



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

# TUARASCÁIL BHAINISTÍOCHTA MANAGEMENT REPORT

Aibreán 2023  
April 2023



## HOUSING & UKRAINE CRISIS

### HOUSING STOCK- APRIL 2023

| PROPERTY STATUS           |          | Athenry - Oranmore | Ballinasloe | Conamara   | Loughrea   | No Eircode | Tuam       | Total       |
|---------------------------|----------|--------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| ⊕ New Props Awaiting Keys | 2        |                    |             | 18         | 11         |            | 51         | 82          |
| ⊕ Occupied                | 1        | 279                | 482         | 481        | 798        | 30         | 472        | 2543        |
| ⊕ Under Construction      |          | 23                 | 14          | 10         | 7          | 174        | 1          | 229         |
| ⊖ Under Offer             |          | 3                  | 2           |            | 8          |            | 5          | 18          |
| ⊕ Available Unit(s)       |          | 3                  | 1           |            | 5          |            | 5          | 14          |
| ⊕ Awaiting Minor Repairs  |          |                    | 1           |            | 3          |            |            | 4           |
| ⊖ Vacant                  | 1        | 9                  | 10          | 9          | 26         | 5          | 23         | 83          |
| ⊖ Available Unit(s)       |          |                    | 3           | 1          | 6          |            | 3          | 13          |
| Existing                  |          |                    | 3           | 1          | 5          |            | 3          | 12          |
| New Property              |          |                    |             |            | 1          |            |            | 1           |
| ⊖ Awaiting Minor Repairs  |          | 7                  | 4           | 5          | 11         |            | 12         | 39          |
| Existing                  |          | 6                  | 4           | 5          | 10         |            | 11         | 36          |
| New Property              |          | 1                  |             |            | 1          |            | 1          | 3           |
| ⊕ Derelict                | 1        | 2                  | 3           | 3          | 9          | 5          | 8          | 31          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>4</b> | <b>314</b>         | <b>508</b>  | <b>518</b> | <b>850</b> | <b>209</b> | <b>552</b> | <b>2955</b> |

There are currently 2543 tenancies with Galway County Council and 229 under construction with delivery of these mainly planned for 2023.

Of the 83 vacant stock, 13 units are now ready for occupancy with 39 being retrofitted and turned over by maintenance. Tenants are being nominated to these on an ongoing basis.

### NOTICE TO QUILTS/TENANT IN SITU SCHEME

As of 18<sup>th</sup> of April:

- 47 HAP properties on Notice to Quit (down 10 since last month)
- 3 RAS properties on Notice to Quit (up 1)
- 19 Privately rented on Notice to Quit (not on HAP/RAS but on Housing list) (same)

There are properties throughout the county currently being purchased using the "Tenant in Situ" scheme.

| Tenant in Situ Expression of interest form received since Jan 2023 |    |
|--|----|
| Closed Application / other local authority applicant               | 14 |
| HAP/open applicant No NTQ  | 41 |
| HAP/open application with NTQ                                      | 7  |
| total  | 62 |

A significant number of properties offered to us by owners do not fall into the 'tenant in situ' scheme, and several properties have been proposed by tenants without the landlord's consent. Other one-off purchases under Disability/Traveller Accommodation/Regeneration will be considered separately from the allocation.

## LAMA AWARDS

Galway County Council was shortlisted for “Best Mental Health Initiative” for our Housing Disability Steering Group. The work of this initiative looks at a multi-agency approach to providing tenancies to people on the Housing List who have additional needs and have support plans in place via disability services and the HSE.

The project was highlighted by Mental Health Reform for having a key role in addressing mental health needs and for being a person-centred, rights and community-based approach.



## UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

There have been 62 homes offered via Galway County Council and the Offer a Home scheme. IOM are working on placing families in these properties.

A number of large-scale renovation projects are currently being reviewed with owners and the Dept of Housing. These will concentrate on returning long vacant privately owned properties to use with potential for other use post the Ukrainian response.

## HOUSING MAINTENANCE

### Reactive Maintenance Q1 2023

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Repair requests received                      | 1086       |
| Valid Repair requests received                | 425        |
| Tenant Responsibility or Repeats              | 661        |
| Repair requests received in Q1 - closed out   | 221        |
| Repair requests received in Q1 - remain open  | 204        |
| <b>Total Repair requests closed out in Q1</b> | <b>453</b> |



### Void Maintenance Q1 2023

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Voids Completed in Q1             | 22 |
| New voids entering workflow in Q1 | 25 |
| Total voids open at end of Q1     | 41 |

## HOUSING CAPITAL

Works continue at a number of locations throughout the County:

| Location                | Status   |
|-------------------------|--|
| Clifden                 | 18 Houses ready for Allocation<br>8 Apartments at final internal fit out |
| Ahascragh               | 18 units progressing on schedule   |
| Kinvara                 | 10 units - Key hand over to tenants                                      |
| Fana Bhui, Tuam         | 49 units - Key Hand over to tenants                                      |
| Weir rd                 | 29 units progressing on schedule   |
| Single Rurals           | 6 units progressing on schedule  |
| Claregalway             | Design Stage to ABP  |
| Cossmona, Loughrea      | Design stage to Part 8, MD   |
| Ardrahan                | Part 8 process underway  |
| St Josephs, Ballinasloe | Part 8 process underway  |
| Dunlo St, Ballinasloe   | Part 8 to start  |
| Ballymoe                | Contractor being appointed   |

### Preliminary design stage works at:

Sun St, Tuam – 90 units Survey work underway

St Bridgets rd. Portumna – Survey work underway

Tuam Fire Station – design to be undertaken

Station rd., Oughterard to be developed in conjunction with an AHB

## TURNKEY

The following Turnkey advert will be placed in the papers:

Home builders and housing developers in County Galway are being asked to consider offering unbuilt houses or apartments with planning permission, to local authorities under an advance purchase turnkey arrangement. Local authorities are seeking to enter into advance purchase arrangements to secure turnkey homes in areas where the need for social and affordable housing, is most acute. This

call is targeted at advance purchase opportunities for a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 150 dwellings in any one scheme.

This advance purchase opportunity has been put in place to provide for accelerated delivery of housing generally, and primarily, to provide social and affordable homes for eligible applicants nominated by the local authority in areas where a significant need for social or affordable housing has been identified.

It is anticipated that, depending on circumstances and proposals, Galway County Council will enter into an advance purchase development agreement for an approved number of homes, with payment on completion.

Turnkey developments, to be of interest to the Council, should ideally be in close proximity to services within an urban settlement/town/village, and within walking distance of shops, schools and local amenities. Housing Design and Construction Standards must at a minimum meet the requirements of all relevant statutory planning and building control requirements. Of particular interest is the regeneration of existing units within towns and villages.

Joint venture arrangements that include an Approved Housing Body (AHB) will also be considered.

Details of advance purchase development scheme and the Affordable Housing Fund are available within the following booklet: [A Guide to making an Advanced Purchase Submission](#).

If you wish to make a submission the following [Advanced Purchase Submission Form](#) must be completed in full and emailed to [dflood@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:dflood@galwaycoco.ie) no later than 12noon on Friday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2023.

For further details please contact Daithi Flood, Housing Section, Galway County Council at [dflood@galwaycounty.ie](mailto:dflood@galwaycounty.ie) or by telephone 091 509050.

## ECONOMIC, COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ERCD)

### LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

- A submission has been made to the Department of Rural and Community Development recommending the allocation of €300,432 under the Community Support Fund (Community Enhancement Programme) across 193 applications, to support grassroots community & social organisations with their running costs and small-scale capital projects.
- Healthy Galway County was involved in a number of Hello, How Are You Events in March. Hello, How Are You? is a campaign about connection and engaging in open conversations about mental health.
- Healthy Galway County and Galway Sports Partnership provided 12 Sports Equipment Packs to Ukrainian Refugee Centres in remote areas. These packs have been well received with Children utilising the equipment during their free time.
- Healthy Galway County and Galway Sports Partnership ran an inclusive Boccia Tournament for Disability and Older Adult Groups with over 70 people in attendance. This is part of a larger initiative to increase participation and social leisure opportunities for Older Adults and also breaking down the barriers to participation for people with Disabilities.



### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- The Community Section is identifying applicants to represent County Galway in the National IPB Pride of Place Awards – 2 towns/villages/groups/estates will be nominated across a range of judging categories to showcase their work at local level and how they involve all people in their area in its development and local activities. This follows on from a very successful 2022 where Lawrencetown won the Best Village category and Woodford were runners-up in the Creative Place category.

- The Tidy Towns Competition for 2023 has been announced with a national closing date of 10<sup>th</sup> May, and advice has issued to over 40 Tidy Towns groups regarding the application process, including networking with other local authority officials to collate information and advice for groups.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION

- A second Working Group Meeting will take place with representatives from the local authority, HSE, and Older Peoples Council in the City & County to agree structures for a revised Directory of Services for Older People. It is envisaged that the revised Directory of Services will provide information on services aligned with the WHO Themes for Age Friendly Cities & Counties, and it is hoped to launch the publication to coincide with Positive Ageing Week 2023.
- A further interagency Working Group Meeting to progress Traveller Education initiatives will take place this month, to plan a networking café event to collate information on all existing initiatives and share information across agencies.
- The Community Section inputted into assessment processes for GRETB educational initiatives and Creative Ireland's Creativity in Older Age Scheme. Following on from the assessment of the latter scheme, a programme of events will be selected to celebrate 'Bealtaine', with a particular emphasis on projects which positively address social isolation and promote positive ageing.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

The Income and Expenditure Report for 2022 was submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development, outlining the allocation of funding across the functions of the PPN, and also setting out a Workplan and associated budget for 2023 activities, which includes an increase of €10,000 to base funding of the PPN.

