



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

## Galway County Council

### Monthly Management Report

July 2022

# HOUSING & ECONOMIC, RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## HOUSING UPDATE

### UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

Over the last month the situation has as per national coverage re-emerged with large numbers of Ukrainians requiring accommodation.

Galway County Council has continued to provide emergency accommodation through the use of Hotels and guesthouses. We have not stood up the emergency community centre accommodation at this point but remain on alert to do so if required. The pledge list of private offers of vacant units and shared accommodation has been reviewed and contact has been made with those people who responded to the Dept/Red Cross appeal in April/May. These pledges are then followed up on by IOM to place people in appropriately vetted and inspected properties.

The interagency response continues to meet with HSE, TUSLA, Social Protection, Local Development Companies and GRETB putting services into the centres in various locations.

### HOUSING FOR ALL

The new **Housing For All** plan recognises that local authorities have a key role in the delivery of homes and provides for the preparation by local authorities of Housing Delivery Action Plans (HDAPs). The Housing Delivery Action Plan (HDAP) underpins housing delivery by setting out delivery targets for new construction and indicating the pathways by which those construction targets will be met

The Dept of Housing has recently approved the Galway County Council's HDAP. The HDAP is currently being translated into Irish in accordance with the Galway County Council Language Scheme 2019-2022 and on completion will be published on the Council website bilingually.

The approved HDAP focuses on the delivery pathways and outlines actions required to achieve the ambitious construction targets for 2022-2026 as set down by the Minister, while reflecting on the challenges to be overcome.

The delivery of 1717 social housing units over the next 5 years will be challenging for Galway County Council. The recruitment of 13 additional staff approved by the DoHLGH will facilitate the continuing growth of capital delivery in Galway County.

This plan includes the following:

- Alignment with the National Planning Framework, in particular compact growth objectives
- An outline of locations where housing will be delivered
- The planned numbers of homes to be delivered
- Alignment to the Minister's targets for each year
- Details of the existing landbank and an indication of the level of land acquisition required
- An outline of planned delivery streams
- Assessment of housing types and needs
- Provision for people with a disability and Age-Friendly housing
- Provision for Travellers
- Targets for the use of Buy & Renew

The primary pathways through which social and affordable housing will be provided in Galway County 2022-2026 are:

- Local Authority direct build (LA Build)
- Turnkey developments from private developers
- Buy & Renew houses
- Part V requirements for social and affordable housing
- Approved Housing Body (AHB) delivery
- Affordable Housing construction by Local Authority (LA Purchase)

- Affordable Housing Advance Purchase by the Council of Turnkey units from developers
- Cost Rental
- First Homes Scheme
- Home Loans Scheme (formerly 'Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans')

In addition, Vacant homes regeneration and the recently announced Croí Conaithe Scheme to address this issue are vital for the sustainability and regeneration of our rural villages and towns. Housing for All and the HDAP identifies key deliverables to support this town centre regeneration and repopulating scheme such as:

- Establishment of the current level of vacancy in Co Galway and develop a coordinated approach to help identify and tackle vacant homes and to maximise the reuse of vacant homes for social housing.
- Promotion of funding schemes available through targeted information publicity on all forms of media.
- Inform vacant property owners of the various supports and schemes available to assist them with the renewal of their properties.

Local authority staffing, Brexit and the Coronavirus pandemic are major challenges for implementation of this action plan and the challenges are likely to continue for some time, creating a high level of uncertainty and risk for housing delivery.

#### HAP DISCRETION LEVELS

In line with **Housing Circular 29/2022** the following changes have been made to the HAP Discretion Levels.

Galway County Council can now apply the below Discretionary levels to the HAP scheme. Previous regulations provided discretion to local authorities to allow additional flexibility of up to 20% above the prescribed maximum rent limits to secure suitable accommodation for a qualified household that requires it.

This new level of up to 35% will be examined on a case by case basis and the HAP section will be working in the figures outlined below only.

<b><u>% Of Income going towards Rent</u></b>	<b>20% Discretionary Rate to be approved</b>	<b>35% Discretionary Rate to be approved</b>
<b>Over 25% of income</b> going towards rent (But less than 30% of income for SW recipients going towards rent & Less than 35% of income for Applicants in Paid employment going towards rent) *	YES	NO
<b>Over 30% of income</b> going towards rent ( <b>Social Welfare recipients</b> with no paid employment)	-	YES
<b>Over 35% of income</b> going towards rent (Applicants in <b>Paid employment</b> )	-	YES
<b>Over 35% of income</b> going towards rent (Applicants in <b>both Paid employment &amp; in receipt of SW payments</b> )	-	YES

\*All applicants have the right to appeal the decision in writing to [hap@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:hap@galwaycoco.ie) or post to the HAP Unit, Housing Department, Galway County Council, Prospect Hill, Galway.

### Galway County Council - Max limits for HAP

Household Composition	HAP CAP max Limit	20% must be approved by GCC when processing	35% must be approved by GCC when processing
Single	€575	€690	€776.25
Single in shared accommodation	€330	€396	€445.50
Couple	€650	€780	€877.50
Couple in shared accommodation	€360	€432	€486
Couple/Adult + 1	€850	€1020	€1147.50
Couple/Adult + 2	€875	€1050	€1181.25
Couple/Adult + 3	€900	€1080	€1215

## CROÍ CÓNAITHE (TOWNS) FUND

In February 2022, the Government published *Town Centre First* – a major new policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into our town centres so that they become more viable and attractive places in which to live, work, visit and run a business.

Against this backdrop, a new Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund was launched on the 14<sup>th</sup> July under Housing for All with a focus to address vacancy and dereliction and encourage people to live in town & village centres. The Fund will initially focus on supporting refurbishment of vacant homes and it is intended to expand it in future iterations to provide serviced sites for new homes in towns and Villages.

