

CHIEF EXECUTIVE MONTHLY REPORT

AIBREÁN / APRIL 2023



TUARASCÁIL AN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNAIGH
CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT
AIBREÁN / APRIL 2023

Do Gach Ball do Chomhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe,

Re: Agenda Item 4(d)(ii) Chief Executive’s Report

A Chara,

I set out hereunder the Chief Executive’s monthly management report, as provided for under Section 136(2) of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended. The Report outlines the current position on strategic and other issues, on the Council’s financial position and on matters arising from the previous meeting of Galway City Council.

1. Transport	2
2. Housing	6
3. Recreation & Amenity	15
4. Economic & Culture & Community & Sports Partnership.....	29
5. Environment & Climate Change.....	68
6. Financial Report.....	74
7. Other Issues	76
8. Notable Dates	79
9. Update on issues arising from previous Council Meetings	79

1. Transport

1.1 Browne Roundabout - Pedestrian and Cyclist Crossing Facilities

Galway City Council has secured funding from Transport Infrastructure Ireland for the design and construction of a pedestrian and cycling crossing adjacent to the Browne Roundabout. This works will enhance safety of vulnerable users crossing this junction and should encourage locals to walk/cycle more frequent.

1.2 Martin Junction

The Martin Junction Upgrade project is co funded by the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) and the National Transport authority (NTA). The project has followed the Public Spending Code (PSC) and has been approved by both funding authorities according to the requirements as outlined in the PSC. At each stage we apply and get “Gateway Approval” for each phase of the project. The project has been managed in accordance with the PSC and the NTA’s Project Management Guidelines.

Under the above funding envelope, the upgrade of the Martin Junction was tendered on eTenders in accordance with the EU Directive on Public Procurement. The project had a Total Project Cost Estimate of 4,785,016.77 ex VAT. The winning tender had a tender cost of €3,294,489.12, well below our cost estimate. The total paid to date to the contractor is €2,943,452.07. There are no identified financial risks to Galway City Council. The project has followed the public spending code and has received Gateway Approval at all stages in the project. The project is 100% funded at national level, between the URDF and the NTA.

The project has progressed since works commenced early last year and the project is in the final stages. It is anticipated that the roundabout system will be removed, and the traffic signals will be operational before the end of Q2, 2023, with just landscaping and snagging works remaining thereafter.

1.3 Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road Cycle Network Scheme – Part 8

Galway City Council’s transportation department have completed the Preliminary Design of the Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road Cycle Network Scheme. A meeting was held with the planning department in February 2022 to confirm the planning route and a Part 8 Process for the scheme was agreed with the planning department.

Documentation for the Part 8 process commenced following the meeting in February, and drafts of the document have been circulated to department heads with an aim to finalise the documentation and design in early April 2023.

Following the finalisation of the design and associated documents, a Part 8 process will commence for the scheme. It is envisaged that this will commence in late April 2023, with a decision expected at the September council meeting.

A drop-in workshop is proposed to be held with elected members in the week preceding the application. An invite for the workshop will be issued to councillors over the coming days.

1.4 Eglinton Canal Cycle Scheme

Galway City Council's Transportation department commenced a tender for the main works on Eglinton Canal in February 2023 with tenders returned in March 2023. Tender assessment of the returned tenders was undertaken in March and a recommendation was issued to the National Transport Authority, as part of the Gateway 5 approval process on the 31st of March 2023. Gateway 5 approval, to proceed to construction and the appointment of the main works contract, was received on Tuesday 4th of April 2023. Galway City Council will commence the appointment process, with a view for formal appointments being completed in May 2023 as previously envisaged.

1.5 BusConnects Galway - Bus Network Review

The National Transport Authority are currently undertaking a review of the city bus service. It is the intention to commence a public consultation process on the proposed new BusConnects bus network. The public consultation is proposed to commence at the end of April. The National Transport Authority will also provide a briefing to elected members, further details in relation to the Councillors briefing to follow next week. The expected Councillor briefing date will be the 24th of April.

The briefing will include details of the proposed new BusConnects bus network, details of the public consultation process including public information sessions, webinars and as to how submissions can be made on the proposed bus network.

1.6 The Crescent Road Enhancement

Galway City Council's transportation department have completed the Preliminary Design of the Fr Griffin Avenue/the Crescent Junction upgrade scheme. Documentation for the Part 8 process are under development with an interdepartmental consultation process ongoing with an aim to finalise the documentation and design in the near future.

Following the finalisation of the design and associated documents, a Part 8 process will commence for the scheme. It is envisaged that this will commence in late April 2023, with a decision due at the September council meeting.

A drop-in workshop is proposed to be held with elected members in the week preceding the application. An invite for the workshop will be issued to councillors over the coming days.

1.7 N59 Westwood Junction Traffic Filter Signal

A new right turn filter aspect was added to the sequence of the Junction at the N59 in the vicinity of the old Westwood Hotel. This will allow a dedicated right turning stage for traffic coming from Moycullen N59 and turning onto the Thomas Hynes Road N59. While Traffic Mgmt. was in place, we also took the opportunity to replace aged and frayed cabling at the junction, which should help to prevent future outages.

1.8 Parklets

Parklets are public seating platforms that convert curb side parking spaces into vibrant community spaces. Parklets transform on street parking spaces into places for people to sit, relax, and enjoy the city. Galway City Council (GCC) in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA) have installed 2 parklet prototypes at the following locations:

- 1 parklet prototype on Middle Street, outside Charlie Byrnes Bookshop.
- 1 parklet prototype on Dominic Street, outside Tartar Café.

Following the development of an innovative design tender process, a designer / Architect was awarded the contract to develop a design for the prototype units. GCC appointed a steel fabricator to manufacture and install the prototype units and the units were installed the week commencing 21st March '23. The parklet prototypes are funded by the NTA.

The parklets are made of robust, high quality, durable materials. Materials such as stainless steel, recycled composite plastic decking and limestone cladding have been used to ensure longevity. A number of the units have been planted with greenery which creates a unique environment in an urban setting. The parklet prototypes are modular structures which can be dismantled and relocated to other locations if required. Each parklet takes up 2 parking spaces and will be accessible to a wide range of users, including those with mobility challenges. Bicycle stands have also been installed at both locations.

To develop the project and gauge public opinion GCC have installed 2 No. Parklet Prototypes at the locations identified above. If the feedback is positive GCC will be

proposing to install further parklets across the city centre and Salthill area and will be engaging with the public to identify future locations.



Dominic Street – Parklet Prototype



Middle Street – Parklet Prototype

1.9 Safe Routes to School – Round 2 Schools

An Taisce's Green School team (programme leads) have commenced engagement with the Round 2 schools selected under the Safe Routes to School programme for 2023. The schools selected in Galway City include:

- Scoil Fhursa, Nile Lidge, Galway,
- Coláiste Iognáid, Sea Road Galway,
- Scoil Chaitríona Snr, Renmore Avenue, and

- Gaelscoil Dara, Ballyloughane Road, Galway.

Initial surveys have been conducted with parents at each of the schools. The following infographics were produced by An Taisce's Green School team to summarise the findings of the parents' surveys. Galway City Council's Transportation department will continue to support the An Taisce's Green School team in the development of the Delivery Plan.

1.10 BusConnects Galway: Cross City (University Road to Dublin Road)

An Bord Pleanála is the consenting authority in relation to the BusConnects Galway: Cross City (University Road to Dublin Road) proposed scheme and Compulsory Purchase Order

The board have notified us that they are not in a position to determine the application by the 3rd of April 2023 because of the necessity to carry out further consideration of the proposed scheme. The board has further notified us that it is their intention to determine the application before the 27th of October 2023 and that the board will take all such steps as are open to it to ensure that the matter is determined before that date.

1.11 Galway to Athlone Castle National Cycleway

Following the publication in December 2021 of the Emerging Preferred Route Corridor for the Galway to Athlone Cycleway project, consultations with individual landowners have been undertaken to identify a preferred route. These consultations have resulted in the identification of a preferred route that provides a continuous cycleway from Ballyloughane Beach in Galway City to Athlone Castle. Where feasible, the route has been amended following discussions with landowners and others to address identified issues whilst ensuring the continuity of the route, end to end. The preferred route starts near Ballyloughane Beach to the east of Galway City and then proceeds close to or through the following settlement areas: Oranmore, Rinville, Clarinbridge, Kilcolgan, Kinvara, Gort, Woodford, Portumna, Meelick, Clonfert, Ballinasloe, Shannonbridge, and Athlone Castle. It links places of interest, established tourism centres, public parks, and outdoor amenities.

The entire preferred route was published online the week of 27th March 2023. You can view the maps on the project website:

<https://www.galwaytoathlonecycleway.com/>

In addition, four public information events were held from March 28th to 31st between 3pm and 8pm at the following venues:

Date	Venue	Location	Time
Tuesday 28 th March	Oranmore Lodge Hotel	Oranmore	3pm to 8pm.

Wednesday 29 th March	Lady Gregory Hotel	Gort	3pm to 8pm.
Thursday 30 th March	Portumna Town and Community Hall	Portumna	3pm to 8pm.
Friday 31 st March	Shearwater Hotel	Ballinasloe	3pm to 8pm.

Following the publication of the preferred route the project team will be continuing with the design and environmental evaluation of the cycleway. In addition, the Voluntary Land Acquisition Agreement process will commence in accordance with the *Code of Best Practice National and Regional Greenways* (December 2021).

The Project Liaison Officers for the cycleway will continue to engage with landowners. The next steps will include discussions with landowners on facilitating engineering and environmental surveys within their landholding where these are deemed necessary.

For more information, please contact info@galwaytoathlonecycleway.com

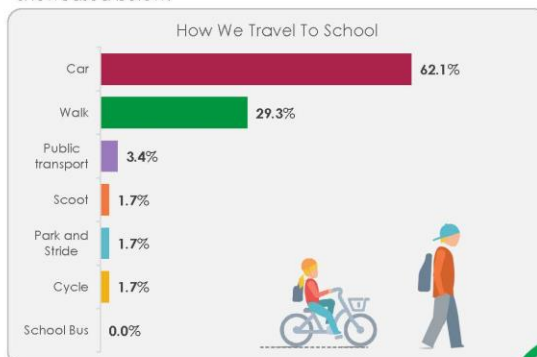
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL SCOIL CHAÍTRÍONA SENIOR PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Results of Our Parent Survey

Responses received: 41

Students represented: 58

Scoil Chaítríona Junior is participating in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme. The objective of the programme is to improve safety at the school gate and to support students to safely walk, cycle and scoot to school. Given our location beside Scoil Chaítríona Junior, we asked you to complete a parent survey. The results and support for the SRTS programme are showcased below.



70.7% of parents agreed that road safety is a problem around the school

95.1% of parents would support works at the front of school that improve student safety, putting pedestrians and cyclists first

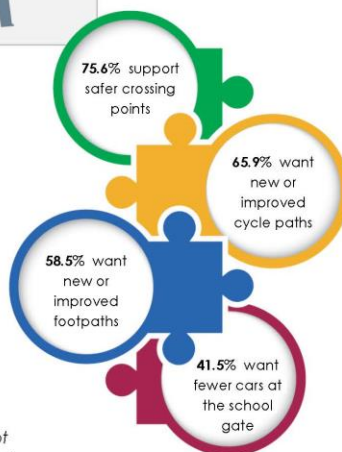
95.1% of parents would support works that improve the walking and cycling routes to our school

Some Key Comments Received from Parents

"My child is a wheelchair user. Her Father regularly brings her back and forth to school. It would bring peace of mind to know with the right precautions will be put in place, so she will enjoy a safe journey."

"A huge problem seems to come from some parents parking right up on the footpaths no space for walking or wheelchair users, speeding and not watching when reversing."

"Crossing at Kingfisher gym entrance and crossing at road to Renmore soccer club is not safe due to parked cars and volume of traffic."



@SRTS_Ire #SafeRoutestoSchool



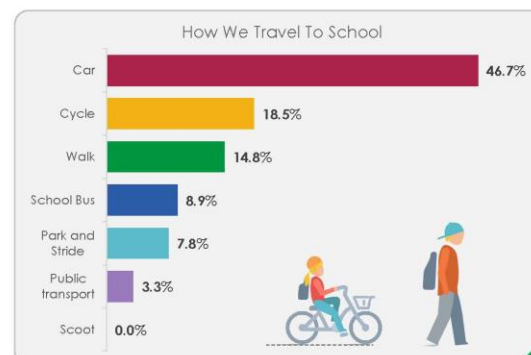
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COLÁISTE IOGNAÍD PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Results of Our Parent Survey

Responses received: 193

Students represented: 270

Our school has been selected to participate in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme. The objective of the programme is to improve safety at the school gate and to support students to safely walk, cycle and scoot to school. Our Parent Survey results and support for the SRTS programme is showcased below.



66.3% of parents agreed that road safety is a problem around the school

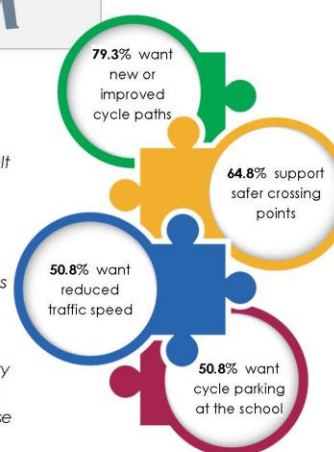
88.1% of parents would support works at the front of school that improve student safety, putting pedestrians and cyclists first

95.9% of parents would support works that improve the walking and cycling routes to our school

Some Key Comments Received from Parents

"We aim to cycle to school at least twice a week, however the experience is a bit stressful as it is difficult crossing roads (i.e. Kingston Road and Fr Griffin Road). Also cycling through Salthill and into the school feels dangerous due to the lack of space on the road for bikes and the speed of the cars overtaking. We would love to cycle every morning as the kids feel energised when they arrive at school."

"Since our children have moved to secondary school they actually travel by car more often than in senior cycle of primary school because of the crippling weight of school bags."



@SRTS_Ire #SafeRoutestoSchool

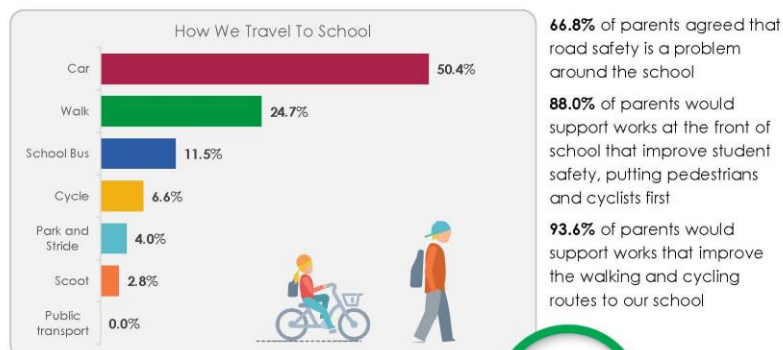


SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GAELSCOIL DARA PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Results of Our Parent Survey

Responses received: 250 Students represented: 425

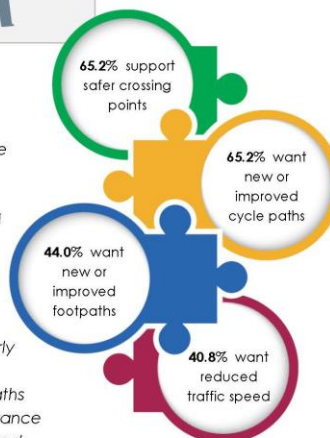
Our school has been selected to participate in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme. The objective of the programme is to improve safety at the school gate and to support students to safely walk, cycle and scoot to school. Our Parent Survey results and support for the SRTS programme is showcased below.



