



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

TURASCÁIL BAINISTÍOCHTA MANAGEMENT REPORT



Nollaig 2025
December 2025

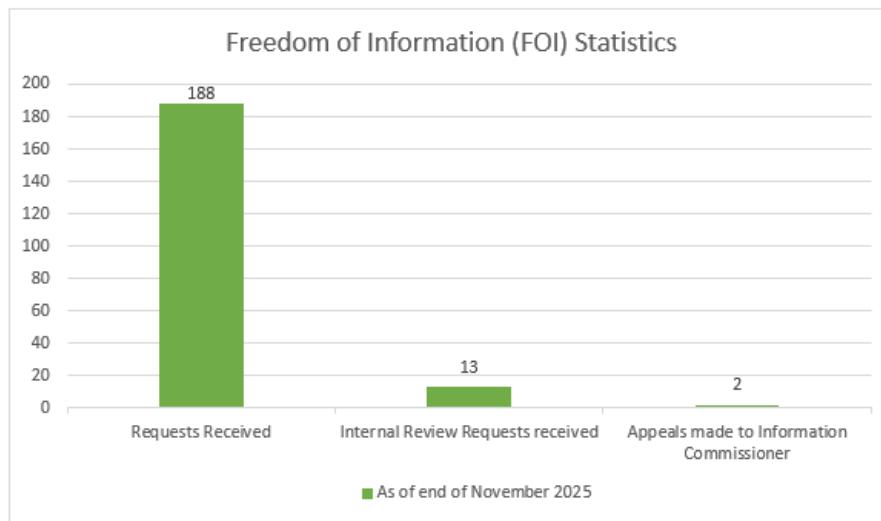
RURAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES AND RURAL, COMMUNITY & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

CORPORATE SERVICES

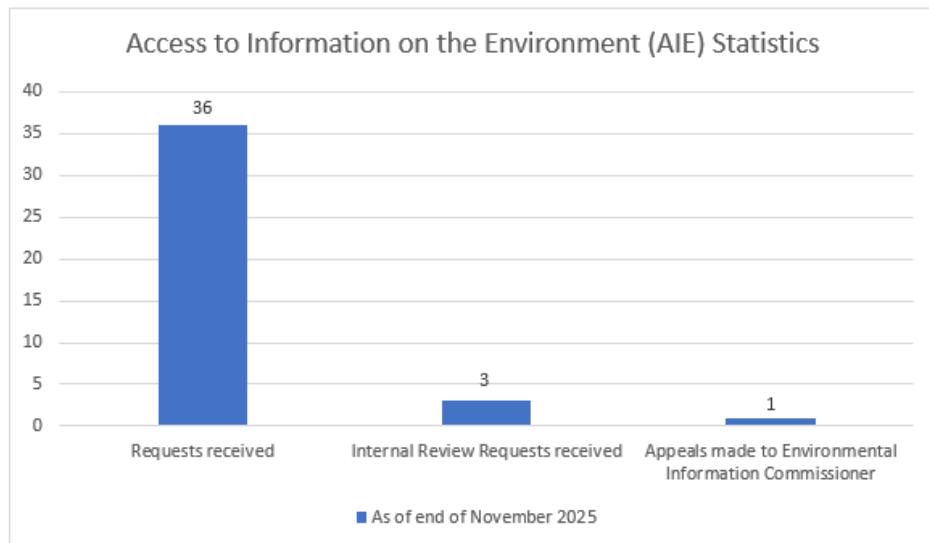
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION & DATA PROTECTION

2025 YEAR TO DATE STATISTICS TO 30.11.2025

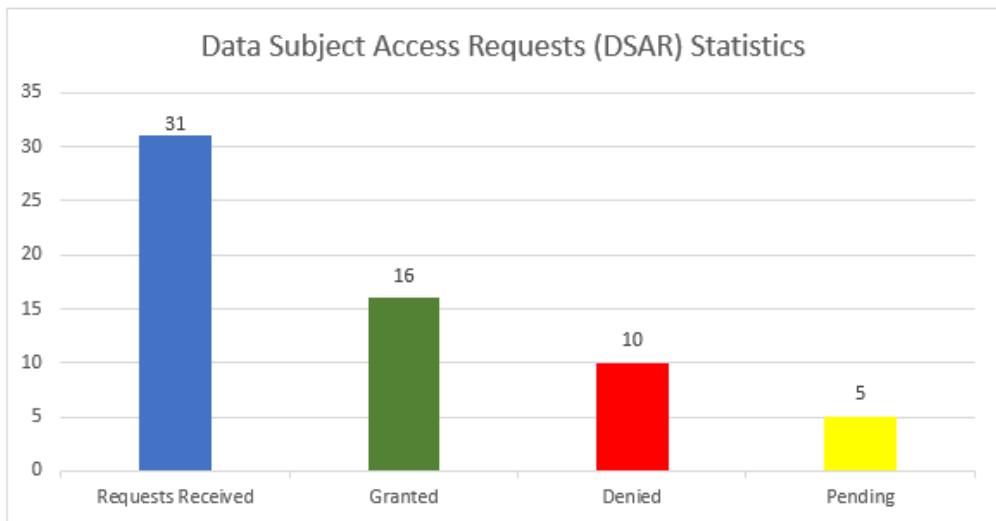
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



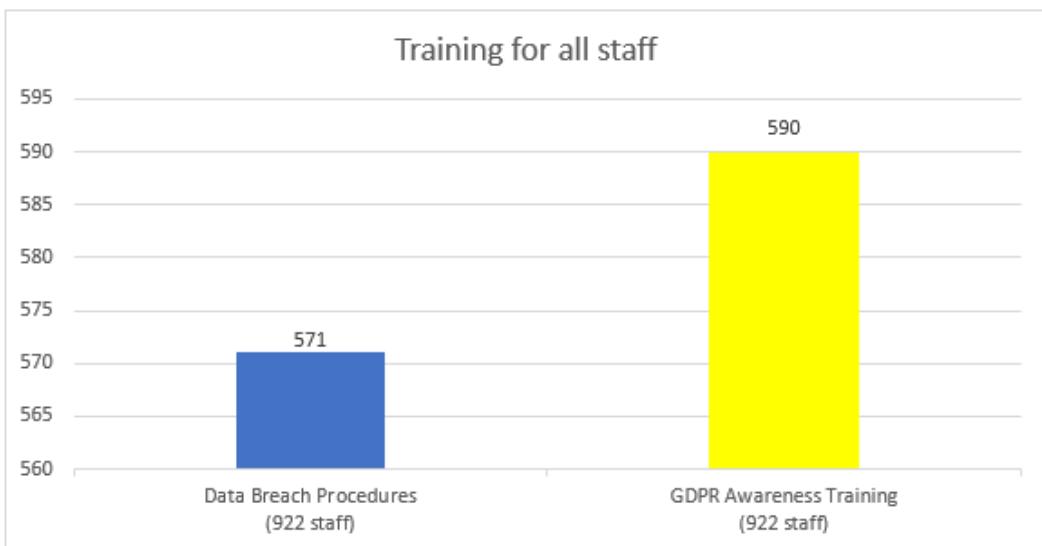
ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT



DATA PROTECTION



- 31 Requests received:
 - 24 Subject Access Requests
 - 5 Third Party Subject Access Requests (An Garda Síochána etc)
 - 1 Data Subject Erasure Request
 - 1 Data Subject Rectification Request
- 16 granted, 10 denied, 5 pending decisions.
- GDPR/Data Protection Training:
 - All staff are required to complete mandatory data protection training throughout the year covering GDPR awareness, cyber security, and data breach procedures. Additionally, two unit-specific courses have been developed for HR and IT teams.
 - In-person sessions were delivered to several units including Water Safety (Lifeguards), Roads, NRPO, Elected members and Management team.



RECREATION AND AMENITIES

PLAYGROUNDS

COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND INSPECTOR TRAINING



Galway County Council, in collaboration with Play Services Ireland, scheduled the second inspector training session for representatives from community playgrounds across the county on Saturday, November 8th with a further 20 community playground inspectors trained.

WATER SAFETY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

WATER SAFETY DURING COLD WEATHER

Our Water Safety Office issued a public advisory in November on Water Safety specifically during Cold Weather. Cold winter waters can cause “cold shock” and hypothermia which can set in within a short period of time. This is especially so if there is a high wind chill factor which can overwhelm even the fittest of swimmers.

Member of the Public are urged to prepare for a winter swim following the below guidance issued through our Social Media channels:



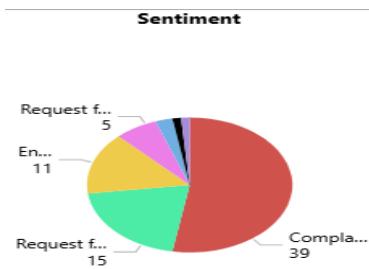
- Immediately before the swim, people should throw cold water on themselves and always ease into the water slowly introducing your body to the low temperature.
- Check local weather forecasts and tides to avoid drowning risks such as rip currents or hypothermia.
- Heed the advice of other seasoned swimmers. If they advise against swimming due to the conditions, then do not enter the water.
- Stay in your depth – know your limits including how long to stay in the water and swim parallel to the shore.
- If you get into trouble lean back in the water, extending your arms and legs, and resisting the urge to thrash around to gain control of your breathing.
- Post-swim it is important to warm up as quickly as possible Be prepared with a dry towel, warm layers and a hot drink following your swim.

If you see a person in difficulty, do not attempt a rescue for which you are not trained. Make use of nearby public rescue equipment such as a ringbuoy.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Customer Services Case Management Tracker has been live since September 15th. To date 74 cases have been logged with 39 of these cases being complaints. This tracker will help us to:

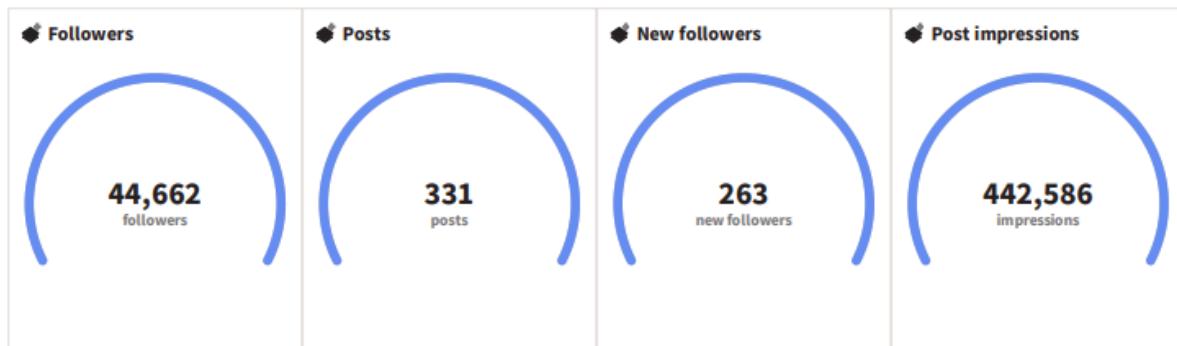
- understand our customers better
- spot trends and opportunities for improvements to aid our pursuit of exceptional customer services delivery day in day out



SOCIAL MEDIA

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

Our Customer Services team, part of Corporate Services, continue to diligently monitor and update the Council's social media content daily towards enhancing our engagement with the Public.



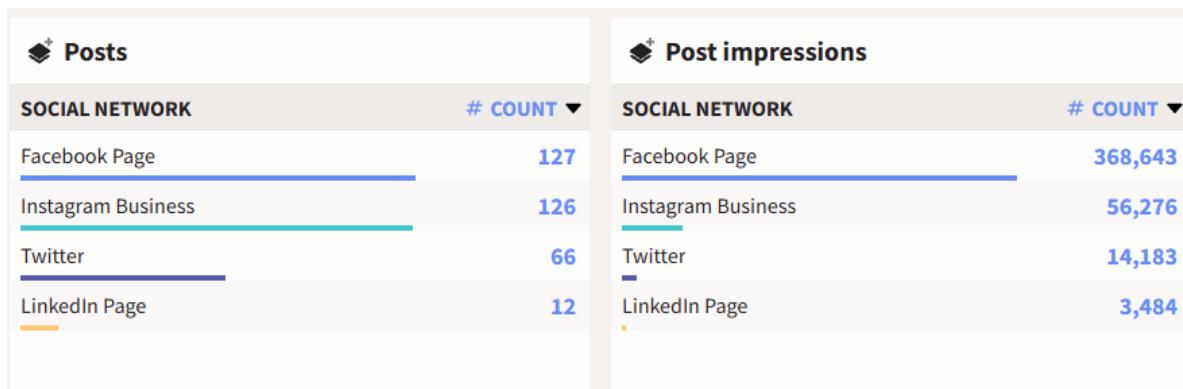
TOTAL FIGURES OF ALL SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Followers

SOCIAL NETWORK	# COUNT ▾
Facebook Page	21,952
Twitter	16,708
LinkedIn Page	3,089
Instagram Business	2,913

New followers

SOCIAL NETWORK	# COUNT ▾
Facebook Page	170
Instagram Business	73
LinkedIn Page	38
Twitter	-18



*Posts Impressions - The number of times that posts on our Galway County Council Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts appeared on someone's screen. Content viewed includes posts, videos, and reels.

*Engagement - The number of interactions people have with your content. Includes: Likes, comments, shares, clicks, saves, and sometimes video views.

FACEBOOK NOVEMBER'S TOP THREE POSTS

Top posts



Algal Blooms have been reported to the council all around the shores of Lough Corrib and in particular the following locations: Kilbeg pier, Annaghdown Oughterard Bircall Bay Glann shore Derrymoyle Bay Rinneroon Bay Golden Bay Recent unseasonal warm and calm weather is the likely reason for this occurrence. An algal

30,399 follower views



Major Housing Scheme Set to Break Ground in Loughrea Galway County Council has announced that site works on one of the largest social and affordable housing schemes delivered in east Galway will commence before Christmas. The local authority has signed a €14.95 million contract with C&N Higgins Construction for the construction

22,634 follower views



John Madden & Sons Ltd will be carrying out resurfacing works on the R338 Dublin Rd, Oranmore on behalf of Galway County Council Wednesday 5th November 2025 for 2 days To facilitate these works a Temporary Traffic Management System (Stop and Go) will be in operation from 9:00am to 5pm and consequently users of this road

14,927 follower views

X (PREVIOUSLY TWITTER) NOVEMBER'S TOP THREE POSTS

Top tweets



<https://twitter.com/GalwayCoCo/status/1990110160430248247/photo/0/1>



FREE Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day on Saturday, November 15th, 2025, from 9:00am to 1:00pm at Gort Mart, Ballybaun, Gort, H91 V256. Booking Essential <https://twitter.com/GalwayCoCo/status/1987445117104411007/photo/0/1>

321 impressions



<https://twitter.com/GalwayCoCo/status/1987211085821137293/photo/0/1>

305 impressions

298 impressions

INSTAGRAM NOVEMBER'S TOP THREE POSTS

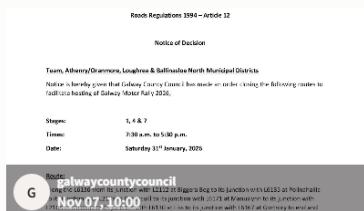
Top posts



galwaycountycouncil
Nov 06, 16:30

Algal Blooms have been reported to the council all around the shores of Lough Corrib and in particular the following locations: Kilbeg pier, Annaghdown Oughterard Birchall Bay Glann shore Derrymoyle Bay Rinneroon Bay Golden Bay Recent unseasonal warm and calm weather is the likely reason for this occurrence. An algal

3,798 views



galwaycountycouncil
Nov 07, 10:00

1,855 views



galwaycountycouncil
Nov 04, 11:49

1,806 views

LINKEDIN NOVEMBER'S TOP THREE POSTS

Top posts



Vacancy/Folántais <https://lnkd.in/eeuy-9YV>

553 impressions



486 impressions



377 impressions

IRISH SERVICES

Galway County Council championed the production of *Mise Éire*, a collaboration with 5th class from *Gaelscoil Riada* for this years' *Scoil an Phiarsaigh* Sept 2025 event. Premiered on Day 1 and gifted to the Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council, Cllr David Collins, this film serves as a lasting cultural archive of the event's impact.



More than a documentary, it amplifies the voices of our youth – capturing their hopes, their visions for climate action and the transformative changes, they wish to see in building a more sustainable future and enhancing the Irish language.

By investing in local talent - teachers, adjudicators, film production student volunteers and facilitators - the Council has built lasting capacity and awoken a vibrant and inspiring new network of Irish language enthusiasts.

Scoil an Phiarsaigh 2025 now stands as a testament to Galway County Council's vision for cultural renewal and linguistic vitality. By blending heritage with innovation this year specifically, the 2-day reimagined programme has created a dynamic platform where education, creativity, and community converge to make Irish a living language for all generations.

The event bolsters our strategic alignment with national policy but also a deep commitment to inclusivity and user-focused design. Through this work, Galway County Council reaffirms its leadership in shaping a future where language, identity, and community thrive together when we work together collaboratively across Directorates and with our communities.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PÁDRAIG PEARSE GAELTACHT SCHOLARSHIPS 2026

The application process for the Galway County Council Pádraig Pearse Gaeltacht Scholarships 2026 is now open. These scholarships give the opportunity to second level students from the functioning areas of Galway County Council across the County to immerse themselves in one of the nine Gaeltacht colleges in Conamara during the summer of 2026.