The scheme will be operated through the provision of a grant and priority will be given to areas where the level of vacancy and dereliction is highest. The maximum grant will be €30,000 (inc VAT) and properties that have not been residences heretofore will be eligible (rooms over shops). In cases where the property is confirmed to be derelict (structurally unsound and dangerous) there is the potential to increase the grant available to €50,000. In addition, SEAI grants to improve energy efficiency may also be available independent of this grant.

## TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

The following projects are planned and are at various stages of progression with all being progressed in 2022, some to completion this year.

### Traveller Group Housing Schemes

- **Clontuskert, Ballinasloe – 3 houses** - Funding approval was received from the Traveller Accommodation Unit, Department of Housing for refurbishment works in March 2022. A more detailed survey of the site identified a need to upgrade the waste water treatment plant. Tenders will be sought by the end of August 2022 for the refurbishment works with works to commence in late September 2022. It may be necessary to submit a further application for funding for an extension to one of the properties to facilitate multi-generational occupancy. This project will accommodate four families.
- **Cloonlyon, Ballygar – 13 houses** – A survey of the sewerage system has been completed. Tender documentation is being prepared for the refurbishment of 13 properties with two derelict properties to be demolished as part of the project. Stage 2 approval for the project is to be sought from the Department of Housing when

responses to tenders have been received and assessed. It is anticipated that works will commence in 2023. This project will refurbish homes for thirteen families.

- **Property at Ballygurrane** – An extension to include a bedroom and bathroom to be constructed to meet the needs of an occupant.
- **Creggane – 4/6 houses** - Land purchase is nearing completion and a Part 8 planning application for the construction of additional properties in the Group Housing Scheme will be sought. Refurbishment works of the 6 properties on the site in addition to the costs of construction of the additional properties will be included in a Multi-Stage Approval application to the Department in 2023. There will be regular ongoing consultation with the current residents of the halting site regarding the proposed development. Their input into the development will assist in developing suitable accommodation that meets the needs of all of the families currently residing on the site.
- **Ballydavid – 6 houses** – A TAP submission to be prepared for essential refurbishment works of the six houses. This project will be progressed in 2023.
- **Tuam Halting Site Phase 1 – 6 houses** – Phase 1 of the development of lands at Tuam Halting Site is to construct 6 houses with a Multi-Stage Approval application to be submitted to the Department of Housing in 2022. There will be regular ongoing consultation with the current residents of the halting site regarding the proposed development. Their input into the development will assist in developing suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

### **Fire Safety Training**

Fire Safety training has taken place on two occasions in the last 6 months at the two halting sites in Tuam and Capira. The Council will continue to arrange fire safety training on an annual basis with all occupants invited and encouraged to attend. Further training will be set up in Autumn 2022. A fire extinguisher has been provided for each bay at the halting sites in Tuam and Capira. Fire hose reels are also provided and located within each halting site. A firefighting water storage tank has also been provided at Capira as part of the upgrade works which were completed on this site in 2019. This is to supplement the public water supply in the event of a fire on the site.

### **AFFORDABLE PURCHASE AND COST RENTAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACT 2021**

Regulations have been made by the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage to enact the Affordable Housing Act 2021 (No. 25 of 2021). These comprise 2 sets of



Regulations for the Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements and 3 sets of Regulations for Cost Rental.

The **Affordable Housing Regulations 2022 (S.I. 183 of 2022)** for Affordable Purchase relate primarily to the assessment of income/ eligibility for an Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangement.

Under an affordable dwelling purchase arrangement, an applicant is eligible for the scheme where the applicant is unable to secure, from a bank or financial institution, a mortgage for 85.5 per cent, or more, of the market value of the dwelling concerned and produces written evidence to that effect from a bank or financial institution.

An applicant shall not be eligible for an Affordable Dwelling Purchase Agreement where the gross income of the applicant multiplied by 3.5 exceeds 85.5 per cent of the market value of the dwelling or if the total of the Applicants purchasing power exceeds 95% of market value of the dwelling concerned.

The **Affordable Housing (No.2) Regulations 2022 (S.I. 184 of 2022)** for Affordable Housing relates primarily to how the scheme shall be operated.

It advises how a scheme should be advertised and what is to be included in the ad and in particular

- (a) that the dwellings will be sold at a price that is lower than market value,
- (b) such price to be determined in accordance with the income of the purchaser, and
- (c) that the housing authority will take a percentage equity share in the dwelling equal to the difference between the market value of the dwelling and the price paid by the purchaser.

It advises of the application process, priority scheme, determination of price, requirements binding on the homeowner regarding maintenance of the property, insurance etc.

#### CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME:

Several phases of different projects are due to be completed in early Q3 2022. These include 10 Units at Cartron, Kinvara, 14 Units at Fana Bhuí, Tuam and 18 Units at Hospital Road, Clifden. In addition to the construction works programme several Part V acquisitions are closing, such as 7 units in Oranmore, 5 units in Moycullen.



Vacant and Under Construction Properties		MD					
Type		Athenry - Oranmore	Ballinasloe	Conamara	Loughrea	Tuam	Grand Total
<b>Allocated</b>							
AHB CALF			1	1		1	3
AHB CAS			2	6		2	10
LA Acquired Property			1		1	1	3
LA Constructed Property	1		4	2	5	5	17
LA Part V Property			1			1	2
LA Turnkey Property				2	11		13
Long term leasing >10yrs						1	1
<b>Allocated Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>49</b>	
<b>Under Construction</b>							
AHB CALF			37				37
LA Constructed Property				8	9	29	46
LA Part V Property	5		8	11	6		30
LA Turnkey Property			32		56		88
<b>Under Construction Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>201</b>	
<b>Vacant</b>							
AHB CALF	1	2	2		29		34
AHB CAS			6	12	2		20
AHB RAS		2		1			3
LA Acquired Property	3			2	2		7
LA Affordable Housing				1			1
LA Constructed Property	6	7	29	18	34		94
LA Owned [on SLA to AHB]				1			1
LA Part V Property	7		3	3			13
LA Turnkey Property			2	11			13
Long term leasing > 10 years (Maint Respons)						8	8
Long term leasing >10yrs						1	1
RAS - Housing (Private)	1						1
<b>Vacant Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>196</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>446</b>	

## VACANT HOMES OFFICER

The Vacant Homes Officer has begun a targeted approach of identifying a number of properties for specific families with special needs. Other regeneration and 'buy and renew' schemes are also being progressed.

