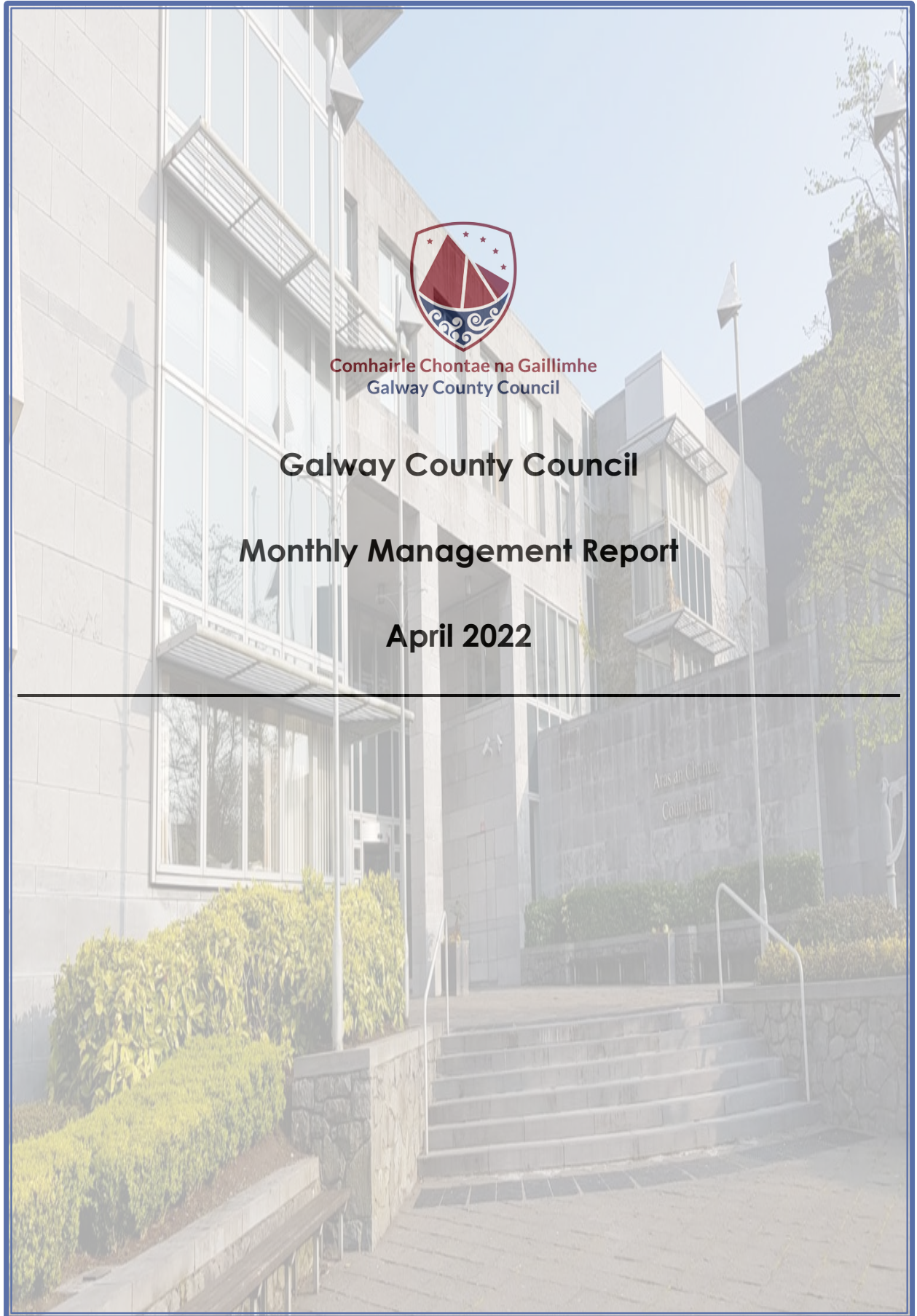




Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Monthly Management Report
April 2022



HOUSING & ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing Update

UKRAINIAN REFUGEE SITUATION – EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION UPDATE

Over the previous three weekends Galway County Council has provided emergency accommodation in Oranmore (1 weekend at Oranmore Community Centre & 2 at Calasancius College). Refugees have arrived in the early hours of the morning having been transferred from City West in Dublin. The rest centres are a short-term solution managed by Galway County Council staff before Refugees are moved onto medium term hotel/nursing home or other solutions.

Galway County Council has also liaised with accommodation providers interested in providing medium to long- term options. These interactions are recorded and sent to the Department (of Children, Equality & Youth) who have responsibility for rolling out all the contracts to providers.

A Galway County Community Response Forum has been set up and engages with the relevant agencies and local development companies working in communities in which refugees have been placed. This includes DSP, HSE and Tusla who are engaging in all hotels and centres, and follow up with GRETB, Community groups etc. Issues of concern including transport, education and employment are being discussed at the forum and fed into the national structures also.

HOUSING CAPITAL DELIVERY

Galway County Council's Housing for All Action Plan is progressing with further engagement with the Dept of Housing. While overall targets have been set, there is further analysis ongoing on the number of Affordable units, Disability and OPD targets and number of units by size. These will be presented to the next Housing SPC

Minister Peter Burke met with the Cathaoirleach and Housing Staff in County Hall to discuss the Housing Capital Programme in detail, but also discussions were held on the overall finances of the Council and the resourcing of the Council.

In the afternoon the Minister visited Clifden, Moycullen and Roundstone developments:



Construction is ongoing at:

Kinvara – 10 units; well progressed

Fana Bui, Tuam – 49 units; nearing completion in May

Ahascragh – 18 units; construction started

Clifden – 26 units; progressing with Houses well advanced and apartments in old school slow due to conservation architecture.

Design team progressing at:

Claregalway	Claregalway: 90 units– Social and Affordable – detailed drawings
Cosmona, Loughrea	Cosmona, Loughrea: 90 units –Social and Affordable – prelim drawings
Ardrahan	Ardrahan: 12 units - detailed drawings
Weir rd Tuam	Weir rd, Tuam- 49 Units – updating design spec to modern build standards
Ongoing design and pre-planning work:	Moycullen, Oughterard, Ballymoe and Dunlo Hill, Ballinalsoe, and other regeneration projects.

TURNKEYS:

An expression of interest for public housing (Social and Affordable) was sought in March 2022 and closing date for EOI's was the 31st of March 2022. A total of 22 submissions were received

and are currently being examined in accordance with the briefing documents requirements for Location, Demand, Services and Zoning.

