



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council

Monthly Management Report

November 2022

HOUSING & UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

CAPITAL DELIVERY

The Galway Housing Taskforce met on the 15th of November and was presented with the end of year numbers for housing delivery in Galway County.



5 purpose built specific disability units, Carraig Weir, Tuam. Nomination of tenants complete

The build target for Galway CoCo for 2022 was **240 Units** and the total delivery currently stands at **246 units**.



Clifden units – refurbishment of Old Buildings & new units on sites. Nomination of Tenancies started.

This is made up of:

Type of Delivery	Location	Unit No.	Comment
Turnkey	Athenry Gort Williamstown	82	Allocations in Athenry & Gort Williamstown early 2023

AHB - CAS	Letterfrack	11	Allocated
SHIP – Local Authority Build	Fana Bhui – Tuam Clifden Kinvara	68	All complete key handover early December on
AHB Turnkey	Headford Ballinasloe	18	Nominations made and tenanting ongoing
CAS Acquisitions	Gort Portumna	7	Allocating
Local Authority Acquisitions	Across County	5	Specific purpose purchases
Part V	Athenry Moycullen Oranmore Loughrea	36	Contract delivery & Allocations ongoing
Part V AHB	Headford	7	Nominations made and tenanting ongoing
Long Term Leasing	Tuam	12	Allocations ongoing
TOTAL		246	
Potential Units: AHB Turnkeys Part V	Tuam Athenry	4 12	Units built but with Dept for contract approval



Turnkey Units at Williamstown – nomination of tenants Jan 2023



Bridge Court, Ahascragh. Redevelopment and new Build, LA Build programme. Completion Mid 2023.

UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

Galway County Council will be involved in a new pledge for accommodation being ran by the LGMA on behalf of the Department of Housing. The web-based system will offer the public the change to submit vacant properties to each Council for consideration for the Ukrainian response. IMO, a charity, will place families in these pledged properties once basic inspections are complete.

Process around the new National Call:

1. Public offer their vacant home on the website. www.hopefromhome.ie
2. The Relevant LA contacts the Pledger within 5 working days.
3. The Relevant LA assesses the property within 2 weeks.
4. If property is suitable the LA engages with IOM
5. The Licence agreement is signed by both parties.
6. The LA or Partner (IOM for Galway) moves the family into the property.
7. IOM supports the family/ pledger and provides assurances for both parties.

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

CHOICE BASED LETTING

Galway County Council allocates a number of properties under CBL as part of the Social Housing Strategy 2020. This method of allocation allows people on the waiting list (with no

restrictions) to place a 'bid' on a property that is advertised on: <https://gccapps.galwaycoco.ie/cbl/details.aspx?id=3130>

Allocations are then reviewed under the scheme of letting priorities. CBL is used when we have had a number of refusals on properties and allows us to ensure that the HLO's can move on either hard to let or long-term vacant properties quickly.

10 properties have been advertised on CBL this year with 102 expressions of interest. 8 have been allocated and 2 are going through the system currently. Refusal of an offer of a CBL property will result in a 12-month suspension from CBL.

CROI CONAITHE

It has been confirmed by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien T.D. that the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant has been extended to eligible vacant properties in rural areas to ensure the existing housing stock is being used to the fullest extent possible.

A grant of up to a maximum of €30,000 is available for the refurbishment of vacant properties for occupation as a principal private residence, including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore. This is subject to upper limits for the types of work

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to €30,000, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 will be available where the property is confirmed by the applicant to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of €50,000.

In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional (e.g. quantity surveyor, engineer etc.) is required to be submitted along with the application confirming that the property is derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous).

Those applying for the grant will be required to indicate on the application form to confirm if they are applying for the vacant property refurbishment grant alone or the vacant property refurbishment grant including the derelict property top-up grant.

Properties considered for inclusion must be vacant for two years or more and built before 1993. For the purposes of this scheme, a property is deemed to be vacant if it has been vacant and unoccupied for a period of two years or more. Confirmation of vacancy can be validated and verified by the use of, for example, Utility Bills which can help determine vacancy periods (e.g. pattern of usage or disconnection) or such other proofs as are available to the

satisfaction of the local authority. Confirmation of vacancy must be validated and verified by the local authority prior to grant approval. An SEAI Better Energy Home Scheme Grant may be available in combination with this grant. Works covered by SEAI Better Energy Homes Scheme will therefore not be covered. The local authority must satisfy themselves that proposed works are not claimed for under any other grant.

Proof of both vacancy and ownership will be required to support the grant payment. In terms of ownership, it is a matter for the applicant to confirm ownership with the local authority.

All Details and updates on the scheme will be made available on: <https://www.galway.ie/en/services/housing/croiconaithe/>

FINAL SSHA FIGURES

The purpose of the Summary of Social Housing Assessments (SSHA) is to capture the total number of households qualified for social housing support across the country whose social housing need is not being met, in order to better understand the level of need for such support. It is a snapshot at a point in time of the housing lists of 31 local authorities.

The Galway County figures show that in the last few weeks there has been a significant reduction in the number of forms outstanding and the majority are now ready for or have been assessed.

SSHA

Row Labels	Count of Status
RECEIVED	17
RETURN FOR FI	214
RETURNED BY AN POST	29
CITY/ RAS /HAP	98
NO REPLY	175
READY FOR ASSESSMENT	201
COMPLETE	194
Closed Applicant	271
Deceased Applicant	4
Grand Total	1203

HOMELESSNESS

There is a marked increase in the number of households making enquiries and accessing homeless services in the recent couple of months with the number growing daily. This increase is reflective of the increase in the number of Notices to Quit issued, the reduction in availability of private rented property and the increase in the population.

PRIVATE EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

There are currently 13 families, with a centre of interest in County Galway, residing in homeless Private Emergency Accommodation in Galway City.

There is no additional availability of accommodation appropriate for allocation to families – all rooms in the seven PEA properties in Galway City are full. The PEA is a shared service between Galway City and County Council and is allocated based on the family with the greatest need.

At this time, there are a further five families who are seeking homeless accommodation, one of whom has been previously excluded by all the operators of PEA. The Council is currently in discussions with other stakeholders to resolve their supported housing need.

There are nine singles currently availing of Private Emergency Accommodation who link in with the Day Centre daily for supports

FAIRGREEN HOSTEL – SINGLE MALES & OSTERLEY LODGE – SINGLE FEMALES

Galway County Council has access to 6 beds in the Fairgreen Hostel, of which 5 beds are occupied by residents who have medium to high support needs. The 6th bed is currently classified as a “crash bed” for the purposes of the Cold Weather Response. It is the intention that as 2 of the other beds are vacated, they will also be classified as “crash beds” for this purpose until the end of the Cold Weather Response in April 2023.

A Business Case is being prepared for the provision of high supported tenancies for two or three of the residents in a property to be licensed to Galway Simon by Galway County Council

Galway County Council has access to 3 beds in Osterley Lodge, all of which are currently occupied. One of beds, when vacant is to be identified as a “crash bed” for the Cold Weather Response.

COMMUNITY BASED HOUSING

Galway County Council with the support of Galway Simon and funding from the Department of Housing has developed 2 Community based houses in the County - 4 male Social Housing applicants with low to medium support needs who were residing in the Fairgreen hostel moved into these properties in October where they are being supported by Galway Simon support workers. The key to the success of these step-down facilities is that the residents were appropriately matched with each other. It is anticipated that within the next 12 months the residents will be allocated their individual tenancies when they are able to successfully sustain their own tenancy. There are challenges with these allocations and extensive input has been required from the various stakeholders to deal with issues which have arisen.

HOUSING FIRST

Galway County Council has 10 supported Housing First tenancies in place since mid-2021, with a further 2 to be allocated in 2022. To date all tenants, remain in situ, however there are some very challenging issues to be dealt with for some tenancies with ongoing input from multiple stakeholders needed. It is intended to allocate a further 6 Housing First tenancies in 2023, dependent on staff resources, funding and suitable properties being available.

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS – APPROVED HOUSING BODY

Galway County Council has 6 tenancies in 4 properties in Tuam where the properties have been licensed by the Council to Peter McVerry Trust with eligible Social Housing applicants licensed to reside in the properties by Peter McVerry Trust.

AFFORDABLE HOMES

Galway County Council met with the Department on the 18th October 2022. The objective of this meeting was to discuss affordable housing delivery, current pipeline and the challenges to delivery in the near term.

The Housing for All Target for delivery for Galway on the Affordable Homes side is **226** by the end of 2026.

Galway County Council gave an overview of the following sites which are progressing:

- Droim na Gaoithe, Claregalway (44 Social, and 44 Affordable) Section 10 being prepared for ABP
- Cosmona, Loughrea (35 Affordable and 35 Social) and is at design stage
- Athenry, (36 Affordable) and is at design stage, Irish water issues currently being resolved

Total – 115

LONGER- TERM DELIVERY LA-OWNED LAND

- Birmingham Road, Tuam, recently acquired by the council for housing.
- Poolboy, Ballinasloe, long term site in Council ownership

AFFORDABLE TURNKEY

- Lakeview, Claregalway; under negotiation
- Moycullen & Oughterard; number of sites being reviewed
- Tuam and Headford; sites being reviewed
- Oranmore; 3 to 4 sites for review.

- Sites are currently being assessed with over 200 potential affordable homes under consideration.