Specific Properties are required in Headford, Tuam & Ballinasloe areas.

The below property has been acquired by Galway County Council in Moylough – it has planning permission for 4 town houses – and while the front of the property looks adequate, the back shows the level of dereliction to be tackled:



Front of premises purchased, Main St Moylough



Rear of premises, Main St Moylough

Planning permission for 4 2-bed townhouses granted with some back land opportunities too.

## ERCD UPDATE

## LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

- A further meeting took place in July with the School of Business in NUI Galway to progress the collation of KPI's and social-economic analysis relevant to the community & economic elements of the LECP. Following this process, a meeting of the Advisory

Steering Group (ASG) will be convened to discuss priority emerging themes to be included in an Issues Paper.

#### LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

- A meeting of the LCDC will take place on 20th July to consider the mid-year review of SICAP in addition to approving a programme of work under an additional allocation of €165,376 which is ringfenced for actions associated with the community response and integration of Ukrainian Nationals into local communities. The SICAP Team in Galway Rural Development will carry out a needs assessment at all accommodation centres to identify group and individual needs under the allocation.
- A meeting of the Healthy and Wellbeing Sub-Committee of the LCDC is scheduled for July to agree a Programme of Works for the transitional period between Round 3 and Round 4 of the Healthy Ireland Fund, which has an interim fund of €40,000 to continue existing programmes and initiatives.

#### SOCIAL INCLUSION

- A meeting of the Ukraine Community Response Forum took place on 4th July to facilitate sharing of information on existing and upcoming accommodation and the coordination of services and supports.
- Staff attended a national networking event for Comhairle na nÓg on 13th July at which Minister Roderic O’Gorman launched a project to support the participation of young Travellers in Comhairle na nÓg which will be implemented over the coming year.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

- The PPN Structural Review has been published and the PPN Workers attended a consultative event with Social Justice Ireland to review its findings and sought feedback on the review from PPN Secretariat and Members.
- Galway County PPN have created a Joint Working Group on the SDG’s with Galway City PPN and organised workshops on permaculture and sustainable living, in addition to providing in-person training on Sustainable Gardening delivered by Aoife Munn.

## COMMUNITY AWARDS

- A meeting was held with Community Groups from Lawrencetown and Woodford to commence preparations for the visit of the Judging Panel for the Pride of Place All-Island Competition 2022, which will take place for the County Galway entrants on 30th August 2022.

## ARTS OFFICE

- **Local Live Performance Scheme Round 4**

In acknowledgement of the excellent programmes of events that have been supported by the LLPPS scheme, the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media has offered Galway County Council Arts Office a fourth round of the Local Live Performance Scheme. This additional phase of the Scheme (Phase 4) to provide further funding to allow local authorities to provide for local live performance. Funding of up to €143,000 will be provided to the Local Authorities

The fourth phase of the LLPPS scheme will continue to support employment opportunities for artists, performers and crew across every town, city and county and will help underpin the recovery of the live performance sector. The funding can be used to support employment and wellbeing in the commercial arts and culture sectors through the payment of live event programme related costs incurred for the **period 1 July 2022 to 31 October 2022.**

- **Strawboys Tour in County Galway**

Arts Office presents Rob Heaslip's STRAWBOYS as a free, Outdoor Performances at locations across Galway County from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> July. Dance Artist Rob Heaslip presents Strawboys, a vibrant and energetic outdoor pop-up performance in unexpected places. Featuring luminous straw dancers whirling to Balkan inspired beats, Strawboys uniquely reignites the cultural tradition of Wren Boys. Locations in the Galway County to include Gort, Ballinderreen, Lawrencetown, Loughrea, Ballyconneely, Maam Cross and Clifden.



Strawboys c. Amy Sinead Photography

The tour is funded by an Arts Council of Ireland Touring Award and is supported by Town Hall Theatre Galway; Galway City Council; Galway County Council; Creative Ireland; Siamsa Tíre - The National Folk Theatre of Ireland; Kerry County Council; Glór; and Clare County Council.

- **Culture Night 2022** –Arts Office received over 50 applications for Culture Night from groups, artists and organisations all over the county. They are currently being assessed with decisions being communicated by the end of July.
- **Artists in Schools 2022:** The following schools have been awarded the Artists in Schools programme from Sep 22- Dec 22; Scoil Eanna – Roundstone, Scoil Mhuire Doireglinne – Oughterard, Scoil Ui Cheithearnaigh- Ballinasloe and Community School Portumna.

## CREATIVE IRELAND

- Work is to begin on the **Galway County Creative Ireland Strategy 2023-2027**. The Culture Team met with Creative Ireland to discuss priorities and plans for the

programme nationally over the next five years which should inform the local strategy.

## RURAL SCHEMES



The Economic, Community and Rural Development Section acts as Lead Co-ordinator and Administrator for allocated Programmes and Initiatives arising from the *Town Centre First* and *Our Rural Future* Policies.

## TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL - MAIN SCHEME

The Department of Community and Rural Development launched the 2022 Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS) on June 1<sup>st</sup>

- The Expression of Interested Process was launched in Local Print and Social Media and via PPN registered Membership and Notifications to Members and Internal Staff
- A Briefing was held for Elected Members on June 20<sup>th</sup>.
- A Workshop with Galway County PPN Membership Invited was held on June 20<sup>th</sup>
- One to one meetings and advisory calls are ongoing with groups interested in submitting Expression of Interest.
- The EOI process closes **on Tuesday July 5<sup>th</sup>** when the process then moves into assessment and shortlisting of EOI's and Further Information. Local Authorities must then make final applications under the TVRS 2022 by July 22<sup>nd</sup> to the Department.
- The Deadline is 5pm July 5<sup>th</sup> and email only EOI's signed and scanned can be accepted up to Midnight on July 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Queries can be directed to [tandv@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:tandv@galwaycoco.ie)

Expressions of Interest (EOI) are sought from Business Representative Groups, Community and Voluntary Groups, Local Authority Sections for the Main Town and Village Renewal Scheme and for the Project Development Measure.

The number of Expressions of Interest that can be shortlisted for development into Applications are:

- 5 applications of between €20,000 and €250,000
- 1 application of between €20,000 and €500,000

Further streams of funding under the 2022 Scheme:

- 2 applications up to €50,000 each under the Project Development Measure
- 1 application up to €50,000 for a specific County Marketing campaign

Specifically, the 2022 Scheme will prioritise tackling vacancy in towns and villages, remote working and supporting town centre living. Projects that focus on developing vacant and derelict buildings and sites into use as multi-purpose spaces are prioritised.

Further information on Priorities for 2022 Below:

- The involvement by community interests and/or business interests will be an essential feature of successful projects. Ideally, projects will have been identified as part of a masterplan, or similar, produced for the town or village.
- Only one application can be submitted in respect of any individual town/village, including towns that may be under the remit of more than one Local Authority. However, an individual application may include several linked components to support the rejuvenation of the town/village.
- Under the 2022 Scheme, a minimum of one application must be submitted from Towns/Villages that have not previously been approved for funding under the Scheme in the last 3 years
- Proposals in respect of towns or villages that have not previously applied, or have not been successful under the scheme, will also be prioritised by the Department where possible, subject to the overall quality of the project.



- It is advisable that appropriate assessments, feasibility studies and planning permissions (if required) are in place or substantially progressed prior to the submission of a project application. Should they not have commenced, it is recommended that the application is retained for future years or may be submitted under the Project Development Measure.
- Only proposals that are capable of being delivered within an 18-month timeframe should be submitted. Grant Funding is at a rate of 90%.

**Expressions of Interest are sought under Town and Village Renewal 2022 for projects in line with the Priorities of the Scheme which are categorised as follows.**

**Priority A1**

Proposals that bring back vacant and derelict Buildings and Site into use as multi-purpose spaces.

May include state owned property

Multi-purpose definitions includes but is not limited to;

- Enterprise Spaces
- Arts
- Tourism
- Youth Hubs and other Community Uses

Projects that bring back vacant properties in Town Centres into use as Remote Working Hubs

**Priority A2**

- Regeneration Projects that assist in revitalising towns and villages in line with Town Centre First Policy. These projects should be identified in Town or Village Masterplans
- New Build Community Centres (with a clear need demonstrated)
- Projects to develop Parks, plazas, outdoor dining, green spaces (allotments) recreation facilities including outdoor skate parks, basketball courts, tennis courts in town centres etc.
- Marketing Campaigns targeted at Remote Workers

**Priority B**

- Upgrade and enhancement of existing shopfronts and street facades in towns and villages and build upon spaces developed under Priority A2 (plazas etc)
- Projects that support Night-time Economy in line with emerging proposal from Night-Time Economy Task Force
- Enhancement of Heritage Assets (local museums, attractions focused on heritage sites/buildings including energy efficiency measures.

### **Project Development Measure**

The Town and Village Project Development Measure is similar in nature to Category 2 projects under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). The purpose of this Measure is to assist Local Authorities to contribute to a pipeline of significant, well developed projects which might be subsequently progressed to construction stage, subject to the availability of further funding. It is proposed that applications would involve:

- Development costs for one strategic large-scale project that may be subsequently progressed with funding from the Town & Village Renewal Scheme e.g. detailed design, preparation for the planning and/or procurement, appropriate assessment etc.
- Funding of up to €50,000 at a 90% rate of aid
- Maximum of two proposals to be submitted by any Local Authority

The approval of funding under this category does not automatically guarantee future support under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme for delivery of the emerging project – the resulting projects will need to be submitted as normal under the competitive Town & Village Renewal process.

### **Point to Consider for the 2022 Scheme**

- If the project involves works on buildings or lands that are not in the ownership of the grantee, a minimum 15 year lease must be in place from date of project completion.
- In the case of funding allocated to enterprises or facilities (i.e. community centre, hubs), it is a requirement that they must operate as funded for a minimum of 5 years following release of the final stage of funding, otherwise funding may have to be repaid. Where they do not operate as funded this must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance
- Phased Payments: Funding may be drawn down in up to 3 phases. The minimum amount that can be drawn down at any time is 20% of project costs.

## **STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT SCHEME**

- The 2021 Town and Village Renewal Scheme Co-Funded Streetscape Enhancement Measure which was operated in Ballygar; Glenamaddy; Headford; Loughrea; Oranmore and Oughterard.

- A detailed Report on the 2021 Measure was prepared and submitted on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 to the DRCD to close out on the Measure.
- The table below provides a summary overview of the investment made under the 2021 Scheme. The engagement by local business, residents, Tidy Towns and Development Associations with support by the Elected Members was critical in ensuring successful roll-out of the Scheme.
- Overall, there was a high take up and completion rate. Some offers were not taken up due to timelines, changes in property ownerships or personal circumstance in the period, increasing costs in some instances and difficulty in securing an approved supplier to complete the works. This feedback was included in final submission to DRCD. The amount paid reflected eligible verifiable expenditure on completion of works. Grants were paid at rates of 80% for adjacent properties or 70% of eligible costs for stand-alone properties in key locations which were approved for inclusion.

