	Comply with delivery standards set down by Irish Water and the Commission for Energy Regulation

Irish Water – Customer Services Centre

Since 1/1/2014 Irish Water has assumed responsibility for water and wastewater services nationally. In order to ensure the impact on the customer is minimized Irish Water has entered into a Service Level Agreement with each Local Authority to continue with the delivery of the services but, with certain changes to systems and procedures to enable Irish Water to quickly assume control of the financial implications of becoming the new National Water Services Authority

The main change for the customer is that initial contact in respect of the majority of water and wastewater related incidents must in the first instance be reported to Irish Water.

Irish Water Customer Service Centre 1890 278 278 or on line at www.water.ie or on social media Twitter @IrishWater. These contact details are also available on the Council's website. www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Investigation of illegal dumping and water pollution	Complaint prioritised and response within 3 working days or less depending on seriousness. Serious pollution complaints response on same day
Delivery of Recyccone Home Composter to purchasers	Within 10 working days
Issue of waste management information to households	Annually
Dog Warden Response Time	Complaint prioritised and response within 3 working days or less

HUMAN RESOURCES	RESPONSE TARGET
Notification of outcome of job interviews	Within 10 working days
Payment of retirement gratuity	First payment run after retirement date
General staff enquiries	Within 5 working days

CORPORATE SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Register of Electors	Meet statutory deadlines
Issue of Casual Trading Licences	Within 15 working days
Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment	In line with regulations
Complaints to the Access Officer	In line with regulations

LIBRARY SERVICE	RESPONSE TARGET
Library Service response to request for information	Within 8 working days if not immediately available
Library service advice on books and reading	Within 8 working days if not immediately available

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES	RESPONSE TARGET
Advice on community and local economic development, social inclusion, RAPID and participation issues.	Within 5 working days
Acknowledge receipt of Grant Applications for Arts, Sports, Amenity (including Tidy Towns) and Community Based Economic Development Grants, RAPID Community Supports.	Within 8 working days

Review Grant applications and recommend approvals to Council.	Within two months of advertised closing date of Schemes.
Payment of Arts, Amenity and Community Based Economic Development Grants	Within 20 working days of receipt of completed claim and compliance with conditions
Notification of relevant community and economic based national and local funding programmes	10 working days notice

FINANCE SERVICE	RESPONSE TARGET
Process motor tax applications	3-5 working days
Efficient payment of accounts payable Compliance with Prompt	Efficient administration of accounts due
Payment and E-day statutory requirements	Early notification and liaison with customers regarding account issues

Customer Role

We can help you best if you

- Follow our Customer Code of Contact, available at all our public service points and on www.gaillimh.ie and www.galway.ie;
- Please use a reference number in your dealings with us, where one has been provided to you;.
- Give us any information you have that is relevant to your enquiry;.
- Complete your application form accurately and clearly. Please sign it prior to submission;
- Be aware of closing dates and fees when applying for services;
- Let us know about any changes in your circumstances that might affect a decision;
- Respond promptly if we need additional information from you;
- Make an appointment in advance so we can prepare for your meeting and let us know if you can't keep your appointment.

Customer Code of Conduct

What Galway County Council expects from Customers

- We expect you to treat our staff and other customers with courtesy and respect.
- We ask you to respect our offices, branch libraries and other amenity facilities.
- We expect you to take home your litter from scenic areas and respect the rules at playgrounds.
- We advise you to mind your personal property – please do not leave personal property unattended while using our facilities.

Thank you

What Galway County Council will not accept from our Customers

Galway County Council will not accept any form of intimidating behaviour, including harassment, sexual harassment and bullying. We will not tolerate such behaviour and we will take any necessary action to prevent it, including referral to An Garda Síochána.