FIRST HOME SCHEME (AFFORDABLE PURCHASE SHARED EQUITY SCHEME)

www.Firsthomescheme.ie

The *First Home Scheme* was launched by the State and the participating mortgage lenders on 7th July 2022.

Activity to Date as at 9 November 2022	
Website accounts created	2,142
Applications approved	640
Equity Contracts issued	217
Equity Contracts signed	112

Galway City 6 Eligibility Certs Issued

Galway County 15 Eligibility Certs Issued

Following the successful launch of the scheme, the Minister has requested that the First Home DAC would undertake the analytical and preparatory technical work required to allow the accommodation of self-build homes and seek Board approval for an expansion of the scheme to encompass one-off houses as soon as is practicable (based on appropriate pre-defined eligibility parameters). Subject to consideration by the First Home Board, an indicative timeframe for any introduction of this measure would be Q2 2023.

ECONOMIC, COMMUNITY & RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ERCD)

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

- An LCDC Meeting took place on 22nd November. Among the items discussed were the new LEADER programme 2023-2027, the Empowering Communities Programme and agree baseline indicators for the development of an Annual Plan for SICAP 2023.
- In relation to the LEADER programme and the Expression of Interest process for the next programme, it was agreed that the LCDC would not put forward an EOI to be the LAG. Galway Rural Development and FORUM Connemara both confirmed that they intend to submit an EOI. There was discussion around the budget allocation and all expressed concern regarding the level of funding in Co Galway for the next programme. It was agreed that as part of the development of the Local Development Strategies as part of phase two of the process that it was important that the Local Development Companies worked closely with the Council and the LCDC to align with the LECP and ensure coordination.
- The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) have announced an Energy Support Scheme for the Community & Voluntary Sector which will be administered by Pobal and provide once-off support towards energy costs for the community & voluntary sector who are registered companies or charities. Further funding supports towards energy costs will be announced in the coming weeks - for unincorporated community groups under the Community Enhancement Programme - and for unaffiliated sports clubs under the Sports Partnership funding scheme.
- Category 1 awards under the Community Centre Investment Fund were announced by the Department of Rural and Community Development and 31 community centres across the county were awarded funding up to €25,000 (without match funding requirement) which will enable essential repairs and upgrades to community facilities. Category 2 & 3 announcements are due prior to year-end.
- Staff from the Community Section attended a briefing on Round 4 of the Healthy Ireland Fund which included confirmation of funding of €75,000 for 2023 and a baseline amount of €40,000 for 2024 & 2025. An outcomes-based approach has been adopted for Round 4 of the Fund and the LCDC will be required to prepare a strategy based on 27 socio-economic and health indicators to develop a programme of work for round 4 which must be submitted by an extended closing date of 27th January 2023.

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN (LECP)

- Socio-economic analysis and information gathering is progressing, and training on incorporating the public sector duty into the LECP. It is intended to complete socio-economic analysis prior to end November with a view to presenting to the ASG and determining high-level goals for public consultation.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- A meeting took place with Youth Work Ireland to plan the AGM of Comhairle na nÓg for 2022, which will take place in the Galway Bay Hotel on Wednesday 7th December, to discuss topics of importance to young people and select a topic to progress with decision-makers in 2023. The Community Section has written to all second-level schools encouraging them to nominate representatives to be released to attend the AGM, as unfortunately, due to the impact of COVID-19, and the geographical challenges in the County, the percentage of schools involved in Comhairle na nÓg (which is a kpi) has reduced over the last number of years. County Galway is currently ranked 27th out of 31 LA's in this respect, and this area will be a particular focus for 2023 including a structural review to broaden access to, and participation in, Comhairle na nÓg at local level.
- Age Friendly Ireland will carry out training for the new County OPC on 28th November on all aspects of the role of the OPC and the age friendly programme.
- The Council has received an allocation of €38,100 under a new Ukrainian Refugee Fund through Healthy Ireland, and has submitted an overall proposal for the fund to improve health & wellbeing, and social integration, of Ukrainians at community level to the Department of Health, and upon approval, will roll out the fund in association with the Ukraine Community Response Forum.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

- The results of the Supervalu National Tidy Towns Competition 2022 were announced at end October and County Galway continues to have a very high representation in the competition with 45 groups, whose performances in the competition are increasing dramatically year-on-year, recognising their huge efforts to promote biodiversity, environmental sustainability and improved public realm in their communities, and the cross-departmental efforts required to support this throughout the Council. A huge congratulations to all of our amazing Tidy Towns Volunteers for improving our towns and villages, with special mention to our Award Winners:
 - Milltown, who secured First Place in the County and retained their Gold Medal
 - Abbey, who secured Second Place in the County and retained their Silver Medal
 - An Spidéal, who improved their score dramatically and jumped to Third Place
 - Na Forbacha who improved their score dramatically and won the Endeavour Award
 - Gort Tidy Towns who were one of 4 National Winners of the Bat Conservation Award
 - Gort River Walk Development Group who were the National Winner of the Waters and Communities Award for the work on the development of this important amenity.
 - Ballinderreen National School who were the National Winner of the School Award.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK

ACTING AS AN INFORMATION HUB:

- The PPN attended the Tuam MD Meeting on 14th November to promote engagement and build awareness of the role of the PPN amongst Councillors and Council Staff
- The Galway Co PPN attended a National PPN Workers meeting and organised the North-western Regional PPN Workers meeting.
- The PPN sent out 4 Weekly Digest info letters (each Friday), 1 Newsletter along with 15 emails to all 1140 Member Groups.

BUILDING CAPACITY:

- A series of training events was designed based on a training needs assessment conducted earlier in the year offering a range of tailored training sessions for members. The first session covered PR & Media for Community Projects and equipped members with the skills to write a press release and get radio/press coverage for their cause. The second session addressed 'Making Decisions in your Organisation' and covered how to manage Conflicts of Interest within a group, explore the purpose of a Code of Conduct, and help improve communication amongst groups. The third session 'Legal Duties of Community Organisations' covered the regulatory responsibilities community groups may have and also addressed issues for Charity/Tax & Bank Accounts and Succession Planning. The fourth workshop was an 'Instagram Reels Masterclass' and showed members how to create Instagram /Facebook Reels to help promote their organisation with zero marketing budget.
- The PPN in collaboration with Galway City Community Network and AMACH! delivered training for PPN Member Groups and Service Providers to make communities LGBTQI+ friendly.
- The Galway County PPN hosted a funding workshop in collaboration with members of Bord Iascaigh Mhara informing members of funding available under the open call of [the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme](#).
- Galway Co PPN hosted an information workshop with the '.IE' programme which has developed the [Digital Town Programme](#), to foster digital enhancement and adoption in Ireland, helping businesses, citizens and communities harness the benefits of the internet and to thrive online.
- The PPN has been informed that its application to SEAI for funding to generate an Energy Master Plan for County Galway has been successful - this is a fund of €25,000 with a project timeframe of 1 year.
- The PPN attended a number of events during the month including GRD's Social Enterprise Event, Domestic Violence Regional Conference, Galway Health and Wellness Conference, and also met with GRD to discuss future collaboration and Workplan for 2023

PROMOTING REPRESENTATION:

- PPN Representatives were involved in a number of meetings during the month including the Housing Linkage Group Meeting, JPC public meeting, consultation event on the next Litter Management Plan for the County, and a meeting with Youth Groups to discuss potential involvement of young people in the PPN structures, particularly the PPN Secretariat, to improve the demographic representation across all ages with the PPN.

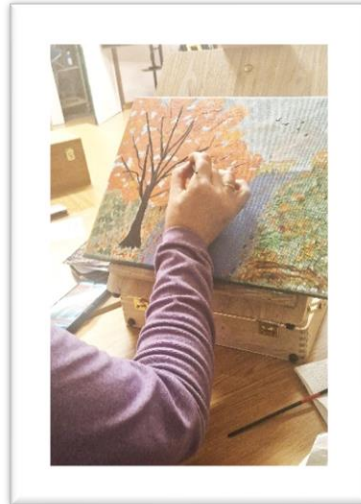
ARTS OFFICE

- Local Live Performance Scheme - Arts Office delivered its final report and claim to the Department for LLPS IV on behalf of Galway Council. Total claim for events taking place between July – August 2022 was €133,817.77. This supported 11 live performances in the county, offering employment to 141 artists, technicians and local event businesses for this period. Over 80 artists performed on stages over this period and it greatly enhanced our Culture Night Programme for 2022.
- Arts Office took part in the Creative Places National Networking Event in Tuam on the 10/11 November, led by Creative Places Tuam. A host of panellists, guest speakers visited Tuam alongside other Creative Places in Ireland. During this two-day event, our invited speakers will propose a series of methodologies that can be used in order to build networks of support and solidarity for and between collaborative, socially engaged practitioners and communities.
- Galway County Arts Office is working with Visual Artists Ireland, Galway City Council Arts Office and Galway Culture Company to programme a series of online professional development events in 2023. We are currently taking feedback from visual artists based in Galway City & County as possible, to shape this programme. The Arts Office's will be hosting an online visual artists café event on Wednesday 30 November 3-4:30pm.