### ACTING AS AN INFORMATION HUB:

- The PPN sent out 4 Weekly Digest emails (each Friday), 1 Monthly Newsletter along with 11 mass emails member groups.
- Membership of the PPN now stands at 1,224 registered groups. 40 Environmental, 945 Community & Voluntary and 239 Social Inclusion Pillar.
- Regular updates across the PPN's social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) Updates from various other shareholders shared.
- The PPN answered numerous queries in relation to funding, advice on setting up groups, insurance options for community groups, via phone calls and emails.
- The PPN Website was updated regularly with funding announcements, news from Government Departments, resources for groups and local/ national events.

### BUILDING CAPACITY:

- PPN Reps forum meeting with all 30 PPN representatives on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. This forum assists reps in their roles.
- News, events and funding sections of PPN website updated regularly.

- National PPN Supports webinar on Communications and Strategic Planning attended.
- PPN collaboration with LAWPRO to plan an event for community groups operating around Loch Corrib.
- National PPN Workers Meeting & Retreat in Athlone. Workshops from various PPN Stakeholders.

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#### PROMOTING REPRESENTATION:

- PPN Representatives were involved in a number of meetings during the month including the JPC, Housing SPC. PPN reports of these meetings are subsequently uploaded to the PPN website for feedback from groups.
- PPN Secretariat Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023.
- National and Local level consultations shared with member groups via email.

#### ARTS OFFICE

**Community Support Scheme** – 48 community groups and arts organisations were awarded €60,000 through our annual Arts Act Grants as part of the Community Support Scheme. These awards will support a wide range of arts events and workshops throughout the county in 2023. Notifications have been sent and Form A's received.

**Artist Support Scheme** – The 11 successful artists have received their first payments. The list of awarded artists can be found [here](#). On Tuesday 18 the Arts Office and artists will meet online to introduce themselves to each other and share information about what they've received funding for.

**Artists in Schools Scheme** – 8 artists and 14 schools submitted applications for this year's scheme. There are 5 places available for artists and schools. Assessments and decisions will be made before the end of April.

**Interface** – After an open call process, artist Noeline Kavanagh was selected as the Galway County residency at Interface in Inagh Valley this year.

**Galway Theatre Festival** – GTF launched their programme on 28 March. Galway County Arts Office is supporting a Speed Creating event for creatives based in the county on 02 May. You can find more info about Speed Creating [here](#).

**Visual Artists Ireland** – The first webinar in our programme supporting visual artists on 29 March was very well received. We received registrations from over 35 visual artists based in the county, 16 from the city and 12 others. Next up we have an in-person networking event which sold out immediately. With support from the venue we will increase the capacity. You can find more info about the VAI programme [here](#).

**Creative Places Tuam** – 30 March, Amie Lawless attended the closing event of a residency on Gilmartin Road called For Our Grandmothers. The work presented was a collaboration between the residents and UK based artist Mark Storer. You can find photos, recordings and information [here](#). 17 April, Sharon O'Grady attended the Tuam Municipal District meeting alongside Create and Sinead O'Reilly, Head of Local Arts at Arts Council to present on the progress to date and the potential beyond 2023.



**Culture Up** – The Arts Office supported our local partner Aras Éanna to compile an application for the Arts Council’s International Residency Initiatives Scheme. The Arts Office will partner with Aras Éanna to support an International Residency exchange for Galway County Artists with partners in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Serbia. Notifications to applicants will be received by mid-June. We continue to collaborate on the future of the Culture Up network with our partners in advance of EU funding deadlines in 2024.

**Public Art** – OPW GCC Flood Relief Schemes: Site Visits took place on 24 March in Claregalway and 14 April in Craughwell with Rina Whyte, Sharon O’Grady, engineers and community representatives.

**OPW GCC DSP Tuam Mural:** After a process of consultation with the Youth Advisory Group, Joanna McGlynn issued invites on 03 April to shortlisted artists to submit proposals in advance of the deadline on 04 June.

**Poetry Day Ireland** – 'Letters to the Universe' - A Celebration of Poetry by The Ploughed Field Collective, a creative writing arts group based in Gort. They are committed to the development of inclusive and accessible poetry and creative writing in their community. 'Letters to the Universe' is their series of poetry events in Gort to celebrate National Poetry Day 2023. You can find more information about these 5 events between 27 and 30 April [here](#).

**Creative Schools Bridging Workshop** – 25 April, Joanna McGlynn will deliver an arts and education focused workshop in Tuam Town Hall for 15 Galway County based artists interested in working in this area. You can find more information about the workshop [here](#).

**Dance Artist Residency 2023** – The Arts Office is delighted to share that Magdalena Hylak has been successful in her Dance Artist Residency Scheme application to the Arts Council. Magdalena will work with 3 communities in Galway County as part of this capacity building residency for contemporary dance.

## CREATIVE IRELAND

**Cruinniú na nÓg 2023** – We received over 20 Expressions of interests from artists and groups to run events for Children for Cruinniú na nÓg. We will be also programming a number of events in Ukrainian Centres for Children on the day itself. Programme launch will take place at the end of April/early May.

**Creativity in Older Years Fund** - The Culture Team received 26 Expressions of Interest from artists, community groups and agencies for projects under two strands: 1) Live music performance in residential healthcare settings and 2) Other forms of creative engagement in community and/or healthcare settings. The applications were assessed by members of the Culture and 3 project were submitted to Culture Ireland for consideration for funding with decisions being announced in May.

**Creative Ireland Bursaries 2023-** Galway’s Creative Ireland Programme 2023, Galway County Council invites applications for our Creative Ireland Bursary Awards 2023. Application window for Creative Ireland opens on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and **closes at 4pm on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023**. E- mail to [creativeireland@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:creativeireland@galwaycoco.ie) or by printing and completing the form and returning it to Galway County Council Arts Office, County Hall, Prospect Hill, Galway.

**SALT**, takes places on the 30th April at Trácht, Kinvara. You can find more info about SALT [here](#).



## RURAL FUNDING SCHEMES – CLÁR 2023

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys T.D. launched a €8m million CLÁR 2023 programme at the end of March 2023. **CLÁR** is targeted funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas experiencing depopulation – projects must be in a Clár area and proposals based on locally identified priorities. Under the initiative, **grants of up to €50,000** can be sought to support the development of community and sports facilities, youth clubs, playgrounds, sensory gardens, walking tracks and general amenities and facilities. And for the first time under the CLÁR Programme, funding will be provided to carry out upgrades and improvements to spectator stands at local GAA and sports clubs.

The 2023 programme will be delivered through 3 separate Measures as follows:

Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities & Amenities

Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care, and Community First Responders Transport

Measure 3: 'Our Islands'

Fully completed forms for Measure 1 must be returned to Galway County Council by midnight on **Monday 8th May 2023** via email to [clar@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:clar@galwaycoco.ie). Application Forms and guidelines are available on [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) or [clar@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:clar@galwaycoco.ie) / 091-509396.

Note: Applications for Measures 2 and 3 must be made directly to the Dept. of Rural and Community Development. Please see gov.ie - CLÁR-Funding for Small-Scale Rural ([www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)) for more information.

## REGENERATION SCHEME

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### ATHENRY:

Cross Street enhancement design completed apart from Safety Audits and feedback issues. Planning package will follow to hold point where co ordination with the Local Transport plan and Local Area plan is required.

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### LOUGHREA TOWN HALL:

Awaiting response form DRCD regarding funding uplift to allow Tender Documents to be finalised and procurement phase initiated.

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### CLIFDEN:

Presentations made to Municipal District and Chamber of Commerce as part of the second phase of public consultation on the developing Conceptual design for Clifden Town Centre. It is anticipated that the Chamber of Commerce will make a formal submission to Galway County Council later this week following on from their own public meeting. In general, the proposed designs are gaining in support which will allow the design to be packaged for a Part 10 planning application.

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### PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE:

Draft Tender Documents scheduled to issue within two weeks.

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## PORTUMNA PUBLIC REALM:

Stakeholder meetings progressed with the Chamber of Commerce with positive feedback. RPS developing public realm design.

Acquisition of opportunity site nearing closure.

Car parking sites identified, and negotiations initiated.

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## GORT :

Meeting with the Gort Business community scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Presentation to the MD took place this week, outlining the developing conceptual designs for Gort public realm.

## BIA INNOVATOR SITE VISIT



Site visit to the Bia Innovator Campus on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April. From left to right: Mr. Alan Farrell, A/Director of Services of Economic, Rural and Community Development, Mr. Liam Conneally, Chief Executive of Galway County Council, Ms. Elaine Donohue, Bia Innovator Campus and Martin Kelly, Bia Innovator Campus.





The preferred route for the Galway to Athlone Cycleway project has been published. Four public information events to display the preferred route were held across the east of the County from March 28<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>. The highly-scenic cycleway, which connects to the existing Dublin Athlone Greenway, is intended to form part of an international network of long-distance cycling trails in Europe.

Landowners, farmers, cyclists, those in the hospitality industry and the wider community were all invited to view the preferred route for the 205 km stretch. Representatives of the project team were present to answer questions about the route at each event. The events proved to be extremely successful and well attended with over 1,000 in attendance over the four evenings.