Our staff may end a phone call or a meeting, withdraw a service immediately, suspend it temporarily or ask that you leave our facilities if you do any of the following;

- harass a staff member or another member of the public by using abusive, racist, obscene or threatening language;
- use violence or threaten to use violence toward staff or members of the public;
- maliciously damage or steal property or use alcohol or illicit drugs while using our facilities;
- smoke where it is not permitted; or
- disrupt others or interfere with their enjoyment of an amenity or access to a service.

We also ask that customers do not engage in repeated complaints or submission of queries and issues which are deliberately time consuming. Our Strategy set out a targets for responding which we endeavour to meet and our Complaints and Appeal Procedure.

Customers who refuse to leave our facilities when requested may be referred to An Garda Síochána. Customers who have services withdrawn for a defined period or temporarily suspended may appeal this decision and the entitlement to a service will remain suspended pending the outcome of the appeal. Complaints are addressed to the Customer Services Officer for that service area and can be submitted in writing at any of our service locations or by post, email or on-line. Customer **Complaints and Appeals Procedure** is available at all our public service points and on www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie

Our Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Galway County Council's Customer Charter commits to providing a transparent and simple-to-use complaints and appeals procedure to deal with your issue. Details of this procedure is available at all public service points and on our website: www.galway.ie / www.gaillimh.ie

Galway County Council treats complaints and appeals seriously and we aim to deal with it promptly and in confidence. Our Strategy is to focus on and learn from situations when a service is not consistent or does not operate as well as we would like.

What is a Complaint?

- A complaint is when you tell us you are not happy about the quality of a service we provide

It could be about anything and could include:

- When we do not deliver a satisfactory service;
- When we give you the wrong information;
- When you receive a poor quality or below standard service;
- When you are unhappy with the quality of service provided by a member of staff.

What is an Appeal?

- An appeal is made about a specific decision that has been by Galway County Council about the provision of a service or an entitlement to service.

Complaints and Appeals under the Disability Act

Customers can use our Complaints Form to complaint under the **Disability Act 2005**. Please submit this to Access Officer, Corporate Services, Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway. Phone: 091-509225 or Email: accessofficer@galwaycoco.ie

An appeal regarding any decision in relation to a complaint under the Disability Act 2005 can be made in writing to the Office of the Ombudsman, 18 Lower Lesson Street, Dublin 2.

Requests for information or assistance in an alternative format can also be made by contacting our Access Officer or using the request from available on www.gaillimh.ie or www.galway.ie

Who can make a complaint or an appeal?

Any customer. This is any person, business, organisation or association who has a reason to contact and deal with us.

When does this procedure not apply?

This procedure does not apply to decisions of Galway County Council where there is a Statutory appeals process nor does it interfere with your rights under the Freedom of Information Acts or Access to Information on the Environment Regulations. Requests should be made in writing to

Freedom of Information Officer (FOI) Corporate Services, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway foi@galwaycoco.ie	Access to Information on the Environment Officer (AIE) Corporate Services, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway aie@galwaycoco.ie
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Further information on these statutory entitlements are available by contacting the above Officers or on www.foi.gov.ie (Freedom of Information) and on Access to Information on the Environment www.environ.ie .

How to make a complaint

You can bring it to the attention of the staff member you are dealing with in the relevant Unit so that it could be resolved immediately. You may also ask to bring the complaint to the attention of the Line Manager in that Unit and if he or she is not available, you may ask to speak to the Customer Services Officer for that Unit.

You can submit a written complaint to the Customer Services Officer for that Unit. You can choose to use our Customer Complaint Form which is available at all our public services point or on our website.

Written Complaints can be made as follows;

- By Post to the relevant section (you can choose to use our Complaint Form)
- By email to customerservices@galwaycoco.ie
- On-Line by using our Customer Comment System on www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

Your complaint will be fully investigated and a response issued within fifteen working days.

How to make an Appeal

You can submit a written appeal to the Unit which issued the decision to you.