Town	No. of offers made	Amount Offered	No. of Offers claimed.	Amount Paid	% of Grant Amount Offered Claimed
Headford	41	€ 79,105.00	30	€ 55,769.67	71%
Oranmore	11	€ 16,224.20	7	€ 9,962.00	61%
Ballygar	22	€ 42,097.00	19	€ 31,134.93	74%
Glenamaddy	16	€ 42,234.00	16	€ 37,993.57	90%
Oughterard	24	€ 34,287.81	19	€ 20,748.45	61%
Loughrea	60	€ 132,266.07	56	€ 108,361.96	82%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>€ 346,214.08</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>€ 263,970.58</b>	<b>76%</b>

#### CLÁR SMALL SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

- The total amount of CLÁR funding sought for 15 projects was €618,712.95 as detailed in the May Management Report. A decision on applications shortlisted by GCC is expected from the Department of Community and Rural Development (DCRD) by the end of July 2022.

## INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

### ATHENRY FOOTBRIDGE



Above is a photo of the new pedestrian bridge in Athenry which was placed into position recently. Works are continuing to create the approaches and is not yet open to pedestrian traffic.

The footbridge was incorporated into the design and planning of the new Clarin College secondary school in Athenry. It facilitates a pedestrian access from the college into the town, but which will also serve the wider community.

### ATHLONE TO GALWAY GREENWAY

Since the last update, and at the request of locals and Councillors, the Director and members of the project team have attended a series of public meetings in the Kilcolgan/Clarinbridge and Eyrecourt/Portumna areas.

On Thursday June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7pm to 9.30pm, there was a meeting held in the Clarinbridge Parish Hall and the following Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 8pm to 11pm, there was another meeting held in the Community Centre in Eyrecourt. Both meetings were well attended and lengthy

debates about the pros and cons of the project and route selection process were had. There was agreement at the end of both meetings that the Project Team would continue to engage and communicate with everyone.



Following those meetings, the Director and members of the project team again attended in person on the evening of Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June from 5pm to 10pm. The purpose of these meetings (one in Stoneyisland in Portumna and another in Clonfert/Meelick/Eyrecourt) was to drive the route of alternative route proposals submitted by the East Galway Action Group. At the end of the evening a commitment was given to revert to the two groups with the results of the scoring of the proposed alternatives and have a briefing meeting to explain the outcomes.

The results were forwarded on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July to the East Galway Action Group with an invitation for a briefing at the Project Office in Ballinasloe.

Also, as a result of another public meeting in the Ballinderreen Community Centre, Councillors of the Loughrea Municipal District requested a meeting with the Director and members of the Project Team. This meeting took place on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July. It was a hybrid meeting over MS Teams with other participants present in person in County Hall. A commitment was given at that meeting that all landowners within the study area between Kinvara and Kilcolgan would be contacted again before the sitting of the next Loughrea Municipal District meeting in early September.

As demonstrated above and as per commitments made throughout the process, meetings, engagement and consultation is ongoing along the entire route of the proposed Greenway.



## UPDATE ON THE 2022 ROADWORKS PROGRAMME

Funding of €36,393,523 has been allocated from the DOT for the 2022 Roads Programme. The Council has provided a further €6,462,799 from its own resources.



Tendering of works took place in March and April. Contracts were awarded in April and May across the Municipal Districts for bound and unbound overlays, surface dressing, road recycling.

Rates for materials are generally significantly up across the board with price increases of up to 40% for some line items. Products associated with oil (diesel, bitumen, plastics) have experienced the greatest price increases). Adjustments have been made to the roads programme grant jobs to reflect the price increases – this mainly involves reducing the length of works. Hire of plant and equipment is also experiencing inflationary pressures.

The three significant programmes for Local Authorities in terms of monies and in terms of maintaining the road network in a serviceable condition are as follows:

**Restoration Maintenance (RM):** This is mainly the surface dressing programme and it is important in terms of sealing the road surface (thus preventing the ingress of water) and in maintaining adequate skid resistance.

**Restoration Improvement (RI):** This is the strengthening programme and again is hugely important in terms of maintaining the network. It caters for pavement overlay works and for complete road rehabilitation works as well as for drainage works where required; and

**Discretionary Grant (DG):** Local Authorities have reasonable flexibility in what they can spend the DG on. It can be used for a variety of maintenance and repair works on roads and footways and can also be used for winter maintenance purposes.

Works have commenced under the RI (restoration Improvement) and RM grants and are well-underway. An approximate indication of delivery under these grants is as follows:

**RI (Structural Overlays):**

Tuam – 70% complete

Ballinasloe – 35% Complete (2nd crew starting)

Conamara – 80% Complete

Loughrea – 60% Complete

Athenry-Oranmore – 80% Complete

**RM (Surface Dressing):**

Tuam – 70% complete

Ballinasloe – 30% Complete

Conamara – 85% Complete

Loughrea – 40% Complete

Athenry-Oranmore – 50% Complete

**Direct Labour Works underway:** Tertiary roads being completed under RI, RM or Discretionary Grant.

**Testing:** PMS Ltd. has been appointed to complete testing of structural overlays (taking cores, checking for voids content, depths etc). PMS also appointed to complete PSCI\* reporting and usual annual mechanical surveys. Testall Ltd. Has been appointed to complete testing of surface dressing chippings on an ongoing basis during the year.

*\*Where works are proposed on a section of public road the Pavement Condition Survey Index is recorded on any application for funding associated with the project. When the project is completed, the PSCI is updated and recorded on the PMS.*





# SYSTRA

The procurement process for the appointment of consultants for the delivery of the following works has concluded.