CREATIVE IRELAND

- The annual claim and project report for the Creative Ireland Programme 2022 was finalised and delivered to Creative Ireland on 17th November. Total amount claimed €208,881 for Creative Ireland Projects in 2022. Of the final recoupment €33,720 was additional funding requested for unique projects supporting Carers and Older People in our community.
- Creative Carer's project funded by the Creativity in Older Age Fund supported 82 participants/carers took part in 11 six-week art classes throughout North and South Connemara. The project engaged with local artists/facilitators to promote culture-led development within the Connemara community of carers. Carers can find themselves excluded from certain creative activities, due to the demands of their caring role, their rural environment, and the 'invisibility' of informal caring. The project has culminated in the creation of artworks by carers which will be displayed and celebrated in Clifden on Friday 25th November. The project was delivered by Forum Connemara CLG working in

partnership with the HSE Carers Department, Galway and Galway County Culture Team in collaboration with Age Friendly and Healthy Ireland Programme.



Creative Carers Project

TOURISM

TOURISM STRATEGY:

The Tourism Strategy is being finalised and edited for circulation internally. The project will then progress to a phase of public consultation in relation to the Natura Impact Statement and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

FAILTE IRELAND DESTINATION TOWN CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

An audit of the existing wayfinding and orientation is complete and a revision of scope of works for Destination Towns Capital Infrastructure Scheme in light of the concurrent programme of work relating to the Clifden Regeneration. Galway County Council were awarded €500,000 in March 2020 for this project; and the match funding agreed by Galway County Council was €166,000; with 0% spend by Q4 2021 due to the extension required to align with the Clifden Regeneration programme of design and planning awarded through the RRDF. Galway County Council met with Fáilte Ireland on the ground in Clifden in November 2022.

LIFE ON MACHAIR – EU LIFE PROJECT :

Tourism in Galway County Council was invited to engage with agency stakeholders from Fáilte Ireland, Clean Coasts, Leave no Trace and community representatives to commence this EU Life project in November '22.

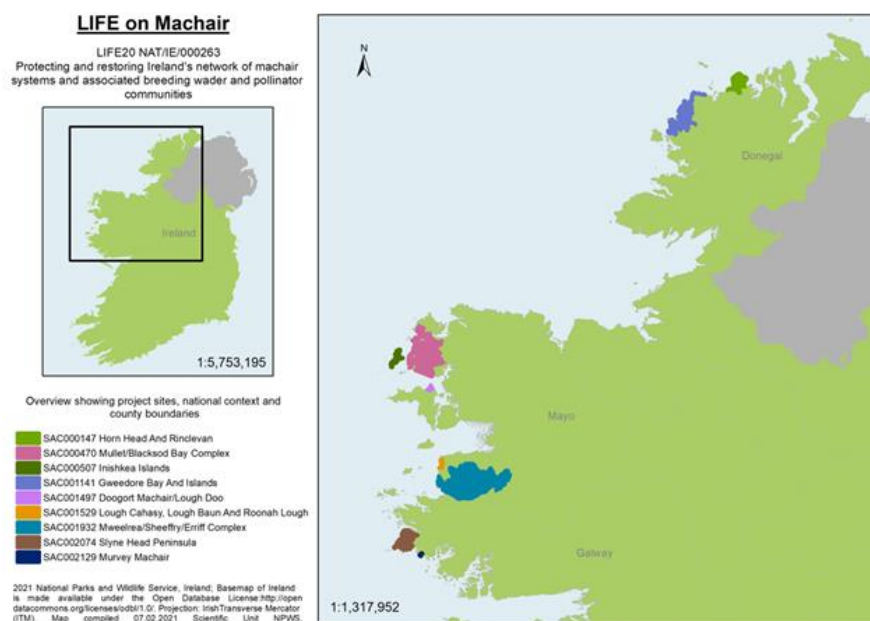
This project aims to address the primary pressures negatively impacting machair systems: unsustainable agricultural and recreational/tourism activities.

LIFE on Machair is an EU LIFE funded project which commenced in 2022 and is set to run until 2028.

The LIFE on Machair project is being coordinated by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage through collaboration with project partners the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), Teagasc and Fáilte Ireland.

Machair is a rare and valuable coastal habitat characterised by a species-rich grassland plain, developed on wind-blown sand. Focusing on nine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 4 Special Protection Areas in counties Donegal, Mayo and Galway, a voluntary Results Based Payment Scheme (RBPS) will be linked to the quality of the habitat, putting the landowner, their skills, expertise and knowledge of their land central to the development of this project.

The two sites selected in County Galway are Murvey Machair and Slyne Head Peninsula.



SHANNON ERNE TOURISM MASTERPLAN

The Shannon Erne Interpretation or Discovery Points is called out within the Shannon Tourism Masterplan, there is now a project underway for the Shannon and Shannon Erne Interpretation Scheme – to communicate a clear and consistent message Visitor Experience message along the river.

Waterways Ireland are leading the project in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and the local authorities. Tandem have been appointed consultants and Interpretation Planners on the programme of development.

Site selection is taking place with a detailed matrix and selection criteria includes requirement of ownership by Local Authority or Waterways Ireland. With 93 sites initially identified, the objective is to narrow this to approx. 40.

Tandem presented to the Tourism Officers, Waterways Ireland and Faite Ireland in Athlone and the briefing also provided samples of a variety of interpretation solutions to bring the stories of the waterways to life for the visitor.

Examples incorporated well-balanced content that meets the appetite and needs of the visitor; materials that are hard-wearing, weather-proof and resistant to vandalism. Typographic design presents written content in accessible and highly legible forms. Imagery brings the past and/or 'unseeable' to life.



FÁILTE IRELAND MOTORHOME SCOPING REPORT

Fáilte Ireland are currently developing a motorhome service scoping Report. The objective is to identify a baseline for provision of motorhome infrastructure in Ireland and to identify barriers to and opportunities for provision of further infrastructure. The team are undertaking an audit of current availability and examining topics such as planning, legislation, costs to set up a new site, best practice and insights from other destinations.

Five counties have been selected for a more detailed study- which include Galway, Kerry, Wexford, Leitrim and Fingal, and the Tourism Officer has supported consultants KPMG with the project.

TOURISM NETWORKS

The Tourism Officer met with the following Tourism Networks and organisations in November;

- The Connemara and Islands Tourism Network;
- Destination Lough Derg
- Galway Convention Bureau to progress shared strategic actions around marketing and tourism development projects.

Faite Ireland ‘Destination Towns Capital Investment Scheme’

RURAL SCHEMES

CLÁR SMALL SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

Drawdown of funds for the following completed projects under the 2021 Scheme will be concluded before month-end;

- Lurga National School – Multi-use Game Area (MUGA)
- Clonberne National School – Safety and parking enhancements.
- Skehana Community Playground Development.
- Abbey Community MUGA / Sensory Play Area

Projects on Inis Mór and in Woodford are due to be completed before month end also.

Works at three community playgrounds have concluded under the Element 1 of the 2021 CLÁR Innovation Measure Project. This Element saw funds of up to €5,000 granted to carry out repairs or upgrades to their community’s facility. Playground committees which received this funding are:

- Collins Park Playground
- Clifden Community Playground
- Ballymoe Community Playground

Elements 2 & 3 of this Project are ongoing and will see committee members involved with approximately 40 playgrounds in CLÁR areas receive training on the safe inspection of facilities and the promotion of playgrounds across the County led by our colleagues in Corporate Services.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME (ORIS) 2022

GORT RIVER WALK – OPENING CEREMONY

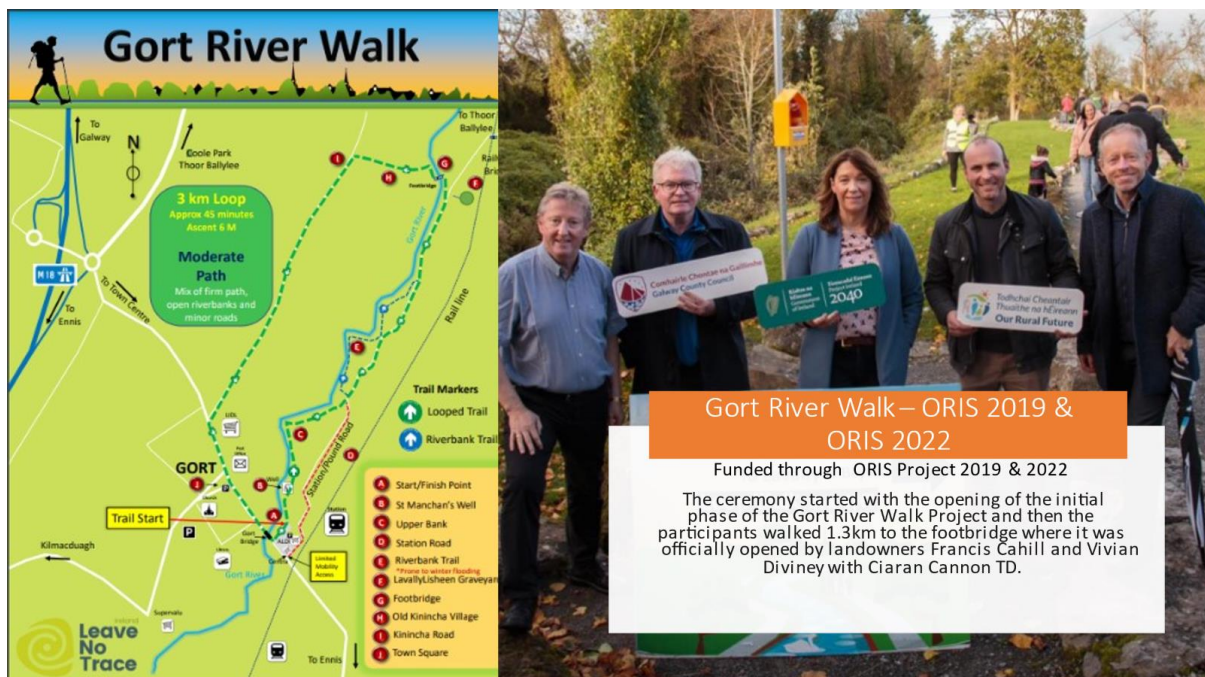
The Gort River Walk - A 3km looped trail has recently opened. This project received funding through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme as follows:

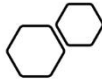
- 2019 – €19,760.00 – To Restore and repair damaged boundaries on the Pound Road. Upgrade existing path from rough trail to gravel path. Install fencing to protect trail users and riparian zone along the upper river bank. Minor repairs to trail. (Works were undertaken by the Loughrea Municipal District Office).