Some Key Comments Received from Parents

"We cross the Dublin Road outside Belmont to walk down the Ballyloughane road. Every day at least once we will see a car drive through while the lights are green for pedestrians. It is so dangerous. We absolutely need cameras at those traffic lights, speed bumps on the main Dublin Road to slow cars down, a lollipop lady for that road. We need our kids to feel safe walking to school."

"The crossings on the way to school are not properly marked and some drivers are unaware they are crossings. It can be dangerous for the kids. Footpaths are very inaccessible for buggies/wheelchairs. Entrance to and around the school is very busy at drop off and pick up times."



@SRTS_Ire #SafeRoutesToSchool

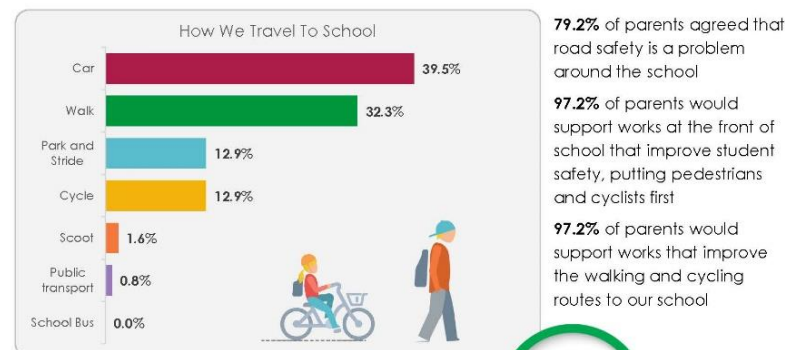


SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL SCOIL FHURSA PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Results of Our Parent Survey

Responses received: 72 Students represented: 124

Our school has been selected to participate in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme. The objective of the programme is to improve safety at the school gate and to support students to safely walk, cycle and scoot to school. Our Parent Survey results and support for the SRTS programme is showcased below.

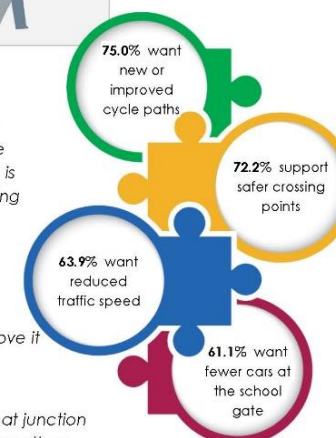


Some Key Comments Received from Parents

"The turn at the Crescent on to Sea Road is a blind turn for the pedestrian child. Cars speed around the corner at high speed and it's very dangerous. There is no lollipop warden there or zebra crossing or anything to help the children cross safely. Parking on the footpath is a problem at the school with many parents ignoring the school's request to park elsewhere or avail of park and stride."

"We love our walk to school and would love it more if it was safer."

"I would recommend a safe crossing for children at junction between Maunsells Rd and Taylor's Hill and also a path on Maunsells Rd for safe walking to school for our children."



@SRTS_Ire #SafeRoutesToSchool



1.12 Operations & Maintenance

1.12.1 Road Resurfacing projects

Road surfacing has been carried out at the following locations:

- Lurgan Park L-50373-24
- Lurgan Park L-50373-11
- Emmet Avenue L-50326-0
- Lios an Uisce L-50375
- Renmore Park L-50471
- Coast Rd R338

Pothole repairs are also being carried out at multiple locations across the city in addition to the above.

1.12.2 Kingston Road

The Kingston Road R337 Resurfacing Contract is currently at the tender award stage. The full cost of the works will be determined once this process is completed. A monetary contribution towards the cost of the resurfacing works has been received by Galway City Council from the contractor who carried out the Kingston Road Water Main Upgrade Works on behalf of Irish Water.

The Irish Water contractor commenced water meter installation works near the Threadneedle Road Junction in the first week of April and the installation is ongoing.

The Kingston Road R337 Resurfacing works will then follow following agreement of the works programme with the successful resurfacing contractor.

1.12.3 Mobility Improvement Works

Mobility improvement works and renewal of footpaths were completed at the following locations:

- McDermott Avenue
- Westbrook, Ballymoneen
- The Links, Ballymoneen
- Tudor Close, Ballymoneen
- Doire Beag, Ballymoneen
- Kingston Gardens, Kingston Rd
- Clybaun Road
- Seacrest Road
- Shangort Road
- Connolly Avenue

Footpath repairs and mobility improvement works have commenced on St Anthony's Terrace, Bohermore.

1.12.4 Footpaths

Footpath reconstruction works commenced on Forster Street on 30th January 2023 and are now fully completed.

1.12.5 Proactive Drainage Maintenance

Proactive drainage maintenance is being carried across the city throughout the year to combat any potential risk of flooding.

1.12.6 Flood Protection & Storm Preparedness

Operations and Maintenance are prepared for any storm forecast over the remainder of the winter/ storm season with flood barriers in place and sandbags at the ready. We are continually monitoring any potential flooding risks across the city. Monitoring and clean-ups continued throughout the month of March during the recent severe weather.

1.12.7 Winter Maintenance

Salting and Gritting continues across the city's priority national, regional & local routes. This is continuously monitored during the winter season with salt stocks monitored and crews prepared in the event of predicted low temperatures.

1.12.8 Bridge Rehabilitation Works

Tender documents were drafted for the appointment of a consulting engineers to supply consultancy/design services for bridge maintenance and rehabilitation works. The Transport Department are in the process of appointing a contractor to undertake bridge maintenance & rehabilitation works.

1.12.9 Speed Limit Review

Notice was issued to the Commissioner, An Garda Síochána in accordance with section 9(3)(b) of the Road Traffic Act 2004 in respect of the Draft Galway City Council Special Speed Limits Bye-Laws No. 1, 2023.

The R338 Coast Road has been removed from the Second Schedule of the Draft Bye-Laws which prescribes the roads with a special speed limit of 80 km/h. This is in accordance with the motion approved by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 9th January 2023.

A public notice in respect of the Draft Bye-Laws was published on 2nd March 2023 in the Galway Advertiser, Irish Independent & Irish Times.

The notice and the Draft Bye-Laws Schedules and Map were published on the Galway City Council website www.galwaycity.ie

A copy of the Draft Bye-Laws documentation was also available for inspection at Reception in City Hall.

Objections to the Draft Bye-Laws could be made by email to roads@galwaycity.ie or in writing to Patrick Greene, Director of Service by any person not later than 4.00 p.m. on Monday, the 3rd April, 2023 and any such objections shall be considered by the council prior to making the Bye-Laws.

The proposed speed limit review is included in the agenda for the April meeting of Galway city council under item 2 (F).

1.12.10 Street Rehabilitation and Drainage upgrade works, Shop Street / High Street – Contract No. 9 – Phase 7

Street rehabilitation and drainage works Upgrade works on Shop Street/High Street intersection have commenced on Monday 20th March 2023. P&D Lydon have been contracted to complete the construction works on behalf of Galway City Council. The work will remove uneven surfaces and surface water ponding, progressing a much-needed upgrade in two of the busiest streets in Galway City. Works will be completed in three phases and will be cordoned off from the public by fences, in approximately 30-metre-long sections at a time. This will ensure the street can be used as normal without major disruptions, with pedestrian access maintained at all times. All necessary measures will be taken to ensure disruptions are kept to a minimum and to maintain deliveries of supplies.

The team in Transport have been liaising with local businesses and stakeholders in the immediate vicinity of the works area, and engagement will continue throughout the project, with a dedicated point of contact available 24 hours a day.

No works will take place between Good Friday and Bank Holiday Monday over Easter – with all areas ‘made good’ so that pedestrians and vehicles can access the area. Likewise, the work site will be ‘made good’ every Friday evening to ensure the Saturday Market can operate outside St Nicholas’s Church.

Substantial completion for works estimated early June.



Works Location: Shop Street/High Street. - The City Centre pedestrianised zone is shaded in green. The orange shading denotes the area of proposed works.

1.12.11 Footpaths and permeability infrastructure

A brief is being completed in order to procure a consultant to provide recommendations on infrastructure required to improve permeability, encourage active travel and support development on specific roads as identified in the Galway City Development Plan. This would include footpaths, public lighting, and cycleways where deemed feasible. It is planned to have a brief finalised by the end of Q2 2023.

2. Housing

2.1 Arrangements for Social Housing Acquisitions in 2023

Circular 16/2022 issued in April 2022, re-instated delegated sanction for priority categories of acquisitions, including:

- One-bedroom units to deliver on Housing First and meet the short supply in this category;
- Other properties that allow persons/families to exit homelessness; and
- Specific housing required for/suitable for individuals with a disability or other particular priority needs.

The number of households in emergency accommodation has increased significantly since 2022. A key challenge for homeless services has been in exiting households from emergency accommodation due the lack of availability of properties in the private rental market. Data provided by the RTB indicates a large number of landlords intend to leave the market, with a large proportion of the Notices of Termination (NOTs) issued due to the landlord's intention to sell the property. The exit of landlords from the market both contributes to households becoming homeless while at the same time limiting options for exits.

In light of this, the Government has decided to increase the number of social housing acquisitions under the Housing for All provision from 200 per annum to 1,500 in 2023. The additional 1,300 acquisitions in 2023 are to be focussed on the acquisition of homes where a HAP or RAS tenant has received a Notice of Termination, due to the sale of the property. In order to provide a greater focus on acquisitions in areas of greatest need and to support planning by local authorities, each local authority is being provided with an initial allocation for the number of acquisitions that can be funded. The allocation for Galway City Council is 50. This is not a target, but rather to support planning and to allow local authorities to prioritise the acquisitions to be targeted. The Department will keep this under review through 2023. Circular 08/2023 refers.

At its meeting on 24th February the Housing Strategic Policy Committee noted the Council's Acquisition policy which sets out the procedure for acquiring units under the SHIP programme. Since January 2023 Galway City Council have completed the sale 3 properties, with 16 under offer and a potential offer on a further 6. It is noted that the majority of the units have "tenants in situ" who are assessed as having housing need and in an effort to prevent entry into homeless services and having regard to the Scheme of Letting Priorities.

2.2 Overview of Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans issued by Local Authorities

The VFM Unit of the Local Government Audit Service has completed a factual overview report entitled 'Overview of Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans issued by Local Authorities' and is due to publish a report.

The purpose of the report is to collate information specifically on the Rebuilding Ireland Home Loans in local authorities. The information included in the report is evidence-based arising from the monthly returns provided by local authorities on their loan book to the Department's Statistical and Data Analytics Unit. The report focuses on the number and amount of loan applications / approvals made and subsequently paid out / drawn down, the level of loan arrears evident, outlining eligibility criteria and the scheme credit policy and detailing interest rate fluctuations throughout the life of the scheme.

The Rebuilding Ireland Home Loan (RIHL) Scheme was introduced on 1 February 2018. It replaced both the House Purchase Loan and Home Choice Loan schemes. The RIHL set out to enable credit worthy first-time buyers' access to sustainable mortgage lending to purchase new or second-hand properties or self-build in a suitable price range. The RIHL was targeted at first-time buyers who wished to own their own home, had access to an adequate deposit and had the capacity to repay a mortgage, but who were unable to access a mortgage from a commercial lender sufficient for them to purchase their first home. As with the previous local authority (LA) loan offerings, the RIHL was available to first-time buyers only. This was to ensure the effective targeting of limited resources. As of 4 January 2022, the RIHL has been replaced by the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme. From this date, applications for RIHL were no longer accepted and all new applications will be processed under the Local Authority Home Loan Scheme. However, any loan applications in-progress or approvals outstanding under RIHL as of 4 January 2022 are unaffected and will continue to be processed under this scheme. When the report is finalised, it will be published on the Department's website which is now the primary means of publishing reports of the VFM Unit. When published, the report will be available for downloading from the Department's website at <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/74ba5-value-for-money-reports/>

2.3 Information for tenants who received a Notice of Termination

Galway City Council is aware that households in the Galway area who may have received a notice to quit, which is also referred to as a notice of termination, from their landlord may be worried or unsure of what to do. Galway City Council would like to advise anyone affected of the services that are available to them in these

circumstances. Tenants residing in the Galway City area, who have been issued with a notice of termination, are encouraged to contact Galway City Council as soon as they receive a notice from their landlord. When the tenants contact Galway City Council, staff in the Housing Department will take note of the termination date. The Council may refer the notice to Threshold, a service funded by the Local Authority to provide a Tenancy Protection Service for private renters in the West Region, including Galway City. Threshold can also be contacted directly on Freephone 1800 454 454 or via their website www.threshold.ie which contains more information and advice on the validity of notices. The Council's first response will be to try to prevent homelessness. This includes assessing the person's position on the social housing list, providing advice on applying for Choice Based Lettings, advising the person on the level of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) they may be eligible to receive, and, in some cases, assessing if the Council can acquire the dwelling where the tenants reside if it is being offered for sale. Placement in emergency accommodation will be a last resort, if no other alternative can be identified. For households in emergency accommodation there will be support to assist them to access more permanent social housing supports in the shortest possible timeframe.

The Council will continue to deal with notice of termination queries and cases as expeditiously as possible and progress tenant in-situ acquisitions while taking account of circulars and guidance issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Galway City Council will be liaising with other neighbouring local authorities to deal with tenancy issues that may require an inter-authority approach. Whilst the Council will, in the context of current circumstances, adopt flexibility in dealing with potential acquisitions of properties with tenants in-situ, any acquisition is subject to appropriate due diligence and checks before any commitment is made to acquire, including, for example, determining that a valid notice of termination is in place, the tenant has a social housing need, and the condition and valuation of the property. The Council is aware that the Government is examining options to allow tenants who are not eligible for social housing to remain in their homes, including schemes to support the purchase of homes and a cost rental in-situ scheme. The Council will await further details on the proposed schemes from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Contact details are available on the Council's website or by emailing housing@galwaycity.ie.

2.4 Housing Circular: 15/2023 Establishment of Housing for All Land Acquisition Fund

To support local authorities to acquire land to deliver new build social housing schemes, the Department has established a dedicated land acquisition fund, which will be managed by the Housing Agency. The fund has an initial allocation of €125m. The Department is cognisant of the need to assemble land banks to deliver longer-term targets out to 2030. However, in light of the available funding and the urgency of supporting HFA targets to 2026, the immediate focus must be to ensure that the

Fund supports the delivery of land that can deliver housing projects by 2026. However, the operation of the Fund and the engagement with the various stakeholders will provide valuable insight for the preparation of the approach to land acquisition in the coming years.

Housing for All includes a target to deliver an average of 33,000 houses per annum in the period to 2030. This includes targets to deliver an average of 10,000 new build social homes each year.

Action 4.5 of Housing for All commits to “support local authorities to acquire suitable land to deliver a housing programme, based on existing land banks, the level of social housing to be delivered under Housing for All and Local Authority Housing Delivery Action Plans”. A review of Housing for All, following its first year, identified further actions required in this area as follows:

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of land available to underpin social housing delivery out to 2030, taking account of the data available from the Local Authorities Housing Delivery Action Plans, and identify the land gap remaining; and
- Put in place a strategy to assist local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies to identify and acquire suitable land banks to support the ongoing social housing need out to 2030.