We are pleased to announce the inclusion of Coláiste na bhFiann, Ros Muc as a new partner institution this year. This college joins our established partners: Coláiste Chonnacht, An Spidéal; Coláiste Lurgan, Indreabhán; Coláiste Chamuis, An Tulach/Ros an Mhíl; Coláiste Chiaráin, An Cheathrú Rua; Coláiste Cholumba, An Cheathrú Rua; Coláiste na nOileáin, Leitir Móir/Leitir Mealláin; Coláiste Spleodar, Corr na Móna/Camus/Ros Muc; and Coláiste Sheosamh, Carna/Cill Chiaráin, all of whom have collaborated with us in recent years.

In recognition of the growing demand, the allocation of Gaeltacht scholarships has been increased by **56%** for 2026.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is **Friday, 19 December 2025, at 4:00 p.m.**

COMMUNITY, RURAL & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (LCSP)

A new statutory body focused on improving community safety in County Galway held its first meeting at Áras an Chontae on the 2nd December, marking the formal end of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) model.

The Galway County Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) has been set up under the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 as part of a national shift towards wider and more inclusive planning. Its members include up to 30 people from Galway County Council, An Garda Síochána, the HSE, Tusla and local organisations representing youth, social inclusion, education, business and community groups.

Over the next three years the Partnership will draw up a safety plan for the county, coordinate new initiatives, engage with residents and feed into the work of the National Office for Community Safety. The National Office will offer training and support and will oversee the Community Safety Fund, which uses proceeds of crime to back local projects.

During the first meeting, Cllr Andrew Reddington was elected Chair for a three-year term, and Aodán McDonogh was chosen as Vice Chair.

Cllr Reddington commented, “Each area of County Galway has its own specific safety and community issues that no single organisation can solve alone. Real progress depends on various agencies working together, from policing to local government and health services, as well as community groups. We aim to unite these perspectives so local people can help guide how safety improves in County Galway.”

Vice Chairperson Aodán McDonogh emphasised that the Partnership strongly prioritises collaboration and places local voices at the heart of decision-making.

Membership from the community and voluntary sector was confirmed through a nomination process led by the Chief Executive of Galway County Council. This was reviewed by the National Office and approved by Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Jim O’Callaghan TD.

Welcoming members to the first meeting of the LCSP, Chief Executive Liam Conneally said the Partnership replaces the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) model and represents a new approach to local community safety.

“The LCSP brings all the key agencies together to look at the safety issues affecting our communities and to agree practical actions to address them,” he said. “It gives local people a stronger voice in identifying priorities and helps ensure that services work in a more joined-up way. Galway County Council looks forward to working with other agencies in developing and overseeing a new Community Safety Plan for the county, focused on prevention, collaboration and improving quality of life for everyone who lives here.”

The Partnership will meet at least six times a year. One of the meetings will be open to the public, while another will be for elected representatives from the Oireachtas and Galway County Council.

It will also collaborate with neighbouring partnerships and existing local structures, including the Local Community Development Committee, Galway County Public Participation Network, and youth groups such as Comhairle na nÓg and the Children and Young People’s Services Committee. The LCSP will not address individual criminal investigations, State security matters, or confidential Garda operations.



STANDING L TO R: JO MULLINS COMMUNITY SAFETY ADMINISTRATOR, ANNE MARIE REGAN, VICE-CHAIRPERSON AODÁN MCDONOGH, CATHY CONNOLLY, MICHEÁL DURKIN, MÁIRE UI MHAOLÁIN, CLLR. PETER KEAVENY, STEVE DOLAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE LIAM CONNEALLY, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES MICHAEL OWENS, CHAIRPERSON ANDREW REDDINGTON, SUPERINTENDENT OLLIE BAKER, CLLR. MARY HOADE, MARTIN WARD, CLLR. DECLAN GERAGHTY, MARY CRONIN, CLLR. MAIRTÍN LEE, SIOBHAN BYRNE, CLLR. TOMAS GREALISH, NIAMH MCLOUGHLIN-BAUDOUIN, GERARD COSTELLO, KAREN MANNION, DEIRDRE BIRMINGHAM, MARIE NICHOLSON COMMUNITY SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR

HEALTHY IRELAND



WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAMME

EVALUATION OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAMME – AUTUMN 5-WEEK TALK SERIES

The evaluation of the most recent Women's Health Programme, delivered as a five-week talk series in Autumn, provided valuable insights to inform the development of a tailored programme for 2026 that will reflect both stakeholder and participant feedback.

10. Have you implemented any of the advice or practices from the talks into your daily routine?/An bhfuil aon athruithe déanta agat ar do ghníomhachas laethúil mar thoradh ar fheastaí ar na cainteanna?

Yes/Ta	25
No/Ni	1



Participants reported adopting a variety of positive practices following the sessions, including dietary improvements, increased physical activity, and mindfulness techniques. Examples shared included adding nutrient rich foods to their diet, using acupressure points, practicing yoga, and prioritising time for self-care mentally and physically. While some attendees experienced significant improvements in health and wellbeing, others noted

10. Have you implemented any of the advice or practices from the talks into your daily routine?/An bhfuil aon aithriúthe déanta agat ar do ghnáthamh iséitíl mar thoradh ar threastal ar na cainteanna?



gradual progress. Overall, the programme was credited with raising awareness and motivating lifestyle changes, with feedback highlighting the importance of early intervention and continued education.

Suggestions for future programmes included tailoring sessions for older age groups, particularly women over 65 and 70+, with content such as chair yoga, osteoporosis-friendly exercises, and wellbeing strategies for later life. Participants also requested more mental health-focused sessions and practical demonstrations of home-based exercises using weights or resistance bands. There was a strong interest expressed in follow-up programmes, WhatsApp groups for ongoing updates, and in-person wellbeing activities such as Tai Chi, mindfulness, and meditation. Respondents further suggested further introductory sessions on weight-bearing exercises and to help demystify fitness for older women.

Following on from this Healthy County Galway has been approached by the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) to help generate interest among women in participating in a Women's Wellness Testing Day. This research initiative focuses on postmenopausal women and aims to provide fitness and health assessments, including strength, flexibility, aerobic fitness, and body composition, alongside tailored exercise and nutrition guidance.

The key role of Healthy County Galway will be to identify and engage partners who are interested in facilitating this screening in locations across County Galway and the offshore islands. This collaborative approach will ensure accessibility and inclusivity for women in rural and island communities in county Galway. There has already been strong interest expressed from groups in Connemara, the islands, and the HSE, highlighting the potential impact for women and reach of this initiative.

Participants will benefit from immediate fitness results, a free online booklet with tailored exercise and nutrition tips, and the opportunity to contribute to research aimed at improving health supports for postmenopausal women.



TAKING STOCK FARMER'S HEALTH PROGRAMME



Healthy County Galway recently supported the National Beef Conference, held at Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, as part of the *Taking Stock* farmer health programme. This free event attracted over 300 members of the farming community and provided an important opportunity to promote health and wellbeing among farmers. On the evening, health checks were delivered by Croí, alongside podiatry services offering foot injury analysis, gait assessment, and overall foot health evaluation. The initiative highlighted the value of integrating health promotion into agricultural events, ensuring farmers have access to practical supports that encourage proactive care.



CONNEMARA DEMENTIA CAFÉ INITIATIVE



The Memory Café Initiative in Connemara is hosting a special Christmas social gathering to promote social connection among attendees and caregivers. This festive event will take place on Monday, 8th December at 12:30 pm in the Station House Hotel, Clifden, and will include Christmas lunch, carol singing, music, and song. The aim of this gathering is to strengthen community ties and welcome participants to explore other Memory Cafés in other locations around Connemara encouraging a wider network of support and engagement.

This initiative continues to grow, with strong participation across Connemara. In particular, the most recently established Oughterard Memory Café has been very well attended and has offered a variety of enriching activities. These have included arts and crafts using activity packs, facilitated by Keelin Kennedy, and movement sessions through chair yoga, which

have been highly valued by attendees. These activities not only provide creative and physical stimulation but also contribute to the overall wellbeing and social inclusion of attendees with cognitive impairment and their caregivers.



AGE FRIENDLY PROGRAMME



The Older Persons Council meeting took place on November 26th. The key input was provided by Valerie Kelly Creative Ireland Coordinator. The programme manager updated on members on a number of areas of work.

The adopted Age Friendly Strategy will be launched after the next Age Friendly Alliance meeting on Thursday January 22nd, 2026, at the Ard Rí Hotel in Tuam.

The programme manager had a meeting in November with the regional Age Friendly manager, the technical advisor from Galway County Council and representatives from Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programmes. A number of areas of mutual working cooperation were discussed where collaboration could be developed. These have been noted and will be worked through in the context of the Age Friendly Strategy which in itself will be underpinned by the recently established Galway County Council interdepartmental committee. This committee will next convene at a date to be agreed after the strategy launch on January 22nd.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NETWORK (PPN)

THE PPN WINTER PLENARY MEETING

The November Plenary meeting was held on the 12th November, online. The event was well attended with close to 60 people logging onto the meeting. The speakers for this meeting were;

- Shane Canney, Galway County Council Procurement Officer spoke about the procurement process for purchasing goods with grant money and the legislation involved with that process.
- Martin Ward, Secretariat Committee Member spoke about the Public Participation Network and its role within the community.
- Steve Dolan from Galway Rural Development gave a brief overview of his work with the SMART Villages projects, its meaning and its core concepts, particularly in Mountbellew and Headford.
- Mark Lee from Champion Insurance spoke about the different insurance types that community groups should be aware of.
- Theresa Donoghue, Galway County Council Community Grants Officer spoke about the upcoming grant, Local Enhancement Programme 2026 Funding and what the grant should be used for.
- The next PPN Plenary Meeting will be held in the Summer 2026.

INFORMATION HUB

- Galway County PPN circulate an e-newsletter currently on a bi-monthly basis, on the 1st and 15th of the month to all 2,940 member organisations, council staff, and Elected Members.
- The newsletter is available on the PPN website <https://www.galwaycountypnn.ie/> and PPN social media <https://www.facebook.com/GalwayCountyPPN/>. The newsletter contains information relevant to PPN Members, Community Groups and Non-Profits in County Galway, under the following headings: PPN News, Council & Government News, Consultations & Public Engagement, Funding & Grants, Training & Development, An Cúinne Gaeilge (Irish Corner), Supports & Resources, Notice Board & Events.
- The PPN continues to circulate information on consultations and funding opportunities from the Local Authority and other agencies to communities and all such communications can be sent to ppn@galwaycoco.ie
- PPN Membership now stands at 1,513 community groups. These groups are categorised under the 3 PPN Pillars – 1,169 Community & Voluntary groups, 283 Social Inclusion Groups, and 61 Environmental Groups.

TRAINING COURSES WITH THE PPN

Four training courses were delivered in November for members of the Public Participation Network, 2 courses on Social Strategy for Non-Profits, Microsoft 365 Production Tools and Boards, Chairs and CEO's – Roles, Relationships and Boundaries.

There are 6 additional training courses scheduled for Quarter 1 of 2026, Canva for Beginners, Microsoft Excel for



Beginners, Marketing & Sales for Non-Profits, Introduction to Social Media, Setting up and Running an Organisation and Grant Application Training.

These courses will be advertised by email, our newsletters and social media.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT & VILLAGE RENEWAL - GRANTS SCHEME

TOWN & VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME

In November 2025 two main projects were completed under the 2023 Town and Village Renewal Scheme, representing an investment of over 600k in Community Facilities and the recouptment of 500k in grant aid from Department of Community, Rural Development and the Gaeltachta. Both facilities provide essential space for community groups and organisations, recreation, well-being and cultural events. Working with these Committees a key issue arising is that, while capital investment is vital to maximise the use of these community assets, support is also needed to sustain their use including the continuation of employment schemes, social enterprise or other schemes to assist with the day-to-day caretaking and operation of the facilities which is handled by volunteers.

DUNMORE TOWN HALL - COMPLETION OF €250,000 TVRS FUNDED INVESTMENT

Dunmore Town Hall occupies a prominent corner site and is a Protected Structure, almost 100 years old. Further to community consultation and preliminary designs from *Feeney McMahon Architects* investment in the Town Hall under Town and Village, prioritised access and addressed the requirement for much needed upgrades to provide a comfortable accessible community space located within the heart of Dunmore Town centre. The project has addressed a deficit of available community space through improved building thermal performance and comfort for new daytime users as well as existing evening weekly and monthly community

events – e.g. 25 Card game & Monster Bingo.

The Hall, hosts Foróige, Parent and Toddler Groups and Active Age

Activities as well as

Cultural and Entertainment venue year-round and as a hub in the Annual Dunmore Festival. The Property is held in Trust for the Community by the Trustees of Dunmore Community and Leased to Dunmore Community Council. The delivery of the project was led by a sub-group of Dunmore Community Council and there is a sense of pride in the achievement, which involved significant co-ordination and consultation with users of the hall suppliers and trades resulting in improved visual appearance and internal upgrades the Kitchen and Main Hall. Total Expenditure was €264,392.79 with Grant Funding of 250,000. The Community Council are proposed a formal re-launch event in early 2026 to include Members of the Tuam Municipal District.



Northeast Elevation



TVRS FUNDED - NEW
ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY
TO DUNMORE TOWN
HALL, SAMPLE OF
KITCHEN UPGRADE

L-R IN DUNMORE TOWN HALL: MR. RONAN MANNION, CAPITAL DELIVERY TEAM, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MS. MARIE HOWLEY, CHAIR, DUNMORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, MS. EIMEAR DOLAN, TOWN AND VILLAGE CO-ORDINATOR, RURAL TEAM GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MR. PETER NICKLIN, TREASURER, DUNMORE COMMUNITY COUNCIL. (FINAL SITE VISIT AND INSPECTIONS NOVEMBER 7TH, 2025)



MAREE COMMUNITY CENTRE - COMPLETION OF €250,000 TVRS FUNDED INVESTMENT

The Maree Community Centre is a multi-use community facility, with indoor recreational space for functions, community meetings, family events, education and training, basketball court and gym adjacent to the National School. Providing for the growing population in Maree and the rural hinterlands of Oranmore and beyond, it is a much used and in demand space which required critical upgrades and repairs. The investment in this community asset was vital for the continued operation of the Maree Community Centre which had experienced leaks and damage to the roof.

The project was driven by a sub-committee of Maree Community Development Association (MCDA) with support of local consulting engineers. Initial works were reviewed post-tender, and it was agreed with GCC and DRCDG given the estimated costs for all works to focus on the priority of a full roof replacement and roof insulation, which was delivered on time and within budget by this hard-working group of volunteers. The delivery timeline was impacted by the availability of roofing contractors post Storm Eyon and working around the National School holidays to ensure safety. The total expenditure was €263,356.00. This has improved energy efficiency and sustainability, which will impact on reducing heating costs and benefitting the environment. Improved facilities will sustain its continued and safe use.

Completed in November 2025 an official community launch is proposed to take place in January 2026 which will be circulated to the Elected Members in Athenry-Oranmore Municipal District.



TVRS FUNDED - SAMPLE OF BEFORE AND AFTER WORKS, MAREE COMMUNITY CENTRE



L TO R: AT MAREE COMMUNITY CENTRE: MS. MICHELLE HANNON, MAREE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, MR. SHANE HANNIFFY, HANNIFFY CONSULTING ENGINEERS, MS. ANNE EARLS, MAREE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, MS. EIMEAR DOLAN, TOWN AND VILLAGE CO-ORDINATOR, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL. FINAL SITE INSPECTION NOVEMBER 6TH 2025/ MAREE COMMUNITY CENTRE CO. GALWAY

GORT STREETSCAPE SCHEME

A total of €189,745.23 in Grant Aid has been invested in Gort Town Centre which has been matched by approximately €55,000 by local business owners, tenant and residents as part the Shopfront Enhancement and Painting Scheme. A total of 64 grant claims have been paid for approved shopfront and facade enhancement works and a further 8 to finalise claims in early December 2025. These works included appropriate repair to shopfronts, painting of facade and repair to fanlights in the Architectural Conservation Area. The Council is working with Gort Town Team to produce a short on-line video with input from local beneficiaries of the Scheme for release during the run up to Christmas to capture the enhancements and further promote footfall to the town in the run-up to the Christmas season.

NATIONAL HUB SUMMIT

In November the Community & Rural Development Department was represented at the Western Development Commission and DRCDG National Hub Summit in Ballinasloe on November 13th, 2025. Galway County has 38 Hubs on www.connectedhubs.ie with 8 of these also operating as Broadband Connection Point providing digital access to

communities. The BACD Hub on Chamber Street was previously co-funded by Galway County Council Town and Village Renewal Scheme and by BACD own funds, LEADER funding

from GRD and Just Transition Funding, hosted the pre-summit networking event at the Ballinasloe Hub for Hub Managers from across Ireland.