2022 – GRANT OF €27,424.00

This project includes an upgrade of an old village road to a class 2 trail and the completion and registration of a 3.5 km looped trail from Gort Town Centre. This project was progressed by The Gort River Walk Development Group.

The trail starts in the town centre and follows the river north out of the town and alongside an old farm road. After 1.3km the trail crosses the river over a new curved footbridge, “funded through the Active Travel Scheme”. The trail then continues along an old Kinincha trail to where it meets the public Kinincha road that leads back to the town centre. (ORIS 2022). This trail is very popular with the communities around South Galway and North Clare and is proving to be an attractive tourist amenity also.





Before and After

The initial section of trail was challenging to open as it went through an illegal dumping site and there was no defined path.

- **Trail Development**
- The development is the result of 4 years of work driven by the Gort River Walk development group, supported strongly by the local community, and Galway County Council. The group received funding from the local community, the Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) and Active Travel.



Trail opening

The first part of the trail was opened by Deputy Sean Canney and the new footbridge was opened by Deputy Ciaran Cannon. Also attending were local councillors Joe Byrne, PJ Murphy, Geraldine Donohue and Gerry Finnerty, and Bernie Donnellan, Brent Mostert, Galway County Council.

Day 2 Cllr Michael Maher, Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway lead the inaugural Walk with large members of the Community and visitors.

The before and after shows the transition at the trail start from an illegal dump to an attractive walk



Community Led Project supported strongly by Galway County Council.

- **Waters and Communities Special Award**
- The Gort River Walk Development Group were announced overall winners of the Waters and Communities Special Award 2022 at the SuperValu TidyTowns awards ceremony held in the RDS, Dublin on 28 October. The group receives the top prize of €2000.



REPLACEMENT OF PAY & DISPLAY UNITS

A project to replace all existing Pay and Display parking machines through the county with new solar powered units is underway. The contract to supply, install and maintain the new units was awarded in August 2022 and rollout on the ground commenced in October.

All the units are solar powered and will accept both card and cash payments, replacing the existing cash only machines. The installation of the replacement units in Loughrea is complete and Tuam will be complete by the end of November. The total number of units in these two towns is 68.

The next phase of the installation will take place in 2023 when it is envisaged that 57 replacement units will be installed in Gort and Athenry. A final phase in 2024 will result in the replacement of a further 48 units in Ballinasloe, Clifden and Cleggan. The phasing of the installation is designed to cater for funding availability.

The overall cost of replacement of the 173 existing pay and display machines will be €602,905.



New Unit Installed in Loughrea



DERRIGIMLAGH TO KYLEMORE GREENWAY

AECOM has been appointed as the design consultants for the above scheme to work in partnership with Galway County Council Greenway Team.

The Derrigimlagh to Kylemore Abbey Greenway forms an integral part and extension to the strategic Galway to Clifden Greenway.

This Greenway will be delivered in accordance with the Department of Transport Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways. A Greenway is defined as a recreational or pedestrian corridor for non-motorised journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area.

The Greenway will be required to be Scenic, Sustainable, Substantially Segregated or Shared Use, Strategic, and can Offer lots to See and Do. It will provide an excellent experience for all visitors and will be developed to be a significant tourist attraction for international and local visitors. The Derrigimlagh to Kylemore Abbey Greenway is to commence at the Wild Atlantic Way signature discovery point at Derrigimlagh and terminate at Kylemore Abbey.



Figure 1 Project Phases

For the purposes of clarity, this Commission will be for the 'Planning and Design Phases', namely Phase 0 to 1 inclusively.

In the tender response AECOM has indicated that a Feasibility Report will be concluded by Q3 2023.

UPDATE ON THE SPIDDAL AND AHASCRAUGH WWTP UPGRADES.

Both schemes are at similar stages and following the same completion programmes. Both WWTP's are still on course to be completed early in 2023. Civil works were completed earlier this month and site development works (completion of kerbing, hardstands, access road, etc.)

are expected to be completed by the end of this week. Mechanical & Electrical works are underway. It is anticipated that flows can be diverted to the new plants in February 2023. Photos below showing progress for info.



Ahascragh 1



Ahascragh 2



Spiddal 1



Spiddal 2

NATIONAL ROAD PAVEMENT WORKS COMPLETED IN 2022

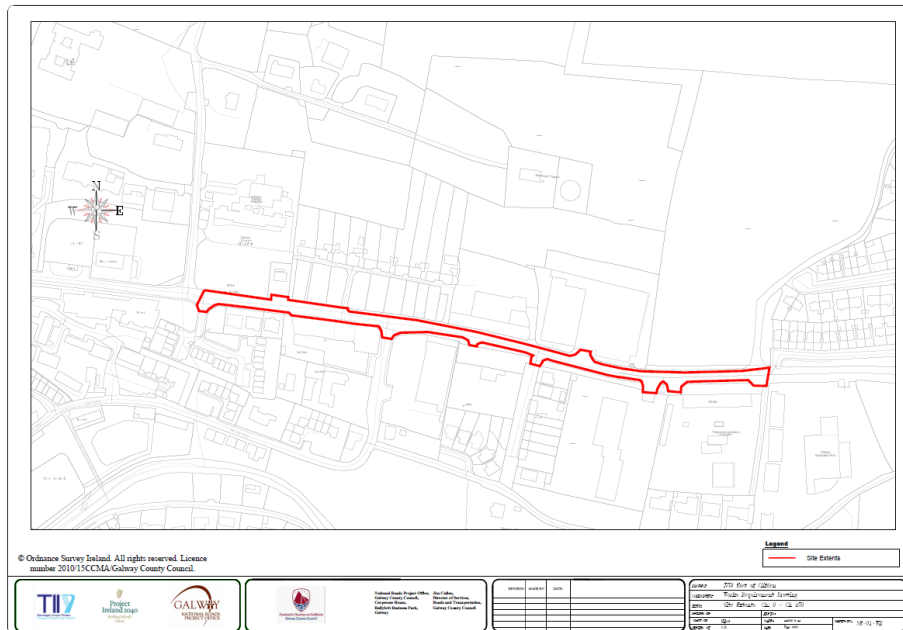
N59 EAST OF CLIFDEN

The works were located along the N59 East of Clifden. The works were approximately 450m long.

The works included the following:

- pavement overlay
- milling and reinstatement
- road lining

- drainage
- traffic management



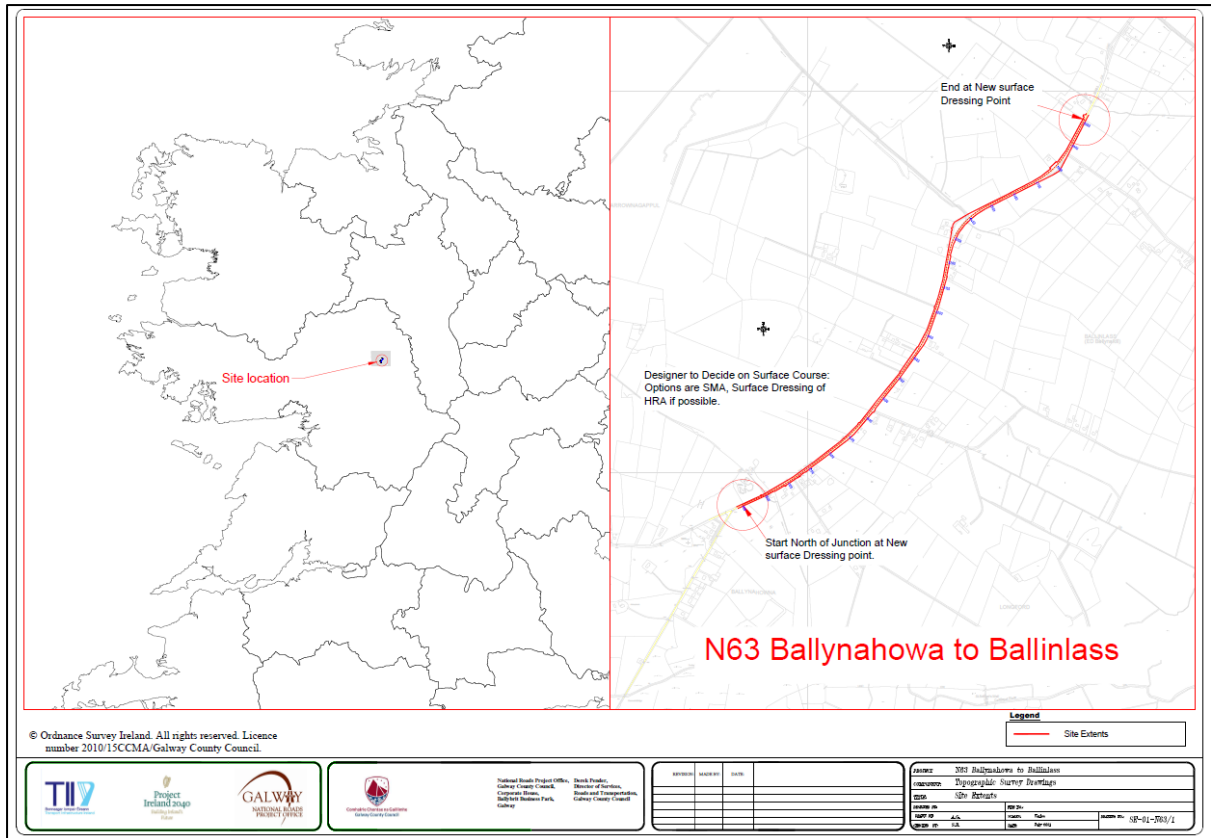
N59 LETTERNOOSH

The works were located along the N59 approximately 2.4Km North of Clifden. The works were approximately 2.3 Km long.