Extensive work was carried out in 2021 and 2022 by the Department and HDCO to identify land available to local authorities to deliver social and affordable housing. Following the publication of the Housing for All, each local authority was required to produce a Housing Delivery Action Plan (HDAP). The HDAPs include details of planned delivery of social and affordable housing for the period 2022-2026, including the locations at settlement level. The Plans also included details of the proposed delivery streams for housing, land available to deliver housing, and land acquisition requirements. The development of the Plans supported more comprehensive analysis of requirements for land acquisition in each local authority. In 2022, the HDCO carried out an analysis of the land requirements in the HDAPs and identified a significant requirement for land acquisition in the period 2022-2026, and a more significant requirement to acquire land in the subsequent period from 2026-2030.

Local authorities are now invited to submit applications to the Housing Agency for sites that you wish to acquire for the development of social housing or mixed tenure housing, including sites that will be developed by an Approved Housing Body.

The initial round of application assessments will be held on all applications submitted prior to 5 May 2023. Lands which score higher marks under the assessment methodology will be given priority for funding over lands with lower marks. It is intended that further assessment rounds will take place on a monthly basis there after subject to the availability of funding.

2.5 Expression of Interest Sought from Private Developers, Building Contractors and Landowners.

Galway City Council has an ambitious 5-year capital programme under the Housing for All Action Plan. As part of a range of housing solutions, the housing authority is seeking expressions of interest from private developers, building contractors and landowners.

Galway City Council is seeking expressions of interest from interested parties who are capable of providing turnkey units within the City or the provision of development land. Galway City Council will consider land or units in areas which have an established need.

In particular, Galway City Council is seeking: -

- Turnkey developments. Acquisitions are on a turnkey basis; potential payment is a fixed price lump sum, on completion of a development, within an agreed timeframe.
- Mixed development schemes where social residential components could be incorporated.
- Development land.
- Delivery of adapted dwellings to meet the requirements of those with specific needs.

All developments and associated works must be fully compliant with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage guidelines and standards.

A preliminary proposal via the official application form will need to be submitted along with required documentation. Application forms must be received by 4pm on Friday 28th April 2023. Application forms and accompanying explanatory documents can be downloaded on Galway City Council's website, www.galwaycity.ie, Tel No. 091-536400 Email: hsgcapital@galwaycity.ie

Galway City Council is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014.

2.6 Circular Letter: PGO 01/2023 Delivery of Affordable Housing on Relevant Public Land and Part 7 Disposal of Relevant Public Land & First Refusal of LDA

Part 9 (sections 74-77) of the Land Development Agency Act 2021 ("the Act") requires, as a condition of a grant of planning permission, that an applicant for permission for the development of 5 or more dwellings on relevant public land is obligated to enter into an agreement with the relevant planning authority prior to the lodgement of a commencement notice to deliver a certain percentage of affordable

housing, by way of either affordable purchase or cost rental units, within that development.

Relevant public land is land owned by a relevant public body, being a local authority, Government Minister or state body listed in Schedule 1 and 2 of the Act, within a town the population of which is equal to or greater than 10,000 persons at the most recent Census. The Land Development Agency (“the LDA”) has developed a Register of Relevant Public Land which identifies relevant public land and land owned by the LDA or a subsidiary DAC on a map and provides information on whether Part 9 requirements of the LDA Act are applicable (for relevant planning applications for residential / residential mixed development) or whether exempted from the provisions of the Part 9 affordability requirement. This register is publicly available at www.lda.ie and will allow for the relevant local authority to check and confirm whether land to be developed is subject to this Part 9 requirement.

2.7 Section 179A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – Housing Development Exemption from the ‘Part 8’ Process:

A temporary measure to exempt housing developments from the ‘Part 8’ process is being implemented. This measure will allow for accelerated delivery of social, affordable and cost-rental housing by local authorities by way of exemption from the local authority own development ‘Part 8’ process in section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act) in strictly defined circumstances.

The amendments to the Act and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 are balanced with the need to provide for the accelerated delivery of social and affordable housing while also ensuring proper planning and sustainable development by means of the introduction of a temporary time-bound exemption from the ‘Part 8’ process for the approval of local authority own development housing projects on local authority or State-owned lands.

This planning amendment will assist local authorities to accelerate housing delivery.

Where the development meets the criteria of section 179A of the Act the housing development is classed as exempted development and is exempted from the ‘Part 8’ process, therefore, the ‘Part 8’ process cannot be used.

‘Housing Development’ is defined under section 179A (5) of the Act:

‘Housing development’ includes:

- (a) the construction or erection of a house or houses,
- (b) the construction of a new road or the widening or realignment of an existing road, to serve houses referred to in paragraph (a),
- (c) the construction or erection of pumping stations, treatment works, holding tanks or outfall facilities for wastewater or storm water, to serve houses referred to in paragraph (a),
- (d) the laying underground of sewers, mains, pipes or other apparatus,

(e) the provision of open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works to serve houses referred to in paragraph (a), and

(f) the provision of car parks, car parking places, surface water sewers and flood relief work, and ancillary infrastructure to serve houses referred to in paragraph (a).

The Chief Executive of the local authority must inform the elected members of the local authority of the housing development prior to the site notice or newspaper notice being issued in accordance with article 81A (1) of the regulations. It is recommended that the Chief Executive engages with the elected members as early as possible to ensure they are fully informed prior to issuing the site notice or newspaper notice and before the final decision to undertake the development is made. Local authorities should maintain a record showing that the elected members were informed prior to issuing the site notice and newspaper notice.

The new exemption from the 'Part 8' approval process is a temporary arrangement to expedite the urgent provision of social and affordable housing in the context of the current housing shortage. Any social and affordable housing developments which do not meet the criteria set out within Section 179A of the Act or are not commenced by end 2024 will be subject to the 'Part 8' (or 'Part 10') process in the normal manner.

The site notice and newspaper notice are required to be published at least 8 weeks prior to the commencement of housing development in accordance with article 81A (1) of the regulations. In addition, the site notice must be maintained in situ for a period of at least 8 weeks under article 81A (7) of the regulations.

The site notice and newspaper notice are intended to make the public aware of the decision of the local authority to build a housing development on the specified site as it meets the criteria under Section 179A of the Act. It informs the public that the works will commence on the site and that, within the period of 8 weeks of the date of the site notice/ newspaper notice, the decision may be subject to an application for judicial review.

The provisions under Section 179A of the Act and the supplementary regulations provide an exemption from the 'Part 8' process and, where a development is classed as exempted development, there is no public participation process. The notification process by means of site and newspaper notices will notify interested parties of the intention to undertake the proposed development.

The temporary exemption from 'Part 8' will apply to all applicable sites that are zoned for residential purposes or for mixed use including residential; and the proposed development may include social and affordable housing.

The exemption will be in effect for developments which commence prior to 31 December 2024 and comply with the requirements of Section 179A of the Act.

There is no minimum threshold on the number of houses, or the size of sites that can be utilised under Section 179A of the Act. Local Authorities are encouraged to look at all eligible land holdings to accelerate the delivery of housing by local authorities.

In accordance with article 83A (1) of the regulations a local authority shall make the necessary documentation available for inspection on their website and at the offices of the local authority:

The local authority shall also enter all the documents, plans and particulars into the planning register.

2.8 Historic Structures fund 2023

Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, TD, announced on the 30th of March that 95 heritage projects across the country will benefit from a total of €4.5m under this year's Historic Structures Fund (HSF). In addition to supporting owners and custodians of historic and protected structures to safeguard and maintain their properties, this funding will also provide a welcome boost to local construction and heritage trades by facilitating works with a total value of over €8m and generating more employment (an estimated 11,250 days' labour), including for specialist heritage roles such as thatching and stonework.

The HSF is one of two built heritage funding schemes which work in partnership with owners and the 31 local authorities to protect our built heritage – a key aim of Heritage Ireland 2030, the new national heritage plan launched by the Minister last year. Today's announcement follows the awarding earlier this month of €4.5m in funding under the Department's other built heritage grant scheme – the Built Heritage Investment Scheme. By providing grants of between €15,000 and €200,000, the HSF assists owners of heritage structures – including those on the local authorities' Record of Protected Structures and those in Architectural Conservation Areas – to meet their obligations to care for their properties. The scheme provides assistance to a wide range of heritage structures, including castles, churches, mills, bridges, shopfronts, and thatch structures, as well as to private houses.

This year's HSF includes awards to Nun's Island Theatre & The Manse Creative Arts Centre – see item 4.34 on pg. 56 for additional information.

2.9 LDA Report on Relevant Public Land

the LDA's first Report on Relevant Public Land has been published today and is with Government for their consideration. The full report and further details are available now online at www.lda.ie/public-lands/

This seeks to identify the potential of state-owned land to deliver affordable and social housing into the future. The LDA is required by legislation to submit the first Report on Relevant Public Land to Government by March 31st. The report was submitted and noted at today's Cabinet meeting. Relevant public land is defined in the Land Development Agency Act 2021 as land in all cities, towns and urban

centres with a population exceeding 10,000 that is owned by the state or state agencies and bodies.

All of the sites identified for this first report are located in the five main cities – Dublin (38), Cork (14), Limerick (6), Galway (8) and Waterford (4) – and in five regional centres – Sligo (4), Letterkenny (2), Dundalk (4), Drogheda (1) and Athlone (2).

Anomalies relating to some Galway City Council owned land have been notified to the LDA.

2.10 Galway – Reimagining the Irish City

The Academy of Urbanism and the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland in partnership with Galway City Council will be hosting a conference from the 26th to the 28th of April entitled “Reimagining the Irish City and Town”. This two-day event aims to focus attention on the radical reform of our current planning, design and delivery systems urgently required to enable Irish Cities and Towns to survive and prosper in the coming decades.

Galway is a city which is looking to remodel itself for the emerging new age and is starting on the long-term conversations required to facilitate a significant transformation using work carried out by the Irish Cities group as jumping off point.

3. Recreation & Amenity

3.1 Sports Capital

3.1.1 Corrib Park Grass Pitch

The contractor has fully mobilised and is currently securing the site, establishing a compound and constructing the temporary access road onto Seamus Quirke Rd. The exceptionally wet weather experienced in March has delayed commencement of the main earthworks. These will commence in the coming weeks once ground conditions have improved.

3.1.2 Refurbishment of Glen Oaks/Drom Chaoín MUGA

Refurbishment works on the lower MUGA pitch are well advanced with the pitch ready to receive the artificial grass surface. It is envisaged that construction of the new MUGA will be completed by early June. Preliminary design has been completed for the landscaping scheme and public consultation is due to be organised in the coming weeks.



3.1.3 Corrib Park MUGA

Detailed design is well advanced with tender documents nearing completion. It is envisaged that a request for tender will be advertised by the end of April 2023.

3.1.4 Woodquay Park Development

Consultants have been appointed and the preliminary design stage has commenced. Initial deliverables will entail a range of surveys and site investigative works being undertaken, design development and engagement with various stakeholders. The preliminary design stage is due to be completed in June 2023.

3.1.5 Salthill Tidal Pool Feasibility Study

Tender assessment for multi-disciplinary consultancy services has been completed and the contract is due to be awarded imminently. The contract will involve scheme design and feasibility assessment for the refurbishment of the dis-used tidal pool at Ladies Beach and, additionally the alternative option of developing a new tidal pool facility.

3.1.6 Refurbishment of Blackrock Diving Tower

A structural assessment has been undertaken on the diving tower to determine the extent of rehabilitation works. Scoping of further structural investigative works is being carried out, which will involve closure of the tower for a brief period. The timing of these works has yet to be determined. The optimum period will be selected having regard to tidal levels and impact on visitor use. Every effort will be made to minimise the impacts from undertaking the structural assessment.

3.2 Cemeteries

Works are underway preparing foundations and infrastructure for new staff facilities and public toilets in Bohermore cemetery on the site of the previous office/canteen. Delivery of the unit is due in the near future.



3.3 Operations

3.3.1 General Parks Works

R&A operations is in the processes of renewing the landscaping of the Cities roundabout and verge contract. See below photos of the landscaping works.





3.3.2 Playgrounds and Skateparks

The Claddagh playgrounds refurbishment works are nearing completion by R&A operations. See below photos of the works. A new tarmac treatment was applied to the playgrounds surface and stencilling has been done to brighten up new wet pour safety surfaces. An underwater mural along a block work wall has been completed by local artist Irene Naughton. A treasure chest and pirate ship were added to the underwater scene. A kinematic ship wheel powered by movement is now in place in the playground. Much positive feedback has been received by R&A staff on the works. See below before and after photos.





A new Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) board has been added to the playground.

PECS boards are an essential tool for many nonverbal students, and their instructors. They are also known as visual communication boards. These invaluable tools provide students with a way to visually associate ideas about their everyday life, and to communicate with the world.

Images allow the child to communicate their needs, make choices about what they want, or to know what will come next in their daily schedule. These devices are often associated with decreased behavioural issues in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and nonverbal children, because they allow an alternative expression of needs and ideas.

Parents and educators use PECS with children. For students who have a difficult time transitioning between activities, using PECS boards is a great way to motivate them to shift settings or actions.



Works on upgrading the skatepark in Children's Millennium Park are continuing. See below photos.



3.3.3 Beaches & Bathing Water

Information requested by the EPA to be uploaded by their deadline date of March 24th has been submitted. This included the Monitoring Calendar and the Bathing Water Profile for Grattan Beach, Ballyloughane Beach, Salthill Beach & Silverstrand Beach. The monitoring calendar, issued to the HSE, sets out sampling dates for the coming season and cannot be deviated from.

Green Coast Award applications for both Silverstrand and Salthill beaches have been submitted with co-operation from the Clean Coast groups operating at each beach. The photos below show the awarding of the Blue Flag & Green Coast Awards on June 1st last year and we are looking forward to similar awards for the 2023 season.



3.4 Operations Projects

On the 4th of November 2021 the government launched the Climate Action Plan, an ambitious plan to put Ireland on a more sustainable path, cutting emissions and protecting us from the consequences of climate change. The Climate Action Plan follows the Climate Act 2021, which commits Ireland to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030. A key initiative to achieving this target is to maintain existing afforestation plans and improve forestry management. By 2030 it is required to achieve a planting rate of 8,000 ha/year to increase carbon sequestration.

In this regard tree planting works were carried out by R&A operations crews. Please see the below photos of the works in Nolan's Field.



Another key initiative includes a requirement, from 2023, that all new vehicles being purchased by the State are BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicles), unless there is no viable electric option. In this regard the below electric machinery was recently trialled by R&A operations.



Works commenced on landscaping in Merlin Woods Community Garden. See below photos of R&A operations crew putting a wall foundation in place. The works are being done in partnership with Friends of Merlin Woods.



Works commenced on landscaping in Merlin Woods Community Garden. See below photos of R&A operations crew putting a wall foundation in place. The works are being done in partnership with Friends of Merlin Woods.

Works on de-sodding and returfing goal mouths on Cappagh Park pitches was recently completed by R&A Operations



Works on replacing seating in Cappagh Park are ongoing by R&A Operations

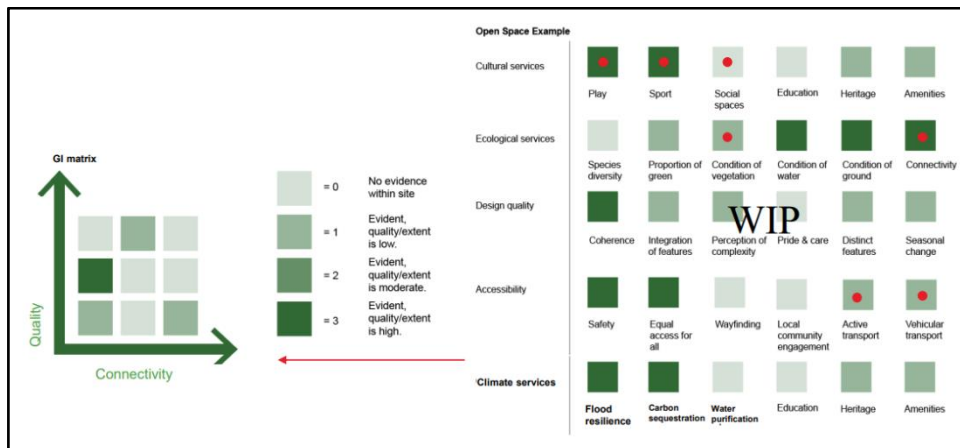


3.5 Biodiversity & Pollinator Plan Updates

3.5.1 Green Spaces Strategy

Stage 1 of the Green Spaces Strategy is nearing completion with the field assessments commencing at the end of March. A draft interim report is due in the

coming weeks and confirmation of a launch date for the stakeholder engagement process due shortly.