1. Preparation of a Transport Modelling Assessment of County Galway, and
2. Preparation of Local Transport Plans and Traffic Management Plans for 16 selected settlements in the settlement hierarchy of the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028 i.e. (towns/villages identified as Strategic Potential, Self-Sustaining Towns, Small Growth Towns and Small Growth Villages). The settlements are: Headford, Kinvara, Loughrea and Oranmore/Garraun, Athenry, Clifden, Gort, Portumna Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard, Dunmore, Glenamaddy, An Chearthrú Rua, An Spidéal, Ballygar and Moylough, and
3. Preparation of the Galway County Walking and Cycling Strategy,
4. Draft Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy for Galway County

Systra has been commissioned to carry out these works.

## GORT RESERVOIR



The new 1,500 m<sup>3</sup> capacity (2 x 750m<sup>3</sup> cells) reservoir in Gort is complete.

It was constructed in order to increase the security of the water supply to Gort. It will increase treated water storage capacity to 24-hour storage.

This project involved the construction of a new covered reservoir adjacent to the existing water treatment plant site. Covered reservoirs eliminate any potential re-contamination of the treated water following water treatment.

Additional works included construction of additional ancillary buildings on existing site, additional pumping and electronic equipment and additional onsite fuel storage facilities.

**PLANNING**

**European Union (Planning and Development) (Displaced Persons from Ukraine Temporary Protection) Regulations 2022**

The European Union (Planning and Development) (Displaced Persons from Ukraine Temporary Protection) Regulations 2022 (S.I. No 306 of 2022) came into effect 23 June 2022.

The Regulations provide that the provisions of the Planning Act (other than the environmental considerations in Sections 181A to 181C) will not apply to certain classes of development by or on behalf of a State Authority i.e a Minister of the Government or the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, for the purposes of providing temporary protection to displaced persons as specified in the Regulations.

The classes of development listed in the Schedule for the purposes of providing temporary protection to displaced persons comprise:

- Reception and integrations facilities;
- Residential accommodation, including ancillary recreational and sporting facilities;
- Medical and other health and social care accommodation;
- Education and childcare facilities, including ancillary recreational and sporting facilities;
- Emergency management coordination facilities;
- Structures or facilities ancillary to development referred to above, including administration and storage facilities; and
- Infrastructure and other works ancillary to the above development.

The classes of development listed include the temporary change of use and repurposing of existing buildings and facilities, and temporary new-build accommodation and structures to address this emergency.

The provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (other than the environmental considerations in Sections 181A to 181C) will not apply to the specified classes of development in the Schedule only for so long as the Regulations are in force, which duration is linked to the duration of temporary protection activated by European Union Council Decision EU 2022/382 of 4 March 2022.

After this time the removal, demolition or alteration of any temporary structure and the discontinuance of any temporary use and, in so far as is practicable, the restoration of the land to its condition prior to the commencement of the development, will be required, unless the development is permitted, exempted or otherwise regularised by a provision of the Planning and Development Act 2000 or the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

In accordance with the Temporary Protection Directive 2001/55/EC, the duration of temporary protection activated by European Union Council Decision EU 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 shall be for an initial period of one year. Unless terminated under the terms of Article 6(1)(b) of the Directive, that period shall be extended automatically by six monthly periods for a maximum of one year. At any time, the European Commission may propose to the Council to end the temporary protection, based on the fact that the situation in Ukraine is such as to permit the safe and durable return of those granted temporary protection, or propose that the Council extend the temporary protection by up to one further year. As such, the maximum extended period for the duration of Temporary Protection Decision EU 2022/382 may be for a total period of three years from 4 March 2022.

## RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX

### **Residential Zoned Land Tax Ministerial Planning Guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)**

As set out in Housing Policy Objective 15.2 of *Housing for All*, a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes, and which will in time replace the Vacant Site Levy, was enacted as a part of the Finance Act 2021.

The aim of the tax is to activate and bring forward the development of housing on lands which are suitably zoned and serviced, as indicated on maps to be prepared and published by local authorities for their respective functional areas. The legislation also sets out certain lands which are to be excluded from the scope of the tax. The tax measure is intended to encourage activation of existing planning permissions on lands which are identified as being in scope and to incentivise owners of suitable lands without planning permission to commence the process of engagement with Planning Authorities.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage has issued new ministerial planning guidelines under Section 28 of the Planning Development Act 2000 (as amended), to provide guidance to planning authorities in the preparation and publication of maps to identify lands in scope for the Residential Zoned Land Tax, pursuant to section 80 of the Finance Act 2021.

A key action in facilitating the introduction of the Residential Zoned Land Tax is the publication of draft maps by planning authorities, by the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2022, showing lands in scope.

The purpose of the guidelines is to assist planning authorities in meeting the statutory requirement to undertake and publish a draft, supplemental and final map(s) identifying lands zoned for residential purposes and mixed-use purposes including residential uses, which are connected or able to be connected to the necessary services to support housing development. The Guidelines include details in relation to the various actions to be taken and identification of lands in scope.

The Guidelines set out further details of the provisions which facilitate the making of submissions on the draft and supplemental maps, appeals to An Bord Pleanála, and the role of other key stakeholders.

While residential zonings which include existing dwellings are to be included on the map(s), where connected or able to be connected to services, permanently occupied residential premises which are liable for Local Property Tax will not be liable for the tax.

It is also intended to issue a Section 29 Ministerial Policy Directive over the coming months to provide a legislative process for planning authorities to consider requests for rezoning of land made by landowners in relation to lands identified during the public display periods for the draft and supplemental maps as being in scope for the tax. This provision of the Finance Act 2021 is only available during the first draft and supplemental map process in 2022 and 2023.