Notice to Quits & ongoing issues

There are currently 79 validated Notice to Quits with Galway County Council – people renting privately via HAP/RAS or private with a valid housing application. These NTQ's are increasing significantly as landlords leave the market or seek higher rents that HAP cannot compete with. At the recent SPC Threshold provided the following figures:

Average rents in Galway County



County	LEA	Quarters >7%	Q3 2021 (€)	Reference average	Local average compared to standard reference average
Galway	Conamara North	*	*	Non GDA	*
	Tuam	2	957.76	Non GDA	89.6
	Ballinasloe	*	*	Non GDA	*
	Loughrea	*	*	Non GDA	*
	Athenry - Oranmore	1	1,179.86	Non GDA	110.3
	Gort - Kinvara	4	1,162.86	Non GDA	108.7
	Conamara South	3	1,166.49	Non GDA	109.1
	Galway City West	2	1,372.56	Non GDA	128.3
	Galway City Central	3	1,602.10	Non GDA	149.8
	Galway City East	1	1,325.84	Non GDA	124.0

Stock – Vacancy

Overall Stock:	3566
Under Construction (at stage of build not considered for allocation)	201
Vacant and being Shortlisted	66
Vacant and undergoing minor works	44
Vacant AHB (approx. 50% not ready for occupants)	29

Energy Efficiency 2022:

Circular 14/2022, “Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme 2022” the information below provides the detailed breakdown of each Local Authorities allocation.

The allocation determined for 2022 for Galway County Council is **€2,506,613** with a requirement to retrofit a minimum of 71 properties to a B2/Cost Optimal standard.

The funding being provided will allow for an average spend of €33,333 per property for Galway Co Council and with a further payment of €1,971 being available per property for project management fees bringing the overall average grant available per property to €35,304.

Galway County Council's current retrofit programme has resulted in all BER's being returned at A rated and the above project funding will be matched to the Just Transition Fund and to our own ongoing maintenance programme works.

ERCD Update

BIA INNOVATION CAMPUS

ON 14th April Minister English visited the BIA Innovation Campus to review its progress, he also met with the LEO staff in County Hall to discuss ongoing projects and programmes.

BIA is entering into the final stages of construction and hosted the recent Economic SPC and reviewed progress on tenancies, education programmes and industry engagement



LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN

The ongoing roll out of the next LECP is progressing. The guidelines for the new LECP have been issued and an in house a desk top review of the existing LECP is being carried out. The Council and the SPC have agreed the Advisory Group members and the desktop review of the current plan and actions is ongoing.

TOURISM STRATEGY

Consultation has begun on the Co. Galway Sustainable Tourism Strategy,

a bi-lingual industry facing survey has been published on www.discovergalway.ie since St. Patrick's day. This has been circulated to industry databases and will gain additional promotion through local press from 28 March.

One to one meetings / interviews with key personnel in the industry and state agencies have been taking place since early March.

The **SEA Scoping** report has been issued to relevant authorities on 16th March, allowing four weeks for submissions. Consultants will brief the Galway County Council Management Team and Elected Representatives will be consulted through a special workshop in April. The consultation process will inform the Tourism input to the LECP.

The various submissions on Tourism made in the County Development Plan will be reviewed for inclusion in the Tourism Strategy.

ARTS OFFICE

Meeting held with Creative Ireland on progress on Creative Ireland programme, funding and the 5-year commitment given to the programme by Government

Local live performance scheme 2022 -EOI issued and being assessed

Public Art Management Group – first meeting held & TOR & Work programme agreed

CONNECTED HUBS IN CO. GALWAY

Introduction & Background

In March 2019, the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) sought to conduct an audit of the enterprise centres / digital hubs / co-working spaces along the AEC. The Atlantic Economic Corridor/Broadband Officer networks in the ten Local Authority areas identified 101 centres which identified as enterprise centres / digital hubs / co-working spaces in the region. This excluded the Údarás na Gaeltachta 'gTeic' network of hubs. The DRCD appointed the WDC to undertake a co-ordinating role in respect of the AEC initiative.

The WDC surveyed 72 enterprise hubs across the AEC. The research took the shape of an online survey divided into five sections, with the aim of ascertaining the features of the enterprise centres in the AEC region. The sections included:

1. Organisation & Function
2. Facilities
3. Governance
4. Networking / Collaboration / External Engagement
5. Future Plans

In June 2019, a meeting took place between the WDC and Údarás na Gaeltachta to discuss the gTeic network, and the status of the hubs on this list. Only operational gTeic hubs completed the online survey at the time but more gTeics have come on board since and are operational.

In County Galway 16 hubs were identified, 7 of which are currently operational, with 9 at various stages of development. The operational hubs include:

<https://opendata-galwaycoco.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/galwaycoco::community-digital-hubs/explore?location=53.433415%2C-8.057012%2C7.68>

Community Digital Hubs is a database which is available on the On-Line Digital Services Section of www.galway.ie on Community Datasets. This is not a complete picture of all Co-work or Hubs in the County but is a baseline picture and is subject to further updating. The Connected Hubs Platform supported by DRCD and operated by WDC has been introduced nationally in the interim and it services the customer in terms of being a one stop shop for where you can gain access to a co-work space in order to work remotely.

Galway County Council led by the ERCD RRDF Team, have engaged in design and capital works for GCC owned properties which have been prioritised and included in our Regeneration Strategy in larger Towns. Loughrea, Portumna and we are engaging in discussion re: Clifden in the context of a RRDF Category 2 programme and considering if a Hub can be included. .

ERCD (incl. RRDF) will work on how the Hubs being progressed under the capital build could operate (the tasks here being subject to further discussion and who is leading on doing this)

GCC has co-funding under T&V and is open to EOI's but at this juncture we do not have a 500k or 250k project related to Hubs in our pipeline outside of the RRDF programme.

ERCD are working on the listing of hubs via connectedhubs.ie (there are 12 Galway County hubs listed on this platform) BCP and Community Hubs and then awaiting WDC report – linked to AEC network.