Assessing ecosystem services in Galway City

3.6 Pollinator Plan

3.6.1 No Mow

The No Mow areas are being prepared for the season ahead with the outline areas mown into shape and signage installed around the city.



3.6.2 National Tree Week (March 19-26th) – Eyre Square

Eight new mature trees were planted by contractors in Eyre Square as part of National Tree Week and to replace dead or dying trees in the park. These included 4 new native upright oaks, 1 large copper beech, a native evergreen oak, an ornamental rowan tree and a Korean fir (to mature into a Christmas tree for the park).



Planting the upright oaks tree in the plaza



Planting the copper beech tree, copper beech planted, ornamental rowan tree at playground, planting the evergreen oak.

3.6.3 National Tree Week (March 19-26th) – Estates

Eighty-one mature trees were planted by GCC crews across the city. These were a mix of native and other species chosen for their suitability for their new location. The tree species mix included oak, evergreen oak, whitebeam, rowan, sycamore and wild

cherry. The trees were distributed across the city in locations in Westside, Cruachan Park, Crestwood, Lurgan Park, Renmore,



Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) arriving and being planted at Renmore.

3.7 Other Projects

3.7.1 Sliabh Rua, Ballybane – Greening of the Laneways

The final pieces of landscaping went into Sliabh Rua in March including resurfacing of tarmac and installation of the tree grills (reused) and tree guards (new & reused).



Before & After photos of Sliabh Rua

3.7.2 Stone wall building and new pedestrian path at Merlin Woods / Fionnuiske

Recreation & Amenity works closely with the Roads Department and the Friends of Merlin Woods to deliver a new pedestrian path through the open space at Fionnuisce and create a new access point into Merlin Woods. A new path, stone wall and ramped access was installed in a location that was previously an informal access point with a number of safety issues.



Before & After photos of access point at Fionnuisce and Merlin Woods

3.8 Lough Corrib Navigation Trustees

Maintenance works are underway along the Eglinton Canal and at the LCNT piers. Power washing, pruning and installation of bark mulch to beds along canal have been completed. See photographs below.





LCNT staff continue to issue Marine notices through the Lough Corrib Navigation Facebook page regarding navigation hazards on the lake.

Work is underway to complete a design and refit of selected markers on the Navigation Channel with specific focus on the Corrib River.

LCNT staff continue to monitor the markers on the channel and report any required works to the nominated marine contractor.

4. Economic & Culture & Community & Sports Partnership

4.1 Government launch Call 6 of Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund

The Government has launched Call 6 of the Disruptive Technology and Innovation Fund (DTIF). The aim of the fund is to encourage collaborations by the industry and research sectors into the development and commercialisation of ground-breaking technologies. DTIF Call 6 welcomes applications from all research priority areas but particularly applications that complement the government's priority enterprise policy objectives on digital transformation and on integrating decarbonisation and net zero commitments. Prospective applicants can obtain detailed information on the Fund and on the application process through the enterprise.gov.ie/DTIF webpage. The deadline for applications is 3pm on 31 May 2023.

4.2 Atlantec Festival

itag is delighted to announce AtlanTec Festival 2023 'Connected Future' which will take place from 8th – 18th May 2023. The AtlanTec Festival features an incredible line-up of talented minds, inspiring organisations and enjoyable events across a packed festival. itag are currently working on the exciting [programme for 2023](#) and will have registration for free event open soon. You can enjoy online events or in-person community events which take place in Galway. This year the focus is on the Connected Future of Tech. The reality of business today is one of unrelentingly disruptive change on a scale never seen before. Accelerating the speed of innovation, reimagining supply chains, and improving operational efficiencies are all critical imperatives while managing business uncertainties.



4.3 Climate Action Economic Opportunities - Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise Conference – 26th April 2023

As a sector, local government appreciates that climate change is an unprecedented crisis for our natural environment, our economy and society and there are significant challenges ahead in translating strengthened climate policy and in working with our business and local communities in the transition to a climate neutral future. This conference will explore how local authorities, working through their economic & enterprise remit are supporting existing and new business to embrace the innovation required for the transition to a net-zero economy. In this context it will showcase examples of how businesses are pivoting to capitalise on new opportunities arising from the need to pursue transformative climate action and in doing so, are becoming green economy pioneers with the support of local authorities, in a range of areas from renewable energy technologies, research and innovation through to circular and bio-economy and more. The conference is open to Elected Members and local authority staff with a remit on Economic Development, Enterprise, Climate Action, Planning, Community Development as well as Enterprise and Development Departments and Agencies that work with Local Authorities to promote Economic & Community Development, Enterprise and Climate Action. For further information or registration link visit <https://www.caro.ie/training-events/events/climate-action-economic-opportunities-local-author>

CONFERENCE [Click here to Register](#)

**CLIMATE ACTION
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**
Local Authorities Supporting Enterprise

Discover how local authorities, working through their economic & enterprise remit, are supporting existing and new business to embrace the innovation required for the transition to a net-zero economy.

Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Wednesday **26th April 2023**
CONFERENCE FEE: €150.00 per delegate
9:30am – 4:00pm (Registration from 9.00am)

Who should attend:

- Elected Members and Local Authority staff with a remit on Economic Development, Enterprise, Climate Action, Planning, Community Development.
- Enterprise and Development Departments and Agencies that work with Local Authorities to promote Economic & Community Development, Enterprise and Climate Action.

CIMA **AILG** **LGMA** **CARO**

4.4 Connected Hubs Showcase Day – 26th April 2023

On 26th April 2023 hubs across the country will open their doors for a national Connected Hubs Showcase Day. On the day hubs across the Connected Hubs network will display the incredible variety and regional diversity with a focus on promoting why their hub and locality are great places for remote workers. This open day is taking place in support of the Government's national campaign promoting Remote Work and is likely to become an annual event in the Connected Hubs calendar. Participating members of Connected Hubs will be supported through an upskilling programme which will provide them with insights on how their hub can maximise occupancy through digital, actionable insights on how their locality can up its game in competing for investment, remote workers, home buyers, shoppers and

visitors through their hub and resources. The network now has 315 hubs across the country registered on its online platform. One of the aims of the Connected Hubs initiative is to create a shared platform and brand and to raise awareness of hubs, the services they offer and the opportunities to relocate to, or establish a business from anywhere in Ireland, as well as developing and raising awareness of hubs as convenient and professional distributed workplaces. For more information visit <https://www.digital-ireland.ie/connected-hubs-showcase-day-2023/>. As part of this the PorterShed are running a Coffee Morning on Wednesday 26th April 2023 from 10.00am - 12.00pm in PorterShed a hAon, Bowling Green with the hub manager and coworking community, ideal for remote workers, community groups and co-workers for their shared hot desk space.



4.5 Ireland West Airport welcomes announcement of €5m in funding from the Department of Transport for safety and security related projects

Ireland West Airport welcomes the announcement of funding of €5,000,541 towards Capital expenditure (CAPEX) projects, from the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport. The funding is provided to support critical safety and security projects under the Regional Airports Programme 2021-2025. The Programme will continue to support major safety and security related projects this year such as an upgrade of the airports electrical infrastructure across the entire airport facility, runway end safety area works, new fire tender vehicle, baggage x-ray & security screening systems and the installation of new state of the art central search security equipment. In addition to the exchequer funding announced the airport will invest over €1 million to support the completion of these projects. This funding will support the latest phase of the airport transformation programme aimed at both future proofing the airport and ensuring facilities meet the needs of customers as the airport prepares for a record summer flight schedule.

4.6 Ireland West Airport announces new destinations for 2023

On Sunday 26th March 2023 Ireland West Airport welcomed the commencement of a brand-new daily service connecting the west coast of Ireland to London Heathrow with Aer Lingus.

Aer Lingus will operate daily flights to London Heathrow, London's biggest and most well-connected airport, on a year-round basis. This new service is another milestone in the airport's history as it's the first time the airport will be connected to one of Europe's major international airport hubs.

Customers can enjoy seamless connections via London Heathrow Airport to locations in North America, such as New York and Boston and to multiple destinations in Asia Africa and Australia. Aer Lingus currently has partnerships with a network of airlines out of Heathrow Airport, providing access to an ever-growing number of routes and benefits. Airlines include Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, British Airways, Iberia, JetBlue and United Airlines.

The new route will boost inbound tourism to the West of Ireland. Given the proximity of Ireland West Airport to the Wild Atlantic Way and the huge spotlight on the west of Ireland following the box-office hit *The Banshees of Inisherin*, the new route will provide increased access for GB visitors and those travelling from all around the world via Heathrow to one of Ireland's most popular regions.

Ryanair also commenced a weekly service to Lanzarote on March 28th, 2023, which will provide a major boost for holidaymakers across the West, Northwest and Midland's regions of Ireland. The reintroduction of the Lanzarote service for the first time since January 2020 is part of Ryanair's planned summer schedule from Ireland West Airport in summer 2023.

2022 saw Ireland West Airport welcome new services to Birmingham, Edinburgh and Manchester with Ryanair as the airport restores these popular services following the cessation of Flybe in 2020. This was a positive development as it provided continuity of service on three important UK services for the airport and region.

The number of passengers travelling on services to and from mainland and continental Europe hit a new high for the airport in 2022, surpassing 2019 levels, increasing by 9% to 138,621. Significant economic benefits for the West, Northwest and Midlands region were generated from overseas visitors. Ryanair record its busiest ever year for passenger numbers at Ireland West Airport carrying 654K passengers in 2022. For the summer of 2023, Ryanair will operate their biggest ever schedule from the airport, with 16 routes and 120 weekly flights, a 15% increase on 2022.

The airport continues to engage with several airlines across the UK, Europe and US regarding the potential for new services. Despite challenges in the global economic market, airport management remains confident in the airport's strong portfolio of airlines and route networks that will see them well positioned to grow sustainably in the coming years.



4.7 European Enterprise Promotion Awards 2023

The European Enterprise Promotion Awards identify and recognise the most successful promoters of enterprise and entrepreneurship around Europe, showcase best entrepreneurship policies and practices, raise awareness of the added value of entrepreneurship and encourage and inspire potential entrepreneurs. There are six categories for entry in 2023 as follows:

- Promoting the entrepreneurial spirit
- Investing in entrepreneurial skills
- Supporting the digital transition
- Improving the Business Environment and Supporting the Internationalisation of business
- Supporting the sustainable transition
- Responsible and inclusive entrepreneurship

The closing date for entries is Friday 9th June 2023 at 5pm. For full information on the awards please visit https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/supporting-entrepreneurship/european-enterprise-promotion-awards_en

4.8 EU Funding Conference – Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating across the EU

The Irish Regions European Office (IREO), in conjunction with the three Regional Assemblies of Ireland and the Irish Delegation to the EU Committee of the Regions will be hosting an event aimed at accessing EU funding on Wednesday 19th April 2023 in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone. The one-day national conference aims to communicate the opportunities for local government to participate in the new round of EU funding, particularly in the European Territorial Cooperation programmes, the Horizon Europe Missions and the LIFE programme. The event will also showcase how local authorities and regional assemblies in Ireland have been participating in European Territorial Cooperation programmes to the benefit of local citizens and communities across Ireland during the last funding period and launch the interactive map developed by the IREO and the Regional Assemblies. To register your attendance at the event, click here <https://form.jotform.com/230504413707346>



EU Funding Conference
19th April 2023

Radisson Blu, Athlone
9.15am – 4pm

Register Now

Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating - Irish Regions Cooperating across the EU

Come along and find out more about how local authorities can engage in EU Programmes. Don't miss this opportunity to gain advice from experts on the application process for INTERREG European Territorial Cooperation programmes, the Horizon Europe Missions and LIFE funding.

Agenda includes:

Keynote speech by Paschal Donohoe, Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform

Panel One: Speculate to Accumulate - Can EU funding really meet local authority objectives?

Panel Two: Not a Mission? - Greening, Innovating and Empowering local communities

Launch of the IREO and Regional Assemblies Interactive Map

Individual EU funding programme workshops.

IREO logo, EU logo, and logos of the four Regional Assemblies (Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Western) are displayed at the bottom.

4.9 Funding approved to mark Ireland's 50th anniversary of joining the European Union

The Minister of State for European Affairs, Peter Burke T.D., recently announced small scale funding in the amount of €7,500 to Galway City Council for events to take place during Europe Week (8-12 May 2023). The funding will support events organised by Blas Na Gaillimhe, involving European chefs in Galway to reflect on how Europe has influenced Galway and Irish food over the last 50 years and the benefits that has had on the food offering and service industry within the City. Funding will also support Ardán to programme a European Night of Films and Screenings at the Pálás Cinema during Europe Week 2023. EU50 is a whole of Government programme led by the Department of Foreign Affairs along with the Department of the Taoiseach and involving local communities, industry, academia, cultural institutions and civil society. It is hoped that the EU50 programme will provide for reflection, celebration, debate and exchange on Ireland in the European Union. You can learn more about EU50 and the programme so far here www.ireland.ie/EU50



Galway City Council will also mark some key designations that have been bestowed on the city arising from our European Union involvement, including European Greenleaf 2017, European Region of Gastronomy 2018, European Capital of Culture 2020.

4.10 Galway Community Circus awarded over €100,000 in social enterprise funding

- **Galway Community Circus is one of five trailblazing social enterprises awarded to accelerate change under Rethink Ireland's €700,000 Step-Up Fund**

During March 2023, [Rethink Ireland announced the awardees of its Social Enterprise Step-Up Fund](#). This is a €700,000 two-year Fund created by Rethink Ireland in partnership with Tomar Trust and the Department of Rural and Community Development via the Dormant Accounts Fund. This Fund was set up for established, mid-sized social enterprises with the aim of supporting them to be ready to scale. It focuses on elevated funding for social enterprises at the next stage and will help support and expand the social enterprise ecosystem in Ireland. Rethink Ireland has awarded social enterprises that are accelerating change nationwide, with a particular focus on communities in Galway, Cork, Limerick and Waterford. These social enterprises will receive a combination of cash grants and business supports to further expand their organisations, supporting people that are most in need. Galway Community Circus were awarded over €100,000 in social enterprise funding to support an accessible and engaging programme that reduces isolation and promotes empowerment in young people. This funding and support will enable them to grow their dynamic circus school to 3 locations, share their model of inclusive circus education throughout Ireland and develop and professionalise circus education with their academic, national and international partners.

4.11 Local Enterprise Office, Galway

LEO programmes and courses in April: in addition to normal ongoing supports, April will see the launch of the Galway LEOs new programme:

- Strategic Growth Program for Female Founders commences on April 3rd.