The public information events, took place at the:

- **Oranmore:** Oranmore Lodge Hotel, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March – approx. 300 attended
- **Gort:** Lady Gregory Hotel, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March – approx. 300 attended
- **Portumna:** Town Hall, Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March – approx. 250 attended
- **Ballinasloe:** Shearwater Hotel, Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March – approx. 200 attended

The Galway to Athlone Castle National Cycleway project will see the creation of a segregated walking and cycling route linking Ballyloughane Beach in Galway City to Athlone Castle, where it will connect to the existing Athlone to Dublin Cycleway. The Cycleway will be Ireland’s first dedicated inter-city route for cyclists and walkers. Stretching across the country from Galway to Dublin, the Cycleway will be a world-class amenity for families, communities and tourists to enjoy.





DISPLAY IN BALLINASLOE



DISPLAY IN PORTUMNA



DISPLAY IN GORT

To identify the emerging preferred route, a series of project objectives were set, including the '5S' criteria set out in the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways, published by the Government of Ireland in 2018. See link below.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ed5d17-strategy-for-the-future-development-of-national-and-regional-greenwa/>

The '5S' criteria outline that Greenways should be Scenic, Sustainable, Strategic, Segregated, and with lots to See and do.

Following the publication of the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor in December 2021 and the completion of Public Consultation No. 3 in January 2022, the project team have been engaging with individual landowners to determine the preferred route for the project. The preferred route has been identified and published and is available to be viewed at this link

<https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/6414124/29/>

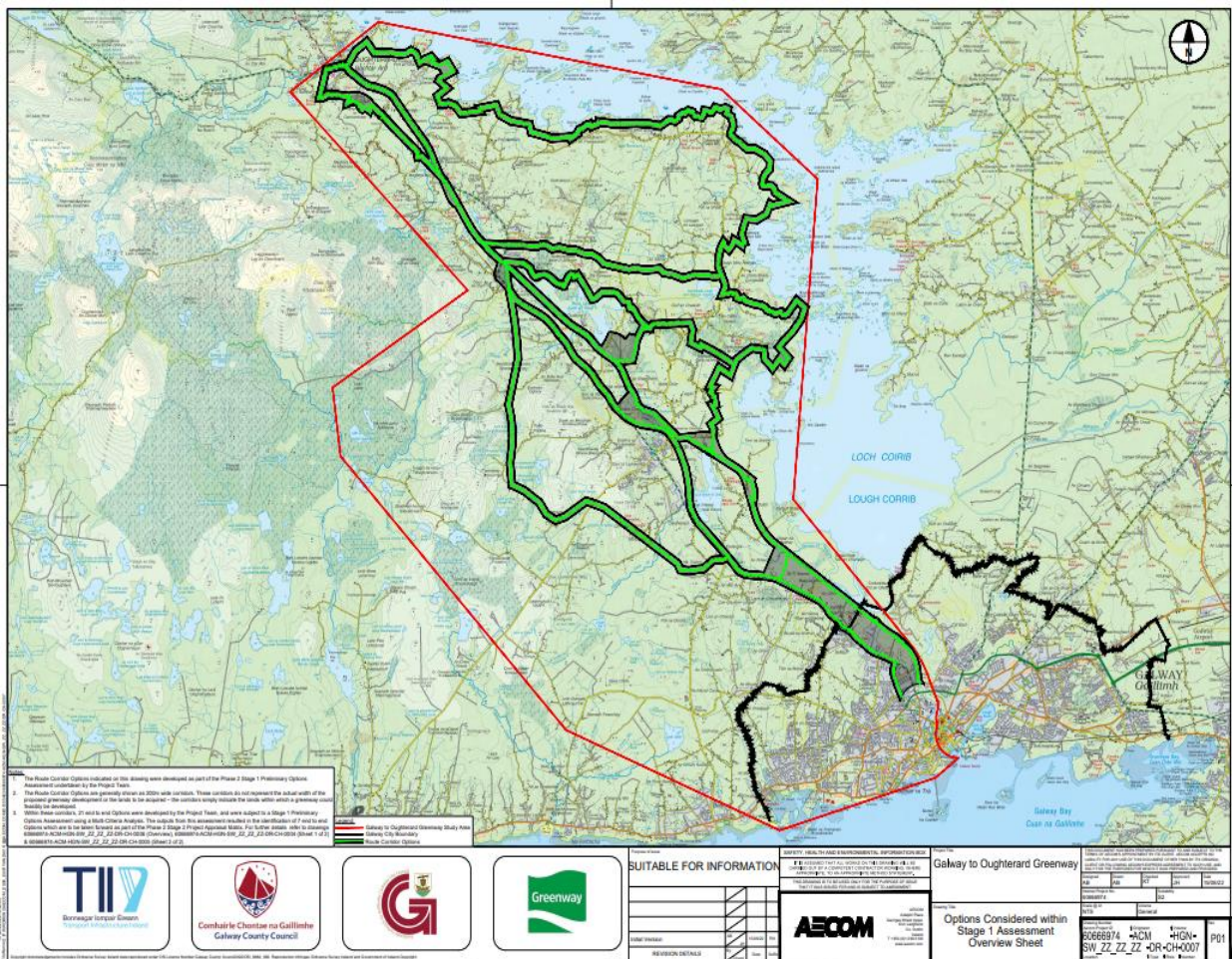
A Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways has been agreed with the main farming organisations and published by the Government. This is to ensure that landowners are treated respectfully and fairly at all stages including construction and operation. The Code of Best Practice includes a payment mechanism to address early engagement and cooperation in an effort to agree upon a route that minimises the impact on respective farm/property holdings and to enter into Voluntary Land Acquisition Agreements where possible. Its available at the following link.



**GALWAY TO OUGHTERARD GREENWAY – UPDATE**

Galway County Council, in partnership with Galway City Council and in association with Transport Infrastructure Ireland are working to develop a recreational trail which provides commuters and leisure cyclists with a corridor linking the city of Galway to the town of Oughterard. Once completed, the route will form part of the Connemara Greenway between Galway and Clifden, as well as the EuroVelo 1 ('Atlantic Coast') route, which is an 11,000km long-distance cycling route between Norway and Portugal.

The project will seek to provide both long and short-distance recreational users and commuters with safe, convenient opportunities to travel between areas along the route. It is anticipated that the provision of a greenway in this location will provide enhanced access to Connemara and will entice users to explore its many towns, villages and unspoilt countryside. This will have a positive impact upon rural economies and will provide the momentum needed for new enterprise and rural regeneration throughout the region. Furthermore, a resultant increase in walking and cycling activity will improve the health and general wellbeing of users and will lead to reduced car usage and the associated carbon emission levels.



The Galway to Oughterard Greenway Project is currently in Phase 2: Options Selection, which is a 3-stage process.

- Stage 1 – Preliminary Options Assessment
- Stage 2 – Project Appraisal Matrix
- Stage 3 – Preferred Option

During Stages 1 and 2, taking into consideration the previously identified constraints and the feedback received through the first and second non-statutory public consultation in February/March 2022, and June/July 2022 the project team identified a range of feasible options for the Galway to Oughterard Greenway - see map above.

The project has now moved to Stage 3 – Preferred Option (Corridor)

**There will be a series of Public Information and Consultation events convened on the week commencing May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, where Landowners, farmers, cyclists, those in the hospitality industry and the wider community will all be invited to view the preferred corridor make submissions and further engage with the project team.**

Once the venues, dates and times are confirmed these will be advertised locally, uploaded to all social media platforms and communicated via press release and email to the members and wider community.

## BREXIT ADJUSTMENT LOCAL AUTHORITY MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE [BALAMI] – UPDATE

The Scheme has been designed having regard to the recommendations of the Seafood Taskforce on immediate measures to mitigate the impacts of the fish quota share reductions arising from the EU/UK Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) on the Irish Fishing industry and on the coastal communities that depend on fisheries. Expenditure under this scheme will be proposed for funding under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

Funding provided under the Scheme is for the purpose of eligible capital works. Funding for studies, surveys, planning and permit processes, consultants and/or design fees, etc. are not allowable as project costs under this Scheme.











BALLYCONNEELY

BRIDGE REHABILITATION WORKS



FIDDAUN, MOYLOUGH





CARROWLUSTRUN, MOYCULLEN



CAHERGAL, CONAMARA



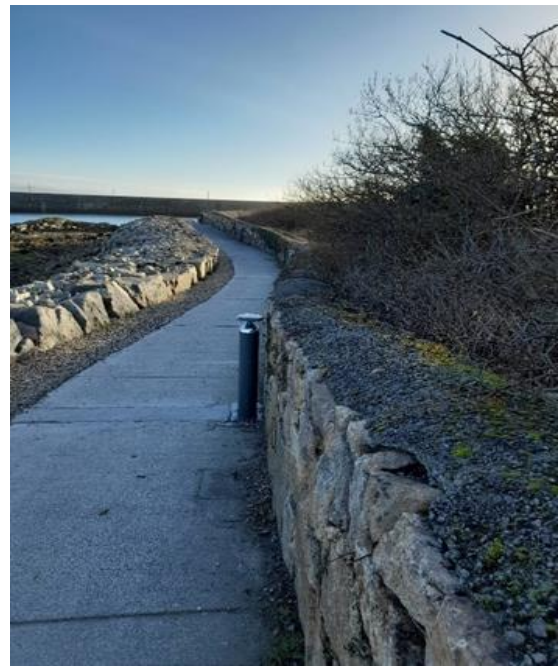
THE SPIDDAL COASTAL WALKWAY IS LIT UP FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL!