The works shall include the following:

- pavement overlay
- milling and reinstatement
- road lining
- drainage
- accommodation works
- traffic management





PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES

PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) REGULATIONS 2022 [S.I. 565/2022]

The Planning and Development (Amendment)(No. 2) Regulations 2022 came into operation with effect from 09 November 2022.

The new Regulations 2022 amend the information and documentation required to be provided with a planning application by Irish Water.

Under the pre-existing provisions, where Irish Water identified land as being suitable for the location of water-related infrastructure (such as a water treatment plant etc) but did not own the land in question and have landowner consent to submit a planning application for a proposed development on that land, it was effectively required to compulsorily acquire the land in question under its CPO powers before being able to submit a planning application for

the proposed development. In this regard, Article 22(2)(g)(i) of the pre-existing Regulations provides that a planning application shall be accompanied by “where the applicant is not the legal owner of the land or structure concerned, the written consent of the owner to make the application”. These arrangements had significant cost and time delay implications for Irish Water in progressing proposed water-related infrastructure.

On foot of the new amending Regulations, which are aimed at streamlining the planning process in relation to the progression of water-related infrastructure, Irish Water is now no longer required to submit the written consent of the landowner when making a planning application. Instead, the newly inserted sub-paragraph (iii) in Article 22(2)(g) requires Irish Water, when making a planning application for a proposed development on property it does not currently own, to furnish written confirmation of its intention to compulsorily acquire the land in question, along with the statutory provisions underpinning those powers, should planning permission be granted for the proposed development.

It is important to note that the new regulations do not pre-determine the outcome of either the planning process or of any subsequent compulsory purchase order process relating to the land concerned.



PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, MARITIME AND VALUATION (AMENDMENT) ACT 2022 (COMMENCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS) (NO. 3) ORDER 2022 [S.I. 523/2022]

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage signed the above-named Commencement Order to take effect from the 20 October 2022.

The Planning and Development, Maritime and Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022 (No. 29 of 2022) (PDMV Act) makes a number of amendments to provisions in Section 50A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended regarding judicial reviews of planning matters. These new commenced provisions provide for the following:

1. The introduction of a requirement that any available appeal or other available administrative remedy should, unless special circumstances exist, be exhausted before a

judicial review challenge of a planning decision can be initiated. In effect, an appeal to An Bord Pleanála rather than a judicial review challenge should be the default position in the first instance;

2. On the quashing of a planning decision by the Court, an applicant for planning permission – be it a developer of a large housing development, a strategic infrastructure development or another form of development - may apply to the Court to have the quashed decision remitted back to a planning authority or the Board for reconsideration, having regard to such directions as the Court considers appropriate, thereby avoiding delays and the need for the planning proposal to re-commence the planning process again.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES FUND 2023

This scheme officially launched on the 16 November focuses on caring for and restoring historic structures and buildings for the benefit of communities and the public. Only one application will be considered per historic structure, and while applicants may apply to both the Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Scheme, they may not avail of funding under both.

The core aims of this fund are to:

- enable larger scale conservation works to be carried out on historic structures which are deemed to be significant and in need of urgent support.
- encourage the regeneration and reuse of historic structures and to help to conserve protected structures and other historic buildings.
- support the investment of private capital in labour-intensive projects to conserve historic structures in public and private ownership for community benefit.
- support employment in the conservation and construction industries.
- build resilience in our historic structures to enable them to withstand the effects of climate change.

The Historic Structures Fund provides capital funding for works to qualifying structures which include the following:

- (i) Protected Structures: Structures in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) of each Local Authority;
- (ii) Structures eligible for or proposed for inclusion in the RPS but not yet formally approved for inclusion.
- (iii) Structures or works within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), or within the amenity of a National Monument, where exceptional circumstances apply.
- (iv) Vernacular structures - Vernacular structures are ones that are built to no formal plan. They are generally modest buildings constructed using traditional methods and simple that were local to the area or readily available.

The Historic Structures Fund 2023 will be structured as follows:

Stream 1 will offer grants **from €15,000 up to €50,000** and is aimed at essential repairs and smaller capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of heritage structures.

Stream 1, Historic Shopfronts sub-stream – To incentivise the conservation of historic shopfronts, each Local Authority is invited to submit an additional application under Stream 1 for eligible essential repairs and small capital works for the refurbishment and conservation of historic shop facades, windows, signage and other associated details to safeguard them and keep them in use. Local Authorities are also invited to make an additional application for Irish-language shopfronts.

Stream 2 will offer a small number of grants **from €50,000 up to €200,000** for larger enhancement, refurbishment or reuse projects involving heritage structures, where: A clear community or public benefit has been demonstrated, or A clear residential benefit has been demonstrated (such projects must be advanced through the planning process as necessary) A grant of over €200,000 may be awarded in exceptional circumstances where a case is made by the applicant in relation to the significance of the project and the works proposed.

Vernacular Structures Stream - In the context of the forthcoming strategy for built vernacular, the pilot stream for vernacular structures introduced in 2021 will be retained, with increased funding of €150,000. The purpose of the stream is to support conservation repairs and small capital works to vernacular structures that are not listed in local authority Records of Protected Structures or otherwise legally protected. Such structures may be located within an Architectural Conservation. All local authorities can apply for funding for specific projects of between €5,000 and €10,000 for eligible projects.

The following will not be eligible for funding:

- i. Projects or elements of projects where works have already commenced prior to grant award
- ii. New build or extensions
- iii. Works not in accordance with sound conservation methodology and practice
- iv. Purchase of lands or buildings
- v. Feasibility studies
- vi. Conservation plans or other non-capital expenditure, except where such is directly ancillary to capital works being funded under HSF.

QUALITY OF WORKS

Conservation works must be designed, specified and overseen on site by an appropriately qualified and experienced building conservation professional(s) who will be required to confirm on completion that works have been carried out to a satisfactory standard and in accordance with good conservation practice. The building professional should have

conservation accreditation from a relevant professional body or a demonstrable competence in the relevant area of building conservation.

Where the specific expertise lies with a practitioner, e.g. a thatcher or stone mason, they may be considered to fulfil the role of the conservation building professional for a particular project.

Please note there is a requirement for an appropriately qualified conservation professional to oversee the works, and for a comprehensive and sound methodology to accompany the application.

Assessment

Eligible applications will be assessed for selection under the following criteria:

1. Significance of the structure.
2. Efficacy of the grant in achieving the aims of the Historic Structures Fund.
3. Quality of the methodology and technical merit of the works proposed.
4. Contribution of the proposed works to keeping the structure in use or bringing it back into use.
5. Broader public or community benefit of the project (Stream 2 only).

REGULAR PROGRESS REPORTS

As part of the process of funding under HSF 2023, the local authority shall monitor the progress of projects to ensure that works will be completed and the claim for funding is submitted by the required deadline. The applicant/conservation professional working on the project is required to provide the local authority with relevant information on the works a project is receiving funding for, including completion of works, commencement, progress, and any changes that may occur during the calendar year.

QUALIFYING WORKS

ROOFS:

- Works to ensure the structural stability and/or weather tightness of a roof using appropriate materials and details.
- Works to repair thatched roofs using appropriate, compatible traditional materials and details
- Works to renew damaged or missing metal sheeting, gutter linings and flashings.
- Rainwater disposal:
- Works to repair or, where this is not feasible, replace rainwater goods to ensure efficient disposal of water from the building.

EXTERNAL WALLS:

- Works to ensure the structural stability and/or weather tightness of the building envelope using appropriate materials and details.
- Works to remedy defects or problems that have the potential to create serious future damage if left untreated.

WINDOWS, DOORS AND ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS:

- Works to prevent water ingress.
- Works to repair significant elements of external joinery with minimal replacement of decayed timber.
- Repair of stained glass windows and associated works in accordance with best practice.

INTERIORS:

- Works to repair internal structural elements such as floors, walls, staircases and partitions.
- Works to conserve significant decorative features and artwork such as wall and ceiling plasterwork, interior joinery and fittings and decorative elements as appropriate.
- Works to conserve significant vernacular elements including ceilings and hearths.

SHOPFRONTS:

- Works to repair elements of a historic shopfront, including appropriate replacement of small elements of missing detail, repair of shutters or awnings, repair of signage; repair of details, removal of unsightly and redundant later additions.

TEMPORARY WORKS:

- Works to reduce the risk to a structure from possible or partial collapse.