Funding Schemes:

<p>Clar</p>	<p>Target: Submission of 15 prioritised projects seeking up to 750k under M1 by May 6th to DRCD including GCC led Projects. (DRCD decision on projects due June 2022 with completion by April 2023.</p>
<p>ORIS</p>	<p>Provides funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure. (Adventure Tourism type projects, Blueways, Walking Trails, Boardwalks, etc) ORIS 2022 Scheme is now open. EOI and project proposals have been assessed across all categories for submission to the Department.</p>
<p>Town and Village</p>	<p>This programme is largest ever TV Scheme administered by ERCD in the County. Current Schemes running are 2019, 2020 and Offer on 2021 to issue in April 2022 and finishing out of the Accelerated Measure, three rounds – 16 projects to end of March 2022.</p>
<p>Community Enhancement Fund</p>	<p>Announcement made in early April via Dept.</p>
<p>RRDF</p>	<p>Clifden – presentation to be made to MD. Linking of RRDF, Destination Town and other elements of public realm strategy Tuam – Masterplan implementation; The Shambles open market area to be progressed & Part8 ongoing for Town Hall Loughrea – detailed costings & pre-qual tender complete. Costings a concern and ongoing liaising with Dept. Portumna – Significant interagency meetings with OPW, Waterways Ireland and Failte Ireland in April. Gort- Tender docs being complete for masterplan (funding secured) Ballinasloe – 60 payments out of 80 made on streetscape Athenry – Bia Ongoing. Plans in town centre to be finalised</p>

INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

Local Improvement Schemes 2022



The Council is delighted to confirm an allocation of **€958,831** in 2022 for LIS. This funding will support the continued improvement of non-public roads and lanes that are not normally maintained by the local authority.

Such roads represent a vital piece of infrastructure for rural residents - providing access to people's homes and farms, as well as outdoor amenities such as lakes, rivers or beaches.

Eligible roads under the Local Improvement Scheme are:

- non-public roads that provide access to parcels of agricultural land or provide access for harvesting purposes (including turf or seaweed) for two or more persons.; or
- Non-public roads leading to important community amenities such as graveyards, beaches, piers, mountains, etc.

Non-Eligible Roads

Non-eligible roads include:

- Roads serving only houses or buildings occupied or used by persons not engaged in agriculture, and
- Roads leading to commercial enterprises

Local contribution

The financial contribution provided by the household/landowner is set at:

- 10% of the estimated cost for eligible roads with up to and including 5 households/landowners, and
- 15% for those roads with 6 or more households/landowners, however
- The maximum amount that any household/landowner is required to contribute is capped at €1,200.

The Council has submitted its priority list to the Dept which included the next 24 schemes on the existing schedule of works countywide.

CPO to construct the N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment Scheme

Section 216 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, provides that where any objection received by An Bord Pleanála is subsequently withdrawn at any time before ABP makes its decision ABP shall inform the local authority and the local authority shall, as soon as may be, confirm the order with or without modifications, or it may refuse to confirm the order.

Accordingly, ABP has informed the Council that the objection received to the CPO was withdrawn and it is now open to the Council to confirm/refuse to confirm the order.

In parallel, the Council has made an application to ABP under Section 177(AE) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended to construct the N17 Milltown to Gortnagunnad Realignment Scheme. No planning consent, as yet, has been approved by ABP in relation to that application.

The proposed development runs for 3km, from the outskirts at the northern end of Milltown village and finishes in the townland of Gortnagunnad which ties in with a recently completed road realignment scheme of the N17 Carrownurlaur to Ballindine.



Broadband



Galway County Council submitted a multi-hub application for the Connected Hubs 2022 call on behalf of 5 Broadband Connection Points (Clonberne, Inis Oirr, Portumna, Tuam and Leitrim Ballydugan).

This application brings together 3 BCPs (Clonberne, Inis Oirr and Tuam) which benefitted from Connected Hubs 2021 funding and feel they can increase their service offering to their communities in 2022 through a combination of increased remote working spaces, updating facilities and e-charging points to support the wider community and acknowledging the national move to sustainable modes of transport at a local level. These three hubs have an NBI fibre network delivery date towards the end of the fibre roll out program c. 2026, as such they will be key infrastructure in supporting their communities into the future.

This multi-hub application also includes 2 BCPs (Portumna and Leitrim Ballydugan) applying for Connecting Hubs funding/support for the first time, with one of the applicants BCPs (Portumna) proposing to offer remote working facilities for the first time, subject to a successful application.

The opportunities this funding call offers communities is essential for their service expansion and for them to make the most of the connectivity the BCP scheme has delivered.

The application was submitted requested funding of €127,797.93. This figure represents 90% of the total project cost of €141,991.70 with the other 10% to be match funded by the BCPS.

Seven BCPs (Ballyglunin, Inishbofin, Inis Meáin, Lettermullen, Milltown, Lackagh and Lettermore) submitted single hub applications directly to the department. Galway County Council will also support these projects in whatever way possible.

BCP update - At this point in time, 18 BCPs in County Galway are connected and live, with just 4 (Inis Meáin, Lackagh, Milltown and Ballinakill) still awaiting connection.

WiFi4EU update- There are now 40 external WiFi access points live across County Galway County providing free WiFi access to locals and visitors alike.

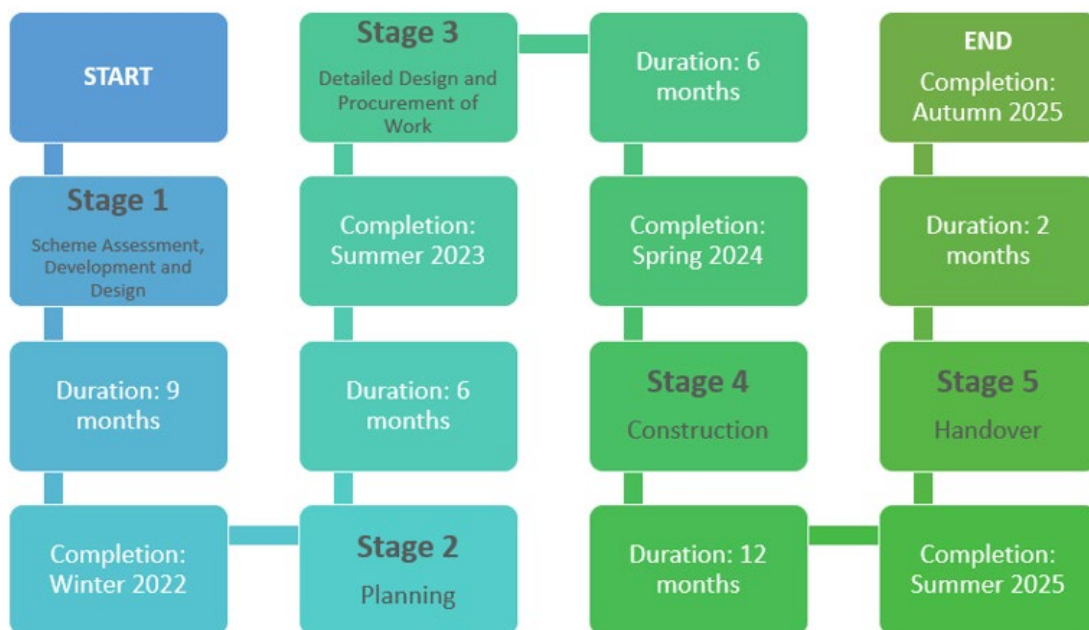
Clifden Flood Relief Scheme

Galway County Council have appointed Jacobs Engineering Ireland to develop a flood relief scheme for the community of Clifden, with the aim to develop a scheme to reduce the flood risk to the area, specifically those areas affected by recent flood events.