L-R: CLLR. ALAN HARNEY, BALLINASLOE MD, MR. DARA CALLEARY TD, MINISTER FOR RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE GAELTACHT, MS. EIMEAR DOLAN, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, RURAL TEAM, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

MR. DARA CALLEARY TD, MINISTER FOR RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE GAELTACHT SPEAKING AT NATIONAL HUB SUMMIT, BALLINASLOE. ORGANISED BY WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION & DRCDG



L-R: CLLR. SEÁN BRODERICK, ATHENRY MD, DR. ANN O'BRIEN, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER, UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY, MR. STEVE DOLAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, GALWAY RURAL DEVELOPMENT, MS. LYNN DONNELLY, ENTERPRISE MANAGER, BACD & BALLINASLOE HUB, MS. EIMEAR DOLAN, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

CLÁR PROGRAMME

The CLÁR Scheme funds small-scale capital recreation and amenity projects including renovation works to community facilities open to the wider community such as community centres/sports centres/clubhouses of sporting groups/youth centres/men's sheds etc. This includes external works such as parking and accessibility enhancements.

CLÁR 2025 PROGRAMME

Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Dara Calleary TD, (Friday, 28 November 2025) announced €12.3 million to deliver 206 community projects under the 2025 CLÁR programme. A total of 634,922 was awarded for ten projects were approved for Galway County. A total of 16 projects were shortlisted and submitted by Galway County Council. Contracts will be finalised in December 2025 with projects commencing in early 2026 with an 18- month timeline for completion. The projects approved are as follows:

	CLÁR 2025 Approved by DRCDG 28/11/2025	School Name / Community Facility Name / LDC	Project Description (less than 30 words)	XY Co- ordinates (ITM format) or Eircode	Matching to be Provided by Applicant Group	Amount of CLÁR Awarded
1	Approved	Lawrencetown Community Development CLG-Community Pitch	Community Pitch - Upgrade of Facilities	53.235992 and 8.183823	€11,600.00	€65,000
2	Approved	Killimordaly GAA Club	Installation of Community Outdoor Gym, Upgrade to Parking & Accessibility	H65 NC86	€10,780.00	€65,000
3	Approved	Kiltartan National School	Community Astro/MUGA Development on School Grounds	H91 C6E8	€42,962.00	€65,000
4	Approved	Glenamaddy Soccer Club CLG - Glen Celtic AFC	Upgrade to existing village centre Astro/MUGA	F45RT10	€12,815.60	€65,000
5	Approved	Portumna Chamber of Commerce & Galway County Council	County Pilot - Changing Places Toilet & Facilities for person with additional needs	H53WN23	€23,607.50	€100,000
6	Approved	Abbeyknockmoy Hurling Club & Community Grounds	Enhancements of Existing Parking Area	H54 VW29	€5,100.00	€54,900

7	Approved	St. Thomas' GAA and Camogie Club	Extended Walkway and Parking Accessibility	H62HW02	€38,110.40	€65,000
8	Approved	Pairc Spraoi Iorras Aithneach Cill Cháirain	Playground-Sensory Area Development	085024 and 232806	€2,792.00	€25,022
9	Approved	Meelick Eyrecourt Gaelic Athletic Association	Accessibility Measures & Enhancement at Community Sports Ground	H53 N9X7	€6,500.00	€65,000
10	Approved	Skehana Community Development (SCD)	Completion of Carpark at Playground & Community Pitch Facility	H53C4A3	€8,000.00	65,000

CLÁR 2024 PROGRAMME

The following projects have been completed in November 2025 with full recoupement of grant monies payable by the Department to Galway County Council by mid-December 2025. These projects were grant-aided under the CLÁR 2024 Programme.

The following Inspections on completed projects were undertaken by the CLÁR team from the 18th of November at Esker and 24th for Dunmore, and Williamstown and Kilconly inspection on the 25th of November.

KILCONLY – ‘FITZ FIELD’ RECREATION AREA

Located within walking distance of Kilconly village, Kilconly Community Recreation Group has added a tennis court and basketball court to its suite of amenities in ‘Fitzs Field’ which is also home to Kilshaveny Soccer Club. Total expenditure was €57,885.00 which was supported by a CLÁR grant of €44,730. Co-location consolidates Clár projects, which is evident in this multi-amenity site now having tennis courts, basketball courts, soccer and GAA pitches, complemented by the playground, and adult outdoor exercise area.



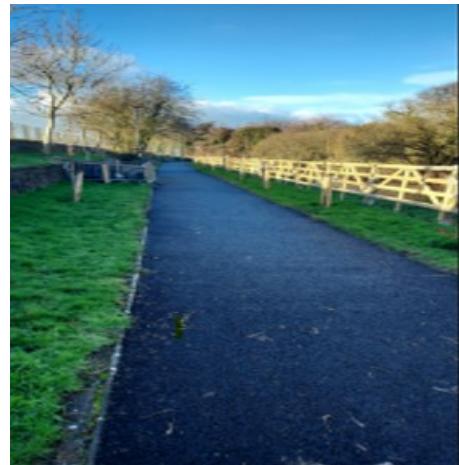
L-R: MR. JAMES GREANEY, MS. MAJELLA MOYLAN, CLÁR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MR. SEAN DUNLEAVY, AND MR. GABRIEL MCHUGH, AT FITZ FIELD, KILCONLY RECREATION GROUP ON NOV 25TH 2025

KILCONLY FITZS FIELD, CLÁR 2024 INVESTMENTS IN TENNIS AND BASKETBALL COURTS



DUNMORE RIVER WALK

One of the flagship projects of Dunmore Tidy Towns, Dunmore Riverwalk adjacent to rugby and soccer club in the town centre has benefitted from further upgrades under the CLÁR 2024 programme. It is well lit and compliments the town centre. The project was a joint effort by Galway County Council's Tuam Regional Office and Dunmore Tidy Towns. Landscape Architects were engaged to draft a masterplan for the enhancement works which included Biodiversity, (Planting) Fencing and Accessibility Works with the desire to enhance the walkway for older persons and those with accessibility needs. Consultation on the plans were promoted in Dunmore Library and the



Council worked with a GRD Tús Scheme on elements of the planting. The total grant awarded is €50,000.

L-R: DAVID DONNELLAN, DUNMORE TIDY TOWNS AND MAJELLA MOYLAN, CLÁR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 24TH 2025.

ESKER

ESKER COMMUNITY CENTRE

Esker Community Centre is a unique Building dating from its commencement as part of Government Improvement Schemes in the late 19th century. It was constructed in 1857 built by the locals under the tutelage of the landlord James Collier Harter, a dry-salter/

merchant from Manchester at the time. The plaque on the building references its use as a school from 1858. It continued its use as a National School until the early 1980's.

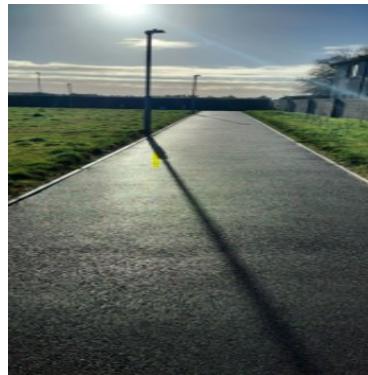


The Community Centre has a suite of new activities such as chair yoga, men's Pilates classes, general Pilates classes, group water scheme meetings, drama and historical presentations. Internal upgrades to kitchen, toilets were undertaken, resulting in a warmer, dryer building, secure from draughts and given

a new lease of life. The total expenditure was €53,974.92.

WILLIAMSTOWN

Williamstown Development Company CLG, acquired a plot of land six years ago and have been getting the site shovel ready over a period, removing telegraph and electricity poles and doing drainage works. A section of the site has been developed into an Accessible Walkway and Sensory Garden with lighting. The project was led by Williamstown Development Company CLG with the support of Williamstown GAA Club & Williamstown National School.



The location of the site forms a key link between the National School and the adjacent GAA pitch amenity and the community playground. The walk is wheelchair and baby-buggy friendly. Given the footfall of 111 pupils from the local school, and its location adjacent to the GAA pitch make it an attractive amenity. The total expenditure was €60,928.54, funded by a CLÁR grant €50,000 and matched by the Development Group.

L-R: MR. OLIVER LENNON, WILLIAMSTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMPANY CLG, MS. MAJELLA MOYLAN, CLÁR, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, AND MS. KATHLEEN HEVICAN, WILLIAMSTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMPANY CLG AT WILLIAMSTOWN COMMUNITY PARK, NOVEMBER 25TH 2025.

GALWAY COUNTY ARTS OFFICE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Art in Every Place, held on Friday 21 November at Limerick City Gallery of Art, was an event to mark 40 years of partnership. It was attended by Minister for the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan and representatives from the County and City Management Association (CCMA), the Arts Council, Galway County Arts Officer Sharon O'Grady, as well as local authority Arts Officers past and present.

The event looked back on the milestones of this decadeslong partnership from the opening of the very first arts office in Clare in 1986 to Galway County Council's appointment of its first Arts Officer in 1990. It traced the journey through the national rollout of arts offices under Better Local Government in 1997, and the landmark Arts Act of 2003, which gave arts planning a firm place in local authority life.

Between 2005 and 2025, €2.6 billion has been jointly invested in the arts through the Arts Council's partnership with local authorities across Ireland. The partnership is underpinned by **A Framework for Collaboration**, the joint agreement between the Arts Council and CCMA. Each local authority in the country has its own strategic arts plan, aligned to its County or City Development Plan and national arts strategies.

[Click here to watch a short video on the impact of our partnership and opportunities for future collaboration.](#)



MINISTER FOR CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPORT PATRICK O'DONOVAN, TD (SEATED CENTRE) WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARTS COUNCIL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY ARTS OFFICES, INCLUDING GALWAY COUNTY ARTS OFFICER SHARON O'GRADY (SEATED 5TH FROM LEFT) AND RETIRED ARTS OFFICER JAMES HARROLD (SEATED 3RD FROM LEFT). CREDIT DON MOLONEY.

ARTS PLAN 2026-2030

Under the Arts Act each local authority prepares and implements plans for the development of the arts within its functional area. In October and November, the Arts Office sought



quotations for services from suitably experienced arts consultants to work closely with the Arts Office to assist in the development of the new five-year Arts Plan. We're delighted to announce that the successful consultant is Jane Daly, and the Arts Office team looks forward to working with her throughout 2026 to deliver Galway County Council's next Arts Plan.

MS. JANE DALY, ARTS CONSULTANT

ARTIST SUPPORT SCHEME 2026

Our annual funding scheme assists individual artists to develop their arts practice and artistic career. It's open to professional artists living in County Galway at all stages of their career, working in any artform and context. The maximum award offered is €3,000.

Deadline for applications is 4:00 p.m. on Monday 03 February 2025.

[Click here for more information](#)

ARTS AND OLDER PEOPLE IN CARE SETTINGS

At the end of 2024 the Arts Office supported two Galway County artists to participate in Age & Opportunity's Artist Care Exchange (ACE) training programme, Joanna McGlynn and Luci Kershaw. Following on from their training in 2025 we commissioned research and development projects with each of the artists so they could put into action what they learned.

Between October and December, the artists have been trying out ideas and meeting with residents to make art together. Joanna is working with residents and staff at Greenpark Nursing Home Tuam and Luci with St. Brendan's Nursing Home Loughrea. The artists have carefully designed arts sessions centred on inclusivity, wellbeing, playfulness and storytelling. As they near the end of their research projects we look forward to hearing about Joanna and Luci's findings and plans for their next steps working with older people in care settings.

RESIDENT OF ST. BRENDAN'S NURSING HOME.
PHOTO: LUCI KERSHAW



ARTS PARTICIPATION AND DISABILITY

Through collaboration, advocacy, and thoughtful planning, the Arts Office endeavours to support the development of a truly inclusive arts sector for the County, where creative expression is open to all, without barriers.

Between January and December Arts Office commissioned consultant Fiona Hession to deliver a report and plan focusing on arts participation and disability.

The report explores the current landscape of arts and disability in the region, examining best practices, challenges, and opportunities in fostering quality arts participation. It highlights the vital role of partnerships, leadership, and sustained support in building an arts ecosystem where people with disabilities can fully engage as creators, leaders, and participants. Arts and Disability organisations based in Galway supported by the Brothers of



Charity Services contributed to the report including Blue Teapot Theatre Company, That's Life and Limelight Creative Arts. Currently a consultant artist with a disability is reviewing the report and plan. Suggested arts participation and disability projects will be rolled out in 2026.

ARTIST EMILY-ROSE CUMMINS AT LIMELIGHT CREATIVE ARTS ORANMORE

GALWAY CITY OF FILM – YOUTH FACILITATOR SMARTPHONE FILMMAKING TRAINING

Training took place 14 November at the Ard Rí House Hotel Tuam, delivered by Caroline Keane of Leaning Tree Media. Training the trainers - how to film like a pro with your smartphone – topics included:

- The fundamentals of photography/ videography
- Camera/ phone settings
- Composition
- Camera movements
- Camera angles
- Interview setup
- Sound
- Lighting
- Practical elements e.g. scene setup
- Introduction to editing
- Q&A

YOUTH FACILITATOR SMARTPHONE FILMMAKING TRAINING DAY OPEN CALL



PUBLIC ART

After a two-phase competition, congratulations to Cathal McCarthy the artist who was awarded the **Stone Walls and The Grass is Green** Percent for Art Commission in Baile Chláir.

With the support of a Local Public Art Working Group, Council Engineers, students and staff at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, Cathal has been continuing with his research. On 01 December a series of songwriting workshops took place at Coláiste Bhaile Chláir facilitated by musicians Padraig Stevens and Leo Moran. Lyrics and texts from these community songwriting workshops will feature on the final artwork.

CREATIVE IRELAND

2025 OVERVIEW

The scope of Creative Ireland projects across Galway County for 2025 was incredibly broad as we brought creativity to every corner of our county. The Creative Communities funding for 2025 was divided into the following categories: Open Call, Culture & Creativity Team, Flagship, and additional funding under the pillar of Creative Health and Wellbeing.

OPEN CALL

2025's Open Call was an extremely popular funding stream with the total applications reaching over 60. Out of this fantastic response, 12 applicants secured funding to a total amount of €71,000. Geographic spread was taken into account in the assessment process which resulted in projects taking place in all five Municipal Districts. A broad range of forms of creativity were covered including theatre, music, crafts, dance, coding, needlework, mosaic, and spoken word to name but a few.

The 2026 Open Call will be launching shortly with a total fund of €70,000 available. While we welcome applications from previous awardees, we have also set aside €10,000 in funding for Creativity Newcomers, groups who have not previously engaged in creative projects. It is envisioned that this will encourage more people across Galway County to embody Creative Ireland's ethos that Creativity is for All. The 2026 Open Call will run from mid-December until late January and all projects must be completely drawn down by mid-October 2026.

OPEN CALL PROJECT - DRUMADORE – HEARTBEATS PROJECT IN THE STATION HOUSE CLIFDEN



CULTURE & CREATIVITY TEAM

The Culture and Creativity Team consists of a variety of staff from within the County Council. Areas represented include Libraries, Heritage, Biodiversity, Irish Language, Climate Change, Integration, and Health & Wellbeing. Each year the members of the team submit an application for funding for a creative project under their remit. A total of €40,000 was awarded to Culture Team projects in 2025. These have been discussed in detail under each office but are listed below for reference;

- Library Services - 'Spring Into Storytime', 'Bealtaine Festival', 'Summer Stars'.
- Heritage Officer - 'Forged in Fire'
- Healthy Ireland Co-Ordinator - 'Dementia Cafés for Connemara'
- Integration Team - 'One Million Stars', 'From Ukraine to 4 Roads Glenamaddy', 'Diversity on our Doorstep', 'Community through Artistic Expression', 'Tuam Tango'
- Climate Action Team - 'SAUTI Youth Fashion Project'
- Biodiversity Officer - 'Wild Trad Tunes'

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

Each year the Creative Communities Engagement Officer directly funds a number of large-scale projects. In many cases a more hands-on approach is taken with these projects which vary from year to year. In 2025 a total of €27,000 was awarded to Flagship Projects. The largest of these was Sparkcatchers! 'Middle of Somewhere' project which saw Tuam-based artists, Midie Corcoran and Jojo Hynes take their youth-led approach to creativity on tour around the county. They worked with young people in Ballinasloe, Corr na Móna, and Glenamaddy to help them realise their creative potential and ask the big questions about what creativity means to them in the context of their communities.



Other Flagship projects included a partnership with the Brothers of Charity arts groups, Cois Cladaigh and Limelight Arts to deliver creative programmes to their service users. Galway County Council has an ongoing relationship with these groups through the medium of Creative Ireland funding. We also ran a series of Sing Along Social pop-ups in Nursing Homes in the Connemara region. This was a follow on from a highly successful pilot programme in late 2024.

SING ALONG SOCIAL NURSING HOME POP-UP

CREATIVE HEALTH & WELLBEING

Galway County Council was successful in securing an additional €25,000 in Creative Ireland Funding to run a series of Live Music Performances in Residential Healthcare Settings. This was funded under the pillar of Creative Health & Wellbeing. This project was a collaboration with Galway City Council and was delivered by Music Connects, formerly Galway Music Residency. The project saw musicians make 3 visits each to 8 Nursing Homes across Galway City and County (4 in each). The focus for the county element this year was Connemara with a series of performances on Inis Mór from local musician Pádraig Jack being the highlight. [A video of this can be found by clicking this link.](#) The project reached over 270 audience members including, residents, staff, and visitors. This was the third year of the project, and it has been wonderful to see it grow in popularity as it goes from strength to strength.