You can do this as follows;

- By Post to the relevant Unit
- By email to customersservices@galwaycoco.ie
- On-Line by using our Customer Comment System on www.gaillimh.ie / www.galway.ie

If you are unhappy with response provided

If the Complaint or an Appeal is not resolved to your satisfaction you make this known in writing to the Customer Services Officer in that section.

It will be referred to a nominated Senior Officer in that Unit for review.

In the case of an Appeal it will be referred to a nominated Senior Officer within that Unit that was not directly involved in the original decision.

If you are still unhappy

If you are still unhappy with our response you can contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Office of the Ombudsman

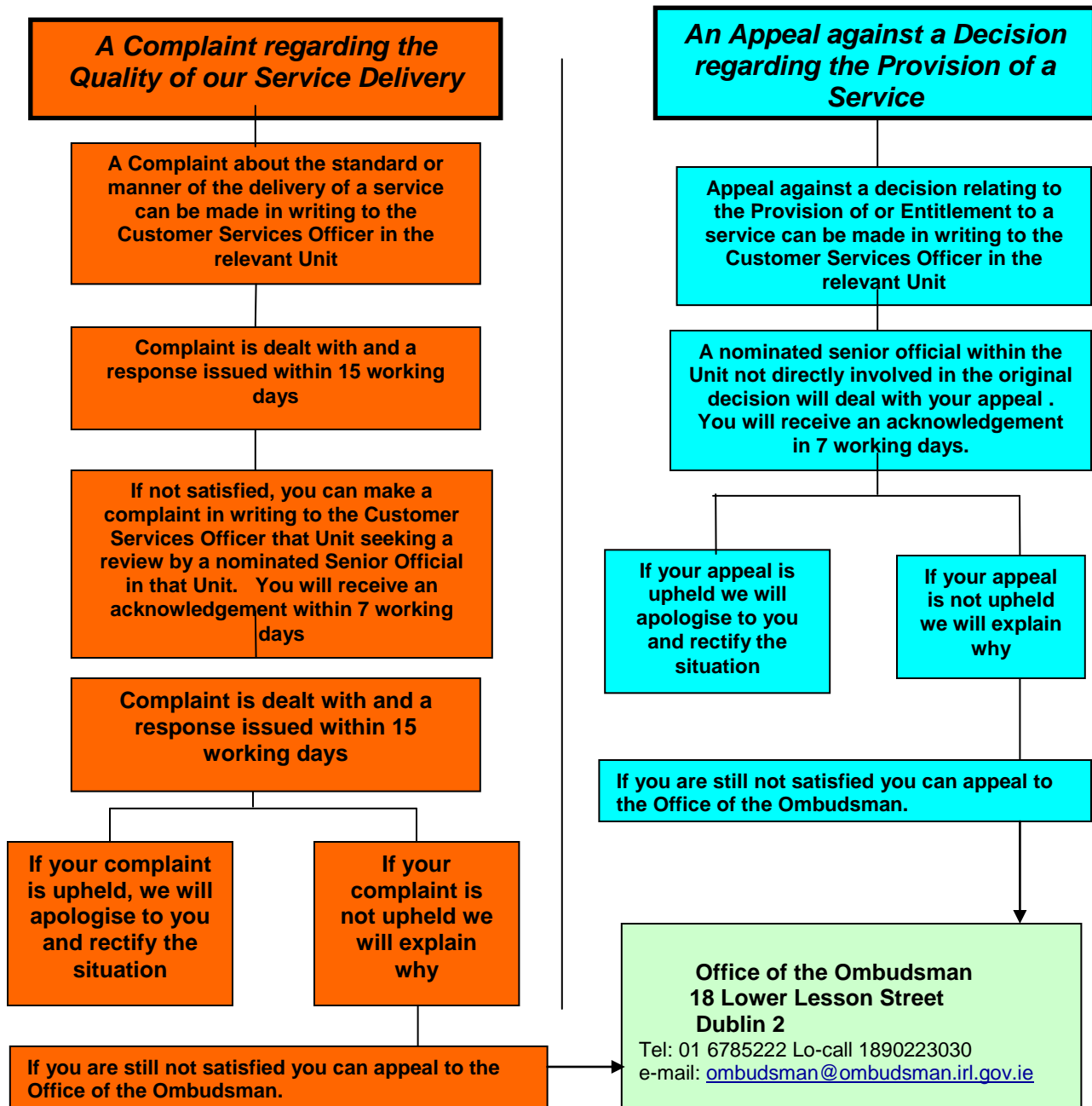
Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2