The project is currently at Stage 1: Scheme Assessment, Development, and Design which commenced in October 2021.

A Public Information Day event was held on the 20th of April 2022 between 1pm-7pm in the Clifden Station House Hotel. Records of attendance on the day indicate that representatives from Clifden Glen and the anglers club were present and overall 80% of the local residents who have been affected by historical flooding were also in attendance. Feedback has been extremely positive, and the project team were complimented on the day for the transparency around the whole process.

Current indicative timelines are as set out below.

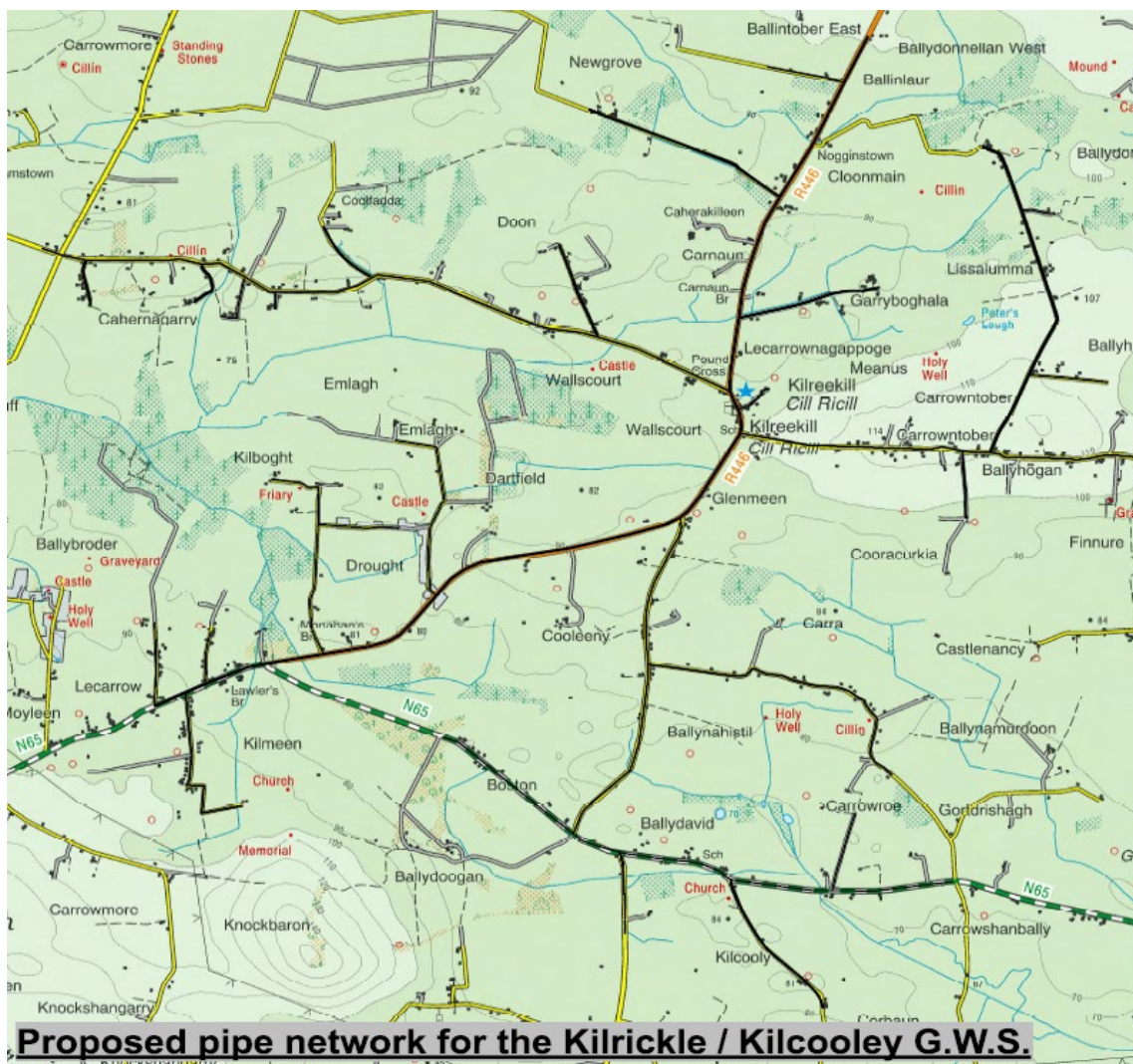


Note: these dates are indicative.

Update on Kilrickle/Kilcooley Group Water Scheme

The Kilrickle/Kilcooley scheme went to tender on 16th November 2021 with a closing date of 4th Feb 2022. The group scheme consulting engineer is satisfied that a competitive tender was submitted and has made a tender recommendation which was recently received by the Council. An internal peer review of the tender documents is underway and it is anticipated that the tender recommendation will shortly be submitted to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for final funding confirmation. This should be forthcoming in a prompt manner as funding for the scheme was provided in the last Multi Annual Rural Water Programme and the Council can confirm that the tender received was very close to estimates submitted to the Department in the planning phase.

At present the members are collecting local contributions to ensure they have sufficient numbers to draw down grant funding to pay for the project. Subject to the scheme gathering the requisite number of signatures and local contribution the project could commence in early summer.



Community Monument Fund 2022

The core objective of the Community Monuments Fund is to support the conservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of local monuments and historic sites. It contains a number of different measures aimed at enabling conservation works to be carried out on monuments which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support, encouraging access to monuments and improving their presentation and also building resilience in monuments to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change.

The Community Monuments Fund has 3 streams:

Stream 1 for essential repairs and capital works for the conservation and repair of archaeological monuments.