LOOKING FORWARD

With funding announcements coming through week by week, it seems as though 2026 will be the biggest and best year yet for Galway County Council's Creative Ireland programme. We are striving to reach a broad variety of communities across our county and maintain a high percentage of Irish Language projects. For that reason, the Creative Communities Engagement Officer has been attending meetings of various groups and delivering

presentations on Creative Ireland funding, as well as answering any queries from the public as they prepare to apply for 2026 funding.



CREATIVE COMMUNITIES
ENGAGEMENT OFFICER, VALERIE
KELLY SPEAKING TO ARTISTS AT
AN ARTIST'S NETWORKING EVENT
IN TUAM

2025 OVERVIEW

2025 was a busy year for Galway Sports Partnership, delivering over 200 programmes and engaging 16,000+ participants across Galway City and County. The focus remained on inclusion, accessibility, and community engagement, with initiatives spanning all target groups: women and girls, older adults, people with disabilities, disadvantaged communities, ethnic minorities, and youth.



INCLUSIVE TRIATHLON,
KILCORNAN

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Community Sports Development: 2,700+ participants through school programmes, Men on the Move, balance bikes, and outdoor activities.
- Disability Inclusion: 337 participants in inclusive camps, triathlons, cycling, kayaking, and Games for All
- Older adults: 433 older adults engaged in Activator and FitStick programmes.
- Women in Sport: Over 1,000 women and girls reached through hiking, rowing, capoeira, tennis, and online workshops on health and coaching.
- HER Moves & HER Outdoors: Empowered teenage girls and women through multi-sport programmes, outdoor adventures, and leadership workshops.
- Community Sports Hubs: Ballinasloe and Active Islands delivered inclusive rugby, basketball, Couch to 5k, Older Adult Classes and Marathon Kids.
- Events: hosted major events like Ballinasloe Multicultural Festival, Bike Week (6,000+ participants across city and county), National Play Day in Tuam with over 350 people in attendance, and over 250 people at our Be Active Night Colour Run.
- Special Projects: Urban Outdoor Adventure Hub launched for disadvantaged groups; European Social Fund Social Innovation in Sport Officer launched Club OSAAT (One Step At A Time) and Young People at Risk programmes supported recovery and resilience.

- Capital Projects – Through the Healthy Ireland Outdoor Swimming Infrastructure Fund 3 Outdoor Shelters were installed at Traught, An Spidéal and Inis Meáin. Through the Participation Nation Fund a 3 v 3 Basketball Court was installed in Tuam Palace Grounds and also a BOX UP unit through the Healthy Ireland Fund. FitStick Trails installed at Corribdale Park, Kilcornan, Lawrencetown and Tuam Palace Grounds through the Healthy Ireland Fund.
- Funding & Capacity Building: €26,000 in club development grants, €10,000 in volunteer supports, and a four-part governance workshop series for local clubs.
- Training & Education: Over 50 courses such as Safeguarding courses (739 participants), plus workshops on autism in sport, coaching teenage girls, and first aid.



ROWING ON INIS MEÁIN

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Building on the strong foundations of 2025, Galway Sports Partnership will focus on expanding programmes across our target demographics. Priorities include scaling initiatives for women and girls and advancing disability inclusion through innovative partnerships.

A key strategic development for 2026 will be the creation of a Local Sports Plan for Galway County Council. This plan will serve as a comprehensive roadmap for sports and physical activity development across the county, aligning with national strategies and local priorities.

Local Sports Plan Strategic Themes



It will outline clear objectives, actions, and measurable targets to increase participation, improve infrastructure, and foster collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring that sport and physical activity become integral to community life.

INTEGRATION

The Integration Team continued to provide support to migrants in Galway County. There are increased contacts from Ukrainians due to changes in the accommodation system for Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection. From 10th November, new arrivals from Ukraine will only be accommodated by the State for 30 days. Arrivals who have sought temporary protection in another EU state will not be accommodated. Ukraine has also allowed young men aged 18 – 22 yrs to leave the country, which has led to an increase request for support from the Offer A Home Scheme.

Upcoming changes to the migration processes, announced recently by the Minister for Justice, will also impact on the nature of queries dealt with by the Integration Team. The Team assists persons applying for International Protection, and those who have been granted permission to remain in the State. We anticipate queries in relation to accommodation contributions, applying for citizenship and family reunification.

As Ireland works towards the introduction of the EU Migration & Asylum Pact in June 2026, International Protection Applicants will receive the decisions on their applications after 3 to 6 months.

We also work with communities across the County to welcome new arrivals, and to help migrants living in the community to settle in. As part of this, we worked with schools to purchase books for intercultural storytelling, to raise awareness about different cultures.



L-R: MS. JANET KEHELLY, INTEGRATION SUPPORT WORKER, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, MR. DARA McALEER, PRINCIPAL, SCOIL MHUIRE NATIONAL SCHOOL, CLIFDEN

We will be hosting a night of Christmas carols in An Spidéal in December, facilitated by jazz vocalist, Róisín Mulliez. All welcome to attend.



TOURISM

GALWAY CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS

Galway Chamber Business Awards 2025 sponsored by The Shannon Airport Group. The awards took place on Friday 21st November at the Galmont Hotel, one of the highlights of Galway's business calendar. These awards recognize excellence across multiple sectors. Congratulations to 'The Connacht Hospitality Group'!

This year's **Tourism & Hospitality Excellence Award**, sponsored by Galway County Council, recognizes a business that delivers unforgettable experiences and sets new standards in service and innovation. Their work showcases the very best of Galway's tourism and hospitality scene.



MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL(CENTRE),
PICTURED WITH THE CONNACHT HOSPITALITY GROUP WINNERS OF THE 'TOURISM AND
HOSPITALITY AWARD'.

MR. JOHN NEARY, TOURISM OFFICER PICTURED WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE GALWAY CHAMBER MS. CÁIT NOONE AND MEMBERS OF THE GALWAY CONVENTION BUREAU



THE SHANNON AIRPORT GROUP HOSTS INSPIRING NETWORKING EVENT FOR GALWAY CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS.

Sponsors and finalists in the Galway Chamber Business Awards were commended for their innovation and creativity at a networking event hosted by The Shannon Airport Group. The event brought together over 30 representatives from shortlisted companies and Galway Chamber officials, ahead of the awards ceremony.

This event offered a great opportunity for sponsors and finalists to engage with one another, share insight and draw inspiration from the contribution of The Shannon Airport Group.



MS. LORETTA RAFTERY, JTF ACTIVATOR, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, PICTURED WITH THE SPONSORS AND FINALISTS OF THE GALWAY CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS AT SHANNON AIRPORT.

DESTINATION EXPERIENCE PLAN – EAST GALWAY

Galway County Council is supporting the development of an East Galway Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP). This initiative, delivered by Fáilte Ireland, aligns

closely with our Tourism Strategy and reflects our shared commitment to enhancing the visitor experience across the region.

The first working group meeting for the East Galway DEDP kicked off on Thursday the 22nd November in the Shearwater Hotel with great energy and engagement. It was both successful and engaging. Representatives from the broad geographical region contributed, setting a positive tone for the work ahead.

Community group meetings will take place in Q1 of 2026.

HUMAN RESOURCES, CITY & COUNTY LIBRARIES & ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT

AGRICULTURE

- 21 planned farm inspections were carried out in the Headford Stream_020 waterbody. Three complaint-related inspections were also carried out and 1 farmer received a Section 12 notice on foot of these.
- Galway County Council are required by the EPA to complete 72 full GAP farm inspections in 2025 and at the end of November, 92% of these were completed, with the remainder to be carried out in December.



HEADFORD STREAM_020 WATERBODY

SEPTIC TANK INSPECTIONS

In relation to files being prepared for legal proceedings, a second full inspection of 19 septic tanks were carried out across the county on the 19th and 20th of November. 4 of the inspections passed and the households will be issued with a Certificate of Compliance. The other 15 inspections failed, and the households will be issued with a new Advisory Notice with measures required to remediate the issues found and a new timeframe to complete the works.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

The Western Local Authorities Liaison meeting took place on the 11th November with following items included for discussion:

- Forestry licencing notifications
- New training programme for Section 4 discharge licencing.
- Organic manure pilot
- National Agricultural inspections Programme, Bio-solids and sewer misconnections and urban run-off working groups
- LA Water Action Work Plans
- 6th Nitrates Action Programme
- Blue-green Algal Blooms

The Western Regional Operational Committee met online with the following items on the agenda:

- LAWPRO national updates
- Regional issues of concern
- Shellfish waters roadmap
- Water quality in Ireland 2019 to 2025 – Alan Stephens, EPA
- Round table updates from committee members

BLUE FLAG BEACHES

- Applications have been submitted to An Taisce for 8 Blue Flag Beach designations in 2026.
- A site meeting was held with a specialised contractor at Portumna Bathing area in relation to excessive reed growth which has infiltrated to a point where a Bathing Prohibition Notice had to be issued in August 2025. It is hoped (after appropriate assessment screening) that work to remove the reeds can be carried out before the bathing season starts in 2026.



EXCESSIVE REED GROWTH AT PORTUMNA BATHING AREA

PRE-PLANNING

A pre-planning meeting took place in relation to an extension of a previously approved Solar Farm at Ballymoneen.

LITTER & WASTE

- During the month of November 13 fines were issued under the Litter Pollution Act by our Community Warden Service. In total, 89 fines have been issued by the service as of the end of November with 37 fines paid in full, 13 files referred to the law agent to initiate legal proceedings, and a further 24 being actively processed through the system.
- 2 cases in regard to offences under the Litter Pollution Act were heard in Gort district court during the month of November. One of the cases was struck out by the judge as the defendant was no longer in the jurisdiction with the other case resulting in a conviction for the offender with fine and clean-up costs of €680 in total awarded to the Council.
- 2 cases heard in Ballinasloe District Court on the 6th November in respect of litter offences were adjourned until 4th December 2025 to give a further opportunity for the defendants to pay costs due. In both cases, costs have been partially paid to date.
- 1 case heard to Loughrea District Court on 6th November 2025 for offences under the Litter Pollution Act resulted in the judge convicting and fining the defendant €500 plus €250 costs with 2 months to pay.

BURIAL GROUNDS

BURIAL GROUND IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

It is intended to advertise a Burial Grounds Improvement Grants Scheme as part of the Community Support Schemes 2026, which will focus on accessibility and safety works at active Burial Grounds owned by Galway County Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS & EDUCATION

AWARENESS & EDUCATION INITIATIVES



- Green school visits were conducted in Tuam Primary School, Clarin College Athenry, SN Naomh Ciarán, Cill Chiaráin, and Cloughanover NS during November.
-

- All schools in the County were invited to take part in the ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards.
- A bilingual Anti-Litter advert on roadside litter has been run on Galway Bay FM to encourage people not to litter our roadsides.



- It is intended to advertise an Environmental Improvement Works Scheme as part of Community Support Schemes 2026 which will enable Tidy Towns Groups to take preventative action on litter blackspots in our towns and villages.

DOG CONTROL

PROMOTION OF RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

- 676 dog licences were purchased during the month of November. Of these, 475 were purchased at the local post office with the remainder purchased online. Licensing campaigns were carried out in Lackagh, Roundstone, Ballygar and Leitir Péic, An Spidéal with the assistance of the Community Warden service. 8,301 dog licences have been purchased in the county by the end of November 2025.
- Galway County Council continue to partner with dog charity MADRA on their spay initiative 'Millies Fund' for dogs in the County. The initiative has now been extended to include male dogs. Over 300 applications for neutering vouchers have been received since the scheme's inception in 2023 with 86 neutering vouchers issued in 2025 to date.
- Galway County Council have also been working with MADRA in helping them deliver their 'Talking Dog' Workshops, which are a series of education and fun, dog-focused workshops aimed at 3rd and 4th class students in the County. 10 workshops have been delivered by MADRA in county schools in An Cheathrú Rua, Craughwell, Ros a'Mhíl, Headford, Béal an Daingin and Baile Chláir during 2025. The Council have agreed to continue to support this worthy initiative with further workshops planned in 2025 and into 2026.

DOG CONTROL & ENFORCEMENT

- 4 fixed penalty notices for offences under the Control of Dogs Act 1986 as amended were issued during the month of November, with 54 fixed penalty notices issued in the year to date. Of these, 26 have been paid in full with a further 8 fixed penalty notices being paid via agreed payment plans and 3 files sent for legal proceeding for non-payment of the fixed penalty notices. The remainder of the fixed penalty notices are being processed through the system.
- Unfortunately, the dog warden service was notified of further incidences of livestock worrying during the month of November, with reports received in the Belclare and Shanaglish areas of the county. 2 sheep were lost in the incident reported in Belclare. The dog involved in the incident has been located by the warden service and has been euthanised
- Galway County Council dog warden service attended the district court in Gort on 27th November in regard to an ongoing case with a dog owner for non-payment of fixed penalty notices which were issued for failure to keep their dogs under effective control. The matter has been adjourned by the judge until the 22nd January 2026 to give the defendant an opportunity to erect an enclosure to keep the dogs secure on their

property. A follow up inspection of action taken will be carried out by the dog warden service in advance of the court hearing.

DOG SHELTER

18 stray/abandoned dogs came through the dog warden service during the month of November. To date, 94% of the dogs that have come through the dog warden service have been rehomed.

LIBRARY SERVICES

LAUNCH OF A NUISANCE OR A LUXURY...." HISTORICAL AND NOSTALGIC REFLECTIONS; A 100 YEARS OF GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Two significant dates in the establishment of one of Galway's most loved public services are 2nd August 1924, when Lennox Robinson, secretary to the Irish Advisory Committee of the Carnegie Trust, took the Chair at the inaugural meeting of the County Galway Carnegie Libraries Committee, and 22nd May 1926, when the Galway County Libraries Committee

(administered by Galway County Council) held its first meeting.



These significant dates are outlined in a history of the library, included in a new publication of essays, titled "*A nuisance or a luxury...." Historical and Nostalgic Reflections; A 100 years of Galway Public Libraries*

The book, which is edited by Josephine Vahey (Senior Executive Librarian) and Patria McWalter (Archivist), was launched by Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, Professor Emeritus, University of Galway, with Cllr David Collins, Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway, at Library Headquarters last weekend.

The book is the flagship legacy initiative arising from the commemorations that Galway Public Libraries held throughout 2024 to mark the 100th anniversary of its establishment.

The book opens with an Acknowledgement from the editors, thanking all contributors for capturing the history and essence of the library service. This is followed by an Introduction from Josephine Vahey, and then the main chapters, commencing with a *Brief History on the Library* (by Patria McWalter) which includes two useful appendices; one a select timeline on the development of branches and the ancillary services, such as the establishment of the Mobile service in 1960 and the Archives service in 2000, and the other a list of County Librarians from 1924 up to October 2024. The subsequent essays are personal reflections, *Not Anchored To The Ground At All* (by Patricia Forde), *Treasure Unsunk* (by Nuala

O'Connor), *Days of Leisure and Learning - Going to the Library* (by Jim Higgins), and the final chapter, *Books are alive: magic is afoot!* (by Pat McMahon).

Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, Professor Emeritus, gave a wonderfully detailed account and review of the publication, describing it as '*richly informative, charming*', and '*consistently inspiring*'. He paid particular attention to the history of the service, indicating that the first engrossing essay in the publication requires careful reading.

The nostalgic essays in the publication he said were '*warm and sensitive reminders of the wonder and excitement of the initiation of the young into the Aladdin's Cave of curiosity, enquiry and imagination that is the library*'.