The National Transport Authority (NTA) Active Travel Investment Team recently provided Galway County Council Roads and Operations Section with €127,000 of funding to design, install and commission circa. 400m of continuous public lighting along an existing Coastal Walkway in Spiddal Co. Galway.

This project is now successfully completed and huge thanks to the GCC Roads Area Office team in Carraroe for bringing this Active Travel project in on time and within budget.



BEFORE



AFTER



VIEW FROM ACROSS THE HARBOUR



LED STRIP LIGHTS ON HANDRAIL

COMMUNITY MONUMENTS FUND 2023

**€505,000 allocated to Eight Community Monument Projects in the County of Galway.**

Eight Galway County Projects have been awarded funding under the Community Monuments Fund 2023. Galway County Council administers the Community Monuments Fund on behalf of The National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Many communities throughout the county are already seeing the benefits of the Community Monuments Fund which is essential in building resilience and conservation within our most vulnerable archaeological monuments. Full credit to the community groups and committees that have put in huge effort in their preparation of applications, assisted by Galway Community Archaeologist, Heritage Office and Environment Section of Galway County Council and Community Employment Scheme Supervisors.

**Stream 1 – Capital Works**

|                                      |             |                                  |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-1-GA001</a></u> | Galway CoCo | St Mary's, Athenry Graveyard     | €98,517.00  |
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-1-GA002</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Issertkelly Church and Graveyard | €85,647.00  |
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-1-GA004</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Kilboght Church and Mausoleum    | €111,588.77 |
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-1-GA005</a></u> | Galway CoCo | St. Kerrill's (Religious Hse)    | €97,260.75  |

**Stream 2 – Conservation Management Plans/ Audits**

|                                      |             |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-2-GA002</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Temple Jarlath (ecclesiastical site) | €28,905.00 |
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-2-GA003</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Killogilleen Church and Graveyard    | €25,215.00 |
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-2-GA005</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Kilcreevanty                         | €27,675.50 |

**Stream 3 – Interpretation & Signage**

|                                      |             |               |            |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|
| <u><a href="#">CMF23-3-GA001</a></u> | Galway CoCo | Abbeygormacan | €29,950.00 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



GALWAY  
COMMUNITY  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
SEANDALAÍOCHTA POBAIL NA GAILLIMHIE





Issertkelly Church and Graveyard. Capital works have been funded under CMF2023 following the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan 2022. Further details on previous years Community Monuments Fund Projects can be accessed via Galway Community Archaeology Website at <https://field-monuments.galwaycommunityheritage.org/>.

### **Funding in previous years.**

First established in 2020, the Community Monuments Fund has increased year on year.

- **2023 €505,000 awarded to eight projects in Co. Galway**
- [2022 €278,108.50 awarded to seven projects in Co. Galway](#)
- [2021 €224,867 awarded to seven projects](#) in Co. Galway
- [2020 € 75,953 awarded to four projects](#) in Co. Galway

### **Conservation and Maintenance**

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.

### **Archaeological Monuments**

The Community Monuments Fund is investing essential capital in our valuable archaeological heritage to help owners and custodians of archaeological monuments to safeguard them into the future for the benefit of communities and the public while stimulating local employment and economic activity.





ABBEYGORMICAN TRANSEPT CHAPEL AND HANNON TOMB DURING CLEARANCE WORKS



ABBEYGORMICAN TRANSEPT CHAPEL & HANNON TOMB AFTER CAPITAL WORKS 2021 & 2022





WORK IN PROGRESS AT ST KERRILLS ABBEY, CLOONKEENKERRILL, GURTEEN.





Archaeologist Dominic Delany and Conservation Architect Fergal McNamara working together at St Kerrills Abbey, Gurteen. A Conservation Management plan was carried out in 2021 and the first phase of capital works were carried out 2022. Gurteen Community Council were successful again in their application for further capital works 2023.



TRACERY WINDOW, ST KERRILLS BEFORE AND AFTER WORKS 2022



### **Additional funding to support the Residential Zoned Land Tax mapping project.**

The publication of draft Residential Zoned Land Tax maps, showing lands in scope, was a key statutory milestone in the introduction of the RZLT.

DHLGH also recognises that the creation of a supplemental map where required and the finalisation of the RZLT maps by 01 December, will require additional resources and has accordingly secured funding for all 31 local authorities to assist with the next phase of implementation. This funding has been apportioned to individual local authorities on the tiered rating basis previously agreed with the County and City Management Association. Accordingly, Galway County Council will receive an additional allocation of €21,223.

## CORPORATE SERVICES

### PLAY & RECREATION GRANT SCHEME FUNDING AWARD FOR LOUGHREA PLAYGROUND

Galway County Council have successfully secured funding of €16,633 towards the installation of a Wheelchair accessible roundabout and the carrying out of repairs to existing equipment in the Loughrea Playground as part of 2023's Capital Grant Scheme for Play, and Recreation

The Capital Grant Scheme for Play and Recreation supports the work of Local Authorities in improving access to quality play and recreation facilities within their communities. This can be through the refurbishment and upgrade of existing facilities or through the development of new ones. The Scheme offers funding of up to €18,000 per project, an investment that will see positive impacts delivered to children and families across the country.

The addition of the Wheelchair accessible roundabout will provide for new innovative and inclusive play infrastructure and lots more fun for all children within the younger children's play area. Repairs to existing equipment will also be carried out to improve safety for all users.



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## ELECTORAL REFORM BILL 2022: MODERNISATION OF THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION PROCESS

On the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, Minister Malcolm Noonan, T.D., Minister of State with responsibility for Heritage and Electoral Reform announced funding of €1.7m to be ring fenced for registration authorities for the purposes of further supporting local authorities with their legal duties in managing and maintaining the register and the need for intensified data quality activities to be carried out on the register. This money will be made available to supplement each authorities' own spending on the register with an objective to further improve data quality.

Galway County Council has been allocated €59,437 with funding to be made available in the period of April – September 2023.

The new provisions under the act, including provision for rolling registration enables registration authorities to proactively engage with electors and potential electors at any time of year. Work is underway to develop a national electoral registration system and working towards a complete and accurate register is required as part of the future migration process for this system which will bring a number of improvements and efficiencies for the management of the register.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

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### BALLINASLOE LIBRARY CRIME BOOK CLUB

The first meeting of the brand-new Crime Book Club "The Bookworms" took place in Ballinasloe Library in March. These lovers of crime fiction will meet once a month to discuss a chosen crime, detective or mystery book. Starting off with Run Time by Catherine Ryan-Howard the group hope to read books by writers from across the world.

The group is the inspiration of librarian Brid Grehan and already has 17 members and a waiting list. Membership is free and open to all.



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#### CON TEMPO COUNTYWIDE AT BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

The first ConTempo Countywide Galway Music Residency of 2023 came to Ballinasloe Library Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April. The ConTempo Quartet is recognised as one of the most exciting and vibrant chamber ensembles performing today. The afternoon of music and words was hosted in the beautiful Church Gallery and featured a performance of Haydn's Seven Last Words which was accompanied by a reading of Mark Strand's poem 'The Seven Last Words'.

This event was a collaboration between Ballinasloe Library and members of Group 8, a local Professional Artist Collective. One of highlights was a reading by Zara Little-Campbell who is a member of Group 8 and the newest member of the Ballinasloe Library team.

The event was free and fully booked out.



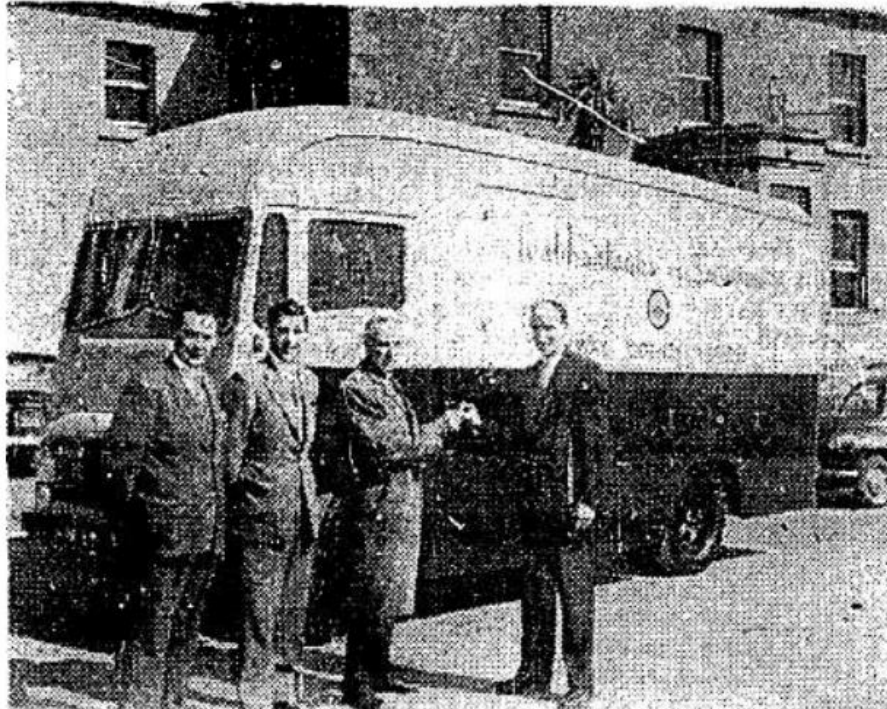

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### GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE COMPUTERISED

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960, Galway Public Libraries launched its first mobile library service. The service is busier than ever with 59 stops in towns and villages including visiting 4 playschools and 3 nursing homes.