Stream 2 for the development of Conservation Management Plans/Reports aimed at identifying measures for the conservation of archaeological monuments and improving public access.

Stream 3 for enhancement of access infrastructure and interpretation (including virtual/online) at archaeological monuments.

The following is a listing of projects submitted for consideration for funding:

Stream 1:

1. Abbeygormacan Church, Mullagh
2. Kilclooney Tower House, Milltown
3. St. Kerrill's Church, Gurteen
4. Kilboght Church and Mausoleum
5. St. Mary's, Athenry

Stream 2:

1. Killeroran Church & Graveyard, Ballygar
2. Kilkerrin Church and Graveyard
3. Killogilleen Church and Graveyard

Stream 3:

1. Tuam High Cross
2. Killora Church
3. Killeeneen Church

Seven projects in the County of Galway were awarded funding under the Community Monuments Fund.

Community Projects awarded Funding

The following is a listing of the projects that have received funding:

1. Abbeygormacan Church, Mullagh €50,000
2. Kilclooney Tower House, Milltown €80,000
3. St. Kerrill's Church, Gurteen €84,999
4. Killeroran Church & Graveyard, Ballygar (Galway County Council Project) €16,000
5. St. Mary's Athenry (Galway County Council Project) €15,000
6. Issertkelly Church and Graveyard (Galway County Council Project) €29,109.50
7. Tuam High Cross €3,000

Stream 1: Capital Works Projects 2022:

Abbeygormacan Church and Graveyard

Abbeygormacan Cemetery Committee were successful in their funding application 2020 for conservation works to a collapsed medieval wall within the graveyard. This wall was part of the medieval abbey. Funding also incorporated a conservation plan which will enabled further applications for funding and encouraged the local group in the future preservation and promotion of this Recorded Monument GA107:002 (Church and Graveyard). Works involved the trimming of ivy and stabilisation of a medieval wall. Mattieu and Mitchell, Moore Group Archaeological Services, John Britton Consulting Engineer and 7L Architects are working together on the project under the project management of Abbeygormacan Cemetery Committee.

Transept Chapel

In 2021 works were concentrated within the transept chapel. An initial record of the church was prepared by Impact Archaeology, producing a 3D model of the chapel. The Hannon tomb proved more challenging than initially expected with the revelation of a supporting arch on removal of ivy. A buttress was also identified against the outer Northern wall. The deterioration of the stone itself added to the masons' challenge in making the structure safe. Method statements and the scope of works had to be updated throughout the project. Thanks to the ongoing support within the National Monuments Service and a dedicated team of heritage professionals works proceeded at a steady pace.

The restoration of a double piscina, an architectural feature of the internal wall of the chancel was completed. This would have been located adjacent to an altar and used to wash hands/chalices.

Phase 3, CMF 2022 shall concentrate on the Completion of Conservation works to Ecclesiastical Site at Abbeygormacan.

Kilclooney Tower House, Milltown

A Conservation Management Plan was financed by Community Monuments Funding 2020. Prepared by 7L Architects with inputs from Martin Fitzpatrick, Archaeologist, John Britton Engineer and MKO Ecology.

2021 conservation works concentrated on stabilising the monument and making the structure waterproof. Works were monitored under license by Archaeologist Martin Fitzpatrick, supervised by Grade 1 Conservation Architect Fergal McNamara, 7L Architects and Conservation Engineer John Britton, Kinvara Konsult Ltd. Local stone masons Galway Stone based in Claregalway Castle were the contractors. A test excavation was also required on the roof of the building.

2022 works shall involve follow up maintenance to wall tops, reinstating quoins to SE and SW corners to support surviving facing stone; further consolidation around entrance door and ogee window above with insertion of new stone door portal, jamb and cill to window; pinning and pointing to surviving facing stones on all sides. Works shall be monitored by Licenced Archaeologist under Notification to Minister.

Kilclooney Tower House is a Recorded Monument (GA016:062001) in private ownership within a complex of archaeological monuments including a bawn, possible mill, souterrain, field systems of local and national importance. This is one of 129 castles or tower houses recorded for the County of Galway by the National Monuments Service. It is recorded as being in possession of Donell O Huiginn in 1574.

Bardic School

A poem dated in the C16th refers to seventeen poets from Ulster being educated at Kilcooney. A bardic school was a place where students, kinsmen and poets would travel to further their education and study their art. Many have been documented but physical evidence of few actually survive.

A reconstruction of the tower house and further background information is available on Milltown Heritage Group Website.
<https://milltown.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/townlands/milltowns-bardic-school>

St. Kerrils, Cloonkeenkeril, Gurteen

St. Kerrill's Heritage Group, a sub-committee of Gurteen Community Council procured the services of 7L Architects to prepare a conservation management plan of St. Kerrills Abbey and graveyard through Community Monuments Funding 2021. Located in East Galway, this abbey has many fine medieval features. It is a central focus within the local community. They have been awarded €85,000 in CMF 2022 for capital works.

The Abbey, which is in ruins, is situated in a publicly owned (Galway County Council) graveyard that is the main cemetery within the parish of Gurteen. Local tradition dictates that no work (including burials) be carried out in the graveyard on a Monday. This tradition, which continues to this day stems from the tales of St. Kerrill himself and highlights the uniqueness of this place and its importance to the community. Prepared by 7L Architects with advice and input from Ecologists MKO, Conservation Engineers Kinvara Konsult Ltd and Archaeologist Dominic Delaney, the purpose of the plan is to assess the history, cultural significance and current condition of the ruined church and its graveyard setting. It assesses the threats; outlines a conservation strategy and makes recommendations for enhancement, improved management and interpretation.

The detailed report shall be used to inform the graveyard committee, heritage group, Galway County Council and National Monuments Service of best heritage practice and proposed management of the site. It shall enable the group to make informed decisions when applying for funding in the future.

The surviving ruins of Saint Kerrill's Abbey consist of the 'much-repaired rectangular church with a south transept' (NMS Files) . Interesting monuments include St. Kerrill's Bed, with a re-used carved headed corbel, the carved effigy of Bishop Edmond Kelly (1658-1732), and various memorials and architectural features throughout the site.

See <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/community-archaeology/cmf21-galway-county/st-kerrills-abbey-cloonkeenkerrill>

Stream 2: Conservation Management Plans – CMF 2022

Issertkelly Church & Graveyard - Galway County Council Project

Recorded Monument RMP No. GA114-097001 – 3 is located within an area rich in archaeological and historical importance. The working graveyard is visited frequently, and the church is under severe threat of further deterioration owing to overgrowth of ivy and vegetation, and climate change effects. It is located within medieval settlement.