Also speaking at the launch, Cllr David Collins Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway congratulated the editors, Patria and Josephine, and the contributors '*for producing this invaluable historical record, enriched with deeply emotive reflections on one of Galway's most cherished public services*', and said,

It is available to view, and download on the library's website www.galway.ie/en/libraries-archives/adult-programming



L-R: JOSEPHINE VAHEY (GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, JOINT EDITOR), PAT MCMAHON (FORMER LIBRARIAN, CONTRIBUTOR), PATRICIA FORDE (AUTHOR, CONTRIBUTOR), DR JIM HIGGINS (GALWAY CITY HERITAGE OFFICER, CONTRIBUTOR) AND PATRIA MCWALTER (GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHIVES, JOINT EDITOR AND CONTRIBUTOR)
PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON

WHAT DO YOU CALL A GATHERING OF GALWAY COUNTY LIBRARIANS... A CHAPTER PERHAPS!!
PRESENT AND FORMER GALWAY CITY & COUNTY LIBRARIANS WITH
CATHAOIRLEACH OF GALWAY COUNTY,
CLLR DAVID COLLINS, JOSEPHINE VAHEY
(2023-2024), CATHERINE GALLAGHER
(2017-2019), BERNIE KELLY (2019-2023),
PAT MCMAHON (1995-2013) AND
ELIZABETH KEANE (2024 TO PRESENT)
PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON





SHARON O'GRADY, (ARTS OFFICER, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL) AND JAMES HAROLD

PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON

LEO HALLISSEY, EDUCATIONALIST AND ENVIRONMENTALIST, AND MEMBER OF THE FORMER COUNTY LIBRARY COMMITTEE, JOSEPHINE VAHEY (GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES, CO-EDITOR), CLAIRE HALLISSEY, AND DR JIM HIGGINS (GALWAY CITY HERITAGE OFFICER AND CONTRIBUTOR)
PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON



SINGER/SONG-WRITER, ULTAN CONLON, PREFORMING 'I LOVE TO GO TO THE LIBRARY', A SPECIAL CENTENARY SONG CO-WRITTEN WITH PADRAIC STEPHEN

PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON

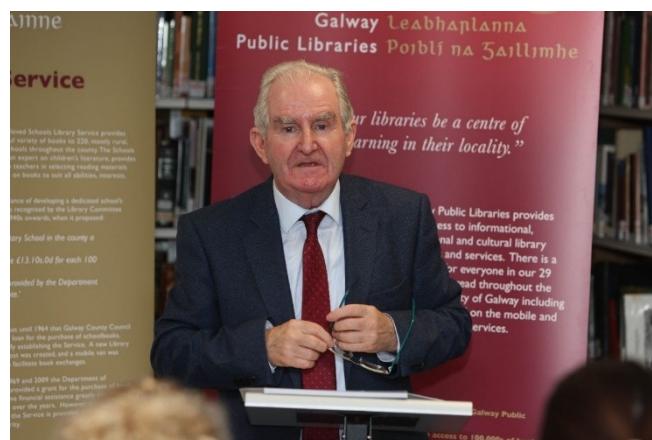
POET RITA ANNE HIGGINS, READING HER POEM CONSUMPTIVE WHICH IS INCLUDED IN THE PUBLICATION

PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON



DR. JIM HIGGINS, (GALWAY CITY HERITAGE OFFICER, AND CONTRIBUTOR), VINNIE BROWNE, CHARLIE BYRNE'S BOOKSHOP, AND POET GERRY HANBERRY

PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON

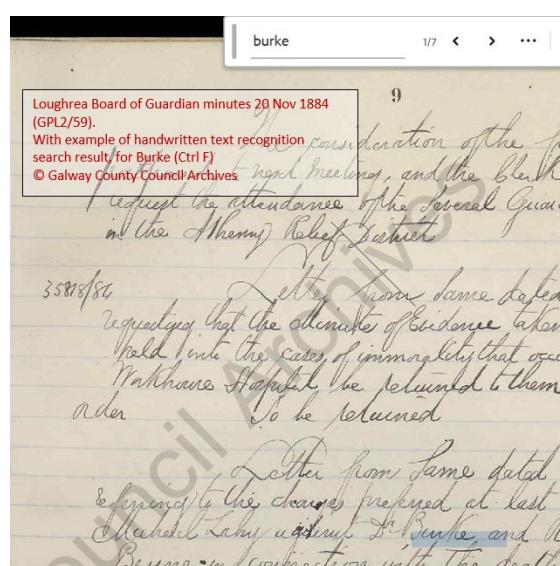


KEYNOTE SPEAKER GEARÓID Ó TUATHAIGH, PROFESSOR EMERITUS, UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY, AT THE LAUNCH OF 'A NUISANCE OR A LUXURY....' HISTORICAL AND NOSTALGIC REFLECTIONS; A 100 YEARS OF GALWAY PUBLIC LIBRARIES (PHOTO: AENGUS MCMAHON)

ARCHIVES

Galway County Council Archives has added a further batch of digitised Loughrea Board of Guardians minutes, covering the period 1868 to 1899, to the [Digital Archive](#), under reference GPL2/35-85. This project was assisted with a grant aid received from the Heritage Council in 2025, supporting the digitisation of these additional volumes.

To further assist researchers and aid searchability within these volumes, handwritten text recognition software was applied to the images, so it is possible to search the handwritten text for various words or phrases, e.g. use Control F and insert the required word in the pop-up search box.



BALLYBANE LIBRARY

EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

During November, the library was delighted to host the **Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers** exhibition, showcasing exceptional craftsmanship and artistry. This exhibition, which previously attracted significant interest at the Lexicon in Dublin, was warmly received by our patrons.

The launch event was well attended and complemented by four weaving and spinning workshops, each fully booked. A highlight of the launch was a creative crossover moment when Mary Reilly, a member of our Creative Writing group, shared an original poem inspired by the art of weaving.



HEALTHY IRELAND AT YOUR LIBRARY

Our Healthy Ireland programme featured two impactful events this month:

ASTHMA SOCIETY OF IRELAND INFORMATION EVENING

Held on 20 November, this event drew a strong audience and included three expert speakers. Attendees also availed of complimentary lung function testing, which proved very popular.

HEALTH SCREENING DAY

On 26 November, we welcomed two mobile units from the Irish Heart Foundation and Hidden Hearing to our car park. Heart health checks and hearing assessments were provided throughout the day, supported by Heart Nurses Barbara and Bernie, who offered practical advice on healthy living. Approximately 50 patrons availed of heart checks, with slightly fewer attending hearing assessments.



Feedback from participants highlighted the value of these services as an extension of our library offering.

RIGHT TO READ AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our Fusion Fridays in the Maker Space continued to thrive, with creative activities such as portrait drawing and Hama bead art. These sessions are linked to literature, reflecting the growing interest in graphic novels among younger readers.

The Creative Writing Group has expanded from five to twelve members, meeting fortnightly under the guidance of Colette. Many participants were introduced to writing through workshops led by Gerry Hanberry during the Eastside Arts Festival, funded by Creative Ireland. The group is now preparing for a public reading event in January.

Two craft groups meet on Wednesday and Friday mornings, attracting approximately 24 regular participants. These gatherings provide more than creative engagement—they foster social connection, resilience, and emotional support. Recent examples include a member who returned after a prolonged ICU stay, attributing her recovery to the motivation of rejoining her knitting group, and another who found solace in the crochet group following a family bereavement. These stories underscore the profound impact of our library as a safe, supportive community space.

GALWAY CITY LIBRARY

November was a vibrant month at Galway City Library, marked by a diverse programme of cultural, educational, and community-focused events. The library continued to serve as a dynamic hub for creativity and learning, hosting art exhibitions, workshops, literary discussions, and outreach initiatives.

The month began with a series of art launches, including an exhibition by the Arches Art Collective. Towards the end of November, artists Louise Blaisi and Helen Fahey unveiled their thought-provoking exhibition *Closed Doors*, attracting strong interest from local art enthusiasts.

Community engagement remained central to our work. In partnership with Galway City Partnership, the Bridge Project, and Sexual Health West, we hosted a Women's Sexual Health event tailored for migrant women, providing a safe and informative space for

discussion and support.



WOMEN'S SEXUAL HEALTH EVENT FOR MIGRANT WOMEN, IN CONJUNCTION WITH GALWAY CITY PARTNERSHIP, THE BRIDGE PROJECT, AND SEXUAL HEALTH WEST.

Celebrating Irish culture, the library collaborated with Gaillimh le Gaeilge to present an evening of traditional Irish singing featuring acclaimed musician and singer Cait Ní Riain. This event highlighted our commitment to promoting the Irish language and heritage.



As part of **Irish Design Week**, artist Anna-Rosanzska Batra led a series of creative workshops introducing participants to the intricate art of paper quilling. These sessions offered an accessible way for the public to explore design and craft.

Education and outreach were also key priorities. During **College Awareness Week**, nursing students from GTI College visited the library for a presentation on leveraging library resources for academic success. Executive Librarian Caroline Rowan extended this engagement by delivering on-site presentations to GTI law, business, and arts students on November 19, followed by an additional session for nursing students on November 26. These initiatives strengthened our ties with local educational institutions and showcased the library's role in supporting lifelong learning.



Literature lovers enjoyed a special event on November 22 when crime and thriller author Lucy O'Callaghan met with members of our Online and Tuesday book clubs, as well as the wider public. Lucy discussed her latest novel Obsession, shared insights into the writing process, and sparked lively conversation about her Galway-inspired settings.

Music and the arts took centre stage on November 25 with Music Unveiled, a collaborative event featuring composer Amanda Feery, lecturer Dr. Aidan Thomson, and performances by the Con Tempo Quartet. Delivered in partnership with University of Galway, Music Connects, and Galway Public Libraries, this initiative—now in its second year—continues to attract enthusiastic audiences.



Finally, poet Anne Donnellan launched her new collection *If Only We Could Bottle It*, published by Revival Press, adding a lyrical flourish to an already rich cultural calendar. Poet Anne Donnellan launched her new book of poetry *If Only We Could Bottle It* which was published with Revival Press.

TUAM LIBRARY

Staff at Tuam Library continue to contribute weekly articles to the *Library Corner* in the *Tuam Herald*, offering engaging 500-word pieces on topics of interest to our readers.

PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

Our popular **Rhyme Time** sessions take place every Wednesday morning, creating a joyful space for families to share stories, songs, and early literacy experiences. Saturdays see the children's area transformed into a creative zone with LEGO free play, encouraging imagination and the development of motor skills in a relaxed, social setting.

Community Connects, held every Friday morning, provides an open and welcoming environment for conversation and connection over a cup of tea. These informal gatherings continue to strengthen community ties and foster inclusion.

Regular visits from Trinity Primary School ensure that young learners remain engaged with library resources, supporting literacy and a love of reading throughout the school term.

BOOK CLUBS AND CULTURAL EVENTS

Our book clubs remain vibrant, with lively discussions across all age groups. The Friday Book Club explored *All the Colours of the Dark* by Chris Whittaker in November, while the Thursday group is preparing to discuss *My Father's House* by Joseph O'Connor in early

December. The Young Adult Book Club meets monthly and will next delve into *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen.

Soundbites, a unique lunchtime gathering of local musicians, storytellers, singers, and poets, continues to be a highlight of the cultural calendar in Tuam. These sessions celebrate creativity and community spirit, offering an intimate platform for local talent.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

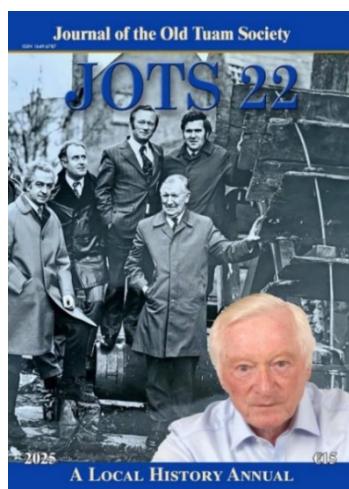
The Breastfeeding Support Group meets monthly, providing new parents with expert guidance from a local HSE public health nurse and a supportive space to share experiences. This month, researcher Catherine Maguire joined sessions to engage parents in a study on emotional development, contributing to research that may inform future policy.

CREATIVE AND INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

Our craft initiative, *Tuam Mapping 2025: A Cultural Tapestry*, continued throughout November under the skilled direction of facilitator Helen Flynn. Participants have made remarkable progress, and anticipation is building for the project launch in December.



DIGITAL SKILLS AND LIFELONG LEARNING



Weekly digital skills drop-in sessions remain an important part of our social inclusion work, helping learners of all ages build confidence with technology. Staff also undertook Acorn training to prepare for the introduction of Age Friendly tablets, further enhancing our commitment to accessibility.

Finally, November saw the successful launch of **JOTS 22**, a creative event that brought together writers and readers in celebration of literature and storytelling.

AN CEART CHUN LÉITHEOIREACHT:

‘FIGHTING WORDS’

Ba é seo an seisiún deiridh sa sraith seo dírithe ar dhéagóirí; an eagraíocht ‘Fighting Words’ i bpáirt leis an Club Cleite (club scríbhneoireachta de chuid dhaltaí na hIldirbhliana). Beidh na déagóirí ag obair anois le snas a chur ar na scéalta nuachumtha! Bhain siad ann tairbhe as na seisiún dar leo. Tá muid ag súil go mór le torthaí a gcuid saothar a léamh sa todhchaí.

CLUB LEABHAR

Bhí teacht le chéile eile ag an gclub leabhar míosúil an Déardaoin seo caite. Bhí plé iontach ann faoin leabhar *Bódléar* le Darach Ó Scolaí agus seo an léirmheas a bhí acu ar an leabhar “Tríd is tríd bhí na baill sásta leis an úrscéal. Tugadh moladh do dhearadh an leabhair agus measadh go raibh fad gearr na gcaibidil go deas. Dúradh go raibh caighdeán an Ghaeilge tharr bharr.” Seachtar a bhí i láthair - beidh cruinníú amháin eile acu roimh na Nollag.

OÍCHE AIRNEÁIN

Bhí seisiún beomhar eile comhrá agus scéalaíocht againn le Máirín Mhic Lochlainn agus Cairde ar an 13 Samhain. Seachtar a bhí i láthair ag an seisiún neamhfhoirmiúil seo. Bhí an-spraoi acu, ag insint seanscéalta, ag plé nósanna agus piseoga agus ag baint súp as an ócáid.

CUAIRTEANNA EILE Ó SCOILEANNA & GRÚPAÍ ÁTIÚLA

Mar is gnáth tháinig réimse leathan grúpaí isteach againn ón gceantar, le cuairteanna laethúil againn ó na ranganna bunscoile. Chuir muid fáilte freisin roimh cuairteanna rialta ón gClub Suaimhneas, na scoileanna speisialta agus na heagraíochtaí cúram. Is breá linn na grúpaí seo a fheiceáil ag teacht isteach – baintear an-úsáid as an mBord Céadfach nuair a thagann siad ar chuairt againn! 291 an méid daoine a bhí istigh againn mar chuid de na grúpaí seo.

THE RIGHT TO READ

‘FIGHTING WORDS’

This was the final session in this series aimed at teenagers; the organization ‘Fighting Words’ alongside the Cleite Club (a writing club for Transition Year students). The teenagers will now work on fine-tuning the newly created stories! They felt they benefited greatly from the sessions, and we were delighted to host it. We are really looking forward to reading the results of their hard work in the future.

BOOK CLUB

Our monthly book club came together again last Thursday. There was a fantastic discussion

about the book *Bódléar* by Darach Ó Scolaí – here is some of what they had to say about the book: “Overall, the members were happy with the novel. Praise was given for the book’s design, and it was felt that the short chapter lengths worked well. It was said that the standard of Irish was excellent.” Seven people were present, and they will have one more meeting before Christmas.

STORYTELLING EVENING

We had another lively session of conversation and storytelling with Máirín Mhic Lochlainn and Friends on November 13th. Seven people attended this informal session. They had a blast, telling old stories, discussing customs and superstitions, and enjoying the opportunity to connect.

OTHER VISITS FROM SCHOOLS & LOCAL GROUPS

As usual, we had a wide range of groups coming in from the area, with daily visits from primary school classes. We also welcomed regular visits from the Club Suaimhneas, Special Schools, and local care organizations. We love seeing these groups coming in – the ever-popular Sensory Table is put to great use when

they visit us! 291 people attended in total between all group visits.



AN CLUB CLEITE AG CEILIÚRADH THÉIS A GCUID OBAIR CHRUA

SOME OF THE WRITING GROUP CELEBRATING THEIR HARD WORK

WESTSIDE LIBRARY

November was a dynamic month at Westside Library, marked by initiatives that fostered community engagement, cultural enrichment, and inclusion.

A new series of yoga workshops was introduced in collaboration with Galway City Partnership, designed to support newly arrived Ukrainian refugees. This four-week programme, held every Friday throughout the month, promoted wellness and integration in a welcoming environment.

We were proud to host **Helium Arts**, the award-winning children’s arts and health



charity, for a month-long residency. Professional artists facilitated creative workshops in animation, printmaking, and other art forms, offering young people aged 13–16 living with long-term physical health conditions a unique opportunity for artistic expression and social connection.

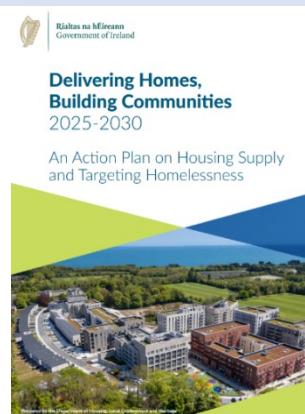
Our monthly Irish language family group, “Grúpa Tuismitheoirí & Leanaí” le Julie Anne De Brún, returned on November 22. Facilitated by Gaillimh le Gaeilge, these sessions continue to provide enjoyable and meaningful opportunities for families to engage with the Irish language in a relaxed setting.



November 26th was a particularly vibrant day at Westside Library. The morning began with a Social Prescribing Coffee Morning, hosted in partnership with Galway City Partnership, creating a space for conversation and awareness around community-based health supports. That evening, we proudly launched our new Ukrainian book collection, generously donated by Natalya Korniyenko—journalist, writer, and cultural manager. The collection includes over 100 titles in Ukrainian and books about Ukraine in English. Natalya introduced the collection with an insightful presentation, and these resources have now been distributed across Galway City and County branches, including Ballybane, Oranmore, Gort, An Cheathrú Rua, Letterfrack, and Westside. They are also available to order through the library catalogue. We extend our sincere thanks to Natalya for her generosity in enriching our cultural resources.