Lo-call: 1890 223030 | Tel: 01 639 5600 | Fax: 01 639 5674

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie |

The Ombudsman will not normally investigate a complaint unless the internal complaints procedure has been exhausted.

Summary of the Complaints and Appeals Procedure



NOTE: The Complaints and Appeals procedures do not apply to decisions of Galway County Council where there is a statutory appeals process nor does it interfere with your rights under the Freedom of Information Acts.

Freedom of Information – Your Statutory Right
 Galway County Council continues to meet its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.
 Requests under the **Freedom of Information Acts or Access to Information on the Environment** should be addressed in writing to: Freedom of Information Officer or the Access to Information on the Environment Officer, Corporate Services, Galway County Council Áras an Chontae Prospect Hill Galway or foi@galwaycoco.ie or aie@galwaycoco.ie Phone: 091-509225

Commitment to Action and Evaluating our Performance

Customer Services Officers Group

Actions to deliver on our **Quality Customer Services Strategy** are drafted annually and implemented by the Customer Services Officers Group. (CSOG).

This Group is comprised of staff from all major services areas and reports on actions regularly to the Council Executive Team. Progress Reports on Customer Services are provided to Elected Members and published as part of Galway County Council's Annual Report and Annual Budget Documents.

Staff Awareness of Quality Customer Service Standards

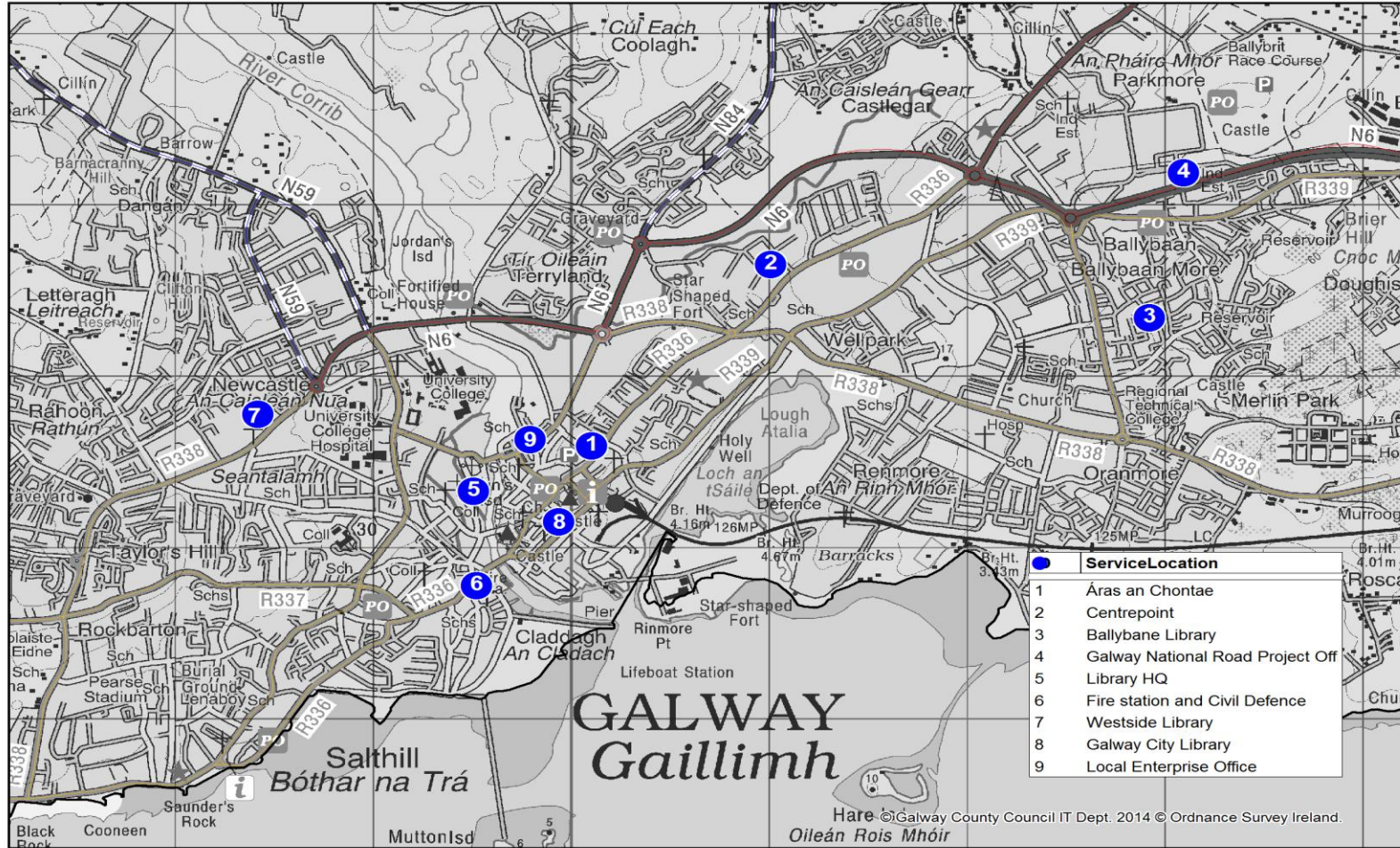
This Group is also responsible for reviewing our Staff Guidelines and Standards Document. This document outlines for staff the standards expected by our Customers and provides tips and guidelines on how to deal with Customers. We believe that staff awareness and training is very important in maintaining high standards.