Short courses will include:

- VISUAL STORYTELLING/ D.I.Y SMART VIDEO for your Business

- ACHIEVING SUCCESS in SALES
- Financials For Small Business
- E-MAIL MARKETING
- SAGE BUSINESS CLOUD ACCOUNTING
- INTRO TO TIKTOK FOR BUSINESS
- Trading Online Voucher webinar



TOURISM

4.12 RTE TODAY SHOW

The Today Show came live from Galway City on March 8th. The show which was sponsored by Galway City Council was filmed live from the Galway City Museum and showcase the Galway International Arts Festival, UNESCO City of Film (week of the Oscars), Galway Community Circus and the Monuments Exhibition. The show which has a daily audience of 96,000 people was used to launch Blas na Gaillimhe. A number of local food producers joined chef JP. McMahon to launch the new food initiative that is supported by Galway City Council to Maura Derrane during the show. The show is available to view on the RTE Player.

4.13 Galway Christmas Market Review

Behaviours & Attitudes have just completed a review of the Galway Christmas Market. The research set out to profile the visitors to the Christmas Market held in Galway City in November & December 2022 with a view to evaluating satisfaction levels, assess how the event's individual offerings are perceived and identify potential development areas for future years. The research was carried out by through a series of Face-to-Face CAPI interviews with a total of 358 visitors to the

market. The results are analysed by key demographics such as area of residence, gender, and age. In addition, qualitative interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the hospitality and retail sectors (11 individual interviews).

The local economy considers itself heavily dependent on the annual Christmas market. The Key learnings set out:

- The market is invaluable to the local economy, and stakeholders feel it has the potential to take the offering to the next level. Businesses wish to see the market expanded and improved.
- While locals naturally dominate attendance at the market, over 1 in 3 visits are accounted for by domestic and international visitors. Overall, the Christmas Market has a very strong youth profile: those under 35 years account for 70% of all visits to the market.
- There is huge visitor loyalty to the market: 93% of locals have visited the market in a previous year; and 58% have visited in at least 6 different years. Such loyalty clearly serves as an endorsement of the market; and also, a challenge, highlighting the need to continually update the offering.
- The differences in motivations across the visitor parties illustrates the importance of the market providing a broad offering: the stalls are considerably more important to family visitor groups for example. Average time spent at the market also illustrates the different demands from weekday and weekend visits: 43% of weekend visits are for two hours or more, whereas only 15% of weekday visits are for this length of time.
- The market earns a very positive overall evaluation which is consistently strong across all visitor groups. The evaluations do peak for weekday visits. The detailed evaluation clearly highlights respective strengths and development areas for the market: the market is excellent at overall atmosphere, visual appearance, and representing Galway itself; the key quantitative development areas relate to parking, toilet facilities and pricing.
- The key influencing factors on Overall Satisfaction relate to the appearance of the market, both in overall visual terms and cleanliness, as well as the atmosphere, and the quality of the stall offerings. All of the key influencing factors are evaluated positively in 2022.

Areas for Development include:

- Suggested ideas and development areas ultimately focus on enhancing the visitor experience, building upon the market's reputation and attracting more satisfied guests to the market and in turn, to the city of Galway.
- Improvement of retail offering in terms of quality, diversity of product and new stalls
- Expansion across the city and running through until the New Year
- Restoration of original vision to elements such as the beer tent

A new tender for a Christmas Market in Eyre Square will issue shortly.

4.14 St Patricks Day 2023



The 2023 St Patricks Day parade took place in unexpected sunshine. Over 2,800 people took part between the parade and Green Mile, making it the biggest ever St Patrick's Day parade in Galway. Over 40,000 people are estimated to have been in attendance. The parade past off without incident and the work put in the by Galway City Council and our partners in the Gardaí, Fire Service, HSE, Ambulance Service ensured an enjoyable experience for all.

The participants included:

Town Crier	Defence Forces	Lally Tours	St. Pats Brass Band	UN Veterans Galway
Rahoon Newcastle GAA Club	Claddagh Watch Patrol	Pedal Power Galway	St. Nicholas NS - Claddagh School Band	Salthill-Knocknacarra GAA Club Nursery
Joint Ukranian Community in Galway c/o Galway Volunteer Centre	Scoil San Phroinsias	GCS Judo	United Woman Galway	Scoil Bhride, Shantalla
Ol' Times	Eddie the Eagle	Galway Bay Rugby Club	Lough Corrib Adventure	Ahmadiyya Muslim

				Community Ireland
Junior Chamber International Galway	Get Rhythm	Salthill Devon Football Club	Galway City Karting	Galway Gallowglass
Ability West	Amach LGBT Galway	Galway City Enivornment - Coffee Cup	Funky Drums School	Connacht Cricket Union
Galway Scout Group	West United	Galway Hooker Sailing Club	Falun Gong - aka Falun Dafa	1st Port of Galway Sea Scouts
Order of Malta	Krewe of Europa	Castlegar GAA Club Galway	World Mission Agency	Liam Mellows GAA Hurling and Camogie Club
Star Wars Fans for Diversity	Galway Filipino - Irish Community	Dulce Ordinario	Sheils Motor Group	Club iománaíocht Bearna-Na Forbacha
Badoirí na Cladaig	Blood Bike West	Tempo Antiques	Indian Cultural and Sports Community - Galway	Stuntworx Eltie and Team Ireland
Fr. Griffin's Éire Óg Gaelic Football	Kildare Irish Figure Dancers	St. James' GAA	Trócaire	Macnas
Galway City Fire brigade Service	Merlin Woods Sports Club			











4.15 Music Festival Eyre Square

The parade was followed by 3 days of Music in Eyre Square in mixed weather conditions. The music was attended by good crowds on each day. New for 2023 saw a partnership with Music Generation Galway City. This provided opportunities for emerging youth bands and musicians to perform as part of the festival.

Artists included

Friday 17th March 2023

- Kildare Irish Figure Dancers - are an exhibition group made up from dancers from all the Irish Figure Dancing Classes in Kildare. They have over 50 members aged between 12 and 24 and are proud of their all-inclusive ethos

and passion for keeping the tradition of Irish Figure Dancing alive! They travelled to Galway to participate in the parade and travelled back to Kildare that afternoon.

- Colm Seoighe & na hEasógaí - With their own inimitable brand of fast paced and lyrical original folk music as gaeilge, Colm Seoighe & na hEasógaí have become one of the most exciting young acts in the west of Ireland. Colm Seoighe & na hEasógaí are performing as part of Music Generation Galway City
- Drumadore Drum School - started in Headford in 2016 and is run by Éimhín Cradock, formerly of The Saw Doctors and currently the director of the Macnas Drummers. Drumadore blends movement and exercise into drumming and the school is built around fun and rhythm. Drumadore can be found in several locations around Galway in Moycullen, Barna, Headford, Claregalway, Tuam, Oranmore, Galway City, Athenry and most recently Ballinrobe in Mayo and cater for ages 5+ including adult classes.
- MacDara - Macdara O'Dwyer hails from Inverin, Connemara. Influenced by the traditional music of his surroundings, there are veins of folk with vessels of blues radiating from his original music. Passing from light to dark, his music focuses on complex thoughts through the medium of lyrics accompanied by melody with powerful chorus.
- BackWest - Hailing from the heart of Galway City, trad ensemble BackWest released their debut album entitled The Long Walk in 2017 and second album, Heritage Hall, in 2019. They have since received an ASLR Celtic Music Award and have represented Ireland as cultural ambassadors on the international stage, performing for Presidents and at prestigious international festivals, both in the US and in Europe. Led by the All-Ireland Champion sibling duet of Maureen and Brendan Browne on fiddle and box, their vast repertoire celebrates the best essence of traditional Irish music, song and dance and is filled to the brim with the music and soul of the west of Ireland. The band's musical narrative, stories, arrangements and performances are a showcase of imaginative, modern day Irish cultural expression - an explosion of songs, tunes, and dances that are vital to the world of contemporary Irish and world music.

Saturday 18th March 2023

- Telebox - Healy on drums and Eoin Killeen on bass. With a guitar pairing that works in a perfect unison, and a rhythm section that will have you dancing along, Telebox create a vibrant and energetic live sound that has made them one of the stars of the local youth music scene. Telebox are performing as part of Music Generation Galway City.
- The Rosecaps - Tipped by The Irish Times as one of the most promising up and coming artists of 2023, The Rosecaps have a rapidly growing fan base and a live show packed with energetic riffs, infectious melodies and a refreshing, exciting new sound. A summer packed with festivals such as Sea Sessions, RiverFest Shannonbridge and Indiependence as well as a headline show in Dolans, Limerick means that 2023 is shaping up to be a big one for the Galway natives.

- Anna Mullarkey - Anna Mullarkey is an award-winning composer and performer whose music weaves electronics with piano and voice. The Irish Times called her “phenomenal” and Irish Theatre Magazine described her music as “if a sultry ménage of Björk/Billie Holiday/Philip Glass got together at the Wickerman Festival.” Anna’s debut album, *Falling*, released in 2023, is all about falling in and out of love - it is a shapeshifting soundscape, with sometimes comforting and sometimes haunting melodies that evoke summer afternoons and winter evenings that speak to a haunted past and a radiant present.
- Curly Organ and The Catharsis! Collective - Galway’s own Sovereign-Prophet-Weirdo-In-Residence, C u r l e y O r g a n, brings his unique brand of Body-and-Mind Folk to Eyre Square this St. Patrick’s Day weekend. His original songs will be accompanied with a full brass section and scratch choir. Expect uplifting melodies, semi-improvised musical excursions and lots of audience participation. Operating from Galway city, Curley Organ is perhaps best known for his socialengagement happenings, such as Catcalling Outside AIB and Tír na Mícreafón. In his very unique live show, Curley Organ takes you gently by the hand and guides you calmly through a museum of human experiences (both the extreme and the banal). This singer-songwriter is eager to do more than put on a show. He aims for C a t h a r s i s !, both for himself and his audience.

Sunday 19th March 2023

- Livefeed - Livefeed is a Music Generation Galway City project which provides opportunities to young people to perform and enjoy live music in safe alcoholfree environments. The project aims to grow a culture of original youth music in Galway and to support young people to pursue interests in music performance, production and promotion. For this special St. Patrick’s Day concert, Livefeed presents a lineup of talented young musicians and songwriters including Grace McQuaid, Nora Staunton, Shannon & Shirley Ward, Francis Ward and Matthew Corbett. Livefeed is presented as part of Music Generation Galway City.
- Tracy Bruen & Band - Galway singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and spellbinding vocalist, Tracy Bruen, blends and bends folk, prog and pop with classical and theatrical influences to create epic compositions of power and vulnerability which lie between the folk stylings of Joni Mitchell and art pop of Kate Bush. Over the last ten years, Tracy has toured extensively throughout Ireland and Europe. Her debut album *Mirror* was released in 2017. Singles from her newly released second album, *Waiting*, have received extensive national and regional radio play and made the RTÉ Radio 1 Recommends, reaching number 2 on the RTÉ Radio charts. Tracy has supported major Irish artists such as Lisa Hannigan, We Banjo 3, Mick Flannery, The Stunning and has joined Mary Coughlan on many of her recent Irish tour dates. Having played the larger stages of many of Ireland’s major festivals including Electric Picnic, Body & Soul, Sunflower Fest and the Galway Arts Festival, Tracy Bruen is continually and consistently developing her audience both at home and abroad.
- Moondance Jazz Band - Moondance Jazz Band are well known for their Sunday morning residency in Busker Brownes where they put their own musical and lively stamp on Jazz standards of Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles, Micheal

Buble and Van Morrisson. Band members include Ivor Curley on alto saxophone, Miki Belton on drums, Bernard Naughton on guitar, Jack Duignan on keyboard and Charlie Foley on bass and, for this special St. Patrick's Festival performance they will be joined on trumpet and vocals by one of Ireland's most respected singers and performers, Keith McDonald.



4.16 UNESCO City of Film – St Patricks Festival

The planned outdoor event at the Fishmarket was cancelled on St Patricks Day due to an issue with the delivery of the screen. The transportation of the screen was delayed by the supplier and as a result would not show up until after the planned finish time of the event. The only costs incurred for the event related to subtitling on the films that were due to be shown. This event will be rescheduled for a different time of the year and these films will be shown at that time.

Indoor events took place with Cinephile Paradiso which hosted a two-day walk-in exhibition of the early silent films of Ireland in the Pálás Cinema Bar and the Silent Cinema on Dominick Street. There was a great turn out on both days and there was a lot of engagement with our new and loyal audiences.

4.17 Family Fun Day – Salthill Park 19th March

Unfortunately, Sunday 19th of March was very wet, which had a major impact on the numbers in attendance at the Family Fun Day. Those that braved the elements got to take part in a number of activities including Olympic Handball, Football, Cornhole, Tug of War and the very popular Drumadore workshops. Galway City Council through the Galway Sports Partnership is looking at options to rearrange this event for later in the year.

4.18 ‘This Morning’ Live from the St Patricks Parade

The St Patricks Day parade was featured live on the ITV This Morning Show. Craig Doyle was live from the parade at 4 times during the morning. This Morning is broadcast to a weekly audience of 5.5 million people. The Mayor spoke with Craig about the Wild Atlantic Way and how to visitors to Ireland must visit Galway City.

4.19 Salthill Receives Purple Flag Accreditation for the First Time. Galway City Retains its Purple Flag for 2023

Galway City Council and Salthill Village are delighted to announce that Salthill has officially been awarded the prestigious Purple Flag accreditation for its evening and night-time economy (ENTE). This is the first time that Salthill has received the award, and it joins Galway City which has retained its purple flag status, first awarded to the city in 2015.

The Purple Flag aims to raise the standard and broaden the appeal of town and city centres between the hours of 5pm and 5am. Purple Flag areas are spaces that provide diverse and well managed night scenes, with a range of entertainment and dining options including; pubs, bars, clubs, restaurants, cafés, live music venues, theatres, art, and even shopping. Salthill's excellent choice of pubs and restaurants, the number of venues promoting alcohol-free socialising and activities, and a solid sense of community amongst the businesses there and through the Salthill Village Group were some of the highlights of the submission in the judges' report.

Judges' positive feedback on Galway City's submission included a co-ordinated approach to public policy development in Galway City, the new Night Time Economy Advisor role planned for 2023, the local live performance scheme which encouraged several concerts to take place in theatres and music venues, and the wide range of bars, restaurants, festivals and events throughout the Purple Flag area. The Purple

Flag award was officially granted to both Salthill and Galway city for 2023 at a ceremony in Liverpool last week. It is reviewed and awarded on an annual basis.

4.20 Outdoor Living 2023

Following a successful Outdoor Living season in 2022, the closure of streets will return in 2023. In Galway's Westend in partnership with the Galway Westend Business Association the following streets will close - Dominick Street, Ravens Terrace, Williams Street West and the Small Crane. The closures will commence on the 28th of April until the 1st of October 2023. One objection was received in relation to the closures before the 31st of March deadline, the notices were advertised in the Galway Advertiser, on the Galway City Council website and on social media channels.

A decision in relation to Woodquay is still under consideration. It is proposed the closure in this area will be for a shorter period than in previous years and discussions are ongoing with businesses in the area.

Arts Office

4.21 Arts Grants

The Arts Office, with assistance from colleagues across community and culture, IT and communications, launched the Arts Grant for 2023 on January 26th. The deadline for submissions was February 16th and 65 eligible organisations from professional, community, voluntary, and amateur organisations have applied. The arts team met with the Arts Funding Review Committee to make recommendations to be presented at the April Council meeting. The annual grant of €400,000 supports arts organisations across the city to deliver high-quality cultural programming and resources to the people of Galway City. A report recommending the allocation of funding of arts grants is included under agenda item 4.(b) on the City Council's agenda for the April 2023 Ordinary Meeting.