HISTORIC RUINS:

- Works to stabilise masonry or other elements at risk.

OTHER WORKS:

- A case may be made by the applicant for other works which they deem to be of exceptional importance for consideration by the Department.

The scheme will be publicly advertised as open for applications. The closing date for members of the public to apply to Galway County Council under the scheme shall be no later than 31 January 2023.

RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX

A copy of the Draft map, prepared under Section 653C of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997, has been published on <https://consult.galway.ie> and is available for inspection during normal

hours at the Planning offices of Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway from the **1st November 2022 until 1st January 2023 (inclusive)**.

The draft map has been prepared for the purposes of identifying land that satisfies the relevant criteria and is to be subject to the residential zoned land tax.

Residential properties, notwithstanding that they may be included on the draft map, shall not be chargeable to the residential zoned land tax.

Land which satisfies the relevant criteria is a reference to land that—

(a) is included in a development plan, in accordance with section 10(2) (a) of the Act of 2000, or local area plan, in accordance with section 19(2)(a) of the Act of 2000, zoned—

(i) solely or primarily for residential use, or

(ii) for a mixture of uses, including residential use,

(b) it is reasonable to consider may have access, or be connected, to public infrastructure and facilities, including roads and footpaths, public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply, necessary for dwellings to be developed and with sufficient service capacity available for such development, and

(c) it is reasonable to consider is not affected, in terms of its physical condition, by matters to a sufficient extent to preclude the provision of dwellings, including contamination or the presence of known archaeological or historic remains,

but which is not land—

(i) That is referred to in paragraph (a)(i) and, having regard only to development (within the meaning of the Act of 2000) which is not unauthorised development (within the meaning of the Act of 2000), is in use as premises, in which a trade or profession is being carried on, that is liable to commercial rates, that it is reasonable to consider is being used to provides services to residents of adjacent residential areas,

(ii) That is referred to in paragraph (a)(ii), unless it is reasonable to consider that the land is vacant or idle,

(iii) That it is reasonable to consider is required for, or is integral to, occupation by—

(I) social, community or governmental infrastructure and facilities, including infrastructure and facilities used for the purposes of public administration or the provision of education or healthcare,

(II) transport facilities and infrastructure,

(III) energy infrastructure and facilities,

- (IV) telecommunications infrastructure and facilities,
- (V) water and wastewater infrastructure and facilities,
- (VI) waste management and disposal infrastructure, or
- (VII) recreational infrastructure, including sports facilities and playgrounds,
- (IV) that is subject to a statutory designation that may preclude development, or
- (V) on which the derelict sites levy is payable in accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990.

Submissions on the draft map may be made in writing to:

- rzlt@galwaycoco.ie;
- <https://consult.galway.ie>;
- The Planning Department, Galway County Council, Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway, H91H6KX.

not later than 1 January 2023 regarding—

- (I) either the inclusion in or exclusion from the final map of specific sites, or
- (II) the date on which a site first satisfied the relevant criteria.

Submissions should include a name and address, reasons for inclusion or exclusion of lands, along with a map of scale 1:1,000 (urban area) or 1:2,500 (rural area) where the submission is made by a landowner, clearly identifying the area of land subject of the submission.

Any such written submissions received by 1 January 2023 other than such elements of a submission which may constitute personal data, shall be published on <https://consult.galway.ie> not later than 11th January 2023.

Where land identified on the draft map is included in a development plan or local area plan in accordance with section 10(2)(a) or 19(2)(a) of the Act of 2000 zoned—

- (i) solely or primarily for residential use, or
- (ii) for a mixture of uses, including residential use,

Where land is identified on the draft map as being subject to the residential zoned land tax, a person may, in respect of land that such a person owns, make a submission to Galway County Council requesting a variation of the zoning of that land. Any such submission should include evidence of ownership, detailed reasons for any rezoning request, along with a map to a scale of 1:1,000 (urban) or 1:2,500 (rural) clearly identifying the relevant plot of land. All rezoning requests made will be considered by Galway County Council having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

PLANNING SEMINAR FOR PLANNING AGENTS

Galway County Council hosted a very successful Planning Seminar on Tuesday, 22nd November 2022 with over 100 Planning Agents in attendance at the Claregalway Hotel.

The topics covered included:

- Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Local Area Plans
- Residential Zoned Land Tax
- Environmental Considerations-Ecology/Appropriate Assessment/ Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Environmental Considerations-Questions on Ecology / Appropriate Assessment / Strategic Environmental Assessment, and Flood Risk Assessment
- E-Planning
- Roads/Transportation
- Rural Design
- Conservation
- Avoiding Delays in Development Management Process
- Large Scale Residential Developments (LRD)





Ballinasloe Library was officially launched as a *My Open Library* on Friday, 18th November 2022 by the Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway. Ballinasloe is the first *My Open Library* in County Galway.

My Open Library is a service which offers extended opening hours to library members on a self-service basis outside normal opening hours, from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week. Library members must be 16 years or over to avail of the service. There are no staff present when *My Open Library* service is in operation. The library is monitored by CCTV cameras all the time during *My Open Library* mode. Members can access Wi-Fi and avail of self-service printing and photocopying, borrowing and returning items and using the Internet. To avail of the service members will go through an induction (under 18 to be accompanied by a parent or guardian) and upon completion their account will be activated.

Galway County Council has received grant funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development to facilitate the rollout of the *My Open Library* project.



CELEBRATING 'SPOOKY SEASON' HALLOWEEN IN OUR LIBRARIES:

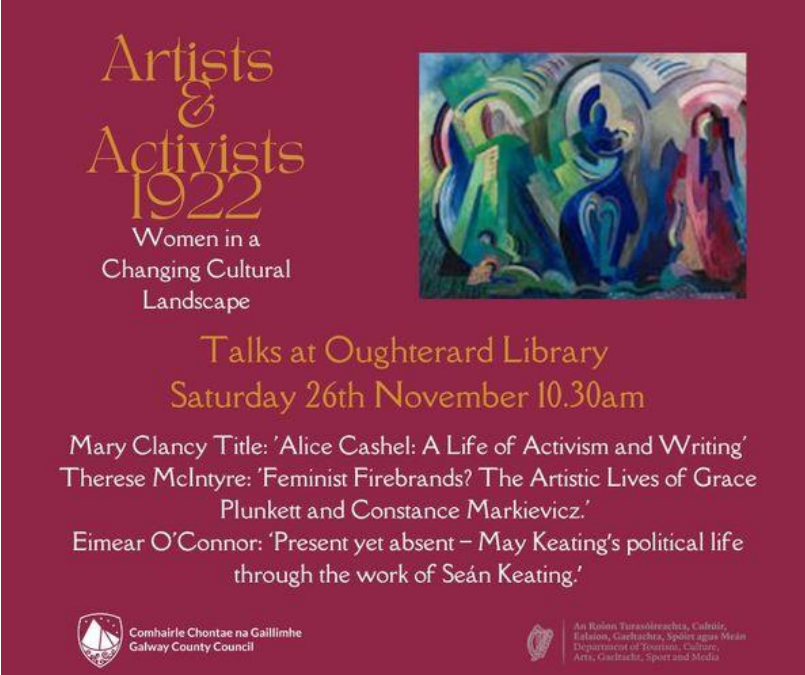


ARTISTS & ACTIVISTS 2022 – WOMEN IN A CHANGING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

This project highlights the role of women as artists and creatives in the early twentieth century. It showcases the contributions of specific women who revolutionised Irish art including 'domestic' art pieces such as weaving, embroidery and clothing. This artistic movement was particularly significant as the nation was simultaneously trying to gain independence.

A range of events were held in Gort Library (18th November), Tuam Library (19th November), Ballinasloe Library (5th November) and Oughterard Library (26th November).

The contributors included Angela Griffith, Assistant Professor, TCD, Eimear O'Connor, Resident Director of Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Theresa McIntyre, Chairperson of the Oral History Network Library, Mary Clancy, Lecturer, University of Galway and Aine Sheridan, singer and harper and an advocate for women's rights and social stories.



The poster features a dark red background. On the left, the title 'Artists & Activists 1922' is written in a gold, serif font, with 'Women in a Changing Cultural Landscape' in a smaller white font below it. To the right is a square abstract painting with swirling colors of blue, green, and red. Below the painting, the event details are listed in gold text: 'Talks at Oughterard Library Saturday 26th November 10.30am'. Three speakers and their topics are listed in white text: Mary Clancy on Alice Cashel, Theresa McIntyre on Grace Plunkett and Constance Markievicz, and Eimear O'Connor on May Keating's political life. At the bottom, logos for Galway County Council and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media are visible.

Artists & Activists 1922
Women in a Changing Cultural Landscape

Talks at Oughterard Library
Saturday 26th November 10.30am

Mary Clancy Title: 'Alice Cashel: A Life of Activism and Writing'
Theresa McIntyre: 'Feminist Firebrands? The Artistic Lives of Grace Plunkett and Constance Markievicz.'
Eimear O'Connor: 'Present yet absent – May Keating's political life through the work of Seán Keating.'

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND PUBLIC LIBRARIES CONFERENCE

LAI (Library Association of Ireland) Public Libraries Conference was hosted by Galway Public libraries from November 8-10th 2022. The theme of this very successful and enjoyable conference was *'It's not easy being green: Libraries, SDGs & climate change'*, a theme that could not be more appropriate or relevant, given that our world leaders were discussing an array of issues critical to tackling the climate emergency at COP27 the same week.



President of the LAI Cathal McCauley addressing the delegates.