This grant shall fund a schedule of works to improve access to the site and inform the Conservation Management plan. This work shall inform best strategy to inhibit further deterioration from climate effects. Works shall be carried out in liaison with an ecologist.

Methodology proposed is under best heritage practice, quotation received from RIAI Grade 1 Conservation Architect, and consultant archaeologist. Amount includes for clearance of vegetation.

It is hoped that works shall improve access for members of the public visiting the site. Educational Purposes - Local Heritage Group, Local Schools all have an interest in this site. Work shall be included on our Galway Community Archaeology Website and social media channels <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>

Killieroran Church & Graveyard, Ballygar - Galway County Council Project

Recorded Monument GA033:036 (Church and graveyard) in the ownership of Galway County Council with a caretaker locally involved with ongoing management and maintenance of the site. Very active Tidy Towns Group has been successful in funding works within the site previously.

CMP/ Audit shall inform Galway County Council, NMS and Community on best heritage practice and future plan of management and conservation of site. Require mitigation to stall effects of climate change on the existing church.

Proposed Conservation Management Plan shall have input from Conservation Architect, Engineer, Archaeologist and Ecologist. May be used to apply for capital works in the future.

CMP will inform the community and GCC on best heritage practice within this working graveyard. Future works subsequent to the CMP shall ensure continued conservation and promotion of the site.

St. Mary's, Athenry

Commission Conservation Management Plan for conservation works to boundary walls of graveyard including input from conservation architects engineers ecologist and archaeologist.

Stream 3 – Tuam High Cross - Old Tuam Society

Creation of high resolution, digital 3D models of Tuam's Market Cross, GA029-179007, Chancel Arch and two other high cross fragments currently housed in St Mary's Cathedral (Recorded Monument GA029-179008). The aim is to make all the resources produced available online for the benefit of education, local, national and international heritage and tourism interests.

Significance: The Market Cross of Tuam (c. 1152) commemorates the appointment of the first Archbishop of Tuam, Áed Ua hOissín, under the high kingship of Tairrdelbach Ua Conchobair. It is reputed to have been the tallest of the high crosses of Ireland and was one of at least 4 crosses in Tuam. The cross is situated in St Mary's Cathedral, which also houses the 12th-century Romanesque red sandstone chancel arch, the largest example in the country, which is also a National Monument. St Mary's also houses 2 other cross fragments worthy of online display.

This funding focuses on presentation of Tuam's most significant archaeological monuments. Due to limited site access, this project aims to improve these impressive National Monuments presentation and accessibility for the public. The technology will also facilitate visualisation of the highest parts of the Market cross and chancel arch.

The technology employed is state of the art 3D modelling equipment. This work will be undertaken by Galway company Digital Heritage Age (DHA). DHA provide proven, low-cost

digital solutions and have a track record of accomplishment and significant contributions to major national and EU-funded projects.

Access to the monuments within St Mary's Cathedral is sporadic in the absence of set opening times. A 3D model will broaden the access, inform locals and visitors and spark interest in the monument. High definition images will enable viewers to see parts of the Market Cross and arch which are >4m high, a benefit to in-person visitors also.

To see the extent of the works undertaken to date with grant aid from the Community Monument Fund (includes photographs of before and after works) please see:

Link to County Galway CMF Projects 2021 <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/category/community-archaeology/cmf21-galway-county>

Link to County Galway CMF Projects 2020 <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/community-archaeology/community-monuments-fund>

Heritage Council Funding Received by Galway County Council and also Community Groups in the County

Heritage Council announces €2.37m worth of funding for projects.

Funding from three Heritage Council schemes which collectively help to conserve and restore built, cultural and natural heritage throughout the country, will be issued to grant recipients this year.

Work on these projects can begin immediately which will see local communities enriched through initiatives, from the conservation of medieval town defence walls in our walled towns, to the digitisation of otherwise vulnerable materials, to supporting endangered wildlife to thrive in their natural habitats. The projects will all be completed by the end of the year.

Irish Walled Towns Network

Under the Heritage Council's Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN), funding is earmarked for conservation work and interpretation initiatives, which will protect and preserve the history and heritage of Ireland's walled towns.

Galway County Council received the following funding allocations:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. Athenry Town Walls Conservation Works | €50,000 |
| 2. Athenry Walled Town Day | €20,000 |
| 3. Loughrea Medieval Festival | €20,000 |

Community Heritage Grants

Awards range from €2,000 to €20,000 per project for applications that improve access and inclusion to heritage sites; that apply good heritage practice to the management of places, collections, or objects (including buildings). The scheme also supports the purchase of essential equipment. This scheme is intended to enable communities and heritage non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to continue their work in this area or to start new initiatives. The majority of applicant groups from the County of Galway received assistance with their funding applications from the Heritage Office. In the region of €166,000 of this fund has been awarded to groups in Galway County (included 2 projects that are joint city and county).

See list of grants.

[Community-Heritage-Grants-2022.pdf \(heritagecouncil.ie\)](#)

Heritage Stewardship Fund

32 projects awarded €360,113

The Heritage Stewardship Fund was set up in 2022 to support and build the capacity of staff who play a key role in the heritage infrastructure of Ireland and are vital to the delivery of national policy and plans. Applications were received from local authority-based museum curators, archivists, archaeologists, architectural conservation officers and biodiversity officers. This scheme was also open to employees of state agencies and third level educational institutions proposing heritage focused projects. Awards range from €2,000 to €25,000.

The projects awarded funding include 2 Galway County Council Projects (Archives & Environmental) and a further project led by ATU (GMIT) supported by the Heritage Office.

Historic Structures Fund (HSF) 2022

In addition to supporting owners and custodians of historic and protected structures to safeguard and maintain their properties, this funding will also provide a welcome boost to conservation professionals and tradespeople by facilitating works with a total value of almost €8 million and leveraging an estimated 22,400 days' labour, including in specialist roles such as thatching and stonework.

Three buildings in County Galway have been allocated €35,000 each towards essential works

- Church of St. Peter and Paul, Ballymacward for repair of windows.
- Kylemore Chapel for stonework and repair of rainwater goods.
- Kilcornan Coach house, Clarinbridge for repair to roof.

Funding of €7,695 has also been allocated under the vernacular structures stream of the HSF towards the repair of a thatched house in Maree.

The Historic Structures Fund is administered by the Architectural Conservation Officer .

Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development)(Number 2) Regulations 2022

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development)(Number 2) Regulations 2022 (S.I. No 151 of 2022) were signed on 30 March 2022 and they came into effect on the same day.

The present Regulations (S.I. No 151 of 2022) have the effect of replacing some elements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Section 181) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 93 of 2020) – which were commenced on 27 March 2020 to address the Covid-19 civil emergency, and which expired on 31 March 2022. The present Regulations are more limited in scope than S.I. 93 of 2020 and relate to temporary change of use of specified building types for use as vaccination and testing centres by the HSE only.

The present Regulations temporarily amend the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 ('the Principal Regulations') to provide an exemption for a temporary change of use of specific structures, or parts of structures for use as public vaccination or public testing centres. The classes of development to which this temporary exemption applies comprise the following:

- school; college; university; training centre; social centre; community centre; non-residential club; art gallery; museum; library; reading room; sports club or stadium; gymnasium; hotel; convention centre; conference centre; shop; Defence Forces barracks; light industrial building; airport operational building; wholesale warehouse or repository; local authority administrative office; or any structure normally used for public worship or religious instruction.

The following specific conditions and limitations apply to the exemption:

- The temporary use shall be limited to a period of up to 12 months and;
- The exemption only applies to change of use for the purposes of preventing and alleviating the risk to public health posed by the spread of specific infectious diseases listed in the Infectious Diseases Regulations, 1981 (S.I. No 390 of 1981) e.g. Covid-19.

These Regulations (S.I. No 151 of 2022) will remain in effect for two years following their commencement on 30 March 2022, within which period one or more changes of use not exceeding 12 months could be applied.

Loft Conversion Guidelines 2022

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has published the Loft Conversion Guidelines - Fire Safety Guidance (2022).

Converting the roof space may be a convenient way of obtaining additional living space in an existing dwelling house, without extending into the garden. However, there are many issues to be resolved before any works are carried out. Under the Building Control Act 1990 – 2020, there is a legal requirement placed on the owner / builder / designer to ensure that the finished works comply with the Building Regulations. This document highlights the principal issues (including fire safety) that need to be addressed when converting an attic / loft roof space in an existing dwelling house. The purpose of these fire safety requirements is to safeguard you and your family, should a fire occur in your home.

The guidance document can be found <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b9d03-loft-conversion-guidelines/>.

Library Service

Books in Ukrainian/English

A collection of books primarily for children has been purchased and will be on the Library shelves next month. The Children's Services brochure has been translated into Ukrainian also and is presently with the printers and should be available in the branch libraries over the coming weeks.



**ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE, FIRE & MAJOR
EMERGENCY SERVICES, HUMAN RESOURCES &
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
DIRECTORATE**

Environment

Environmental Awareness



Galway County Council are supporting Tidy Towns groups to deliver the Conscious Cup campaign in their community. The object of the campaign is to eliminate single usage in the Cafe and Food to Go sector

by encouraging cafes and other outlets to incentivise customers to bring their own cups.

The ultimate objective has always been to increase awareness about waste prevention and conscious consumption thereby changing consumer behaviour.

12 communities have signed up for the initial campaign.

UPDATE 'Picker Pals' Programme for Primary Schools



The Picker Pals programme was run in 56 classrooms throughout the county in 2021/2022 school year.

Feedback was requested from the schools, and it was all positive.

The questions posed were:

1. Did you find the Picker Pals programme useful?
2. Did the children enjoy being involved?

3. Was there any comment from parents?
4. Was there sufficient help to deliver the programme from Picker Pals?
5. Would you run the programme in the school again?
6. Would you recommend the programme to other schools?
7. Overall impression?

Samples answers below which are reflective of programme....

1. Yes, we found the Picker Pal programme great. It was very interactive and engaging! The children really enjoyed participating in it and were enthusiastic about being chosen to bring the picker set home at the weekend. They completed their reports and loved the videos. We would be delighted to do the programme again. It creates a lovely connection with home, and it is fantastic to get families involved together to help look after our environment.

Yes. It is a method for the children to become aware of the litter problem and understand they can make a difference

2. The children love the Picker Pal programme. They remind me every day to pick the person who gets it. They enjoy sending in their photos for our display.

3. Parents are great at bringing their children around the local area. Some have commented it was good to make them aware of the litter.

4. Yes

5. Yes, with a different class.

6. Yes

7. It was a good programme. The only thing I would change is to not start the programme until January. Children and parents found it hard getting out with it when the evening was so dark. Much more up take since January.

Yes, to your question regarding the enjoyment of the programme. The children loved it, it is very age appropriate for them, they were all very eager to participate. Many parents sent in

Presentation to two classes in Lackagh National School



Mark Molloy, Galway County Council, was invited to present to 2 classes at Lackagh National School as part of their Environmental Awareness Week. Presentation included Recycling, Food Waste Prevention and Water Conservation.

LEAVE NO TRACE KINVARA



Mark Molloy, Galway County Council attended the "Leave No Trace" celebration event in Kinvara on the 10th of April 2022. An information stand was set up in relation to dog fouling, litter awareness, and waste prevention.

Galway County Council LAPN Grant Aid for Water Fonts in Schools



Mark Molloy gave a presentation to the members of the Planning, Environment, Agriculture and Emergency Services SPC meeting on the water fonts in school's project.

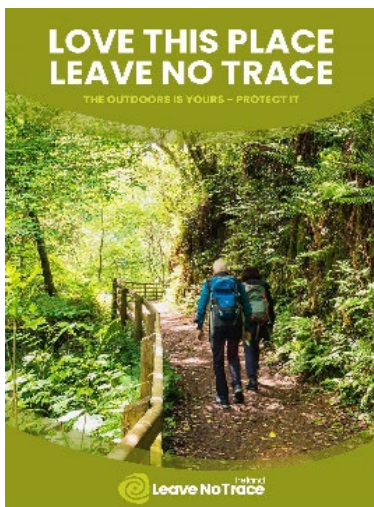
The results so far highlight the success of the project.

- 15 secondary schools were granted aid to install 16 water fonts in their school.
- 13 installed, 1 awaiting installation, 1 awaiting final go ahead in school, and 1 withdrew.
- Water font to be available to 6575 pupils +staff to help reduce use of single usage plastic bottles.
- In 2019 a unit was part funded in a school and has now saved 23348 bottles.
- 27959 bottles saved at 10 fonts so far.
- Waste Prevention Awareness Programme delivered by students and teachers in schools to all pupils
- Awareness is carried outside the school environment and beyond
- School led the programme – Students, teachers, ancillary staff
- Schools will participate in future campaigns.