63 years to the day we are thrilled that the service is now fully computerised and library members are being issued with Galway Public Library cards which they can use in any library across Ireland. The mobile service will now be accessible to anyone with an Irish library card so visitors and tourists can take full advantage of being able to borrow and return books when on holidays.





**Mr. F. J. Fahy handing over the keys of Galway County libraries new mobile library unit, to Mr. Bohan, County librarian. This is the first unit of its kind built in the Country. Also in the picture is Mr. E. P. Fahy (Fahy Bros.) and Mr. J. Woods, B.E. Galway County Council.**



## BALLYBANE LIBRARY MAKERSPACE LAUNCH

On Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> April the Mayor of Galway City, Cllr. Clodagh Higgins formally launched the new MakerSpace and creative studio in Ballybane Library. This is the first MakerSpace in Galway Public Libraries that is funded by Creative Ireland Galway City and is jointly supported by the GRETB under the Creative Youth Partnership.

Elected members, members of the Creative Ireland team as well as the Director of Service Mr. Michael Owens were in attendance. Participants from the area were involved in a creative art workshop as well as VR (Virtual Reality) experiences. These sessions were supported by Foróige, Youth Work Ireland and the GRETB after school team.

This was also the last public engagement of Bernie Kelly, Acting County & City Librarian, who has retired from Galway County Council following 43 years of dedicated and distinguished service.





*Mayor of Galway City, Cllr. Clodagh Higgins, with Elected Members, staff of Ballybane Library, Creative Ireland Galway City, Director of Services Michael Owens and the Senior Executive Library Team.*

## HEALTHY IRELAND @ YOUR LIBRARY PROGRAMME

The Library team were busy in both City and County locations hosting a number of events that aim to support Early Years development through Play, Teenager and Adolescent Development, Smoking Addictions, Autism Awareness and our first Health Fair in Ballinasloe Library.

Libraries that supported talks and workshops for this month were:

Athenry      Loughrea      Ballinasloe      Leabharlann an Ceathrún Rua      Westside      Tuam

Notable guest speakers include Dr. Rita Melia and Caitriona Ryan, Early Years Specialists from the ATU (Atlantic Technological University) Máire Bríd Ní Chonghaile from Galway Autism Partnership (GAP) as well as psychotherapist Sinead Taylor. Our Health Fair is a cross collaboration between various Organisations including the HSE, Alzheimer's Society of Ireland, Asthma Society of Ireland, Croí: the West of Ireland Cardiac and Stroke Foundation, Mental Health Ireland and Galway East and Midlands Cancer Support.





## Ballinasloe Library

Saturday 15 April 2023  
2:15pm - 4:30pm

Come to our Community Health Fair and find out information regarding your health from a range of healthcare professionals

- Alzheimer Society of Ireland
- Asthma Society of Ireland
- Croí, the West of Ireland Cardiac & Stroke Foundation, Ltd.
- Mental Health Ireland
- Galway East & Midlands Cancer Support
- HSE Quit Smoking

FREE blood pressure check 

FREE physiotherapy demonstration:  
warming up safely before exercise

For more information:  
Phone: 091-509551 OR email: [ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie](mailto:ballinasloe@galwaylibrary.ie)



ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

**National Spring Clean**

To date 180 groups/individuals have registered for the An Taisce National Spring Clean which will take place in April 2023.

The National Spring Clean encourages clean ups of local areas. Galway County Council will participate in the National Spring Clean by providing support to communities involved in clean ups.

**Green Schools**

The Green School's Assessments programme continues with 34 schools renewing to date, and one new school joining the programme.

**WEEE Collections**

Galway County Council are supporting WEEE Ireland in the delivery of 5 mobile collections of waste electrical goods at local level in Oughterard, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Maam Cross and Gort during April and May. More collections are planned for later in the year.



**GAA Green Clubs programme**

5 GAA clubs in Co. Galway have been selected to participate in phase 2 of the GAA Green Clubs programme where they are being asked to help evaluate the effectiveness of the Programme Tool Kit, and a further 9 clubs have been asked to report to the GAA on their general progress. All clubs have been informed by the GAA of the programme and the availability of the tool kit. Galway County Council will support any club involved in this programme and will encourage all clubs to use the Tool Kit to progress their environmental awareness journey. Contact has been made with 7 clubs so far at different stages in the programme.

## National Food Waste Recycling Programme



Galway County Council is involved in the National Food Waste Recycling Programme which encourages food waste prevention and segregation of food waste.

As part of the National Food Waste Recycling Programme

<https://www.mywaste.ie/what-to-do-with-my-food-waste/> Galway County Council have made available promotional kits to Tidy Towns groups for distribution in their community. The kit consists of a food waste caddy, a roll of biodegradable bags and an information leaflet. The kit will encourage people to think about food waste, and where a food waste service is available will help to ensure that the correct waste is put in the bin.

This campaign can be included as part of the "Sustainability – Doing more with less" section of any Tidy Towns campaign. 12 Tidy Town groups have signed up to date.

This kit will also be included in any community awareness initiatives going forward.

## Social Media



A social media campaign was run in relation to mobile WEEE Collections and a campaign to encourage the recycling of batteries during April.



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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### **Clifden Green Homes Exhibition.**

Galway County Council supplied promotional material to Clifden Green Homes Exhibition held on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April.

Comment from organiser *“Thanks so much for the contribution from the County Council to the Clifden Green Homes Exhibition. The high vis vests and the garden compost containers were great hits! ... It was a very good event, made better because of your participation.*

*Many, many thanks from me and all the staff and volunteers of Connemara Credit Union.”*

### **Lá Gairme (Careers Day) Loughrea**

In conjunction with the Oifigeach Gaeilge Galway County Council had an Environmental Awareness Stand at a career's day in Loughrea for local Secondary School pupils.

### **Empowering Communities Programme –GRD (Galway Rural Development)**

The Environmental Awareness Unit met with the Community Engagement Officer for the Empowering Communities programme being delivered by Galway Rural Development in Ballinasloe. We hope to work with the Community Engagement Officer as the programme develops to include environmental awareness and responsibility in the area.

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## LITTER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023 – 2025

Galway County Council is replacing its existing Litter Management Plan in accordance with Section 10 of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 which requires local authorities to review its Litter Management Plan every 3 years.

The Litter Management Plan 2023 – 2025 sets out objectives for the prevention and eradication of litter throughout County Galway.

While there is a growing awareness of littering, its causes and its consequences, there is still a need to change attitudes and behaviour.

A major environmental issue facing the country is the amount of litter that defaces the countryside – footpaths, streets, parks, beaches etc, while the problem of dog fouling is of particular concern.

The Plan has been translated into Irish and it will be progressing to the consultation phase.

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## SOLID FUEL REGULATIONS

The current Solid Fuels Regulations took effect on 31 October 2022 and apply equally across the State.

The primary focus of these regulations is on improving air quality and improving people's health outcomes, by restricting the retail, online, and commercial sale of smoky fuels, including smoky coal, turf, and wet wood. These fuels are proven to be a major contributor to air pollution in Ireland.

The thresholds which now apply are:

- Coal products and manufactured solid fuels must have a smoke emission rate of less than 10 grams per hour. This is the same as was previously in force in Low Smoke Zones.
- Manufactured part biomass products must have a smoke emission rate of less than 5 grams per hour.
- Coal products and manufactured solid fuels, including manufactured part biomass products, must have a sulphur content of less than 2% by weight on a dry ash-free basis, and subject to a market assessment, from 1 September 2025 this will be reduced to 1%.
- Fuel products that are 100% biomass products (including wood products and wood logs), supplied in units of two cubic metres or less, must have a moisture content of less than 25% (from 1 September 2025, this will be reduced to less than 20%).
- Wood logs supplied in units of two cubic metres or more must now be accompanied by a notice outlining the need to store and season wet wood until it is sufficiently dried.
- It is now not possible to sell turf via retail, online or other media, in public houses or other public places.

The Regulations also place certain obligations on producers, importers, and retailers of solid fuels.

Environment section in collaboration with Roscommon County Council and Mayo County Council is in the process of applying for funding for the rollout of some projects under the Smokey Coal regulations.

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## WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

The issue of serious illegal dumping remains in some areas within County Galway. In recent years significant work has been done under the ADIs (Anti-Dumping Initiative) to remediate these sites. However, areas of dumping remain where both individuals and unauthorised collectors continue to carry out this illegal activity.

During March 99 complaints were investigated and closed in relation to illegal waste activities.

Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI) Applications were also prepared. In total 10 projects have been submitted ranging from illegal dumping clean up to awareness campaigns.

The sites for clean-up have been identified through complaints from various stakeholders including members of the public and public representatives.

As part of last year's ADIs Galway County Council launched 2gocup reusable coffee cup campaign at 2 locations in Loughrea and Roscahill.

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## ENFORCEMENT

Two cases were heard in the District Court, a Section 32 prosecution, and a Section 58 Order and both cases were adjourned.

There was one successful prosecution under Section 32 of the Waste Management Act, costs of €500 were awarded for a cleanup, however, community service may be allowed in lieu of a fine. Court date set for September.

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## LANDFILL DEVELOPMENTS

East Galway Eco Park: Ballinasloe MD Cllr's have been informed of Preliminary Framework plan for an amenity development on the former landfill site in Kilconnell. A councillor workshop is scheduled in April prior to launching a public consultation process.

Polboy Amenity, Preliminary Report: Tenders have been received and consultant appointment expected to be issued in Q2.