### **Marine Spatial Planning and the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021**

The Maritime Area Planning Act represents the biggest reform of marine governance since the foundation of the State. The Act establishes a comprehensive and coherent marine planning system. The MAP Act 2021 comprises a number of key elements as follows:

- Forward planning through the National Marine Planning Framework including comprehensive sub-national planning (Designated Maritime Area Plans – DMAPs);
- The establishment of Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) a dedicated agency to undertake certain consenting and enforcement functions in the new regime;
- Development management through a sequenced consenting system that
  - Replaces foreshore consents with a new focused Maritime Area Consent,

- Extends the existing planning permission regime into the entire maritime area (approx. 495,000km<sup>2</sup>), augmented with additional marine considerations; and
- Provide licencing of certain activities undertaken in the Maritime Area.
- Compliance and enforcement of consent conditions through robust provisions for investigation, enforcement action and penalties.

The MAP Act is being commenced in stages as required. The tentative timescale for the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority to become operational is Q1 2023.

In terms of the role of local authorities, the Act continues the requirement to obtain planning permission on the Foreshore, however, this area now extends to 3 nautical miles and is now called the 'nearshore'. Upon its commencement, Section 279 of the MAP Act will extend the functional area of each Coastal Planning Authority to include the nearshore.

Section 20 and 29 of the MASP provides for the Designated Maritime Area Plans or DMAPs. These are forward-looking sub-national plans that will contribute to the overall vision for marine spatial planning in the Irish maritime area. In order to prepare a DMAP, a coastal authority must be designated as a competent authority. It is intended following the commencement of Section 20 of the MAP Act, that the Minister will then seek to designate a number of public bodies as competent authorities. This may include coastal planning authorities.

As is the case on land, the Coastal Planning Authority will be responsible for enforcement in the nearshore.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

### CRUINNIÚ NA NÓG

Cruinniú na nÓg 2022 is a collaboration between the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the Creative Ireland Programme, local authorities and RTÉ.

#### **Dance Ireland Pop Up Dance**

The first ever Dance Ireland pop up workshop took place in Ballinasloe Library for Cruinniú na nÓg.



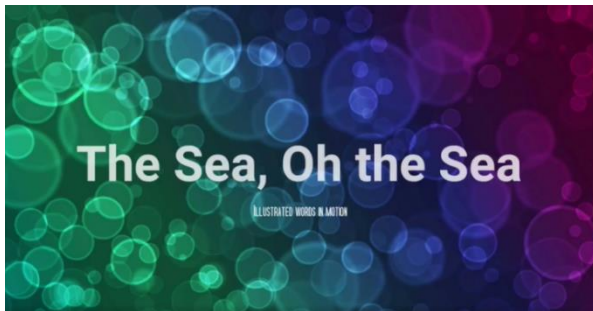
Pop-Up Dance is a project which aims to connect with young people who want to dance. The event in Ballinasloe Library was 1 of 12 pop-up performances around the country, developed by local youth dance companies to reflect their own communities and experiences





## The Sea oh The Sea project

Project title: *The Sea, Oh The Sea.....illustrated words in motion*



Working in collaboration with author Trish Forde, Illustrator Kim Sharkey and animators from Galway Public Libraries, three schools participated in writing, illustration and animation workshops to design stories about the importance of the sea, it's history, it's lifeform and our engagement with it.

A screening of the animated stories took place on Cruinniú Day 2022 in Galway City Libraries.



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

**ENVIRONMENT**

**CLÁR FUNDING**

Inis Oírr Comhar Caomhán Teo received 56,814.53 euro in Clar Funding for the enhancement of the existing public toilet facilities and associated litter recycling infrastructure. The application for funding was a joint application with the Environment Section, Galway County Council.

**BURIAL GROUND MAINTENANCE GRANT SCHEME**

The Burial Ground Maintenance Grant Form for 2022 is now available to assist Voluntary Groups / Committees who maintain burial grounds in Galway County. Grants start at 300 euros up to 600 euros. Details are available on our website.

The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 19th August 2022. The forms have been circulated to all committees in the County.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**



**Food Waste Recycling**

Due to the success and demand for the food waste caddies the programme has been extended to Area Offices and the Libraries in the County. This will encourage Householders to recycle food waste in a proper manner. It is available on a first come, first served basis.

## Mobile WEE Collections Updates

We had a total of 246 tonnes of electrical waste collected during our recent campaigns and there was 22 collection points in total in the county. We will examine the option of running it next year, but this will depend on WEE Ireland and resources. The programme generated a lot of interest.

## WEEE Social Media campaign (July)



A social media campaign commences in July to encourage householders to recycle waste electrical/electronic goods, lighting and batteries through the Civic Amenity sites and shop network. This campaign is to help ensure National Targets are met.

## Food Waste Prevention Social media campaign. (July)



A social media campaign started in June and continues in July. This encourages and advise householders how to avoid food waste.

### **IBAL (Irish Business Against litter) Anti-Litter League report**

In the recent IBAL report Ballinasloe was classified as being clean to European norms and described as a “very strong performance” in the report.



## WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of June Galway County Council in conjunction with Galway City Council and An Garda Síochána launched a new multi-agency operation to combat illegal dumping, starting with a radio interview on Galway Bay FM

Gardai and waste enforcement officers conducted a few multi-agency checkpoints on that date targeting the illegal haulage of waste. An associate social media campaign circulated on the Garda Western Region Facebook page on the day, and on Galway County Councils' social media platforms.

Day 1 of this multi-agency approach was primarily focusing on highlighting the offenses of illegal dumping and providing the public with the necessary advice. Further days of action will be rolled out across the city and county over the next few months and checkpoints will be carried out during the daytime, the evening, late at night, and at weekends.

National enabling legislation is required for the use of CCTV and other recording devices in the processing of illegal dumping complaints and cases. This is still with the Government for approval. It should be noted that only **Overt** CCTV has been included in the Circular Economy bill which is going through the Dail at present.