It is also planned to present the programme to the Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC later in the year.

Future Campaigns

LOVE THIS PLACE



Galway County Council have agreed to support the “Love This Place, Leave No Trace” Campaign. This will be a social media and traditional media campaign to encourage everyone to enjoy the outdoors but leave no trace. The launch will take place at the end of May.

Green Dog Walkers Anti -Dog Fouling Campaign



Galway County Council are in the process of introducing the Green Dog Walkers campaign.

Green Dog Walkers encourages dog owners to clean up after their animals and is a non-confrontational, friendly way to change dog owner behaviour in relation to dog litter.

Volunteers lead by example and wear a Green Dog Walkers hi-vis vest with "leave only pawprints" on the back. By wearing the vest, dog owners are showing they have 'taken the pledge' to always clean up after their dog, carry extra dog waste bags, be happy to be approached to 'lend' a dog waste bag to those without, and be a friendly reminder to other dog walkers to clean up after their dogs.

Burial Grounds

Brooklodge Burial Ground Development: Tenders for Construction Works have been received and are being evaluated.

Creagh Burial Ground, Ballinasloe

The Part 8 Planning Application for the development of an Extension to the Burial Ground in Creagh was lodged in Jan 2022. A recommendation from the Planning Authority is expected shortly and once received, same will be presented to the Municipal District for decision.

Climate Action Opportunity Fund

Groups awarded support funding under the scheme are required to complete their projects by end of Quarter 2022. A few projects have been completed to date and related applications for drawdown of support funding are currently being processed by the Environment Section.

Dog Shelter Services

In November 2021 Galway County Council sought expressions of interest from experienced and competent persons and/or organisations to supply a secure a dog shelter facility to Galway County Council with or without the additional service of shelter keeper.

The facility would primarily cover the east of the county and it was asked that the facility would be ideally located within 50km of Galway City.

The expression of interest was advertised on November 25th, 2021, with a closing date for receipt of applications of the 7th of January 2022.

Nine expressions of interest were received from interested parties during this period, 8 of which indicated provision of both shelter and shelter keeper service.

Following evaluation of the applications received, Galway County Council Veterinary Services decided that 1 applicant who operated dog boarding kennels in the Corofin area met the criteria in terms of facilities, experience required, and services available for the needs of Galway County Council's dog warden service.

The Council have entered now entered into an agreement with this contractor for the provision of of Dog Shelter services and related services to cover the east and south of the county until 2023.

Appointment of Dog Warden

Galway County Council advertised for the position of Dog Warden in December 2021 following the retirement of the Dog Warden covering the east of Galway County in August 2021.

Following a shortlisting and interview process, an appointment has now been confirmed and the new Dog warden will commence his duties covering the east of the County after the Easter holiday.

Climate Change

The Climate Change Co-ordinator has been appointed. A presentation was given to the Climate and Biodiversity SPC setting out a work plan for 2022.

Work has commenced in the following areas:

- Improved management and implementation of the actions set out in the Climate Adaptation Strategy. Various software options were reviewed and Click up Project Management Software has been chosen. The actions under the Adaptation Plan Strategy will be inputted into the Project Management Software and the Environment Section will work with the various sections to implement the actions in the Strategy. Regular updates will be provided to the Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC.
- An internal and external communications strategy is required, to include the identification and support of climate change leaders throughout the organisation,
- A few projects have started including the development of a regional awareness campaign for the protection of sand dunes and a review of the GCC (Galway County Council) Severe Weather Emergency Response System to ensure that climate-relevant data is recorded.
- Ministerial direction regarding the development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans is expected in Q4 2022. In the meantime, a regional workshop is being planned to identify the steps required to develop the plan and to identify relevant stakeholders. It is expected that the decarbonisation zone project will come under the Climate Action Plan.

The Environment Section is coordinating the collection of 2021 data for input into the SEAI Monitoring and Reporting Platform which is due for submission by the end of April.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the Energy Bureau has been signed by Galway County Council which will allow Mayo County Council (Lead Partner) to sign contracts with the recommended tenderer. Recruitment of Local Energy Bureau Officers will commence thereafter.

Under SEAI's Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) Program, the Environment Department has engaged with a few SECs to support them develop their own Energy Master Plans (EMPs). Galway County Council has appointed consultants to deliver EMPs for Headford SEC, Milltown SEC, and Dunmore SEC.

GCC has re-tendered for the provision of EMPs for Athenry and Ballinasloe SECs and the tenders received are currently being assessed.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity and Pollinator Municipal District Plans

Research with regards to the production of Biodiversity and Pollinator Plans for each Municipal District has commenced. Consultation has taken place with the area office in each Municipal Districts. A meeting also took place with Forum Connemara and a meeting is also planned with Galway Rural Development with regards to biodiversity and pollinator work that they undertake. Currently a bi-lingual flyer is being designed to send out to individuals, community groups and schools to collect and collate their views and to include any plans that they have in place. It is also hoped to hold two 'in person' and two online meetings with community groups, schools, and individuals in May to give them a chance to input into the plans.

The primary aim of Biodiversity & Pollinator Action Plans is to provide a framework for protecting, managing and/or enhancing natural heritage in each municipal district through actions led by the local authority (Area Office) and the local community. Given the size of the county and variation in landscape and natural heritage resources and the fact that the county is divided up into municipal districts with an area office of Galway County Council it was decided to use the municipal district as the basis of area in which the plans would be developed and implemented.

The process of producing and implementing a plan for each municipal district creates an opportunity to co-ordinate action among local groups, individuals, the local authority, statutory bodies, and other organisations at a local level which is more meaningful and achievable.

It is proposed that the plans will capture the objectives, targets and actions for biodiversity that will be undertaken by the local authority, local communities, organisations, and individuals to achieve the objectives of the plan.

National Biodiversity Week 13th – 22nd May 2022

Events for National Biodiversity Week are currently being programmed.

Fire and Emergency Services

Loughrea Fire Station: The tender has been accepted for the design of the station and contracts are expected to be finalised in the coming week to appoint the design team. It is anticipated that the Part 8 application will be lodged in March 2022.

Athenry Fire Station: Following the approval of the Athenry/Oranmore Municipal District members of the Part 8 planning permission for the station in Athenry approval has been sought from the Department to proceed to the construction stage.

Mise, Le Meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

22nd April 2022