Historic Landfills: Tender for Certificate of Authorisation (CoA) for Glenamaddy landfill issued in Q2. Five CoA's have now been submitted to the EPA, awaiting license issue.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

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### PUBLIC EV CHARGERS UPDATE

- Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEV) Office established.
- Met with ZEV's Strategy and Policy Team in March 2023
- Schemes and initiatives will be advertised in the coming months.
- Plan to extend the Sports Club EV Charging Scheme to other sites later this year including tourism locations.

The total energy spends for GCC in 2022 was €2.6 million. We have engaged with the SEAI accelerator programme with a view to putting in place an Energy Management System capable of being awarded ISO50001 certification to ensure that any decisions made in relation to reducing our energy consumption are optimised.

We are working on a regional tender for the purchase of an IT system for managing, viewing, and reporting energy data.

Interviews for the Climate Action Officer and Community Climate Action Officer has been finalized and the new resources will be joining Galway County Council in the coming weeks.



### **Phase 1 – Advance Planning**

- Draft Baseline Risk Assessment (KPMG) and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment (Bable Gmbh) are under review.
- Significant recommendations were made to ensure that the documents will be clear for the public. Awaiting final documents.
- Next internal workshop to be held next week in relation to Adaptation Actions with representatives from Area Office and Flooding Teams. KPMG will facilitate and we will tease out the issues identified in the report.
- Final reports will be presented at the next SPC meeting in advance of being made available to the public as part of the Draft Climate Action Plan.

#### ***Next Steps:***

- Work with internal teams and groups such as the County Heritage Forum to review Climate Adaptation Plan and identify potential mitigation and adaptation actions
- Review Climate Conversations and other submissions from the public. Develop a framework for the plan and “Issues/Vision Paper”. Develop and implement Public Engagement Strategy.
- Set up a system for acceptance of submissions/comments
- Set up of Decarbonisation Zone Steering Group and develop specific Emissions Assessment
- Appointment of Consultants to commence SEA/AA process

#### ***Approximate Timeline:***

- April – June 2023 – Initial Stakeholder Engagement
- July– August 2023 – Feed in Stakeholder Engagement and Develop Draft Plan
- Sept ember– October 2023 – Public Consultation on Draft Plan
- November 2023 – Develop Report on Submissions and furnish all documentation to Elected Members
- December- January 2024 Amendment of Plan and Circulation to Elected Members
- February 24th, 2024 – Adoption by Resolution
- March 2024 - Publication of Final Plan

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## CONTROL OF DOGS

During 2022, the Council’s Dog Warden service had to deal with the huge influx of stray and abandoned dogs entering the system. This is unfortunately indicative of national trends with many dog shelters and charities at capacity and struggling to cope. This is mainly due to the after effects of the surge in dog ownership experienced in 2020 following the onset of the Covid pandemic. As circumstances have changed, the number of dogs being abandoned and surrendered as people go back to work and deal with a worsening economic outlook has increased dramatically.

336 stray/abandoned/surrendered dogs came through Galway County Council's dog warden service representing a 110% increase on numbers seen in 2021. Over 95% of these dogs that came through the service in 2022 were rehomed.

36 fines under the Control of Dogs Act were issued during 2022. 19 have been issued to date in 2023. Door to door dog licencing checks were carried out in Clifden, Headford and Loughrea during March 2023.

## BIODIVERSITY

The following is an outline of work undertaken with regards to Biodiversity initiatives from January to 18 April 2023:

### BIODIVERSITY AND POLLINATOR MUNICIPAL DISTRICT 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.
- The following are the topics covered in the plans:
- What is Biodiversity \* What is a Biodiversity & Pollinator Plan \* What Can We Achieve through this Plan

- Overview of biodiversity in the Municipal District \* On-Going Actions & Projects \* National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 \* All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 -2025 \* Marine Biodiversity Citizen Science Strategy 2023 – 2028 \* Galway County Council \* Organisations & Funding Bodies
- Communities \* Farming Community \* Key Actions for the Municipal District
- Potential Funding Sources \* Resources \*

### Where are we at with the Plans

- The plans have been finalised
- Each plan has been translated
- Next steps: Plans to be designed by Graphic Designer and Printed and digital copy to be uploaded to the websites
- Launch Plans in the next 2 months
- Promote and distribute the Plans
- As these are 'living plans' they will need to be updated on a regular basis ie as new projects are underway, new funding streams, etc







- Review of Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2017 -2022
- Commencement and development of Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2023 – 2030
- Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Forum has agreed to the review of the current heritage and biodiversity plan and the development of a new heritage and biodiversity plan from 2023 to 2030.
- Link in with Climate Action Strategy, Forum Connemara, Galway Rural Development, LAWPRO, County Development Plan and other related County and Regional Plans
- **Consultation to take place over the coming months**
- Consultation with the local communities, schools in the County
- Consultation with various heritage NGOs,
- Consultation with various Government Departments
- Consultation with the Heritage Council
- Consultation with Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Forum
- Consultation with Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC

**1. Example of additional funding for Biodiversity Initiative in the County: Community Foundation Ireland Funding: Creggs Biodiversity Action Plan**

- Creggs Tidy Towns Group were successful in receiving funding from Community Foundation Ireland to develop a comprehensive Biodiversity Action Plan for the village.
- The funding has allowed the group to engage with an ecologist to work with the community to develop the BAP and habitat map the village.

- This BAP project will result in a list of achievable actions, goals and targets for the group and wider community, to enhance and improve existing biodiversity in the surrounding areas. It also aims to create new opportunities for biodiversity to thrive within the village.
- The group ran a community biodiversity workshop in early April 2023, facilitated by the ecologist and a permaculturist. This workshop was designed to identify projects and actions, and establish the barriers to completing projects in the past, along with resources required for projects to be successful in the future
- Going forward, the community will work with the ecologist to conduct habitat mapping of the village, along with further development of the plan. It is hoped to have the completed Biodiversity Action Plan completed mid-summer 2023.

## 2. Local Biodiversity Action Plan Funding Application 2023 (LBAP)

The following is a listing of Projects that funding applications were submitted

to Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage:

**2.1 Working with Nature 2023** is a multi-faceted project which educates and creates awareness around the importance of our native wildflower species, presenting alternatives to pesticides and provides guidance on sustainable biodiversity planting for communities in Co. Galway.

**2.2 The Northeast Galway Wetland Audit 2021** was funded by LBAP. As part of this audit site boundaries were mapped for the 442 main wetlands identified during the audit, which include both those within the NPWS network of designated sites and those wetland areas that fall outside the designated network. These 442 sites cover an area 29,439ha or 17% of the study area. Of the 442 wetland sites identified, 66 sites lie within areas designated for nature conservation while the remaining 376 are outside of designated areas. A significant proportion of these undesignated sites, most of which have not been subject to ecological survey, are likely to support habitats and species of conservation importance. According to the 2021 audit it is thought that 327 of the wetland areas in Northeast Galway have not been subject to any detailed wetland survey, suggesting that a targeted wetland survey should be a key priority to gain a better understanding of the wetland resource and to ensure that those sites of highest importance are afforded appropriate protection. It is proposed to survey 5 bog sites, 5 fen sites and 5 turloughs sites of high conservation importance in 2023. The sites will be picked in consultation with LAWPRO and NPWS.

### 2.3 Connemara Blue Dot

Ireland has seen a long-term trend of decline in the number of high-status (Q5 and Q4-5) river sites in recent decades. The Blue Dot Catchments Programme is a collaborative programme being delivered by a range of agencies as a means of focusing attention and resources towards the protection and restoration of our high-status objective waters.

This project aims to highlight the Blue Dot Sites of Connemara by collaborating with local communities to protect and improve our pristine waters so that the benefits to biodiversity, our health and well-being, our heritage and the climate can be enjoyed by current and future generations.

The project has three distinct elements:

1. Delivery of School Workshops in the Connemara area
2. Production of a high-quality educational video
3. Publication of a bi-lingual information booklet

These workshops, video and publications are designed to increase awareness on river corridor ecology and water quality; help reconnect communities with their river catchment, discuss best practice and promote community projects and initiatives.

**2.4 I-WeBS** relies primarily on a network of volunteer counters. However, some large SPA sites lack the necessary volunteer base to adequately count the sites over the required months each winter. Funding is therefore sought to identify, explore, and implement novel ways to recruit volunteers and support the counter volunteer network around Galway Bay.

### 2.5 Barn Owl Booklet



The objective of this project is to produce and disseminate a Barn Owl booklet, detailing new and engaging ecological information and innovative conservation advice specific to Ireland, which will be a culmination of fifteen years of extensive research on the species, including information generated through recent survey and monitoring supported by the Local Action Biodiversity Plan Fund across several Counties. This publication will appeal to a wide target audience, particularly the public, landowners, and wildlife enthusiasts, to facilitate an increased understanding and appreciation of the species and its conservation requirements; to encourage public participation and responsibility in the future conservation of Barn Owls and thus to promote and deliver wider ecosystem benefits.