The 2023 Arts Grant is open earlier than previous years to allow organisations sufficient time to plan for financial and programming commitments. With a view to ensuring sufficient time is allowed annually, the Arts Grant for 2024 will be launched in September 2023 and the grant will continue on this schedule annually.

4.22 Arts Office Funding

The annual Band Grant, Creative Practitioner Bursary (formerly the Individual Artist Bursary) and Tyrone Guthrie Regional Bursary are open and welcome applications from across the spectrum of creativity in Galway City. These awards are typically launched later in the year however the Arts Office is keen to allow sufficient time for artists and bands to prepare for their year ahead. The application process has been

streamlined to ensure applications are accessible, use plain English and are user-friendly. The revised applications include detailed guidelines as to how applications are assessed to ensure the process is clear and transparent. Our applications for Creative Practitioners and the Tyrone Guthrie Bursary now include questions to map our social reach. These include questions about the applicant's gender, ethnicity, age, disability status and education. Collecting this data will enable the Arts Office to evaluate the diversity of applications and help us identify groups we need to target with advertising and application support in the future.

The Creative Practitioner Bursary for 2023 now features two funding bands. Band one for funding up to €500 and Band 2 for funding from €501 to €3,000. Previously the award had been capped at €1,500 however the arts office is keen to support creative practitioners working on ambitious projects as well developing capacity within the sector. Over €20,000 is available for the bursary this year, ensuring the growing application numbers can be met with adequate resources.

4.23 VAI Galway 2023 Programming – Artist Supports

In response to the Artists Needs analysis session and survey, the Arts Office, in collaboration with the Galway Culture Company and Galway County Council hosted the first of several artist support workshops aimed at build capacity. This will include financial, application and wellbeing guidance. An in-person networking event will be held in the Portershed for artists to meet and engage with organisations based in the city and county, the two Arts Office teams, and the Galway Culture Company.

4.24 €90,000 Funding Secured from Creative Ireland

Creative Communities Economic Action Fund 2023 (CCEAF 2023) seeks to further develop creative economies at local level, as a pilot initiative, to target identified sectors within the creative industries. Galway City Council in partnership with Ardán developed an application to support the growing digital creative sectors with a particular focus on the games sector.

The Games sector is an emerging sector in Galway with internationally renowned Games Companies (EA, Romero Games) and emerging companies (Spooky Doorway, 9 Impact, Portal Punch) based in the city. Continuing from the pilot project in 2022, this project will focus on discovering, uniting, and supporting emerging games developers to connect and collaborate with support from local professional games developers. The aim of the initiative is to simultaneously give an opportunity to local talent to learn, connect, collaborate and develop while being mentored by internationally leading local game development talent. The projects developed by the participants, will be based on number of initiatives identified and presented to the participants by community and cultural partners that are working to make Galway a better place to live, work and visit. Participants will be given the freedom to take these initiatives and identify one which they would like to tackle. The participants will then enter a structured schedule of exploration, development, iteration and meetings

with industry veterans to develop their initiatives whilst availing of supports including equipment and desk space.

Creative Ireland Funding Opportunities

4.25 Cruinniú na nÓg 2023

Galway City Council, in partnership with Youth Work Ireland Galway, in April 2023, will invite applications for Cruinniú na nÓg 2023. Cruinniú na nÓg is the national day of creativity for children and young people. It celebrates and encourages children and young people's participation in culture and creativity by providing free, accessible, activity-based creative action in their local areas. Proposals from artists, creative practitioners and our community for creative projects aimed at children and young people aged 0-18 years. Grants will range from €500 - €3,000. Cruinniú na nÓg is about doing, making, and creating. We are particularly interested in projects that: seek to elevate the voice of the child, facilitate creative engagement, represent diverse communities across the city and explore themes of interest and pride to children and young people

4.26 Galway City Creative Communities Grant 2023 Open Call – to be announced.

Open call for Galway based creative practitioners, organisations and communities of place and interest* to submit applications for the Galway City Creative Communities Grant 2023. These grants are offered as part of Galway City's Creative Communities Programme to deliver activities taking place in 2023. The open call will be open in mid April.

The Creative Communities Programme is an initiative committed to enhancing access to, engagement with, and enjoyment of Ireland's culture and creativity. Within the broad range of available definitions, creativity is considered as a set of innate abilities and learned skills; the capacity of individuals and organisations to transcend accepted ideas and norms and by drawing on imagination to create new ideas that bring additional value to human activity.

Strand 1. Professional, collective, or organisation - This strand of the funding scheme is aimed at Galway City-based individual professional creative practitioners, collectives and organisations that wish to develop and deliver collaborative community-centred projects based in the city of Galway. The grant can be used on research and development activities and/or the costs of implementing the project. The community at the centre of the proposed project should be actively involved in the proposed research and development activities and in delivery of the project.

Strand 2. Community groups, of place or interest - This strand of the funding scheme is aimed at Galway City-based community groups of place or of interest that wish to develop and deliver creative projects that promote active participation, understanding of creativity, and creative engagement within their communities.

We favour collaborations and strongly encourage cross-sectoral projects, for example communities working with professional creative practitioners to guide their process of development and/or delivery. This can include showcasing the cultural practices of the community to wider audiences outside their community. The project should demonstrate what is possible when working together. The open call will be open in mid April.

4.27 Creative Ireland Creative Climate Action Fund II

The Arts Office in partnership with the Climate and Environment Section and University of Galway made an application to the Creative Climate Action Fund II - Strand 2 - Ignite. This funding strand is suitable for those with experience in delivering public engagement projects at scale and are proposing durational projects with extensive public participation. Applicants may be eligible for grants between €50,000 and €250,000.

4.28 Strand 2 - Creative Place Research and Development

This award is a one-off award and covers research fees and consultation costs. The maximum you can apply for is €35,000. In 2023 it is anticipated that up to three awards will be made. Creative Places is a programme for places around Ireland that have not had opportunities to benefit from sustained investment in the arts and creativity. In line with Galway City Council Arts Plan and the remit of Galway Culture Company, the objectives of the Arts Council of Ireland's Creative Places Programme aligns with our core objectives;

- investment in places that have had fewer opportunities to take part in the arts.
- inclusive and diverse, programmes rooted in socially engaged arts practice and community-development principles.
- build on existing cultural strengths and be led by community participation and ideas.
- involve people who are often excluded

The Arts Council's objective in expanding its Creative Places programme is to invest in places (such as towns, villages, suburbs, rural places) that have had fewer opportunities to take part in the arts. Creative Places should be inclusive and diverse, with programmes rooted in socially engaged arts practice and community-development principles. Successful applicants will build on existing cultural strengths and be led by community participation and ideas. In particular, they will look to involve people who are often excluded.

4.29 Decade of Centenaries

Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 - Galway City Council 2023 Programme. The Decade of Centenaries Programme was initiated in 2012 and complements the on-going programme of annual State commemorations. This year is the final year of commemorations, and we have an exciting program of events to mark it. The centenaries programme is broad and inclusive, highlighting the economic and social conditions of the period, the shifts in cultural norms, and the experience of the Irish abroad. The Culture Division, under direction from Minister Catherine Martin, TD, at the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media has responsibility for the coordination and support of the initiative.

The Culture & Creativity Team has received final confirmation of funding from Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media of its programme of activities recently submitted for 2023, Galway City Council has secured funding of €50,000 for an exciting programme of Decade of Centenaries events. Following an application process in March, the City Council has approved a range of proposals, outlined below.

4.30 Reflections – A commemoration to the Women of 1923

A series of talks and residencies exploring and reflecting on the role, experiences, expectations of women, and their contribution to events that occurred during a significant period in Irish History. The event schedule is:

Programme of Public Talks – Galway City Museum, September 2023

Residencies – Galway City Library, Westside Library, Ard Family Resource Centre, Doughiska – September to December 2023

Public Presentation - *Saint Nicholas' Collegiate Church*, December 2023

More detail to follow.

4.31 Material Culture of the Irish Revolution & The End of the Civil War – Education Events

These events will focus on the local aspect of the war of independence, the treaty debates, and the civil war, and are suitable for a variety of audiences.

The End of the Civil War & the Executions at Tuam Barracks

Saturday 15 April, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

On 11 April 1923, five anti-treaty IRA Volunteers from Galway – Francis Cunnane (23), Michael Monaghan (22), Martin Moylan (24), John Newell (29) and James

O'Malley (25) – were executed at Tuam Barracks, having been found guilty by a Free State Military Court of the unlawful possession of arms and ammunition. Join historian Cormac Ó Comhraí, author of *Sa Bhearna Bhaoil: Gaillimh 1913–1923*, as he discusses the executed men, the end of the Irish Civil War and its legacy. It is envisaged that this talk will be podcast and made available on the Museum website.

Suitable for Ages 12+ (booking required)

LIVING-HISTORY WORKSHOP: Material Culture of the Irish Revolution

Tuesday 25 to Friday 28 April, 10.30am to 12pm & 1pm to 2.30pm

Between the Easter Rising of 1916 and the end of the Civil War in 1923 Ireland experienced a political and military struggle that led to the foundation of the Irish Free State. To mark the centenary of the end of the Civil War, Galway City Museum invites secondary schools to a special living-history workshop. Accompanied by Museum staff, pupils will visit the *Revolution in Galway, 1913–1923* and the *War of Friends, 1922–1923* exhibitions to learn about some of the Galway personalities and stories connected to the struggle for independence. Afterwards Dave Swift of *Claíomh* will give a living-history demonstration of the material culture of the Irish revolution, giving pupils the opportunity of getting up close and hands-on with items from the period. Suitable for second-level students

DROP-IN SHOW AND TELL: Material Culture of the Irish Revolution

Saturday 29 April, 11am to 1pm

Between the Easter Rising of 1916 and the end of the Civil War in 1923 Ireland experienced a political and military struggle that led to the foundation of the Irish Free State. To mark the centenary of the end of the Civil War, Dave Swift of *Claíomh* will give a drop-in living-history demonstration of the material culture of the Irish revolution. Suitable for All Ages

TALK & DISPLAY: Material Culture of the Irish Revolution

Saturday 29 April, 2pm to 3.30pm

Between the Easter Rising of 1916 and the end of the Civil War in 1923 Ireland experienced a political and military struggle that led to the foundation of the Irish Free State. To mark the centenary of the end of the Civil War, Dave Swift of *Claíomh* will give an interactive talk and living-history demonstration of the material culture of the Irish revolution.

4.32 Digitalisation of Fr Michael Griffin (1892-1920) Collection at Galway City Museum

Fr Michael Griffin is a very significant figure in the history of Galway and in Ireland's struggle for independence. His killing in Galway in 1920 made headlines nationally and internationally at the time.

Galway City Museum has recently acquired very complete collection of objects associated with Fr Griffin including some of his clerical vestments, his personal effects such as his driving licence and grooming kit, correspondence with family and his library of books, most of which are signed by him. The collection also includes an interesting series of telegrams dated during his disappearance and the aftermath when his body was discovered as many people offered condolences to the family. The collection is interesting from a political point of view as it includes his Sinn Féin membership card and a Fáinne showing his dedication to the Irish language and culture. Also includes family memorabilia after his death and commemorations afterwards. Working with an accredited conservationist, this collection will be conserved, catalogued, and photographed. The result will be published on Galway City Museum's website.

4.33 Clean and seal Liam Mellows Statue

Liam Mellows is a significant figure in the history of Galway City for both the War of Independence and the Civil War. He is commemorated locally with the renaming of Renmore Barracks, a housing estate, and the erection of a statue in 1957. The location of this statue is one of prominence, and it is a traditional site used by a range of different groups that relate to the foundation of the Irish state. Galway City Council will work to renovate the statue through a cleaning process that will remove algae, dirt, etc, from the statue and present this important commemorative statue to the people of Galway City, and the various groups who interact with the statue, at a high standard.



Recognising the significant role that Liam Mellows played in this part of the Nation's history, the council has determined that exhibiting the statue in the best possible way is appropriate as we end our decade of commemorations. It is expected that a range of groups will organise their annual Easter commemorative events culminating with events at the statue at different times over the Easter weekend. Information on finalised dates and time for these Decade of Centenaries events will be available at www.galwaycity.ie and Galway City Council Social Media streams.

Cultural Infrastructure Projects Update

4.34 Nun's Island Theatre & The Manse

€200,000 has been allocated as assistance for repairs to Nun's Island Theatre & The Manse under the Historic Structures Fund 2023 by Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, TD. Galway City Council will receive funding of €100,000 per year for 2023 and 2024 to make permanent repairs to the following elements: windows, external walls, external doorcase & fanlight, internal structural elements & decorative features and repairs to the roof & eaves.

In addition to supporting owners and custodians of historic and protected structures to safeguard and maintain their properties, this funding also provides a welcome boost to local construction and heritage trades by facilitating works with a total value of over €8m nationally and generating more employment (an estimated 11,250 days' labour), including for specialist heritage roles such as thatching and stonework. The HSF is one of two built heritage funding schemes which work in partnership with owners and the 31 local authorities to protect our built heritage – a key aim of Heritage Ireland 2030, the new national heritage plan launched by the Minister last year. By providing grants of between €15,000 and €200,000, the HSF assists owners of heritage structures – including those on the local authorities' Record of Protected Structures and those in Architectural Conservation Areas – to meet their obligations to care for their properties. The scheme provides assistance to a wide range of heritage structures, including castles, churches, mills, bridges, shopfronts, and thatch structures, as well as to private houses.

4.35 TOWN HALL THEATRE

Town Hall Theatre had a busy first quarter in 2023, with performances and events by many leading local and national companies and performers and building on the momentum of a busy year end in 2022. Highlights of an eclectic programme included Renmore Pantomime who, after a two-year absence arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, got the year off to a great start with a string of sell-out performances. Our theatre programme featured critically acclaimed drama by Branar Téatar do Pháistí. Blue Raincoat, Druid, Fishamble, Mikel Murfi, Niamh Mc Grath, Patrick Cullivan and emerging local companies Hysteria and SamePage.

Our comedy line up featured Jason Byrne, David O 'Doherty, Neil Delamere, Dermot Whelan, Joe Rooney star of Fr. Ted, and Polish comedy star Olka Szczesniak. The Irish Chamber Orchestra performed as part of the Music for Galway Midwinter Festival and musicals from Salerno, Colaiste na Coiribe, Colaiste Baile Chlair and Galway University Musical Society all attracted full houses as did performances by Sharon Shannon, Francis Black, Mary Coughlan, Jack L, Finbar Wright, The Fureys, the Joe Dolan Family Band and Derek Ryan. A magical children's show by Galway's Jason Ryan, a special concert for children by The Speks and an appearance by RTE2 TV star magician Joe Daly all drew large audiences.

For many, the highlight of the January to March season were the two performances of Swan Lake by the Ukraine National Ballet for Peace, from Odessa, with some very emotional scenes after each performance as the group sang their national anthem and were joined in the singing by members of the Ukrainian community now living in Galway. Many Ukrainian refugees also participated in our weekly dance and drum workshops delivered on four Fridays in March by Catherine Young, these workshops were designed to bring together refugees, people living in Direct Provision Centres and Galwegians under the one roof and were a great success, oversubscribed each week.

4.36 GALWAY CITY MUSEUM

Planning: In March the capital development - Museum Extension Project - continued apace with building and exhibition design review workshops and meetings throughout the month. Fortnightly meetings also took place with Fáilte Ireland. The Energy Audit that was completed for the building in January, was further considered and an outline plan was discussed for next steps.