A Customer Service Unit and Team have been put in place to assist in providing enhanced services to the public. The Customer Service team have undertaken Customer Experience Surveys and these have been reviewed in the preparation of our Quality Customer Services Strategy.

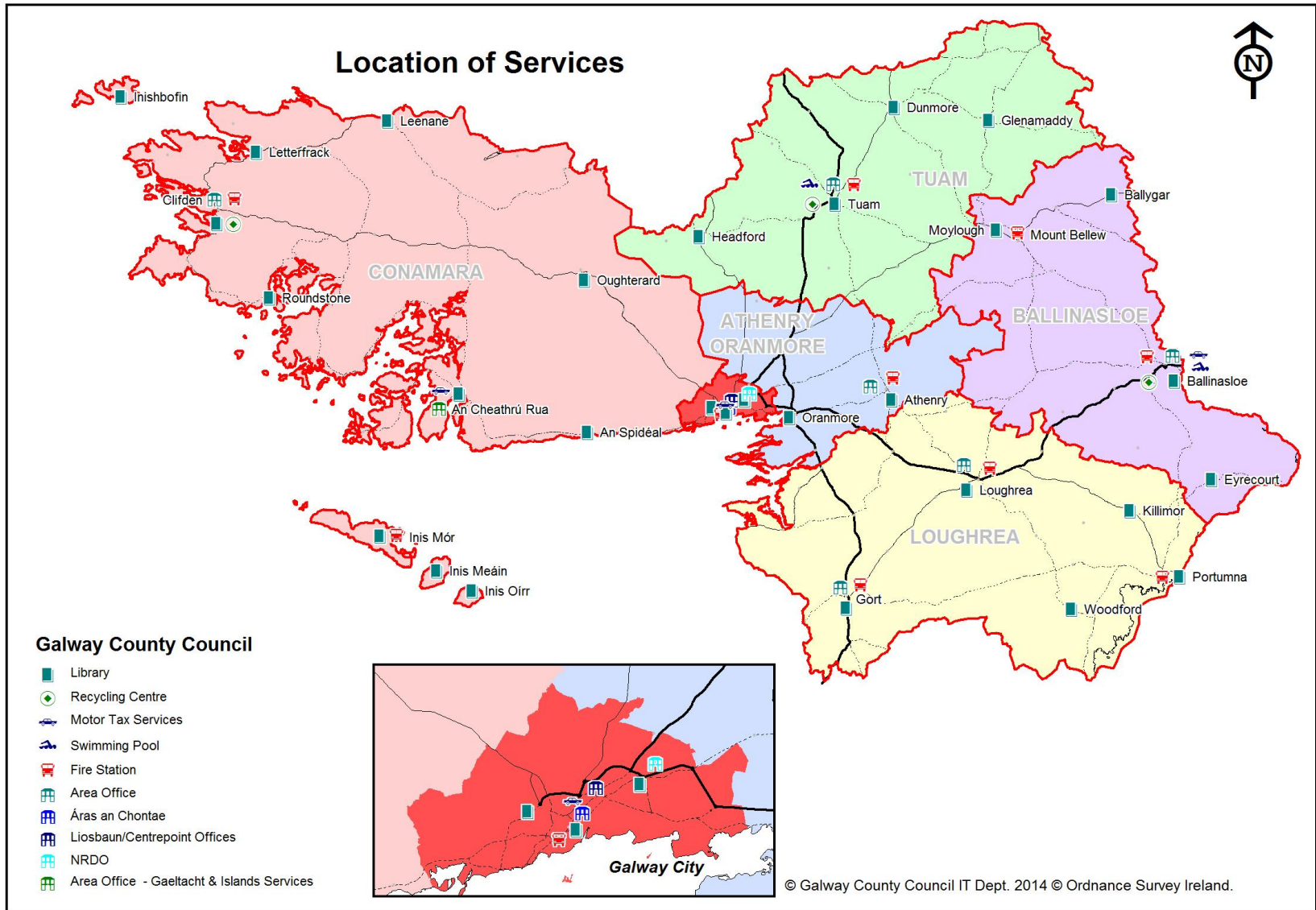
Our Strategy has placed a priority on learning from situations when a service is not consistent or does not operate as well as we would like and on letting our Customers know if we are consistent in maintaining high standards by actively seeking customer feedback and reviewing our performance against recognised standards. We are committed under this Strategy to finding effective ways to gain our customers feedback and measure our performance.

Maps of our Service Locations


Our services are provided throughout the County including the Islands. The main administration centre is located at Áras an Chontae in Prospect Hill in Galway City. Centre, close to Eyre Square.



Location of Services and Municipal Districts



Copy of Our Complaints Form

Seribhísí Custaiméara Foirm Ghearáin	 Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council	Customer Service Complaint Form
Tá an fhoirm seo le fáil i gcló mór chomh maith	This form is also available in large print	
Tá míle fáilte an fhoirm seo a líonadh i nGaeilge		

Sonraí an Ghearánaí		Complainant Details
Ainm	Name	
Seoladh	Address	
Fón	Telephone	
R-phost	Email	
Dáta	Date	

Gearán	Complaint

Síniú:	Signed:	
Dáta:	Date:	

*Seirbhísí Custaiméara Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe – Cultúr barr feabhais a chothú i ndáil le soláthar Seirbhísí Custaiméara
Galway County Council Customer Services – To foster a culture of excellence in delivering Customer Services*