Over 160 delegates from all over Ireland attended





Exhibitors showcased the latest in innovation for Librarians

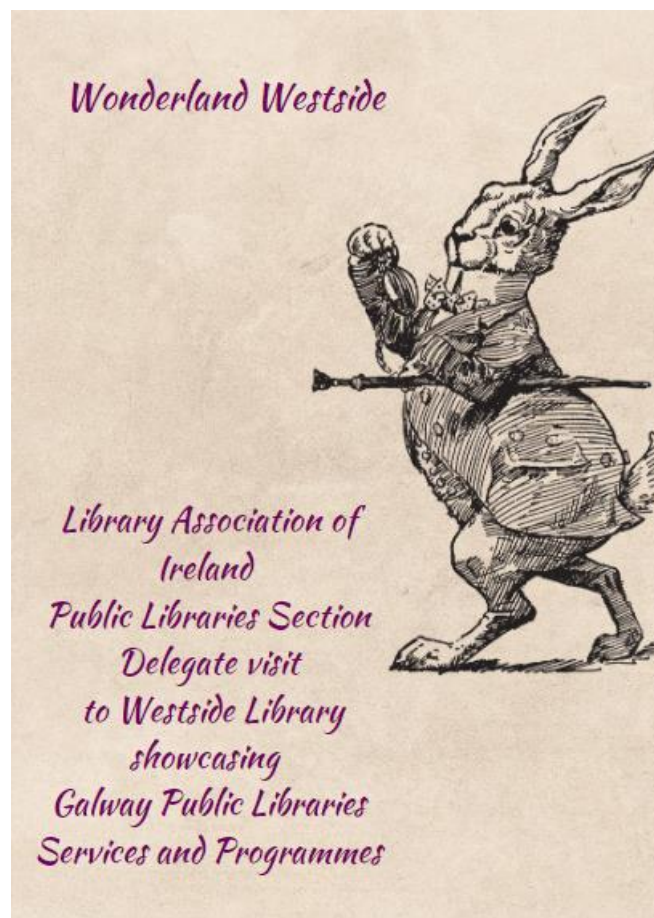


The Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway, Cllr. Michael 'Moegie' Maher and the Mayor of the City of Galway, Cllr Clodagh Higgins both spoke at the Gala Dinner, where they were joined by Senior Library staff.

WONDERLAND WESTSIDE

ABSTRACT

A delegation visit to Westside Library as part of the National Conference for the Public Libraries Section of the LAI provided Galway Public Libraries an opportunity to showcase ongoing projects and proactive community programming. These various initiatives have received departmental funding and provided libraries opportunities to collaborate and engage with their communities and deliver on their objectives of being inclusive and welcoming to all of society as well as empowering their communities through digital literacy, STEM programming and Sensory Service outreach.



Delegates were welcomed to Westside Library by Executive Librarian, Elizabeth Keane who showcased the various strategies and initiatives that the libraries have undertaken to address climate change. From solar panel installation, LED lighting, heating conversion to gas and installation of higher-grade glazing, the library service showed that ongoing maintenance can be proactive in addressing issues of energy consumption

Following on from this presentation delegates were invited to experience the various projects that were on show and were also the first listeners to Galway Public Libraries new podcast series.

DIGITAL LITERACY EDUCATION

Public Libraries are playing a vital part in digital literacy education and ensuring equitable access to modern technology to our communities. This is why one of the core focuses within the Westside Library Makerspace is the provision of STEAM toys, robotics and digital literacy experiences.

A selection of the available Robots and STEAM toys in Westside Library:

- Ozobots
- Sphero Bolt
- Bee-Bots
- 3Doodler
- Makey-Makey
- Arduino Starter Kits
- Lego Education We.do 2.0
- Dash & Dot Robots
- Oculus Go



Since the establishment of the MakerSpace in Westside Library further funding as been identified and two more MakerSpaces are in the process of planning and implementation

Delegates were presented with opportunities to experience and engage in the various technologies during their visit to Westside and were also treated to an 'Alice in Wonderland' themed tea with edible tickets, pastries and juices showcasing healthy options that include veg and fruit.

The catering for the event was in partnership with local businesses including 'Talking Tables' who have a climate pledge to ensure that their products are recyclable and, where possible sourced from sustainable forests thus reducing impact on the climate.



BOARD GAMES & STEM CODING

Many people may not realise it, but we're currently living through a period of creativity and industry growth that some have dubbed the Board Games Renaissance! In a world increasingly crowded by screens, they provide a welcome alternative.

Our colleagues overseas have experimented with borrowable games as part of their collections and have seen great success, but **Galway Public Libraries** are proud to be the first in Ireland to offer this stock to patrons. Each game can be borrowed for a standard three-week period.



SENSORY SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

Galway Public Libraries offers an extensive array of Sensory Services aimed at children and adults with additional needs, their carers and partnering organisations. Galway Libraries were the first Library service to initiate JAM Card training focusing on the awareness and inclusion of those with additional needs.

Our services include:

Multi-Sensory Room in Westside Library	Sensory Toy Boxes in all branches
Touch Type Read Spell (TTRS)	Sensory Book Collections
Dark Dens	JAM Card Friendly Libraries

Since the Sensory Service launch in the Summer of 2022 we have now extended our service programming to include LEGO play therapy sessions in City and County locations as well as Music therapy and interactive storytelling sessions for those with additional needs.

WELCOME NOTES: MUSIC THERAPY @ THE LIBRARY

Welcome Notes: Music Therapy @ The Library is part of our phased programme of outreach to community members who are experiencing mental health issues due to a recent diagnosis.

Our first wave of sessions has been targeted at those with Alzheimer's.



DELEGATE ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the afternoon delegates had opportunities to discuss the various project remits, experience the programming and hear from staff their experiences in delivering these initiatives during the year. Many delegates expressed positive feedback and felt that the showcase widened their future programming in a proactive manner.



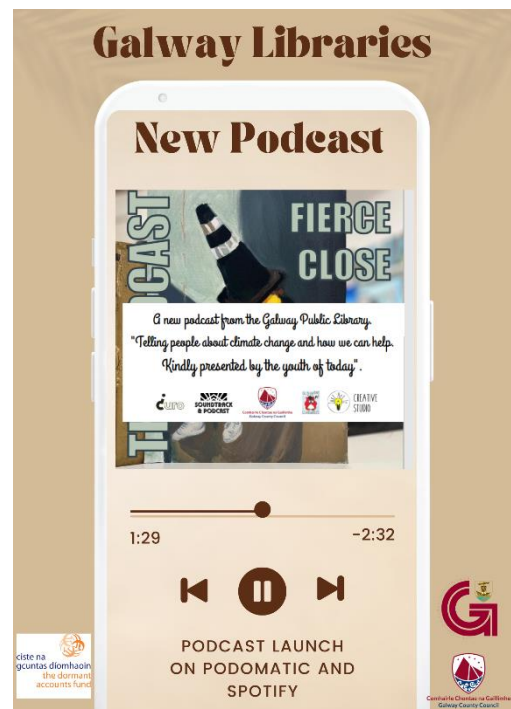
LAUNCH OF FIERCE CLOSE PODCAST SERIES

FIRST PODCAST SERIES FOR GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

With the remit of the Conference addressing Climate Change and what Libraries can do to address such issues, Galway Public Libraries were delighted to launch its' first ever podcast series.

Fierce Close: Climate in crisis is an exciting collaboration between the young people of Galway, community philosophers – Curo and Just Art It Galway. Led by the Jo Vahey, this project gives young people a voice to share ideas on what is climate change, how can we address it and challenges us to be proactive in our lifestyle choices and mindful of our impact on the planet.

This first series is now available on Podomatic and Spotify.



FEEDBACK AND COMMENTARY

'Inspiring, inclusive and imaginative' 'Innovative, courageous and



challenging the role of libraries'





Healthy Ireland at your Library continues with Talks in Tuam and Leabharlann na Ceathrún Rua with talks on Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia and Healthy Relationships and Domestic Abuse respectively over the coming weeks.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA TO LIVE WELL

A talk by
Maureen Mannion,
Dementia Nurse Advisor,
Alzheimer Society of Ireland

Healthy Ireland at your Library

Wednesday
30 November 2022
@ 1pm
Tuam Library

ALL WELCOME
Galway Public Libraries are a dementia-friendly space

Other events happening regularly in our Libraries include

- Knitting and Craft Group in Loughrea Library every Thursday at 11am
- Story Time every Friday in Oranmore Library at 12pm. All welcome from 0 upwards
- For anyone interested in Family History, Clifden, Tuam and Ballinsloe Libraries have free access to FindMyPast
- Bookclubs in Athenry, Oranmore, Portumna and many other libraries. Call in to your nearest one to check if it hosts one.
- Online Resources available 24/7 to library members, Expand your prospects by learning a new language with Transparent Languages or listen to eaudiobooks on BorrowBox
- Book displays, exhibitions are ongoing as space allows.
- Fantastic range of books and a request service that allows you to borrow from any of the 330 Library Branches nationwide. All for FREE.

CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL

Storyteller Niall De Burca has been entertaining children in schools and libraries across Galway as part of our [#Bookit](#) [#ChildrensBookFestival](#)



CORPORATE SERVICES

CHECK THE REGISTER

From the 13th October, improvements to the voter registration process was commenced as the new [#checktheregister](#) campaign begins.