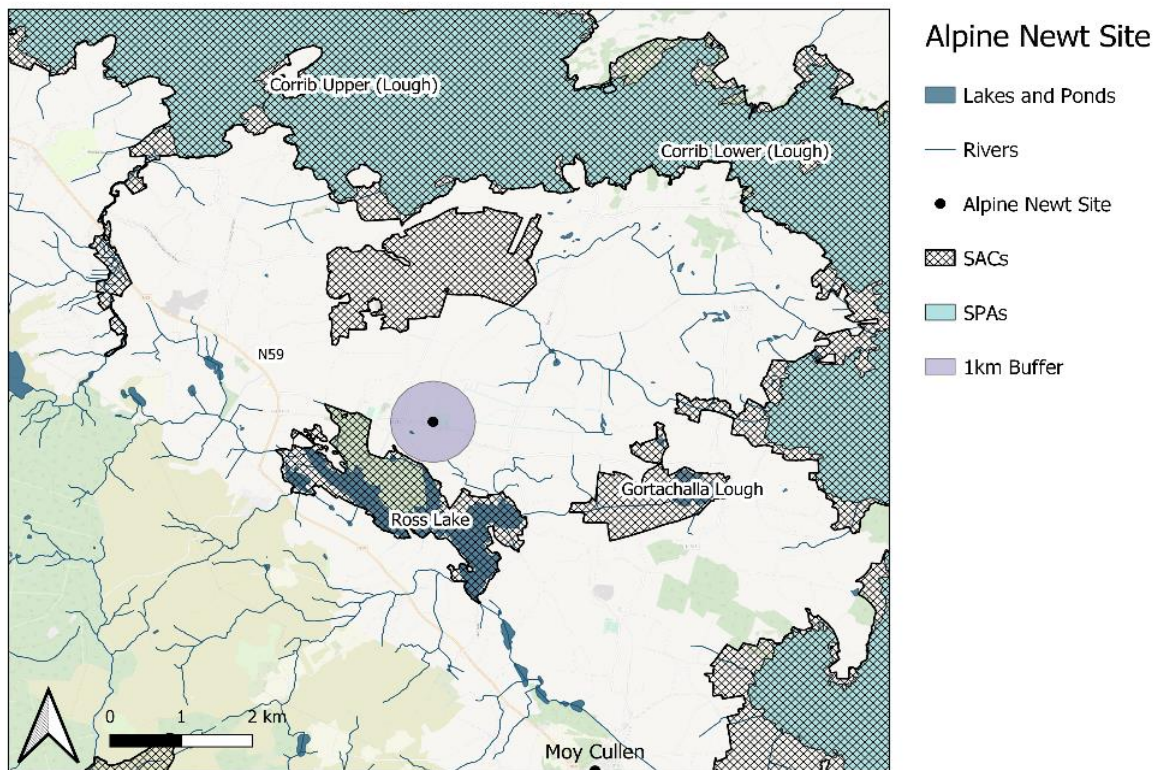
#### 4.6 Connemara Bog Natural Heritage Awareness Programme 2023

In 2022 a comprehensive survey of breeding birds on blanket bogs in the Connemara Bog Complex SPA was undertaken to understand the species present, the importance of these sites and to inform their future management. This project was funded under LBAP. It is now proposed to produce a video, podcast, poster and StoryMap as part of our heritage awareness initiative for Roundstone Bog. It seeks to highlight the bird species present on the site and their symbiotic relationship with the habitats and species contained therein. These outputs will be used to increase awareness and appreciation of the biodiversity value of our blanket bogs to a local and national audience and to enhance engagement among local communities with these sites.

#### 4.7 Monitoring the Quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*) invasion in the Shannon: informing spread, ecology, impact, and management.

The project focuses on the quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*), a high impact invasive alien species discovered in the Shannon in 2021 and in 2022 was shown to be spreading and increasing rapidly. The quagga mussel threatens native biodiversity by establishing extremely high biomasses on all surfaces including soft sediments and at depth, outcompeting even the zebra mussel and affecting filtering rates in lakes and therefore changing nutrient levels.

#### 4.8 Monitor the population of the Alpine newt (*Ichthyosaura alpestris*) at two known locations in the midlands of Ireland and one in Galway and determine the spread to nearby suitable habitats.



#### 4.9 Management of invasive alien plant species (IAPS) in south Connemara

Five IAPS have been selected as the targets for control works. Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Giant rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Bohemian knotweed (*Reynoutria x bohemica*) and Himalayan knotweed (*Koenigia polystachya*). All five species are contained in National Legislation (S.I. 477/2011), while Gunnera, Himalayan balsam and Himalayan knotweed are also contained in International Legislation (EU 1143/2014).

#### 4.10 IAS (Connemara) Project Officer

Provision of a staff resource for six months to support the next phase of the roll out of a comprehensive programme of control and eradication of IASs predominantly rhododendron in NW Connemara. This is a Forum Connemara Project

#### 4.11 Awareness Raising Programme

Funding was sought for staff and community Biodiversity Awareness initiatives.





## MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

### ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

There were a number of works progressed by the Athenry MD team including resurfacing, footpaths, drainage, public lighting and signage.













# LACKAGH PUBLIC LIGHTING





GLENASLAT FOOTPATH MONIVEA





EGANS CROSS - JUNCTION OVERLAY





# CARNMORE DRAINAGE WORKS





## FUREYS CROSS RESURFACING



## ORANMORE FOOTPATHS



**1. Restoration Improvement – Gone to Tender and being assessed**

- a. Roanmore
- b. Annagh Hill
- c. Gorteen
- d. Kiltullagh
- e. Castlelambert
- f. Cloonboo
- g. Lydican
- h. Garraun/Ardaun

**2. Restoration Maintenance/Improvement**

- a. Surface dressing Contracted works gone to tender
  - i. Belville Cross/Hundred Acres
  - ii. Parkcurry
  - iii. Carnakelly South
  - iv. Glennagloghaun/Cloonkeen
  - v. Kilskeagh
  - vi. Castleturvin
  - vii. Gardenham
  - viii. Moneymore
  - ix. Maonbaun
  - x. Annaghdown
  - xi. Killoughter
  - xii. Tiaquin demesne
- b. Works completed by direct labour crews
  - i. Farravaun
  - ii. Gortbrack
  - iii. Rockfield
  - iv. Killoughter
- c. Recycling Contract gone to tender and being assessed
  - i. Aghafadda
  - ii. Clooncah
  - iii. Bushfield
  - iv. Muckrush
  - v. Annagh West
  - vi. Monard

**3. Safety Improvement Works**

- a. Derrydonnell Beg - Design consultant to be procured
- b. Moyveela (Mother Hubbards) - Plan to look at this
- c. Oranbeg (Furey's Cross) - Design consultant to be procured
- d. Cregmore Bridge - Civil works completed traffic lights and road markings to complete

#### **4. Climate Change**

- a. L6214 Clogher
- b. L7125 Ballydavid
- c. L3112 Gloves West
- d. L2117 Lisheenoran
- e. L3117 Cormachugh

#### **5. Community Involvement Scheme**

Allocations not issued yet once they have been issued, we will complete designs and plan works.

#### **6. Other Items**

- a. Belville Road realignment - Design report complete making contact with Landowners
- b. Hydrological study Clarin River - Revised application sent to OPW for minor works fund – no reply to date
- c. Lavally Drainage District - Works completed
- d. Derrydonnell Junction - Line marking renewed anti-skid applied  
Safety improvement scheme design required
- e. Athenry Pedestrian Bridge - Pole moved pavement works completed
- f. Carnmore Drainage - Complete

### BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

The March Ballinasloe MD meeting included:

Presentation from Galway Rural Development on TUS

Environment Presentation on East Galway Eco Park at Kilconnell

Update from DOS on the proposed purchase of St Bridgets Nurses for a Domestic Violence Refuge

Ongoing MD works:

- Road Reconstruction Contract has been awarded to Roadstone Ltd to the value of €3.2 million – 55 road projects
- Surface Dressing Contract – tenders received with lowest tender being €1.6 million – 44 road projects.
- Local Improvement Schemes and Community Involvement Schemes to go to tender shortly
- Substantial Active travel schemes at Williamstown and Ballinasloe underway
- Main activities at moment for outdoor staff include Road maintenance, town and village maintenance, preparation works for roads programme, drainage works – 4 outdoor crews between Ballinasloe North and South (28 in total incl. 4 GSS's)
- Ballinasloe Flood Relief Scheme being progressed by Consultants. Other OPW Minor Works Projects being progressed at various locations throughout the district.



CLIFDEN PUBLIC REALM TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENTS

Presentations were made to the Municipal District and Chamber of Commerce as part of the second phase of public consultation on the developing conceptual design for Clifden Town Centre. It is anticipated that the Chamber of Commerce will make a formal submission to Galway County Council later this week following on from their own public meeting.



ROADS ACTIVITIES CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

- The Restoration Improvement Works and Restoration Maintenance Works have been tendered and a Most Economically Advantageous Tender Identified. It is expected that a contract will be awarded in late April.
- The road works on the islands (DRCD funding) were tendered in February but due to higher than expected tenders the DRCD has asked the Council to proceed in a different manner – the works will be retendered later in the year, with base course to be completed after the tourism season and final surfacing to be completed in 2024.
- The Strategic Infrastructure scheme at the Causeways is progressing through design.
- An application has been made to the Department of Transport for a Strategic Infrastructure scheme at Cuan na Loinge to address flooding of the main road into this area.
- Low-Cost Safety Scheme (3 projects) and Climate Change Projects to be progressed (3 projects).

- Local Improvement Schemes and Community Involvement Schemes to go to tender shortly.
- Main activities at moment for outdoor staff include road maintenance, town and village maintenance, preparation works for roads programme, drainage works. The recent inclement weather has affected the roads network with extensive pothole repair required.

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## CLIFDEN FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

### Project Background

- *Client:* Galway County Council
- *Funding Agency:* OPW
- *Funding Amount:* €530,000
- *Engineering & Environmental Consultants:* JEI Consulting Engineers appointed in October 2021 by GCC.