Events: RTE @ the Museum - On March 8th, Galway City Museum was the main venue for Galway City Council's hosted, RTE Today Show with Maura Derrane, who was onsite with her production team for the day. Ruairí Lehmann, Thomas Melly and the Community and Culture team curated the programme with great additional help from Parks who helped the museum team to spruce up the outdoor space.

On March 20th - Dearthán Media came onsite to film a section of their BBC/TG4 Programme – Iarsmaí at the museum. All of the staff were pressed into action and the museum director was interviewed for the programme. On Thursdays throughout March, Galway City Museum hosted the University of Galway School of Geography, Archaeology & Irish Studies Spring Lunchtime Lecture Series which took place 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 March, with around 40-45 people attending each lecture. On Saturday 18 March – beginners sean-nós dance workshop with Emma O'Sullivan were fully subscribed. On Saturday 25 March – Zoe Roseby, TCD gave a lecture on climate change and the Línthe na Farraige exhibition (29 attendees) Brendan McGowan attended outreach events at Westside Resource Centre (GCM) and Renmore ICA on 7 March (Mellows and Ó Máille) and on the 30th March – made a presentation to Irish Community Archive Network (iCAN) on Community

Exhibitions. CURAM MedTech Exhibition, in partnership with Galway City Museum. In conjunction with CÚRAM, the SFI Research Centre for Medical Devices, Galway City Museum continued the development of an exhibition to profile the impact of medical device research and technology in Ireland and tell the story of how the west of Ireland has become one of the top 5 hubs for 'MedTech' research and development worldwide. The project budget is €350,000 through a Science Foundation Ireland grant. The exhibition is scheduled to open in Qtr. 2 2023.

Traveller Engagement Project: The project continued with partners, Galway Traveller Movement, Mincéir Whiden Society and West Trav with the model of a Traveller Encampment being completed this month. The model continued to be displayed in the museum foyer in March.

Ó' Máille/Mellows Exhibition: The exhibition which features rare photographs and several objects connected to both figures continued in March. Highlights include a revolver gifted by Michael Collins to Ó Maille on his wedding day and the last letter of Liam Mellows, written to his mother, Sarah, shortly before his execution. The letter, which is on loan from the National Museum of Ireland, has never before been on

public display. Produced as part of Galway City Council's Decade of Centenaries Programme 2023, the exhibition is funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. It will run until May 2023, the centenary of the end of the Irish Civil War.

4.37 LEISURELAND

Amusement site: Curry's Amusements moved back into the amusement site and will open on St Patrick's Day, 17th March. He will open on weekends until July and August when he will open every day for the summer season. Discussions are to take place regarding the site for the upcoming winter season.

Event Hall: The event hall had a slow start in January following the wedding show cancellation, but bookings gathered pace from February on. In February we hosted - London Music Orchestra, Foil Arms and Hog comedy show, The High Kings, Paul Heaton and Charity event for Syria In March we have - Miniature World Expo, Jehovah Witness Conference, Bingo Loco, Mario Rosenstock comedy show and The Marty Party. April - The Galway Mind Body Experience Workshops, Boxing Gala, National Children's Choir, Bingo Loco and The Rock Orchestra. May - Jurassic Live Children's Show, Music for Galway Orchestra and Irish National Opera. Trad on the prom will return with their Irish dance shows three days a week from May. All other groups including Baby Sensory and Phoenix Stage School are still operating their classes weekly.

Pool Hall: The Leisureland Swim Academy this term has 1,793 children learning to swim each week, the highest number again, since the Academy started in 2015. The pools are very heavily booked and Schools etc. have already fully booked up the pools until June 2023, which was never the case before. We have reorganised the pool timetable for September in order to accommodate additional schools that are trying to access our schools swim programme. We successfully initiated our pool inflatable fun session with a brand-new pool inflatable. This now operates every weekend. We also had a Connaught Primary School Gala in January and GSC Future Challenger Gala in March. The Beach guard examinations will take place in Leisureland on 25th March. Leisureland will also run Easter swim camps for children, through the Easter break.

Potential works: We are investigating further Asset Management and Energy Team works comprising of the foyer re-roofing, air handling units and renovating the Event Hall entrance and facilities. We are carrying out repairs on the mini golf along with a full resurfacing of the artificial grass to have ready for the summer season. We are replacing all the pneumatic vales in the Leisure Pool so that all the pool features will operate again.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

4.38 Galway City Mayors Awards 2023

The 20th Annual Mayor's Awards opened for nominations to mark outstanding contributions made by individuals, community and voluntary groups across Galway City. Nominations were received across the different categories in line with the closing date of Friday 24th March 2023. Work is now underway to prepare for and consider each nomination received, with the judging panel scheduled to meet in early May 2023. All nominees will be presented with an individually designed Mayoral Certificate at the Awards Ceremony which will be held on Wednesday 24th May 2023 in the Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill where the Mayor of Galway City Cllr. Clodagh Higgins will announce the winners including the Galway City Volunteer of the Year Award.

4.39 Healthy Age Friendly Homes Phase 2

Healthy Age Friendly Homes have secured agreement for 50 additional positions nationally within local authorities. Taking onboard learnings from the pilot phase, 6 Regional Managers and 44 Local Coordinators will be recruited in phase 2. The decision to establish 6 regional managers is in line with Age Friendly Ireland existing structures and aligns with the Regional Health Areas. Each local authority will receive at least 1 local coordinator to work on the programme and assist with progressing age friendly homes across the community.

4.40 Creativity in Older Age Scheme 2023

Research by The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) at Trinity College Dublin, which was commissioned by the Creative Ireland Programme and the Institute of Public Health (IPH) examined the implications for health and wellbeing of arts and creativity in later life. Both reports found a positive association between creative engagement and health and wellbeing. The TILDA report found that older adults who participate in creative activities enjoyed a higher quality of life and were less likely to be lonely, depressed, and stressed than their contemporaries who did not, while the IPH report found that participation in group arts and creativity interventions helps to support the physical, mental, and social aspects of ageing. The Creative Ireland Programme developed and implemented the *Creativity in Older Age* scheme in 2020 to support specific creative initiatives to support positive ageing and wellbeing programmes for older people, taking account of public health guidance in the community and for healthcare facilities. This initiative has run yearly since its inception and has been renewed for 2023 as social isolation continues to affect older citizens *particularly in rural areas* and this scheme seeks to address this issue by bringing creative engagement to citizens rather than them having seek it out.

For more information, and expressions of interest, contact creativeireland@galwaycoco.ie

4.41 Africa Day 2023

Africa Day, the annual celebration of the continent's cultures and people, falls on May 25th each year. Irish Aid at the Department of Foreign Affairs partners with local authorities around Ireland to organise events aimed at marking this special and unique day. On March 30th, funding of €11,800 was announced to Galway City Council towards this year's activities. The following groups will be running events: AMDAF - Amdalah Africa Foundation; FAI - Football Association of Ireland; GAD - Galway African Diaspora; Shining Light; AUG - Africa United Galway; Galway City Baptist Church.



4.42 LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

The LCDC met in March and considered funding proposals under the Community Support Fund and Community Recognition Fund. The LCDC also approved the SICAP Annual Plan 2023 and the Annual Performance Review of SICAP 2022 & SICAP Annual Progress Report 2022. The LCDC Annual Report 2022 was also approved and subsequently noted by Council at the March meeting. An update on the LECP was provided together with an update on the Galway City Ukrainian Community Response. The LECP Advisory Group met in March to review progress on the development of the LECP 2024 – 2029. The 5 high level goals were agreed in 2022 following the consultation process and the AG considered objectives under

goals 2 and 5 and agreed the broad format for the Framework LECP and Implementation Plan and a timetable for completion of the Plan in 2023.

4.43 GALWAY CITY COMMUNITY NETWORK / GALWAY VOLUNTEER CENTRE

4.43.1 Galway Volunteer Centre

263 new members of the public registered with GVC in 2023 to date including 11 new organisations using the service. 41 new volunteer roles were identified and 199 people completed Garda vetting. GVC assisted participation of the Ukrainian community in the St. Patricks Day parade and agreement being reached with GTI for use of Claddagh House facility for larger workshops. GVC Staff assisted with the establishment of Women for Integration community group to enable additional activities to take place in wider community. GVC also assisted with anniversary commemorations, events for International Women's Day and engaged with Galway Professional Business Women's network to assist Ukrainian women with business set up advice. GVC granted €4,763 in funding to financially assist other groups in securing regular venue space for activities. Community Volunteers also assisted with St. Patricks Day parade, Mayors Awards photo launch and Galway Music Residency, and assisted with Mental Health Ireland Campaign in Ceannt Station. GVC are currently recruiting for a Community Decarbonisation Worker.



The 2023 National Volunteer Management Conference will take place on Wednesday 26th April at the University of Galway. With a wide range of national and international speakers, the conference will be an opportunity to learn more about best practice in volunteer engagement and management. This major annual event for volunteer managers and anyone who engages volunteers as part of their role is a chance to meet fellow volunteer managers, network and learn from your peers. Nine masterclasses and panel discussions are scheduled including how to market your volunteer programme, embrace change to reach today's volunteers; learning about trauma informed volunteer management and how your organisation could benefit from employee volunteering. Panel discussions on youth volunteering and engaging

volunteers with a disability will provide an opportunity to learn and discuss with organisations and volunteers who will share their experiences and stories. Contact lucie@volunteer.ie for further information.

4.43.2 Galway City Community Network

GCCN offers ongoing support to all its representatives and continues to hold monthly Secretariat meetings. The first Plenary meeting of 2023 was held on 29th March at the Menlo Park Hotel where the election for a GCCN representative on the Economic SPC was held. GCCN continues to support new and existing members and provides targeted information to its membership. GCCN strives to engage groups who are the most marginalised and seek their participation. Additionally, in collaboration with the Galway County PPN, GCCN continues to hold Active Travel meetings, with the fifth meeting of this series planned.

GCCN supports and promotes the engagement of its membership with relevant training opportunities that will build their capacity to work in their communities. A programme of training is developed in collaboration with Galway City Partnership and GRETB. Galway Volunteer will also provide a series of four collaborative bitesize workshops targeted at GCCN members between April and June 2023. Governance Training will also be provided in 2023. Two Induction sessions for GCCN members will be scheduled in the coming weeks. The National PPN Awareness Campaign was rolled out at the end of February. As a result, all PPN logos across the country have been renewed. GCCN is a member of the National Communications Subgroup established by the Department of Rural and Community Development to oversee and input into the development of this communications campaign. This will continue in the coming weeks with radio and newspaper releases locally and nationally.

GCCN continues to attend the meetings of the Standing Together Against Direct Provision (STAD) and to work on the Communities Against Racism Initiative. In March, GCCN attended the Launch of the [Communities against Racism and Discrimination Network](#). This network was founded by several organisations in Galway, including GCCN, Galway Traveller Movement, Galway City Partnership, Galway Council of Trade Unions and groups such as Galway Anti-Racism Network, Amach! LGBTI+ Galway, University of Sanctuary and Community Knowledge Initiative UoG who have come together to promote inclusion in our wider communities and oppose racism and discrimination in all its forms. The first event organised by this group was a Solidarity Rally held on March 25th. GCCN are continuing to engage with NASC and the University of Sanctuary in regard to community sponsorship of a refugee to attend University of Galway.

A [communications campaign](#) aimed at highlighting local female activists was held on March 8 to mark the International Women's Day. GCCN was delighted to showcase Nora Corcoran – Galway Traveller Movement; Islammiyah Saudique-Kadejo - Amdalah Africa Foundation-Amdaf Ireland; Caroline Stanley – Friends of Merlin Woods; Marian Maloney – Access for All; Fiona McDonagh – Delaney - AMACH! LGBTI+ Galway for their work on advocating for minority rights, environmental protection, disability awareness and preserving Traveller heritage.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND FUNDING

4.44 Community Support Fund

The Community Support Fund (CSF) is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development to support groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas with: Current costs including non-pay running costs such as energy costs (electricity costs, refuse charges, heating charges) or other non-pay operating costs for e.g., rental/lease costs, insurance bills; Capital costs - carrying out necessary repairs and improvements to facilities, purchase equipment for e.g., such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies, and training equipment etc. The Community Support Fund grants were approved by the Galway City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) at the LCDC Meeting on Wednesday 1st March 2023. Funding of €278,199 was approved to 74 local community and voluntary groups / organisations from across Galway city under the Community Support Fund & Women's Sheds Fund 2023. Groups have until Friday 28th July 2023 to drawdown their allocated grants.

4.45 Community Safety Innovation Fund

The Department of Justice recently announced funding under the 2023 Community Safety Innovation Fund (CSIF) funding call. €3 million has been made available to support the development of community safety through innovative, local community-based initiatives.

The Community Safety Innovation Fund will allow proceeds of crime to be directed into community projects to support community safety; ensure that the most appropriate proposals to improve community safety will access the funding they need; encourage the development of innovative ways in which to improve community safety from those people who best understand local community safety needs; allow best practice on community safety and youth justice to be shared with other partnerships and communities nationally as new proposals are developed; reflect and highlight the success of An Garda Síochána and the Criminal Assets Bureau in seizing the proceeds from criminal activity.

The fund can include activities intended to tackle crime or reduce the fear of crime; improve community safety and feelings of safety, support the creation of safe and resilient communities, reduce reoffending and divert vulnerable individuals away from engagement in criminal behaviour. Grants will be in the range of €20,000 - €150,000 and applications will be invited from community safety initiatives as well as groups co-funded with local authorities, NGOs and community organisations working on issues relevant to community safety and youth justice. Applications may be submitted by individual organisations or by a consortium involving two or more organisations where the lead partner is a community organisation, not-for-profit, social enterprise or similar with a remit relevant to community safety and/or youth justice. Further details from: CommunitySafetyInnovationFund@justice.ie

4.46 UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

4.46.1 Offer A Home Scheme

The Offer a Home Scheme was launched nationally in November 2022 and focuses on vacant properties suitable for non-shared accommodation for Displaced Ukrainians. A tax-free recognition payment of €800 per month is available for such properties offered through the scheme. Interested parties register their interest on the offer-a-home website, and the Local Authority coordinates the process with the property owner from there – further details are available here:

<https://offerahome.ie/?faq=1>.

To date, 18 properties have been registered in Galway City, of which 14 properties qualified as non-shared options. Properties which did not qualify under the scheme have been referred to the DCEDIY and Irish Red Cross, depending on their status. With the assistance of Galway City Partnership, 43 displaced Ukrainians have so far been accommodated in 10 of the registered properties. The remaining 4 properties will be coming on-stream for allocation in April and May 2023.



4.47 HEALTHY GALWAY CITY

HGC has partnered with Galway Sports Partnership (GSP), the GCC Arts Office, Volunteer Galway and Galway City Partnership to coordinate the Ukrainian Refugee Health and Wellbeing Support Fund on behalf of the Ukrainian Community Response Forum. Activities to promote health and wellbeing of Ukrainian refugees living in Galway city are currently being offered. These include dance workshops, drama workshops, singing workshops, Nature for Health programme, Toddler Circus, Family Circus and Art Therapy. HGC is coordinating the Safefood Community Food Initiatives 2023. The CFI Steering Group met in February to plan two community events and two smaller projects to promote healthy eating and nutrition in disadvantaged communities. The Westside walking group, supported by HGC and GSP runs Thursdays @ 10 am.

4.48 COMHAIRLE NA NÓg

The Galway City Comhairle na nÓg committee continue to meet weekly in the training room in City Hall on Monday evenings to work on the topic for 2023, which is Physical Disabilities and Accessibility. Galway City Council have recently received approval of funding for 2023 of €25,000 under the Comhairle na nÓg Development Fund, which is overseen by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and administered in conjunction with Pobal. For more information on the work of Galway City Comhairle na nÓg, please follow the social media pages.