The core changes to the electoral registration process include:

- A move from fixed periods for updating details to rolling updates.
- Streamlining of the application process through use of PPS numbers.
- Registering to vote now possible online, year-round.
- 16 and 17 year olds will be able to pre-register to vote.
- New provisions to make the register more accessible to all.

**THE EASY WAY
TO SECURE YOUR SAY**

Your voice matters and
your vote is important

checktheregister.ie

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Other changes enacted from the 13th October include:

- The recruitment of the Chief Executive and ordinary membership of An Coimisiún Toghcháin
- Providing for island voting to take place on the same day as the rest of the country
- Introduction of new processes to facilitate polling in pandemic situations
- Flexible voting arrangements are being extended to those with mental health difficulties that prevent them from attending on polling day

Voters in Galway County Council Electoral Areas are now encouraged to login to www.checktheregister.ie and update their details online whether they are a first-time voter or long time voter

Check the register www.checktheregister.ie - the easy way to secure your say.

WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME



This year the Water Safety Programme involved the recruitment of a panel of 45 trained Lifeguards to provide services at ten locations in the county and at six locations in the city as part of a Shared Service Agreement with Galway City Council. Two lifeguards are provided at all beaches in compliance with International Lifesaving Federation of Europe (ILSE). This season the Lifeguards started on the 28th of May and finished on 11th of September. City and County Beaches operated between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Inis Óirr Bathing Area achieved Blue Flag status this year, a new lifeguard hut and water safety signage was provided with lifeguards working seven days a week. Galway County Council supported Water Safety Week on the island this year with the assistance of the lifeguards and the Water Safety Development Officer.

The role of the Water Safety Development Officer includes supervision of the Water Safety Lifeguard Programme, development of the service as well as advising both local authorities on all aspects of water safety and implementation of the guidance notes.

Galway County Council make a yearly contribution to Water Safety Ireland of €6,000. Galway County Council actively supports the work of the Galway Water Safety Area Committee through the WSDO.

Beach-friendly wheelchairs are available from the lifeguard huts for people with mobility issues at Tracht Beach, Kinvara and An Tra Mór, Indreabhan.

Galway Lifeguard Stats 2022							
2022	Rescue without craft	Rescue using craft	First Aid	Lost Child	Advice Given	Accident Prevented	Other
May			5		172	25	5
June		2	14		594	55	4
July	3	5	240	8	3766	421	116
August	3	4	181	11	5404	702	56
September	1		24		483	7	6
Total	7	11	464	19	10,419	1,210	187

INCREASING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND DIVERSITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2022 CALL FOR FUNDING TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage invited applications from Members of local authorities to fund proposals to increase the participation of women and diversity in Local Government. This will support and encourage the increased participation of women and people of diversity in the 2024 local elections, as well as proposals that actively support the retention of existing female councillors post 2024

Notification was received on the 18th November that funding was approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in the amount of €2,500 to Galway County Council to assist with the contribution to Women's Regional Caucus.

ENERGY

The Energy Bureau Officer has visited several GCC buildings and is gathering data on their energy use to identify suitable building upgrade projects for Pathfinder funding. We are continuing to roll out the national Reduce Your Use Campaign to promote energy efficiency behaviour at work, at home, and as we travel.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Background work is ongoing on the development of the GCC Climate Action Plan. DECC confirmed in early September that €3.5m is being made available nationally for 2022 Phase 1 deliverables. Works are required to be completed and invoiced by early December 2022. With the assistance of the regional LAs, CARO ran tenders and awarded contracts for this baseline work. BABLE GmbH has commenced the development of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment and KPMG is developing a Risk Assessment. With the assistance of staff throughout the organisation we are gathering data to feed into these assessments. Two workshops will be held with the relevant staff on the 21st and 29th of November to review this data. We have submitted an application for funding of additional costs, including for the existing role of the Climate Change Coordinator, from the €3.5m.

A progress report on the Climate Adaptation Plan was submitted to CARO last month. All of these actions will be reviewed in detail as part of the development of the Climate Action Plan. The wording of many of our current actions means that the action is continuous in nature and doesn't have a specific endpoint which is why many of ours are recorded as "Ongoing". The majority of actions that are recorded as "Not Started" relate to actions that were marked as assigned to the Roads and Transportation Section but require significant staff and budget resources which are not currently available. The results are summarised below and include 2021 results for comparison:

Action Implementation Progress	2021 Report	2022 Report
Not Started	56.1%	7.3%
Ongoing	36.6%	75.6%
Postponed	2.4%	2.4%
Completed	4.9%	14.6%

We are involved in the National Working Group for the development of KPIs related to Climate Action for LAs.

CLIMATE ACTION STAFF AND FUNDING

The DHLGH has sanctioned the appointment of a Community Climate Action Officer which will be funded through the Climate Action Fund for a 3-year term. We will now progress to the recruitment stage. DECC has confirmed that a Climate Action Officer will be funded for a 5-year term to assist with the preparation and implementation of the Climate Action Plan. A request has been sent to the DHLGH for approval for this post.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND JUST TRANSITION

Energy Masterplans: We have agreed to provide support funding for 3 new Energy Masterplans for Galway County PPN, Kinvara and Clifden Glen.

LIFE Project funding has been awarded for *Local Energy Agencies in Peripheral Regions*. The aim of the project is to create multiple local social enterprise “integrated home renovation services” in the North and West of Ireland. One of the 3 Local Energy Agencies the project will support will be set up in County Galway and will be managed by the Aran Islands Energy Coop to support peripheral communities in the west of the county. The project aims to develop a pipeline of home retrofitting projects in the target region starting in 2023. We will be supporting this project going forward.

A *Decarbonisation Zone Protect* project submitted by NUIG and supported by GCC and many other partners has been awarded funding under the Community Climate Action Programme administered by Pobal. In summary, the aims of the project are to develop an engagement, dialogue, and participation tool, a local DZ plan procedure guide to ensure input from marginalised communities, exemplar case studies, and provide training. We will be supporting this project going forward.

We participated in an online Climate Youth Dialogues event organised by SAUTI Youth, the aim of which was to connect youth groups with staff and elected representatives from Local Authorities in Galway.

In conjunction with C & E and IT Sections, we are currently reviewing the various IT systems in place for the management of funding applications for community projects with a view to streamlining the application and administration for the upcoming Community Climate Action Programme (CCAP).

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

GREEN SCHOOLS ASSESSMENTS

All schools due for assessment have been contacted and assessments in the Green Flag programme have commenced for 2022/23 school year.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Environment Social Media Campaign continues with promotions on WEEE recycling and Halloween Bonfire Safety campaign.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY SPC PRESENTATION

A presentation was given to the Climate Change and Biodiversity SPC in relation to the “Water fonts In Schools” programme to encourage the elimination of single use plastic bottles in secondary schools.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

- Under the National Inspection Plan for septic tanks, 17 inspections took place in County Galway. These inspections were in the Athenry area, in areas close to a few group water scheme sources.
- 12 facilities with discharge licences were inspected and samples taken to check compliance with conditions.
- 2 farm inspections were carried out with one compliant and the other needing enforcement.
- 2 enforcement notices under the Water Pollution Act were issued to a commercial premises in Clarinbridge and a farm in Cloonmoyle, near Portumna.
- 14 river monitoring sites were sampled as part of the Water Framework Directive monitoring programme.
- A number of staff from the Environment Section attended Catchment Science and Management training in Newmarket, Co. Cork on the 13th and 14th October which was provided by the EPA catchments unit and LAWPRO.

OIL POLLUTION

- SEA-PT (Shannon Estuary Anti-Pollution Team) held a 1-day virtual training session on the 21st of October attended by council staff from Galway, Clare, Limerick and Kerry. A simulated oil pollution incident was re-enacted with the subsequent response from the various agencies.
- Pollution & Waste Services Ltd have been employed to develop an Oil Spill and HNS Response Plan for Galway County Council and provide one-day training to staff as part of this agreement. The training took place on the 16th of November 2022 at council offices in Liosbaun.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

Waste enforcement inspections completed to date are above target for the year as many inspections were carried out earlier in the year.

Data Validation of figures submitted on the NWCPO portal by permitted waste collectors and waste facility permit holders in the county was completed in October- namely 4 waste facilities.

Onsite audits of 2 waste collectors were also carried out. Data validation is now over 95% completed.

There were 6 Enforcement Notices under the Waste Management Act 96 as amended, issued in October

Two Waste facility Permits were drafted for granting in October. Two further permits are to be drafted.

CHECKPOINTS

Galway County Council has been working with Galway City Council and AGS to run waste enforcement checkpoints throughout the County.

To date, we have set up 9 different checkpoints at various locations.

As a result of these checkpoints, a number of offenses have been detected and files are currently being prepared for legal action.

A number of haulers were also identified transporting construction and demolition waste without the required Waste Collection permits.

WASTE PRESENTATION BYE-LAW INSPECTIONS.

Under the Waste Presentation Bye Laws households are obliged to tell us how they dispose of their household waste. Waste Enforcement officers have been carrying out inspections throughout the county over the last year.

577 inspections have been carried out so far in the following towns

Tuam	Monviea	Loughrea	Gort
Ballinasloe	Kilkerrin	Ros Muc	

Warning letters have been sent to those without a collection service and follow-up inspections are planned. From the follow-up inspections that have been carried out, it was apparent that large majority of the households are now compliant with the Waste presentation byelaws.

Mise, le meas,

Mr. Jim Cullen

Chief Executive

Galway County Council

25th November 2022