## WASTE PRESENTATION BYE LAWS

As part of the Waste Presentation Bye laws inspections were carried out during the month of June in Crowe Street, Bolands Lane, Bolands Court, Bolands Close and Sycamore Grove in



Gort. Inspections were also carried out in Fahy Gardens, St. Laurences Fields and Hillcrest in Loughrea. Over 235 inspections were carried out in these areas and follow-up warning letters will be sent as required.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

### CLIMATE ACTION AWARENESS DAY

As an initial step in the development of an internal and external communications strategy, a Climate Awareness Day was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. The event was hosted by the Environment Section and the Housing Section with assistance from the Heritage Officer and the Facilities Team. It was a huge success.

#### Photographs from Climate Action Day







Awareness-raising activities were also carried out as part of “Your Council Day” on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. As well as highlighting the work of Galway County Council in relation to Climate Action on our social media channels we also received national media coverage; we highlighted the role of LAs in delivering climate action on the Pat Kenny Show on Newstalk [Your Council Day - Pat Kenny Show - CARO](#).

Following agreement on the structure for climate action, the following teams will be established:

1. Revised Climate Action Steering Group to include the Head of each Department that has a role in this area. Their role will be to oversee the development and implementation of the actions, promote climate action within their respective departments and assign responsibility within their department to the Climate Action Team and Energy Team,
2. Energy Team to develop, implement and report on climate action related to internal GCC energy use,
3. Climate Action Team to develop, implement and report on climate actions other than those related to internal GCC energy use.

A ministerial direction regarding the development of Local Authority Climate Action Plans is expected in Q4 2022, however, background work has commenced on the development of the plan. We are currently preparing a Road Map with CARO which will set out the implementation pathway for the Climate Action Plan and associated actions and can be used by the Executive Team thereafter for tracking purposes and for reporting to the Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC.



## ENERGY

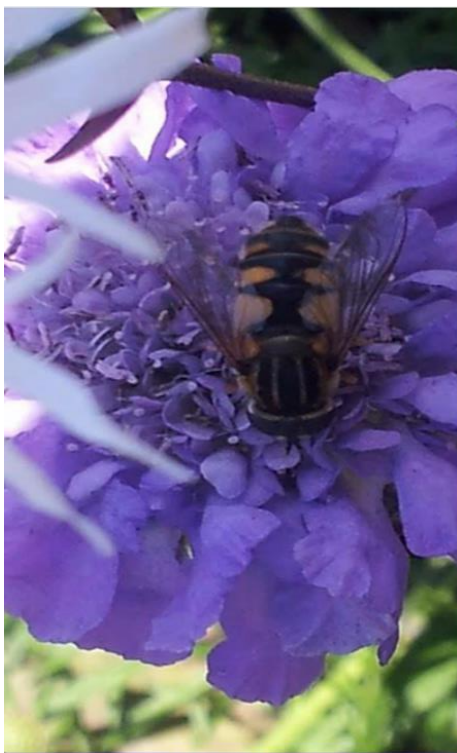
The Regional Energy Bureau is currently recruiting Local Energy Bureau Officers. The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Energy Team with the Energy Bureau Regional Manager will take place in August. It is expected that the Bureau Officers will support the Energy Team to deliver agreed work programs and build expertise internally. Galway County Council will require significant resources internally to deliver these programmes.

## BIODIVERSITY

The following biodiversity events took place in July:

### **Sustainable Gardening Courses Tuam & Clifden**

Galway County Council: Tuam Area Office, Heritage office and Galway County Public Participation Network offered a FREE in person Sustainable Gardening Course designed to get everyone improving their gardens and community areas for biodiversity, eliminating harmful chemicals and learning about drought resistant plants.



The workshops were run over one day from **10 am to 4 pm on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> of July in Clifden and Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of July at the Palace Grounds, Tuam.**

Clifden Tidy Towns and Tuam Tidy Towns partnered with Galway County Council on organising and promoting the events.

These courses were of particular interest to Tidy Towns Groups, Community Groups and those trying to improve their planting for biodiversity and create habitats.

The courses were practical in nature. During the course participants got the chance to learn about Irish pollinators and how to protect them, to dig without damaging their back, take cuttings, sow seeds and prune trees. Notes were sent out to everyone after the session and lots of time was given for questions and answers. Over 40 people attended the courses.

## FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Galway County Council to better utilise existing technology in response to severe weather events. The Severe Weather Event Management System (SWEMS) is the first of its kind in Ireland and was developed on the back of existing council resources.

The aim is to capture and analyse information on emergencies as they happen, allowing for real-time decision making and a reduction in incident response times. Data gathered can be shared simultaneously with other emergency services and teams.

Members of the public can be informed of risk in their local area via live updates through social media and on a free app, which contains council alerts and other information. Incidents reported by the public in relation to severe weather emergencies will also be recorded by the council.

The Severe Weather Event Management was promoted on "Your Council Day" and it was highlighted by RTE, outline of interview below.

Paul Duffy, Assistant Chief Fire Officer at Galway County Council, said the new system will significantly improve management of severe weather events.

"We simply wanted to implement a system to do the job better and inform people in time," Mr Duffy said.

"Up to now there has been a lag getting information and we found we were behind the curve straight away.

"This system means all our information is there in front of us. From an organisational point of view, hours could be saved during severe weather and wildfire events."

Mr Duffy added that the council does not have to collate data or present it to other council teams.

"For example, if we have a supervisor out in Spiddal who comes across a flooded road, he or she takes out their mobile, marks the road as closed and then hits a submit button," he said.

"Within seconds, they have updated a map on our council site, sent out a Twitter message and sent out a local message to people in that area.

"Before this, our teams would have had to come into a room and look at boards or a Senior Engineer would be trawling an area looking for information. All that is coming in in real time now."

The plan is to roll it out to other council fire services. Westmeath and Wicklow County Councils have already had demonstrations and training and are proceeding shortly with trials.

Funding for a shared service approach has been provided by the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management.

**Mise, le meas,**

**Mr. Jim Cullen**

***Chief Executive***

***Galway County Council 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022***