HOUSING

DELIVERING HOMES, BUILDING COMMUNITIES 2025–2030



Ireland's new housing plan, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025–2030*, published in November 2025, sets out the Government's most ambitious housing strategy to date. It aims to deliver 300,000 homes by 2030, including 72,000 social homes, alongside affordable purchase, cost-rental, and private housing. The plan is framed as a whole-of-Government effort to tackle persistent challenges of homelessness, affordability, and supply shortages.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS AND ACTIONS

TWO STRATEGIC PILLARS

PILLAR 1 – ACTIVATING SUPPLY:

- Implement the Planning and Development Act 2024 to speed up planning.
- Zone and service sufficient land; enforce Residential Zoned Land Tax.
- Invest €12.2bn in water infrastructure and €3.5bn in energy grid upgrades; create a €1bn Infrastructure Investment Fund.
- Establish the Housing Activation Office to remove infrastructure blockages.
- Promote Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) with 25% target for social and affordable homes; expand apprenticeships and skills programmes.
- Address viability through VAT reduction on apartments (13.5% → 9%), tax incentives, and €2.5bn additional capital for the Land Development Agency.
- Bring 20,000 vacant homes back into use; introduce a new Derelict Property Tax.

PILLAR 2 – SUPPORTING PEOPLE:

- End homelessness via a €100m acquisition fund, a Child and Family Homelessness Action Plan, and 2,000 Housing First tenancies.
- Deliver 12,000 social homes annually; incentivise local authorities to exceed targets.
- Provide 15,000 affordable homeownership supports per year under the Starter Homes Programme; continue Help to Buy and First Home schemes.
- Strengthen renter protections with national rent controls, enhanced RTB powers, and regulation of short-term lets.
- Increase housing supports for older people, disabled people, and Travellers; expand Housing Adaptation Grants.
- Invest in towns, villages, and cities through Town Centre First, rural housing guidelines, and remediation schemes for defective blocks and apartments.

VACANT HOMES



The Vacant Homes Officer (VHO) attended the Town Centre First (TCF) Public Consultation event in An Crompán, An Cheathrú Rua on Wednesday 19th November and an information event in the Comharchumann Dhúiche Sheoigheach Teo, in Cloch Bhreac, Corr na Móna on Thursday 27th November. The VHO provided information on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL), Housing Grants, and the Vacant Homes Schemes including the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants (Croí Cónaithe Scheme).



THE VACANT HOMES OFFICER WITH CLLR. EILEEN MANNION, MICHEÁL ÉINNÍÚ (BAINISTEOR, COMHARCHUMANN DHÚICHE SHEOIGHEACH TEO), COLM MACEACHMHARCAIGH (VACANT HOMES CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE GAELTACHT) AND MEMBERS OF THE COMHARCHUMANN DHÚICHE SHEOIGHEACH TEO.

THE VACANT HOMES OFFICER AT THE TOWN CENTRE FIRST (TCF) PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT IN AN CROMPÁN, AN CHEATHRÚ RUA.



CROÍ CÓNAITHE

There continues to be a high level of interest in the vacant property refurbishment grants (Croí Cónaithe scheme). Galway County Council has received 653 applications since the start of the scheme with 435 approved to a value in excess of 25 million euros, a further 70 applications are in progress with the balance having been withdrawn or rejected due to ineligibility for the scheme. 99 vacant property refurbishment grants, with a total value of €5,423,846.50, have been paid to applicants to date.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

AFFORDABLE HOUSING WEBINAR

Galway County Council hosted two free public webinars on Thursday, December 4th, at 1:00 pm and 7:00 pm to explain how the Affordable Housing Purchase Scheme works. The sessions were organised in response to a recent Council survey which revealed that almost one-third of respondents were unfamiliar with the scheme, highlighting the need for clearer information on supports available to households seeking to buy a home. The webinars outlined key details including how the scheme operates, eligibility criteria, required



documentation, price-setting mechanisms, and how the Revenue-run Help to Buy Scheme can assist first-time buyers. The initiative comes as Galway County Council continues to assess new sites for affordable housing in towns across the county. Interest was strong, with approximately 500 people registering in advance.

SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK

PROPERTY STATUS	Athenry - Oranmore	Ballinasloe	Conamara	Loughrea	No Eircode	Tuam	Total	
Occupied	169	475	756	689	956	6	871	3922
Under Offer	11	1	4	5	2	6	29	
Vacant		9	17	9	23	8	5	71
Total	180	485	777	703	981	14	882	4022

UNITS by STATUS

Social House Type	Occupied	Under Offer	Vacant	Total
Local Authority Housing	3012	16	60	3088
Approved Housing Body	910	13	11	934
Total	3922	29	71	4022

LETTING STATUS	Units
Available Unit(s)	22
Awaiting Minor Repairs	22
Derelict	39
Major Refurbishment	17
Total	100

TOTAL STOCK (LA & AHB)

- Grand Total: 4,022 units
 - Local Authority (LA): 3,088 units
 - Approved Housing Bodies (AHB): 934 units

OCCUPANCY & VACANCY

- Occupied: 3,922 units (97.5%)
- Vacant (including under offer): 100 units (2.5%)
 - Vacant without tenant commitment: 71 units
 - Under Offer (tenant committed): 29 units

VACANCY COMPOSITION

COMBINED LA & AHB BREAKDOWN (VACANT + UNDER OFFER = 100 UNITS)

- Immediate lettable:
 - Vacant available: 3 (2 LA + 1 AHB)
 - Under offer available: 19 (6 LA + 13 AHB)
 Total immediate: 22 units
- Short-term Awaiting Minor Repairs (AMR):
 - Vacant AMR: 12
 - Under offer AMR: 10
 Total short-term: 22 units

- Major refurbishment: 17 units (7 LA + 10 AHB)
- Derelict: 39 units (LA only)

KEY INSIGHTS

- Headline vacancy = 100 units, but 44 units (22 immediate + 22 undergoing minor repairs - short-term) are committed or easily lettable.
- Derelict stock (39 units) is the biggest challenge — over 39% of all voids.
- AHB vacancy is mainly major refurbishments (10 units) — medium-term turnaround.
- LA vacancy dominated by derelicts (39 units) — 19 of which are part of regeneration and 6 are for disposal.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION SCHEME

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS RAS ACTIVITY AND HOUSING PROGRESS IN 2025

Galway County Council has significant developments in tenancy management and housing delivery across the county. The report reflects a year of dynamic activity, with notable shifts in housing patterns and continued commitment to quality standards.

KEY FIGURES AT A GLANCE

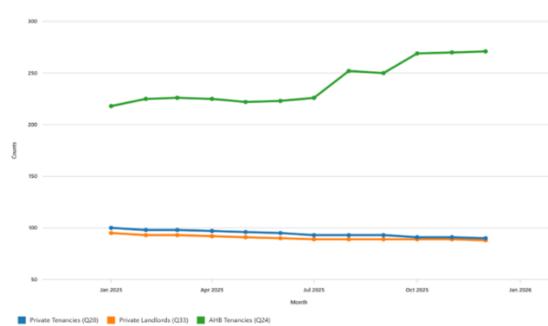
- Private RAS tenancies: Down from 103 in January to 90 in December
- AHB tenancies (RAS-supported CAS units): Up from 217 to 271 over the same period
- Private landlords: Reduced from 98 to 88

TENANCY MOVEMENTS AND HOUSING TRENDS

2025 saw a clear trend toward Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) who avail of RAS support, primarily through CAS-funded units designed for Older Persons Accommodation (OPA), Disability, and Homeless households. These AHB tenancies increased by 54 units during the year, reflecting Galway County Council's strategic focus on long-term, sustainable housing solutions for vulnerable groups.

In contrast, private RAS tenancies declined by 13 units, a natural outcome of transfers to other housing options and scheme exits. Private landlord participation also decreased

slightly, from 98 to 88, indicating consolidation within the scheme. This mirrors a national trend of private landlords leaving the rental market, driven by regulatory changes, rising compliance costs, and market pressures. Galway County Council acknowledges this challenge and is actively working to retain and attract landlords to the RAS programme.



INSPECTIONS AND PROPERTY STANDARDS

Maintaining quality housing standards remained a priority throughout 2025. Inspections were carried out regularly, with properties assessed for suitability under RAS guidelines. Where issues were identified, corrective actions were taken promptly to safeguard tenant welfare. Inspections were most active in January, April, and during the summer months, ensuring that properties met required standards before and during occupancy.

VACANT UNITS AND TRANSFERS

No vacant-unit claims were recorded during the year, and there were zero transfers to the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) scheme. This stability reflects effective tenancy management and minimal disruption for households. While 13 private households and 7 AHB households exited RAS during the year, these changes were offset by new allocations and transfers within the social housing system.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

The increase in AHB tenancies—primarily CAS-funded units for older persons, disability, and homelessness—demonstrates Galway County Council's commitment to delivering secure, long-term homes through collaborative partnerships. This approach aligns with national housing policy and ensures that vulnerable households have access to quality accommodation. The Council's strategy emphasises sustainability, affordability, and tenant security, positioning AHBs as key partners in meeting housing demand.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

RAS continues to play a vital role in supporting families and individuals who require social housing. By working closely with landlords and housing bodies, Galway County Council ensures that tenants benefit from safe, well-maintained homes. The scheme also provides landlords with a reliable income stream, fostering confidence and stability in the rental market.

LOOKING AHEAD

Building on the successes of 2025, Galway County Council plans to:

- Expand partnerships with AHBs to increase housing supply, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- Maintain rigorous inspection programs to uphold property standards.
- Concentrate on engaging private landlords whose tenants are currently receiving Rent Supplement payments, encouraging them to join the RAS programme. This targeted approach will help transition households from short-term supports to more secure, long-term arrangements under RAS.
- Respond to the national trend of private landlords leaving the market by offering clear guidance, timely payments, and dedicated support to make participation in RAS attractive and sustainable.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

Galway County Council has responsibility for a housing stock of 85 properties designated as Traveller Specific Accommodation along with 14 halting site bays and 2 bays within a Traveller Group Housing Scheme.

In 2025, Galway County Council commenced the planned programme of works on Traveller Specific Accommodation as included in the adopted Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029. In 2025 major refurbishment and upgrade of 12 houses in the Group Housing Scheme in Ballygar was completed with the refurbishment and re-roofing of a single rural in the same area nearing completion. The reconstruction of 1 Traveller Specific property in Cloonlyon in Ballygar is underway which was demolished as it was structurally damaged in a fire. It is anticipated that this will be reconstructed by June 2027.

CORTRAN, BALLYGAR

The refurbishment and adaptation of 2 Traveller single rural properties in Castleblakeney, Ballinasloe along with the refurbishment, extension and adaptation of a single rural bungalow in Athenry were completed in 2025.



The Council has been successful with two applications for funding for the major refurbishment of 13 houses in two Traveller Group Schemes at Ballydavid, Athenry and Gortbride, Loughrea. The six tenants in Ballydavid have also requested an energy retrofit of their properties. Work on both these Group Schemes will commence in early 2026. The Council will continue to submit funding applications in line with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025 – 2029 and will progress projects as funding allows.

SOCIAL WORK

As part of the oversight of the Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability 2021-2026, Kieran Keon, Senior Social Worker has been working closely with Disability service providers in the region to assess needs and coordinate various projects in an effort to ensure marginalised people with complex needs benefit from social housing and are supported to live in their own homes.



From a Galway County Council perspective, this work is done by Housing Senior Management (SSW and SEO) under the Housing Disability Steering Group (HDSG) and relevant subgroups or Action Teams. One project that is up, running well and showing the positives of the local authority working in partnership is the 'Living My Life' project.

‘Living My Life’ is a housing demonstration project seeking to enable people with an



intellectual disability to live with support in their own homes and lead a life of their own choosing. It is a collaborative pilot project between Proactive Carers &

Guardians (PACG), the Brothers of Charity Services Ireland - West Region & Ability West. The project supports 32 individuals in Galway City & Council in navigating the pathways to independent supported living, skills development, support for tenancy sustainment and community integration under five-year multi annual funding secured from the HSE. The Living My Life Project is identified as a Priority Action in HSE National Service Plan 2022 - 2027 following the publication of the Disability Capacity Review to 2032’.

The ‘Living My Life’ team are working closely with both Galway County and Galway City Councils to identify, and case manage applicants who are on the ‘Living My Life’ referrals list and who are also social housing applicants. This collaborative approach is working well, both local authorities have provided own door tenancies to a number of people with an intellectual disability who are being supported by the ‘Living My Life’ team to live independently.

Living My Life Collaboration Works: Joint working includes reviewing the housing list to match needs with the right locations and homes.

Positive working relationships: Collaborative solution focused discussion and coordination.

Tenant sustainability: A collective focus on stability, accessibility, and community integration.

Results: The collaboration between Galway County Council and the Living My Life Project is delivering outcomes for participants even amid limited housing supply and competing interests in Galway County.

PRIVATE HOUSING GRANTS

A revised system for Housing Grants came into effect on 1st December 2024.

HOUSING AID FOR OLDER PEOPLE GRANTS

The Scheme is available to assist older people living in poor housing conditions to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out.

MOBILITY AIDS GRANT

The Scheme is available to fast- track grant aid to cover a basic suite of works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing, in order that recipients are not subject to delays in accessing works.

HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

The is available to assist in the carrying out of works that are reasonably necessary for the purposes of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a disabled person who is a member of the household.

GRANT RATES

Applications which were received prior to the 1st of December 2024 are processed under the old scheme and at the grant rates payable thereof.

The maximum grant levels under the scheme were increased:

Scheme	Previous maximum grant amount	Revised maximum grant amount	Difference
Housing Aid for Older People Grant	€8000	€10700	€2,700
Mobility Aids Grant	€6000	€8000	€2000
Housing Adaptation Grant	€30000	€40000	€10000

This is an increase of 33.33% on the previous maximum grant amounts.

The Department will recoup to Local Authorities 85% of the grant paid. Local Authorities are required to provide the remaining 15% from their own resources.

All applications for grant aid under these schemes will be assessed based on household means. The amount of grant payable towards cost of works completed is dependent on household income after deductions and disregards are applied.

For applications approved after the 1st of January of this year, grant funding cannot be provided for the purchase of a new standalone fossil fuel boiler.

Applications for HAOP in particular have increased in accordance with new income limits and higher funding awards.

Grant Type	HAOP	Amount	HAG	Amount	MAG	Amount	Total	Total
2025 Applications received	638		184		246		1068	
2025 Applications paid	423	€2,963,167	87	€850,567	168	€895258	678	€4,708,947

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOME LOANS

A Local Authority Home Loan is a government backed mortgage available for first time buyers and fresh start applicants. It can be used to purchase a new, second-hand or self-build home. Loans are offered at a fixed reduced interest rate, for the full term of the mortgage. A **Local Authority Home Loan** provides up to 90 percent of the market value of the property. The maximum market value allowable of the property purchased with this loan is € 330,000.

2025	Number of Loans	Amounts
Approved in Principle	24	€ 4,496,750
Loans drawn down	3	€ 449,475
Approved in Principle Loans Expired	10	€ 1,715,605
Approvals in Principle on hand	11	€ 2,331,670

Housing Loans have received applications for a number of applicants who have expressed interest in Affordable Housing and Tenant Purchase schemes. Housing Loans have also noticed an increase in invalid applications (lack of savings history, lack of knowledge re criteria etc.). To counteract this, information sessions will be held in person on a fortnightly basis from January to March and on a monthly basis thereafter.

CAPITAL BUILD PROGRAMME

COSMONA, LOUGHREA CONTRACT SIGNING

C&N Higgins Ltd. Have been appointed the main contractor for the development of 56 mixed tenure housing units at Cosmina, Loughrea. The scheme has been designed by VHA architects, Tom McNamara & Partners, and Tobin Engineers. Works on site will commence before the end of 2025 with expected delivery from Q4 2026.



GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL STAFF WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM C&N HIGGINS, TOM McNAMARA & PARTNERS, & TOBIN ENGINEERS AT THE COSMONA HOUSING UNITS CONTRACT SIGNING



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, FIRE & EMERGENCY & CLIMATE CHANGE

WINTER SERVICE PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Winter Service period for 2025-2026 extends from the 13th October 2025 to the 30th April 2026. An updated Winter Service Plan has been prepared, and this forms the basis for the service which will be delivered by Galway County Council over the relevant timeframe.

Winter maintenance on national roads is carried out by Galway County Council on behalf of the TII and is funded by the TII. Winter maintenance on local and regional roads is funded by a combination of the Discretionary Maintenance Grant and the Local Authorities own funds.

ROUTES COVERED

The routes treated are categorised according to strategic importance as set out below.

Priority 1 routes consist of Motorway, dual carriage way, national primary and secondary routes and include a number of sections of strategic regional route network. These routes are ordinarily treated and receive precautionary treatment. Every effort will be made to ensure that these routes are treated by 8.00 am in the morning.

Priority 2 routes are the strategically important regional roads not included in Priority 1 and local routes. These routes are ordinarily treated and receive precautionary treatment. Every effort will be made to ensure that these routes are treated by 8.00 am in the morning.

Priority 3 routes are other local roads. These routes do not receive precautionary treatment but will be considered for treatment by the Duty Engineer once priority 1 & 2 routes are addressed and as resources allow at that time.

Priority 4 routes are other local roads and footpaths and will not be considered for treatment except in severe or prolonged winter weather and then only when resources are available.

Between P1, P2 and P3 routes, 1,228 km of road length is covered. That breaks down into 18km National Primary, 282km National Secondary and 928km Regional and Local Road.

P1 routes account for 499km of the road length treated. P2 routes 175km, and P3 routes 554km.