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Gearáin agus Réiteach</u></p> <p>Léiríonn gearán fúinn nach bhfuil tú sásta leis an mbealach atá muid ag plé leat. Pléifidh muid le gearán áit a ndearna muid cinneadh nó gníomhaíocht bainteach le soláthar seirbhíse nó cur i gcrích feidhme nach bhfuil, a ndeirtear, ag cloí le rialacha, cleachtas nó polasaí nó prionsabail ghinearálta ghlactha cothromais agus cleachtas maith riaracháin agus a chuirfeadh as don duine i gceist. Cuirfear freagra chugat laistigh de 15 lá oibre.</p> <p>Is féidir aiseolas a chur ar fáil faoin seirbhís a bhfuair tú trí foirm thuairime ar chúram custaiméara ar líne agus tá seo ar fáil ar www.gaillimh.ie.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Complaints and Redress</u></p> <p>A complaint against us indicates your dissatisfaction with the manner in which we have dealt with you. We will address a complaint where a decision or action is taken by us which relates to the provision of a service or the performance of a function which, it is claimed, is not in accordance with our rules, practice or policy or the generally accepted principles of equity and good administrative practice and which adversely affects the person concerned. You will receive a response within 15 working days.</p> <p>It is also possible to provide feedback on the service you received using our on-line customer care comment form located on www.galway.ie</p>
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Usáid oifigiúil amháin	Official Use Only	
Dáta a fuair eadh an gearán	Date complaint received	
Dáta admhála	Date acknowledged	
Dáta a éisíodh an cinneadh	Date Decision issued	
Uimhir thagartha	Reference Number	

Cuir ar ais agus seol do ghearán chuig an Rannóg nó Aonad ábhartha sa gComhairle nó seol é chuig:	Please return and address your complaint to the most relevant Section or Unit of the Council or alternatively address it to:
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Seol an fhoirm ar ais chuig: Gearáin Custaiméara Seirbhísí Corparáideacha Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Áras an Chontae Cnoc na Radharc Gaillimh	Return to: Customer Services Corporate Services Unit Galway County Council Áras an Chontae Prospect Hill Galway	Tel. (091) 509225 Fax (091) 509010 customerservices@galwaycoco.ie www.gaillimh.ie www.galway.ie
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Seirbhísí Custaiméara Chomhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe – Cultúr barr feabhais a chothú i ndáil le soláthar Seirbhísí Custaiméara
Galway County Council Customer Services – To foster a culture of excellence in delivering Customer Services

Copy of our Request for Information and / or Assistance in Alternative Format

Iarratas ar Eolas agus Cabhair i bhFormáid Malartach	 Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council	Request for Information and Assistance in an Alternative Format
Tá an fhoirm seo le fáil i gcló mór chomh maith	This form is also available in large print	
Tá míle fáilte an fhoirm seo a líonadh i nGaeilge		

Sonraí Custaiméara		Customer Details
Ainm	Name	
Seoladh	Address	
Fón	Telephone	
R-phost	Email	
Dáta an Iarratais	Date of Request	

Iarratas ar Eolas i bhFormáid Malartach		Request for Information in an Alternative Format
Doiciméad agus dáta atá ag teastáil	Document and date required	

Formáid (cuir tic sa bhosca cuí ✓)	Format (please tick ✓)
Formáid Leictreonach	Electronic Format
Leagan le Cló Mór	Large Print Version
Braille	Braille
Leagan Fuaime	Audio Version
Formáidí Malartacha Eile	Other Alternative Formats

Iarratas ar Sheirbhís Ateangaireachta Teanga Comh- arthaíochta (Fógra 10 lá le tabhairt roimh an ócáid)	Request for Sign language Interpreting Service (10 days notice required prior to event)

Dáta / am atá ag teastáil	Date/Time Required	
Ócáid Láthair	Event/Location	

Seol an fhoirm ar ais chuig: Oifigeach Rochtana Seirbhísí Corparáideacha Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Áras an Chontae Cnoc na Radharc Gaillimh	Return to: Access Officers Corporate Services Galway County Council Áras an Chontae Prospect Hill Galway	Tel. (091) 509225 Fax (091) 509010 accessofficer@galwaycoco.ie www.gaillimh.ie www.galway.ie
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