### Summary of Progress Since Last Briefing in September 2022

- Ground Investigation field work completed in December 2022.
- Economic Assessment of options ongoing.

### Look Ahead

- Ground Investigation reporting to be completed.
- Completion of economic damages assessment.
- Progress on optioneering to determine emerging preferred option and development of final report. Stage 1 is due for completion in Q3 of 2023 (as per the March 2023 programme which is updated monthly).



ROADS PROGRAMME PROJECTS COMPLETED:

**4 No. Restoration Improvement Grant Roads**

- o Carrownamadra
- o Funshinmore
- o Killeenaran to Ballyvulaun
- o Moy Road

**2 No. Discretionary Road Grants**

- o Lacklea
- o Cahertinny

**Restoration Maintenance Grant roads expected to commence in next two weeks**

**Significant Projects Completed**

- Reopening of Corry's Field Walkway, Loughrea – See Appendix 1
- New Footpath, Derrycrag, Woodford – See Appendix 2
- Resurfacing and Relining of Barrack Street Car Park, Loughrea.

**Other Minor Works**

- Repainting of Street Signs and Bins in Loughrea Town
- Painting of Disabled Parking Spaces in Loughrea Town
- Planting of flowers in Loughrea Municipal District
- Ongoing improvement works at the Long Point, Loughrea
- Installation of Land Accommodation Bridge associated with Kilchreest Drainage District
- Safety works at Loughrea Depot on foot of Static Risk Assessment

**RE-OPENING OF CORRY'S FIELD, LOUGHREA**

Corry's Field Walkway in Loughrea was officially reopened by Cathaoirleach Michael (Moegie) Maher on 17th April 2023 as €250K works are now completed. The enhancement project came about in 2018.

The walkway has been a wonderful amenity for Loughrea Town for many years and the recent work represents a significant enhancement of this amenity. The construction work is the final phase of a project that has been in the pipeline for several years.





The Main Contractor for the project was Michael O'Malley Tarmacadam Contractors Ltd., Castlebar, the NIS Report was completed by JBA Consulting, the Supervising Ecologist was Caroline Shiel and Supervising Archaeologist was Martin Fitzpatrick.





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FOOTPATH AND ROAD UPGRADE WORKS- DERRYCRAG (L8204), WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY



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ROAD RESURFACING WORKS  
-CLOONOLISH (L87491),  
KILLIMOR, CO. GALWAY





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RESURFACING AND RELINING OF BARRACK STREET CAR PARK, LOUGHREA



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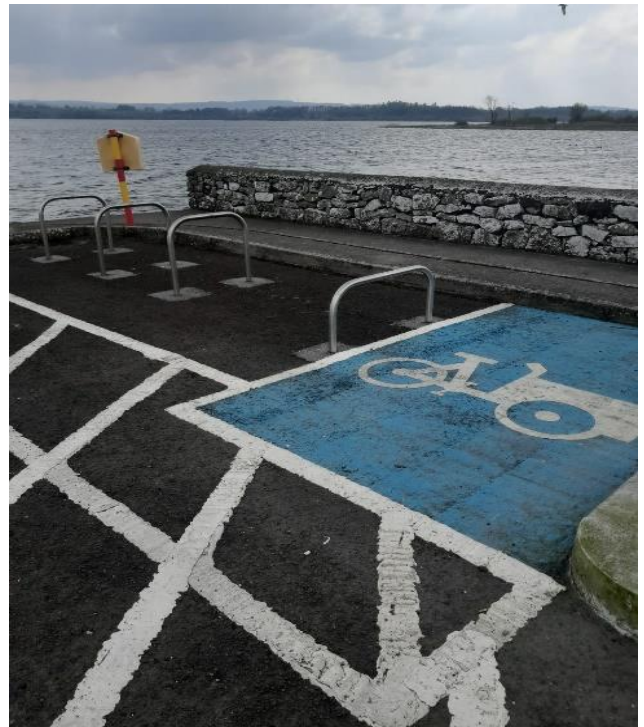
REPAINTING OF STREET SIGNS AND BINS IN LOUGHREA TOWN





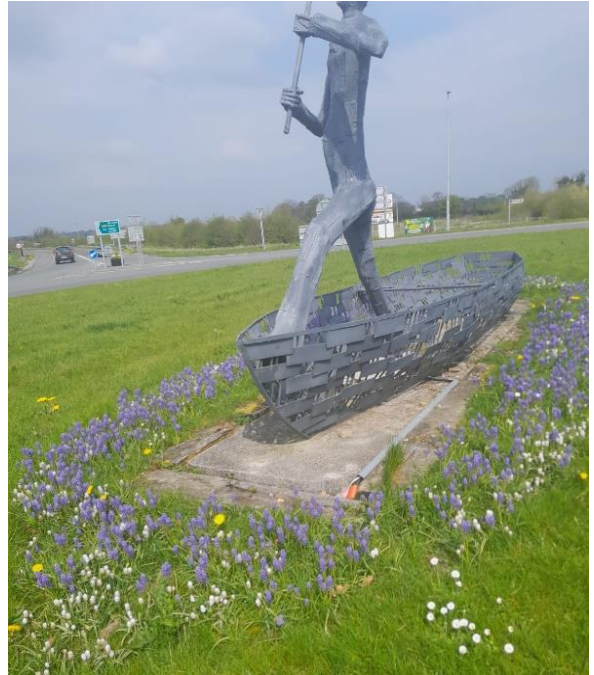
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PAINTING OF DISABLED PARKING SPACES IN LOUGHREA TOWN



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PLANTING OF FLOWERS IN LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



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ONGOING IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT THE LONG POINT, LOUGHREA





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INSTALLATION OF LAND  
ACCOMMODATION BRIDGE IN  
KILCHREEST DRAINAGE DISTRICT



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SAFETY WORKS AT LOUGHREA  
DEPOT ON FOOT OF STATIC RISK  
ASSESSMENT





The Green Flag status has been retained for the Palace Grounds in Tuam from 'an Taisce'. We were also successful in our application for 'Green Heritage Site Accreditation', a first for Galway County Council.

This is awarded to public green spaces of historical and cultural significance. Both flags are now flying proudly at the Palace Grounds, see photo below. A lot of work went into



these applications and significant time went into getting the park looking well by our Community Employment Scheme. An application for additional funding for the Park under the Community Regeneration Fund has been made. This application included for the replacement of defective footpaths, new fencing, removal of Leylandii trees and replacement with native species, age friendly benches, picnic tables, new signage and new maintenance equipment.



**GREEN HERITAGE AWARD AND THE GREEN FLAG AWARD FLYING PROUDLY AT THE PALACE GROUNDS, A FIRST FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Tuam MD recently refurbished the ‘Tuam Martyrs Memorial’ at the site of the former workhouse in Tuam. This memorial dates to 1985 and it remembers a tragic event that occurred during the Civil War. The memorial had been allowed run into a state of disrepair, with weeds visible throughout the paving and staining on the walls, the lettering on the plaque was also illegible. The local CES Scheme carried out wonderful refurbishment of the site, weeds were removed, the wall power washed, the sides painted, and the lettering redone. They also installed 6 No. flowerpots along the base of the wall, one for each of the people who perished there.



REFURBISHED 'TUAM MARTYRS MEMORIAL' AT THE SITE OF THE FORMER WORKHOUSE IN TUAM, CARRIED OUT BY CES TEAM. NOTE THE WRITING ON THE PLAQUE HAS ALSO BEEN REDONE.

The Tuam MD would also like to report on the wonderful success of the 'An Choill Bheag (AnCB) initiative' from An Taisce. These are small, dense, biodiverse native woodland habitats planted on community grounds, providing a space for people and wildlife. An Taisce have planted twenty little woodlands throughout the country, planting over 3,350 native trees and working directly with groups and individuals. The Palace Grounds was planted in late February this year and we included the Transition Year students from the Presentation Secondary School in this venture. 55 Transition year students helped members of An Taisce plant 200 native trees, see photos of this event below. This is a first for Galway County Council and we are delighted our application for this very worthwhile project was successful, highlighting Galway County Councils commitment to the Environment and to Community Engagement.





TY STUDENTS FROM THE PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL TUAM WITH MEMBERS OF AN TAISCE, PLANTING OF AN 'CHOILL BEAG' NATIVE WOODLAND IN THE PALACE GROUNDS TUAM, FEB 2023. (PHOTO COPYRIGHT: AN TAISCE)

Tuam MD has received 13 Community Involvement Schemes for 2023. These schemes greatly improve safety on our roads throughout the MD and we are very thankful to all the landowners who dedicate land for these projects. The MD technical staff will need some assistance from the members over the next few months in relation to finalising Land Dedication forms. Without the forms being agreed and signed the project cannot proceed and it goes to the next person on the list, so it is a critical part of the process. I thank you in advance for your assistance with this.

Active Travel works on the Weir Road in Tuam have been completed recently. This involved replacement of defective footpaths and the installation of additional drainage works. These works have greatly improved pedestrian safety in the area. See photos below. This is part of a larger project we hope to deliver under Active Travel to service the Weir Road with proper pedestrian accessibility to the town centre, similar to works completed on the Birmingham Road and the Dublin Road previously.



FOOTPATH REPAIR UNDER ACTIVE TRAVEL, WEIR ROAD - BEFORE AND AFTER

Mise, le meas,

**Chief Executive**

**Galway County Council**

**21<sup>st</sup> April 2023**