SERVICE DELIVERY

The decision on when and where to treat is made by the Duty Engineer based on the prevailing data and in accordance with the Winter Service Plan directions in this regard. The decision is communicated to the drivers on the various routes. There are ten P1 and P2 routes in total and all of these are looked after by Galway County Council vehicles and drivers. Of the five P3 routes, two are similarly serviced by Galway County Council directly with a further three the responsibility of private contractors.

Salt is stored in four separate locations. At salt barns in Tuam, Loughrea and Gort and in the Machinery Yard. This ensures an adequate supply in reasonable proximity to all routes.

PRE-WET TREATMENTS

TII have indicated that they are embarking on a programme to move to treating all national routes with pre-wet salt. Currently Galway County Council only engage in dry salt spreading and do not have the infrastructure carry out pre-wet spreading. Pre wet salting is considered a more efficient and effective method of treating roads, albeit involving a significant capital investment to make the transition.

There will be a requirement to install brine saturators and salt/brine storage at salt barns and also to acquire and/or adapt spreaders with pre wet spreading capacity. TII are committed to making funding available for this change.

As a first step in this proposed transition Galway County Council plan to install the necessary infrastructure at Tuam salt barn. It is intended to bring forward a planning application in this regard in 2026. Thereafter, similar infrastructure will be developed at the other salt barns. Progress and timeline will be funding dependant.

ACQUISITION OF WINTER SERVICE VEHICLES

In the past year Galway County Council have acquired five new vehicles which are part of the fleet delivering the 20205/2026 winter service. Two of these are permanently mounted spreaders with brine spreading capability. The purchase was fully funded by TII.

ROADS OPERATIONS

The planned annual Roadworks Programmes throughout the county are nearing successful completion. Municipal Districts provide more detail on this later this the report.

Throughout November and into December, various funding submissions have been lodged with the Department of Transport, including the following:

KILBANNON ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Galway County Council has completed all steps to advance the R332 Kilgannon Road Improvement Scheme to construction. Planning permission was granted in 2020, and agreements with all 29 landowners were secured without compulsory purchase, thanks to strong cooperation and the efforts of technical and legal teams. The project will realign and widen 1.55 km of the R332 through Kilgannon village, incorporating a shared cycle track and footway from St. Benin's National School to Kilcooley GAA grounds, improved junction layouts, and ancillary works. This scheme addresses safety concerns arising from increased traffic following the Tuam Bypass and supports national goals for rural connectivity and sustainable mobility.

Following a competitive tender last March, Jons Civils was selected as the contractor. Formal approval to award the contract is in progress and expected in the coming weeks. Once received, the Council will issue acceptance and convene a signing meeting with key

stakeholders. The Council acknowledges the vital support of Cllrs, TD's, and staff in achieving this milestone.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEME (CIS) – 2026/2027

Enables community groups to partner with Local Authorities on low-traffic tertiary or cul-de-sac public roads repairs and improvements.

STRATEGIC REHABILITATION REGIONAL ROAD PROGRAMME – 2026

Rehabilitates deteriorated larger-scale and structurally critical regional road schemes with high traffic volumes.

LOW-COST SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME – 2026

Targets regional and local roads with a history of frequent or serious collisions, allowing minor, high-impact safety interventions, and is designed to support vulnerable users and rural communities with cluster crash locations.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTION AND RESILIENCE WORKS PROGRAMME – 2026

Allocations for flooding resilience interventions, climate-adaptive drainage, embankment strengthening, and culvert upgrades.

Proposed works within these programmes have been prioritized within each MD, and the countywide submission then ensures reasonable geographical distribution of projects.

In addition, the Roads Operations office has been in communication with the DoT regarding funding of both new and ongoing Specific & Strategic Regional & Local Road projects.

It is expected that we will receive confirmation of Regional and Local Roads Grant Allocations during Q1 of 2026, in advance of presentation of the overall 2026 Roads Programme.

BRIDGE REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

BRIDGE REHABILITATION WORKS PROGRAMME

There are two funding streams available to carry out works of repair and maintenance on bridges – the Bridge Rehabilitation Works Programme and the Discretionary Grant.

Galway County Council were allocated a total of €773,500 under the Bridge Rehabilitation Works Programme for 2025. The bridges identified and individual funding allocated are listed in the table below. Along with providing for rehabilitation works, the allocations are also used to fund design work which will facilitate a works request and allocation in subsequent years.

BRIDGE REHABILITATION PROGRAMME	
Location	Funding Allocated
BR Bridge Inventory & Maintenance Inspection GC/BR/25/001	€63,500
BR Tri hill Bridge L-7269 GC/BR/25/002 (Design)	€20,000
BR Kingstown Bridge L-6331 GC/BR/25/010	€30,000
BR Western Way Bridge L-53241 GC/BR/25/005 (Design)	€20,000
BR Forweep Bridge L-12010 GC/BR/25/006	€175,000
BR R336 Treenail Bridge GC/BR/25/008	€90,000
BR Allen Darra Bridge L-42025 GC/BR/25/003 (Design)	€20,000
BR Moat Bridge L-8766 GC/BR/25/007	€160,000
BR Derrygarriff Bridge L-8229 GC/BR/25/009	€175,000
BR Drum Bridge L-821 GC/BR/25/004 (Design)	€20,000

Over the full year, rehabilitation works were completed at 5no. bridges, designs at 4no. bridges and bridge inventory/ maintenance surveys carried out at over 200 locations. The entire €773,500 allocation has been utilised.

There was also significant activity funded under the Discretionary Grant Programme. Galway County Council were in receipt of €395,000. This funded works at 15no. bridges and emergency repairs at 3 other bridges.

The type and variety works undertaken across the two funding programmes include; full realignment where geometry is deficient and which might include new foundations/abutments, deck widening or replacement, parapet replacement or repair, repointing of masonry arch bridges, skirt repair or replacement to prevent or remediate scour erosion, installation of warning signage.

Application has been submitted to the Department of Transport for funding to the tune of €1,001,000 under the 2026 Bridge Rehabilitation Programme. The proposal covers a total of 14 different locations. The Discretionary Grant provision for 2026 will be similar to that in 2025 facilitating a matching work output.

Pictures below show the before and after condition at a variety of locations where bridge works were undertaken in 2025:

TEERNAKIL BRIDGE



DERRYGARRIFF BRIDGE



MOAT BRIDGE



DOIRRIU BRIDGE



FORMWEEL BRIDGE



DERRYNAGRAN BRIDGE



BROADBAND

NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN – UPDATE FOR COUNTY GALWAY DECEMBER 2025

The National Broadband Plan (NBP), a cornerstone government initiative, aims to deliver high-speed broadband to every home, school, and business in Ireland, including those in rural and remote areas. This ambitious objective is being achieved through a blend of private sector investment and public funding.

Investment in fixed-line broadband across County Galway is projected to exceed €210 million by the conclusion of the National Broadband Plan, comprising of a combination of State funding and private sector contributions.

Significant progress has been made in the rollout of fibre broadband across County Galway. According to the latest ComReg Irish Communications Market Report, access to fixed-line broadband in the county has grown dramatically—from just 19% of premises in Q1 2019 to 84% (130,891 premises) by Q2 2025.

Under the NBP, National Broadband Ireland (NBI) is contracted to provide fibre broadband to approximately 41,000 premises in County Galway, representing a total projected investment of €153 million over the lifetime of the project.

As of November 2025, NBI has:

- Passed 30,939 premises (76% of the target), now ready for order or pre-order.
- Connected 10,817 premises to high-speed fibre.
- Commenced network construction on an additional 9,099 premises.

Based on NBI's current build schedule, **81.5% of the network** in County Galway is expected to be complete by year-end, with full rollout anticipated by **December 2026**.

COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT IN FIBRE BROADBAND

Commercial operators continue to expand fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) services across the county. It is projected that **100,668 premises** will benefit from commercial investment in fibre broadband. Leading providers—including **Open Eir, SIRO, Virgin Media, and ENet**—are actively deploying infrastructure.

High-speed broadband is now available in key towns such as **Tuam, Athenry, Gort, Clifden, Oranmore, Barna, Loughrea, and Ballinasloe**. Notably, **Open Eir** has invested **€31 million** in upgrading broadband infrastructure within County Galway.

TAKING IN CHARGE

The Taking in Charge target - 12 estates Taken in Charge and/or for Bond Release.

TIC Target for 2025 will not be met. This is due to delay in Contractor commencing works on estates as Contractor was involved in remedial works following Storm Eówyn.

The Table A hereunder outlines output for 2025.

TABLE A – TAKING IN CHARGE

<i>Estates Taken in Charge (Remedials to take place on 1 estate)</i>		4*
<i>Estates pending Ratification of Minutes</i>		
<i>Estates for consideration at next MD meeting</i>		1
<i>Bond Release (Estates not Taken in Charge)</i>		2

Total Taken in Charge/Bond Release		7
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In addition to the above, the following is position @ 26/11/2025

Estates – advertised for Taking in Charge	1
Estates – Works Complete – Pending Uisce Éireann agreement or Signed Final Report	3
Estates – TIC Led Estates – Works in Hand • One development consists of 10 Estates	24
Estates – Developer led Estates – List of Remedials issued awaiting notification of completion	36
Bond Claims -	3

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ISO 45001 HEALTH AND SAFETY SURVEILLANCE AUDIT:

The NSAI ISO 45001 Health & Safety surveillance audit was held recently in Loughrea MD. The following locations were audited over the course of the day:

Roads & Transportation (Loughrea MD), Fire Service (Loughrea Fire Station), Loughrea Library. A positive audit with Galway County Council retaining certification to I.S. ISO 45001:2018.

ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRAMME - ACTIVE TRAVEL FOOTPATH AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

UDARÁS NA GAELTACHT BUS SHELTER PROGRAMME

Progress meetings held with Age-Friendly Ireland and other Local Authorities to agree delivery mechanism. NTA supports this programme, and Local Authorities can use their bus shelter contractor, Bauer Media. 5 no. locations in the Gaeltacht areas have been identified.

- Leitir Meallán
- Leitir Mór
- Corr na Móna
- An Fhairche
- Cill Chiaráin

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ROUND 1

ST PAULS, OUGHTERARD

This school has now reached Phase 7 NTA approval on PRS, i.e. Closeout.

ORANMORE SCHOOLS (X3NR)

SCOIL IÓSAIF NAOFA

This is now at Phase 6 Construction Stage- Contractor (Harrington's) appointed for works- Works commenced 25th Nov 2025.

CALASANCTIUS COLLEGE & GAELSCOIL DE HÍDE

Both of these projects are nearing completion of Phase 5 Detailed Design. Once complete they will be issued to NTA for approval to go to Tender. Publishing of Tender expected Jan '26.

ATHENRY BOYS SCHOOL AND SCOIL CHROÍ NAOFA

Both schools have received Road Safety Audits and finalised Preliminary drawings have been uploaded to PRS seeking Gateway 3 Approval. Upon NTA approval, planning will ensue.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ROUND 2

5 schools are included in Round 2 - Scoil Sailearna (Indreabhán); Scoil Na bhForbacha (Furbogh); Ballinderreen NS; Gort Community College; St Brendan's NS (Loughrea).



SCOIL SAILEARNA (INDREABHÁN)

This SRTS scheme is currently in Phase 3 Preliminary Design. A Road Safety Audit is currently being conducted on the Ph3 design, which is anticipated to be returned WK1-2 2026.

SCOIL NA BHFORBACHA (FURBOUGH)

This SRTS scheme is currently in Phase 3 Preliminary Design. A Road Safety Audit is currently being conducted on the Ph3 design, which is anticipated to be returned WK1-2 2026.

SRTS R2 BALLINDERREEN NS

Currently in Phase 3 Preliminary Design. Land dedication is currently progressing where three landowners are involved, 1 of which has been agreed and signed. The remaining 2 are with the landowners for consideration. A Road Safety Audit will be conducted following receipt of land agreements. The next action will be compiling TII's Preliminary Design Report. Phase 4 Planning will require Part 8.

ST BRENDAN'S NS (LOUGHREA)

Currently in Phase 3 Preliminary Design. Drawings are being prepared to be issued to Road Safety Audit.

GORT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This SRTS scheme is currently in Phase 3 Preliminary Design. A Road Safety Audit is currently being conducted on the Ph3 design, which is anticipated to be returned WK1-2 2026.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ROUND 3

There are 11 schools included in SRTS Round 3. Preliminary drawings have been prepared for all 11 schools. Final designs for 8 schools have been completed by the consultants and presented to the respective schools, where positive feedback was received. Tender documents for these 8 schools are in place, and a construction tender will be published once the completed designs for the remaining 3 schools are received.

Note that, due to the introduction of Periodic Speed Limit signs at the majority of Round 3 schools, the introduction of special speed limits will require approval through Galway County Council's by-law process. This may result in prolonging delivery of these schemes.

ATHENRY ACTIVE TRAVEL DESIGN SCHEME - CHURCH ST TO TUAM RD (VIA STATION RD)

Phase 2 Options Selection for this project has been extended to allow for additional traffic modelling on Tuam Road and New Line junction. Subject to NTA approval we intend to deliver briefing to for A/O MD elected members in Feb 2026.

HEADFORD FOOTPATHS

Phase 3 preliminary design drawings have been completed and presented to key stakeholders located near the scheme, with positive feedback received. A Stage 1–2 Road Safety Audit has been carried out, and all identified issues have been addressed in the current design. Agreement from the Diocese is required for several proposed measures, after which planning will proceed under Section 38.

GLENBRACK ROAD, GORT

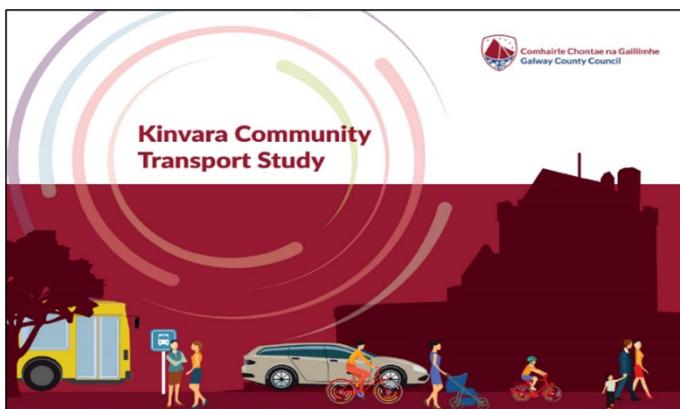
Land dedication is required from two landowners, with one agreement already signed. The second agreement is contingent on the extent of verge stabilization. Following exploratory works carried out in early November, a consultant is now developing a design for the retaining elements. This design will determine the required extent of land dedication.

LOUGHREA ACTIVE TRAVEL DESIGN SCHEME

Tender assessment has been completed, and a preferred bidder has been identified. The successful design consultant has been notified.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING – COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STUDIES

KINVARA COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STUDY



Galway County Council is pleased to present the Kinvara Community Transport Study. This is the first Community Transport Study to be developed nationally and aligns with the broader Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) and the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.

This Community Transport Study is a non-statutory document which seeks to identify the main transportation issues in Kinvara and to provide suggestions for active travel measures which could overcome some of the transportation challenges for the community.

This study provides an indicative list of suggestions that can be taken forward for further assessment, planning and delivery.

Please find a link below for the online version that is available for viewing on Galway.ie.

<https://www.galway.ie/sites/default/files/2025-11/Kinvara%20Community%20Transport%20Study.pdf>



ZEVI

Zero Electric Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI), part of the Dept of Transport, was set up in 2022 to develop and roll out Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure across Ireland. This will include installation of new public EV charging hubs and the upgrading of existing charger locations.

One of Zevi's key goals, which is fully aligned with Climate Action Plan 2025 objectives, is to achieve a target of having 30% of Ireland's private car fleet be electric by 2030.

Another notable ZEVI objective is to provide EV charging infrastructure (to include ultra-fast charging) for every 60km of motorway by 2030.

ZEVI is now actively working directly with local authorities including Galway County Council, and other key stakeholders such as Electric Ireland, to develop and implement EV charging infrastructure. This EV infrastructure delivery will focus on 3 key EV charging scenarios:

1. Neighbourhood charging - will provide for EV owners without access to a driveway. Charging hubs will be located in public spaces and will facilitate convenient slower off-peak EV charging
2. Destination charging - will provide for EV charging while EV users are on the go or staying at a particular destination (shopping centre, hotel, tourist attraction). These may be a combination of fast and ultra-fast charging points depending on user need.
3. En-route charging - will provide for high power ultra-fast charge points at strategic locations, e.g. adjacent to Motorways. This will help address range anxiety.

ZEVI has recently published a Regional and Local EV Charging Network Plan 2025-2030 from which Galway County Council is developing its own county-specific Local EV Charging Strategy and Plan.

The development of this EV Charging Strategy for Galway County is currently underway – it is anticipated that there will be a draft available in Q1 2026.

There will be dedicated Briefings for elected members and SPC teams at Galway County Council which will then be followed a period of public consultation.

It is planned that the final Strategy will be available Q2 2026 timeframe at which point the project will move to the next delivery phase.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES



Tuam & Environs Community Employment Scheme maintains Palace Grounds in Tuam, which covers over 12 acres. It is a public park with lovely walkways and a children's playground.

Maigh Cuilinn/ Oughterard Community Employment Scheme carries out invaluable projects in its community. At Carrowmanagh Housing Estate, the participants carry out regular grass-cutting and maintenance works in the Council estate.