<https://www.facebook.com/GalwayCityComhairleNanOg>

<https://www.instagram.com/galwaycitycomhairle/>

4.49 GALWAY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP



GSP held its Annual General Meeting on 8th March in the Maldron Hotel. Presented at the meeting were the 2022 draft annual report, financial report 2022 and a draft operational plan for 2023. Following the AGM an ordinary meeting of the Steering Group was held where a number of working groups were established in order to deliver on some of the actions under the operational plan.

GSP announced the Club Development Grant for 2023. This scheme supports clubs and community groups to encourage those who are not currently involved in sport to become more active with particular emphasis on; women and girls, older adults (over 55yrs), the unemployed, people from disadvantaged backgrounds/areas and people with disabilities. Please see this [link](#) for the application.

GSP as part of the National Networks of 29 Local Sports Partnerships supported the Federation of Irish Sport's Sports Volunteer of the Year Awards 2022. A ceremony took place in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Dublin to recognise the winners from each county. Catherine Moore was the Galway winner and a worthy winner. Catherine has given over 20 years to both her club, Greenfield Hockey Club and Hockey in general. Catherine was accompanied by her family on the day along with GSP Chairperson, Cllr. Gabe Connelly and GSP coordinator, Jason Craughwell



5. Environment & Climate Change

Environmental Awareness

5.1 National Spring Clean 2023

Applications are still open for An Taisces National Spring Clean which is being held again in April. In 2022, 5,640 groups registered to carry out clean-ups throughout the country - Volunteers who participated in the Spring Clean 2022 collected an estimated 2,600 tonnes of litter. Galway City Council support the spring clean by collecting the bags around the City. For more information visit: <https://nationalspringclean.org/>

5.2 Greening the laneways

Greening the laneways has been shortlisted for a national LAMA award, which are to be held in Clonmel on the 15th of April. It has been shortlisted in the Best Green Sustainable Initiative Category. More information can be found here: <https://lamaawards.ie/shortlists/>



5.3 Clean it up you dirty pup!

A call out to Residents Association's, businesses, and community groups is taking place in April. Groups will be asked to circle dog fouls in their area and the Community service will stencil the footpath and put-up signage in these areas. Galway City and County Council are also developing a joint cinema advert on dog fouling in an effort to deal with this challenging area.

5.4 Green-Schools

A total of 16 Schools successfully renewed their Green Schools flag for this year. Of them, 2 new schools are receiving their flag for the first time-Scoil Fhursa, Nile lodge

and Abalta Special needs School in Parkmore. Both have completed the Litter and Waste theme.

5.5 Amenity Grants 2023

The applications for amenity grants have now closed and a total of 92 applications were received from Residents Associations and community gardens. The grants will now be processed, and payment issued before the end of June.

5.6 Community Clean Ups Rebrand



The environment team has been liaising closely with Customer services and ICT to rebrand the Spring Clean community clean ups to Galway Community clean ups. It was quite confusing for the public and GCC staff to have GCC's Spring clean as well as An Taisce's National Spring Clean. A new website has been developed and IT are in the process of creating an online application form. For more information see <https://www.galwaycity.ie/community-cleanup>

5.7 Automatic Public Convenience

The changing place facility in Ladies Beach is nearing completion with final snags/defects to be closed out. Ongoing engagement occurs with Healthmatic in relation to any maintenance issues that may arise in an effort to ensure that such issues are dealt with promptly.

5.8 Litter Management

There is a significant increase in the amount of cardboard being collected by GCC staff in the City Centre. This cardboard originates from Businesses that leave it out for collection overnight. The cardboard bundles are being ripped open and thrown around the streets. GCC will actively engage with Businesses over the coming weeks to discuss and hopefully establish sustainable solutions to the issue.

The roof of the toilet block in Eyre Square is cleared daily of rubbish being stored on top of it. The instances on rubbish being found there have now greatly reduced.

Bin Improvements – 20 no. solar compactor bins will have their solar panel protection covers refurbished as some are in poor condition. These works will help to freshen up these bins within the city centre.

Bins continue to be vandalised on a regular basis. This includes graffiti, political posters, advertising posters and damage to the cigarette holders on the sides of the bins. It has been noted that there is a significant increase in the number of Posters been stuck on the bins, which when removed leave glue residue which is difficult to take off. Community wardens are currently investigating any leads to this vandalism.

Galway City Councils Street cleaning crews commenced a trial deep clean across the City Centre. This initiative commenced on Wednesday 8th March from 5.00am to 8.00am and targeted Williamsgate Street, Williams Street, Castle Street, Shop Street, Upper & Lower Abbeygate Street, Churchyard Street, Mainguard Street, High Street & Quay Street. This involves a tractor and bowser bringing water to be brushed by road sweepers with bio-friendly degreaser to remove dirt, grease and grime.





5.9 Markets/Casual Trading

The first quarterly meeting with the St. Nicholas Traders Committee took place on 14.03.2023. The Market Trader Committee are happy with the new additional stalls to the St. Nicholas Market on Saturday and Sunday. There have been no complaints from the Warden's weekly inspections to date this year. The Eyre Square North Market has no complaints to report.

The Casual Trading Bye Law 2022 review submissions portal opened on 06.03.2023 and remained open for submissions until 4.00pm on 14.04.2023. 20 submissions have been received up to 13th April 2023 and 185 individuals have reviewed the online Portal up to 13th April 2023.

5.10 Waste Enforcement

Local authorities have been notified of the revised Waste Enforcement Priorities for 2022-2024 (Circular WP 07/22). They are as follows:

- Tackling significant illegal waste activity
- Construction and demolition activity
- End-of-Life Vehicles (ELV) Directive & the Waste Metal Industry
- Waste Collection – Household & Commercial
- Producer Responsibility Initiatives and additional local priorities

Galway City Council has a plan of inspections and work programme for 2023, aligned with these waste enforcement priorities and in line with annual Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) process.

The environmental sector is a busy one and it is anticipated that there will be additional demands on local authority staff in 2023, relating to new legislation (such as the Circular Economy Act), new plans (such as the National Waste Management Plan and the River Basin Management Plan), new schemes (such as Single Use Plastics and Deposit Return Schemes) and emerging work programmes relating to climate action. This challenge will be addressed through team planning and regular reviews. The Council will ensure that a level of flexibility and responsiveness exists within its work plans to deal with additional tasks and unexpected events.

Galway City Council remains cognisant of the challenge that Covid19 presents to the delivery of local government services. In addition, legacy issues associated with the pandemic remain as households and businesses try to recover from the last 3 years. This challenge will be addressed through regular reviews and risk assessment, as was carried out in previous years, to ensure that the maximum number of inspections can be carried out in a safe and appropriate manner.

The main responsibility for managing and co-ordinating the plan, including continual monitoring throughout the year, rests with the Environment Department.

Some work tasks relating to water quality are carried out by the Recreation & Amenity Department and responsibility for the Noise Action Plan lies with the Transport & Infrastructure Department. RMCEI work also links directly to the work of Irish Water, our Water Services Department and the Council's Planning Department.

Challenges remain, the presentation of waste bags in Galway's City Centre has been identified as an area for investigation and action. As well as the litter problems associated with bags presented early for collection, rough sleepers often empty the bags looking for cardboard and seagulls can destroy the bags. This relates to NEP Household and Commercial Waste and, in 2023, Galway City Council will prioritise patrols and inspections relating to this matter and will review the Council's Wheelie Bin Exemption Procedures, in conjunction with the waste industry.

Galway City Council will remain open to working with other authorities and bodies in 2023 on work not yet planned and a level of flexibility has been built into the RMCEI 2023 Plan to facilitate this. For example, in 2022, Galway City Council engaged with Southern WERLA on 2 projects (aggregate sampling & ENVA remedial work project), neither of these projects were planned for in RMCEI 2022.

6. Financial Report

The unaudited Annual Financial Statements for 2022 have been completed. Revenue Expenditure and Income has been within budget and there was a surplus of €69,052 for the year ended 31st December 2022.

The Local Government Auditor has commenced some preliminary Audit work with regards to 2022 and this continued during March 2023.

Capital Expenditure of €8.7m has been incurred in so far in 2023 and has been across the following areas:

- Housing Construction and Acquisitions,
- Housing Adaption Grants
- Road traffic Improvements
- Bridge works

Approval for an overdraft limit of €8m was sanctioned by the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government for 2023 and Galway City Council had recourse to this facility for 4 days in March 2023 up to a value of €1.1m.

Commercial Rates

2023 rate demands totaling €39,297,819 were issued on the 19th of January to 3,762 customers in Galway City. Receipts to end March amount to €8.88m which is favorable on that collected in the same period previous years.

We continue to offer various payment options and payment plans and promote our direct debit facility, which allows businesses to spread the costs across the year. This year direct debits will be taken over a ten-month period instead of 9 months in previous years, thus reducing instalment amounts, so far we have had a significant increase in customers opting to pay by Direct Debit.

Commercial Rates Revaluation 2023

Further Proposed Valuation Certs (PVC) were issued on 31st March, 25 no. cases in Galway City. These customers did not receive a PVC in September 2022. They relate to properties, mainly in the Medical/Pharma sector. Those businesses will now have a 40-day period to make representations on their proposed valuation certs.

The Valuation Office have advised that all remaining PVCs will issue on the following dates:

- 18th May (270 between all the REVAL counties)
- 27th May (3500 in total between all the REVAL counties)

Housing Rents & Loans

Our collection on Housing Rents to end of March was €2.34m and €386,788 in Loans which is line with same period last year. The standard variable interest rate charged by local authorities to variable rate mortgage holders increased by 1% with effect from 1 April 2023. Notification was issued in March to variable interest customers regarding their change of instalment and were advised to make the necessary arrangements to amend payments. Increased interest rates together with an increase in cost of living may have an impact on repayment capacity, however the Debt Management Unit will work with any customer who faces difficulties in meeting their loan repayments.

6.1 GCC Audit Committee Meeting

The Audit Committee Annual report for 2022 was discussed and approved at the GCC Audit Committee Meeting on the 4th of April. It is included on the agenda for the April Ordinary Council Meeting for the consideration of elected members.

6.2 Draft Annual Financial Statement 2022

The Draft Financial Statement (unaudited) for 2022 has now been finalised. A copy has been circulated to the City Council. The AFS 2022 is included for consideration at the April 2023 meeting under agenda item 2.(j).

7. Other Issues

7.1 The Galway Hydrogen Hub (GH2) Consortium

A consortium which includes SSE Renewables, University of Galway, COLAS, Bus Éireann, Port of Galway, Aer Arann, Aran Island Ferries, and Lasta Mara Teo launched in Q3 2022 a public consultation about developing a hydrogen hub in Galway. The project recognises that hydrogen will have an important role in ensuring net zero is achieved by the decarbonisation of sectors that will be difficult to electrify, including;

- Transportation, especially heavy-duty vehicles e.g., Buses and trucks, in addition to marine and aviation.
- Heating.
- Manufacturing and providing a green alternative to petrol, diesel or natural gas.

The GH2 Consortium is proposing to establish a Hydrogen Valley at the Port of Galway. This pathfinder project will be a first for Ireland. The project aims to act as a regional ecosystem for Galway, linking hydrogen research, production, distribution, and transportation to various end users, such as the transport industry. Work has been ongoing on developing the final design for this project, including connection to green electricity wind generation that is in close proximity to Galway. The consortium envisages lodging a planning application to Galway city Council before the end of June 2023. A drop-in briefing workshop for City Councillors will be organised in the coming weeks. Details will be notified to Councillors in the near future.

7.2 University Hospital Galway – Helicopter Landing Pad

City Councillors will be aware that there has been ongoing communication with the Saolta University Healthcare Group / HSE in relation to its ongoing use of City Council land at Newcastle. In recent months there has been extensive contact between the City Council Executive and Senior Management within the Saolta Group to seek to rectify the current ongoing use of Council lands as a helipad. Correspondence has now been received from the HSE wishing to seek to formalise its use of the land and indicating that negotiations will proceed to seek to propose a solution that addresses the needs of the local community, the Saolta Group, and the City Council. It is hoped that discussions can be expedited over the coming period in order to bring forward a proposal to the City Councillors for consideration by end Q2 2023.

7.3 Official launch of new state agency, Tailte Éireann

On Tuesday 21 March 2023, Minister of State with responsibility for Local Government and Planning, Kieran O'Donnell, officially launched the new state agency Tailte Éireann brought about by the merger of the Property Registration Authority, the Valuation Office, and Ordnance Survey Ireland.

All the functions currently carried out by the Property Registration Authority, the Commissioner of Valuation, the Boundary Surveyor, and Ordnance Survey Ireland will now be performed by Tailte Éireann.

For further information on Tailte Éireann, see <https://www.tailte.ie/>

7.4 Community Centres Investment Fund

The Department of Rural and Community Development recognises the vital role that community centres play at the heart of each community in bringing people together, engaging with those who may be marginalised or disadvantaged, and building stronger, more coherent communities.

The objectives of the Community Centres Investment Fund's New Build Measures are to assist voluntary and community organisations and local authorities to develop high quality, accessible, safe, well-designed, sustainable new build community centres to help develop empowered, inclusive and resilient communities, and to encourage the sharing of community facilities.

The minimum grant funding available from the Fund is €1,000,000 and the maximum is €6,000,000. If the City Council is to consider proceeding with an application under this scheme, it will be necessary to procure an external consultancy to develop and application. The content of such an application is extensive and onerous, particularly in a context of demonstrating compliance with the Public Spending Code. The closing date for submissions is the 3rd of July 2023.

7.5 Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund

A grant was initially awarded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media to Galway City Council to develop a regional aquatic centre at Cappagh Park. The estimated cost of the project has escalated, principally due to inflation from an estimated €17.3 million euros to an estimated cost in the region of €23 million euros. In the context of this increase there are questions surrounding the overall viability of the project both in relation to capital costs and ongoing operational costs. There are also now significant potential adverse impacts from the recent Climate Action Amendment Act in relation to net zero carbon targets.

Following discussions with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the Department indicated that it is open to considering use of the Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund grant of €8.003 million euro elsewhere in Galway City. The Departments agreement in principle partly derives from the

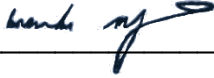
potential risk from a planning consent perspective to the proposed development in Cappagh Park, arising in part from other recent planning decisions made by Bord Pleanála in the general area.

The Department has asked the City Council to reappraise the original proposed project & to approach it again if the Council wishes to relocate the proposed project to a location elsewhere in Galway City. It is a requirement of the Department that the project must be based around a regional aquatic centre. While other possible project elements may be feasible within the project, the core elements of the original project must be preserved. Consequently, all possible options are being examined, and the Council will be provided with updates in due course. The budgetary issue and the Climate Action Amendment Act are significant constraints. This issue warrants full consideration by the City Council in the near future.

8. Notable Dates

Date	Time – Meeting
17/04/2023	15:00 – 18:30 Ordinary Council Meeting
21/04/2023	11:00 – 13:00 Northern & Western Regional Assembly
24/04/2023	11:00 Joint Policing Committee
25/04/2023	10:00 – 11:00 West Ward Area Committee Meeting
26/04/2023	17:00 – 19:00 Local Community Development Committee
28/04/2023	10:00 – 11:00 Central Area Committee Meeting
03/05/2023	14:30 – 15:30 East Area Committee meeting

9. Update on issues arising from previous Council Meetings

Signed: 

Brendan McGrath,
Chief Executive

10th April 2023