CLIMATE CHANGE

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The Climate Action Unit continued its comprehensive outreach programme in November. The team delivered presentations and hosted stands at numerous events, raising awareness and sharing best practice on Climate Action including the Meitheal Strategy Event for Sustainable Energy Communities and the “From Kettle to Climate” webinar series.



COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION FUND



The second round of the Community Climate Action Fund was officially opened for applications on October 21st and will close on the 16th of December. This fund provides 100% project funding—up to €726,000 in total—to support community-led initiatives that build low-carbon, sustainable communities across Galway County. We’re currently engaging with communities and clubs to help them to develop project ideas.

Communities are currently implementing projects under the 1st round of the Community Climate Action Fund 2024. Galway County Council is supporting the 2nd highest number of projects

in the Country. Comharchumann Fuinnimh Oileáin Árann Teo (Aran islands Energy Coop) recently installed solar panels, a water refill station & completed fruit tree planting. Ballyglunin Community Development Company carried out retrofit works on their community building and planting for pollinators.



UPCOMING CLIMATE ACTION EVENTS

The Climate Unit is supporting and / or presenting at a number of upcoming events to promote the Climate Action including:

"Shaping Ireland's Climate Future Together"

On behalf of the Connected Project and Prof. Jamie Goggins of University of Galway, you are cordially invited to join us at this upcoming event to help celebrate key project achievements.



Date: Monday 8th December, 2025
Time: 10am - 3pm
Venue: Galmont Hotel, Lough Atalia, Galway City, H91 CYN3.

REGISTER

Please click the **REGISTER** link above before Friday 28th November to register your interest.

Registration via [eventbrite](#)

AGENDA

Interreg Europe  Co-financed by the European Union **CIBUS**

Combating Food Waste Regional Policy Solutions

8.30 - Welcome & Introduction - CIBUS project updates and Next Steps

10.00 - Supporting the agrifood in sustainable practices. The role of EU collaboration
 • Lisa Ryan (ATU)

10.30 - Coffee Break

11.00 - Roundtable: Food Waste, Procurement & School Meals

- Francis Duggan (GETNS Principal),
- Charlotte Sandberg (GETNS BoM Chairperson),
- Paddy Cuddy (Glamore Foods)
- Tina Ryan (Galway County Council)

BIA Innovator Campus, Athlone, Co. Galway H55 DD86
Friday 5th December 2025 9:30 - 12:00
Registration required - limited space!

Join us from 12-1pm and enjoy a free networking lunch with BIA Community

HOW CAN YOU:
Own your own energy?
Lower your energy costs?
Influence Energy Policy?
Build an energy community?

The Galway Energy Cooperative invites you to a working session that will focus on solutions to these questions, not on speeches and policy aspirations.

The Portershed, Market St, Galway 26 November, 7:00 to 9:00 pm

Places are limited so book your place on Eventbrite 

FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATION

On the 20th of November, Gerry O'Malley, the Chief Fire Officer of Galway Fire and Rescue Service travelled to Vienna to present "Irelands Reflection on Storm Éowyn" to the Federation of European Fire Officers (FEU) conference. The theme of the conference was



"The Fire Service in the Playing Field of a Resilient Society". The presentation covered preparations in advance of the storm, the impacts, Irelands emergency response mechanisms under the Framework for Major Emergency Management and lessons learned from the event. Amongst the audience were many very experienced European fire service professionals sharing their knowledge and experience on a wide range of fire service and civil protection issues.

GERRY O'MALLEY, CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, AT FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN FIRE OFFICERS (FEU) CONFERENCE

TRAINING

COMPLETED TRAINING OCTOBER

- Breathing Apparatus Refresher 2-day Course #6
Attendees: Ten firefighters.
- Breathing Apparatus Refresher 2-day Course #7
Attendees: Ten firefighters.
- Breathing Apparatus Refresher 2-day Course #8
Attendees: Seven firefighters.
- NDFEM CAFS Trainer
Provider: NDFEM
Attendee: One senior fire officer and one firefighter.
- NDFEM USAR TECH 2 Course
Provider: NDFEM
Attendee: Three firefighters.
- EFR Refresher 3-day course
Attendees: Fifteen firefighters.

BREATHING APPARATUS REFRESHER TRAINING OCT 2025 AT SLIGO FIRE STATION



COMPLETED TRAINING NOVEMBER

- NDFEM Module 2 (Tullamore)
Provider: NDFEM
Attendees: One firefighter
- NDFEM USAR Tech 2 Course
Provider: NDFEM
Attendees: One senior fire officer and three firefighters.
- NDFEM Module 3 (Tullamore)
Provider: NDFEM
Attendees: One firefighter.
- NDFEM CFBT Trainer Course
Provider: NDFEM
Attendees: One firefighter

QQI ACCREDITED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COURSE



Twenty-three firefighters successfully completed a QQI-accredited Hazardous Materials Course at Carnmore Fire Training Centre. The course was five days in duration, delivered over a two-week period.



QQI ACCREDITED
HAZARDOUS
MATERIALS TRAINING
NOV 2025 AT
CARNMORE FIRE
TRAINING CENTRE

QQI ACCREDITED PUMP OPERATORS COURSE



Twelve personnel completed a QQI Accredited Pump operators' course at Carnmore Fire Training Centre over a five-day period.



QQI ACCREDITED PUMP OPERATIONS TRAINING
NOV 2025 AT CARNMORE FIRE TRAINING CENTRE

CIVIL DEFENCE

ACTIVITIES

Regular duties were carried out across the county, ranging from local community support at events such as the Science Fair at the University of Galway and participation in Transition Year Student Day at Loughrea Garda Station, to providing a safety boat and crew on the River Corrib—at the request of the College Authority and An Garda Síochána—for the unofficial Student Christmas Jumper Day.

At the request of An Garda Síochána, and with support from Clare Civil Defence Search and Drone crews, a search was carried out for a missing person in the Galway Bay area. Thankfully, the individual was located safely and handed over to the National Ambulance Service.

The Annual Civil Defence Officers Association Conference was hosted this year in Galway, marking the 75th anniversary of Civil Defence service to local authorities and communities. The conference was officially opened by An Cathaoirleach, Cllr. David Collins, and attended by Deputy Mayor of Galway City Council, Cllr. Alan Cheevers.

TRAINING

Boat crews attended additional Personnel Survival Techniques training courses in County Clare. This training is essential for all boat crews.

The CDO and ACDO participated in an Evacuation Centre Exercise in Roscommon. This training aims to standardise future planning and development within each Local Authority in the event of emergencies where Evacuation Centres may be required.

The ACDO and volunteers attended a Missing Person Search Seminar at the Civil Defence College in Roscrea. This seminar offers experience and advice, from within our service and outside agencies to our Search Teams, with the use of advanced technology that is constantly evolving.

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DATA

KEY STATISTICS 1 st JANUARY 2025 – 30 th NOVEMBER 2025.	
Exempted Development Applications (under Section 5)	138
Exempt	74
Not Exempt	53
FI	6
Withdrawn	0
Decision Pending	2
Appealed	3

- According to the information from the International Protection Procurement Service (IPPS), any proposal under Class 20F (temporary use under S.I. No. 376 of 2023) must also undergo the Declaration of Exempted Development under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 Process.

KEY STATISTICS 1 st JANUARY 2025 – 30 th NOVEMBER 2025.	
Stage 1 LRD (Section 247)	4
Stage 2 LRD (Section 32B)	1
Major Meetings	20 from 21 requests
SID Meetings	1
Red III Applications	5 (1 invalid, 4 valid applications). The completeness checklist is currently under review for 1 Red III application.

One LRD opinion issued by Planning Department under Section 32D.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENTERPRISE

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The Galway County Council Project Management Office has begun to be resourced. The office will be led by a Senior Engineer, who will coordinate a more strategic approaches to Capital Project development, building of expertise within local authorities, and co-ordination of rural development works and initially and specifically Dept of Rural, Community Development & the Gaeltacht funded resources across the local authorities whose roles concern rural development (including Town Centre First/Town Regeneration Officers, Broadband Officers etc.) via a formal Rural Development Co-ordination Group that meets on a monthly basis;

The coordination group consists of the Director of Community & Director of Regeneration of Galway County Council and their relevant senior staff, and they will:

- Contribute to, and agree, a shared vision for the County and comprehensive
- Agree the timelines and deliverables to guide the formulation of the RDCG.
- Identifying priorities from the long list of projects and initiatives that might arise from the preparation of applications
- Foster effective communications and collaboration between all stakeholders
- Ensure that tall initiatives are being captured and integrated into any wider economic development plans for the county and included in ArcGIS Mapping system.
- Liaise regularly and effectively with the organisations and/or communities, ensuring timely and relevant input to the development of any projects and up-to-date awareness of the funding Government Department expectations.

The initial task for the PMO is to work with on a number of existing specific projects that have funding from the DRCDG. The PMO has been specifically funded by the DRCDG with two executive engineers and an admin support person to deliver existing projects such as CLAR, Town and Village etc. The PMO will work alongside the Regen team on RRDF projects and the new THRIVE project for Tuam.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE GALWAY

LEO Galway is the first stop shop for anyone seeking information or advice on starting, growing, or expanding a business in both Galway City and County.

This month LEO Galway continued to support small and micro businesses through their range of financial/soft supports and advisory services outlined below:

TRAINING COURSES & PROGRAMMES

SHORT TRAINING COURSES

A comprehensive schedule of training programs for 2026 has been published on our website. These sessions are designed to help businesses and professionals strengthen their operations, improve efficiency, and build digital skills for future growth. The training portfolio includes:

- **Social Media for Beginners** – Techniques for learning the basics of social media marketing and how to use it to grow your business.
- **How to Master your VAT Return** – Practical guidance on mastering VAT processes and ensuring regulatory compliance.
- **Website Optimisation** – Methods to maximize website performance, improve user experience, and increase conversions.

- **Artificial Intelligence Tools for Business** – Insights into leveraging AI solutions to streamline operations and drive innovation.

The full schedule, including dates and registration details, is accessible online. These programs will help equip participants with actionable skills to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving business environment.

BUSINESS ADVISORY CLINIC

Our business advisory sessions enable clients to speak with one of our business advisors who will offer general advice to help with starting a new business or expanding an existing business.

Our advisor will discuss LEO related support, training, mentoring and any other relevant services that may be available to aspiring or existing business promoters.

A business advisory is a free 30-minute consultation and runs weekly throughout the year. Please keep an eye on our website for the next upcoming available dates.

MENTORING

Our mentoring programme is designed to match up the knowledge, skills, insights, and entrepreneurial capability of experienced business practitioners with clients who need practical and strategic one-to-one advice and guidance. The mentor contributes independent, informed observation, and advice to aid decision making.

The Mentor Programme is open to both new and existing businesses located within the Galway region. Areas of mentoring include business strategy, financial planning, market research, marketing & promotion, distribution, exporting, production planning, social media. A mentoring session consists of 3 hours support from the mentor.

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS PROGRAMME (SYOB)

LEO Galway runs a Start Your Own Business (SYOB) programme every four weeks, providing aspiring entrepreneurs with practical guidance and support. Each programme accommodates up to 16 participants, ensuring an interactive and focused learning environment. The most recent programme took place in November, commencing on the 3rd and concluding on the 26th.

The next Start Your Own Business (SYOB) programme begins on January 7th, 2026. Two sessions will run in January: a morning option from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and an evening option from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. With a new programme every four weeks, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved and take the first step toward building your business.

Business Start Up Programme		January 2026 evening
Wednesday January 7 th	6.30-9.30pm	Business & Self Appraisal, Goal Setting, The Business Plan
Thursday Jan 8 th	6.30-9.30pm	Legal Structures, Registration, Responsibilities, Records
Wednesday Jan 14 th	6.30-9.30pm	Record Keeping & Taxation continued, VAT & Cash Flow
Thursday Jan 15 th	6.30-9.30pm	Marketing & the Business Plan, Research
Monday Jan 19 th	6.30-9.30pm	Market Research, Product and Promotion
Thursday Jan 22 nd	6.30-9.30pm	Market Research, Competition, Costing & Pricing,
Monday Jan 26 th	6.30-9.30pm	Networking, Marketing review, Leo Galway Guest, Funding and Supports.
Thursday Jan 29 th	6.30-9.30pm	Personal Management, Going forward with your business plan; Growing your business.

EVENING PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

IDEA TO IMPACT

LEO Galway is running an Idea to Impact programme (formally known as Lean launch) which started on 30th October. This programme is designed for individuals at the early stages of developing a business idea or those seeking guidance to increase customers and sales. Participants will receive expert support in conducting practical market research and real-world sales activities to determine the viability of their concept. Market research is a critical component of any successful enterprise, and this hands-on programme ensures that participants gain the insights needed to validate their ideas and make informed decisions about their business potential. The programme will run as follows:

IDEA TO IMPACT 2025					
Thursday	30.10.25	9.30am – 4pm	Mod 1.	In person	Galway City Council (GCC)
Friday	21.11.25	9.30am-4pm	Mod.2	In person	GCC
Thursday	04.12.25	9.30am-4pm	Mod.3	In person	GCC
Monday	12.01.26	9.30am-4pm	Mod.4	In person	GCC
Tuesday	10.02.26	9.30am-4pm	Mod.5	In person	GCC
Tuesday	10.03.26	9.30am-4pm	Mod.6	In person	GCC
Tuesday	14.04.26	9.30am-4pm	Mod.7	In person	GCC

THE STRATEGIC GROWTH PROGRAMME FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

The Strategic Growth Programme is a dynamic 12-month programme designed for ambitious business leaders seeking to accelerate growth. Limited to 12 participants, it combines expert-led workshops, personalised strategy sessions, and practical implementation support. The first phase focuses on building strategic foundations, while the second drives execution through peer accountability and collaboration. By programme end, participants will have scaled their ventures, gained strategic confidence, and joined a



powerful network of growth-focused leaders. This programme started on November 4th, 2025 in the Galway County Council offices.

TRAINER DECLAN DRONEY WITH THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE STRATEGIC GROWTH PROGRAMME FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

UPCOMING EVENTS

DESIGN MINGLE

Join us at CREW, Cluain Mhuire, Galway on Friday 12th December for an energising session with Galway's own Tara Jaye Burke - 3D Generalist Artist, Game Designer, and multidisciplinary creative.

Tara will share insights from her experience working on games for global brands including LEGO, Marvel, Hasbro, and Disney. She will also discuss her current role with StoryToys and her work lecturing in Game Design and 3D Animation at ATU, as well as her contributions to community initiatives such as Galway Game Jam and collaborations with Imirt, Ardán, and Eirmersive.

In her talk, *“Destined for This,”* Tara will explore the pivotal moments that shaped her creative journey. The event will begin at 11:30am with networking and refreshments, followed by the talk and an interactive Q&A session.

Attendees will have the opportunity to connect, learn, and draw inspiration from one of Galway's leading creative voices.

PAST EVENTS

LOCAL FOOD & CRAFT FAIR

The popular Local Food and Craft Fair, organised by the Local Enterprise Office Galway, returned to the Black Box Theatre in November with an extended schedule. The event showcased Galway designers, handcrafted goods, and artisan produce, featuring up to 60 stands with the best locally produced gifts.

Held from Thursday, 27th November to Tuesday, 2nd December, the 2025 fair partnered with the Galway Sick Kids Foundation as its chosen charity. Since its inception in 2012, the

fair has grown in scale and reputation, offering visitors a unique opportunity to purchase locally made gifts and artisan food products ahead of Christmas.

Family entertainment was provided by Barnardo the Magician, who delighted children with balloon creations and magic shows throughout the weekend. Exhibitors included Michele Chambers Ceramics, Irish Sockscieity, Elaylor Jewelry, Sliabh Aughty Honey and Natural Irish Skincare, among many others.

To improve accessibility, the Local Enterprise Office Galway operated 14 free bus routes from towns across the county, making it easier for shoppers to enjoy a hassle-free visit to the Local Food and Craft Gift Fair at the Black Box Theatre. This initiative helped increase footfall and ensured rural communities could participate, further strengthening the fair's economic and social impact. Coaches served Athenry, Ballinasloe, Carna, An Cheathrú Rua, Baile Chláir, Clifden, Cloonboo, Dunmore, Na Forbacha, Headford, Indreabhán, Loughrea, Maam Cross, Maigh Cuilinn, Oughterard, Oranmore, Rosmuc, Ros a'Mhíl, An Spidéal, and Tuam. Shoppers were able to spend a couple of hours at the fair before being transported back to their collection points, creating a convenient and inclusive experience for all.



MR. LIAM HANRAHAN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, (GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR. DAVID COLLINS, CATHAOIRLEACH OF GALWAY COUNTY, AND MS. MEAVE GALLAGHER, MAEVE GALLAGHER CERAMICS

SANTA AND MARTHA BEGLEY SCHADE,
AUTHOR OF GALWAY FAIRYTALES





MR. BUNDEE AKI, CONNACHT RUGBY, SANTA AND MR. JARRAD BUTLER, SPORTSKN SKINCARE

L-R: MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, LEO GALWAY, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR. MARY HOADE, MARTHA, IVY HOUSE CHOCOLATES, NOEL LEAHY, SLIABH AUGHTY HONEY AND NATURAL IRISH SKINCARE



MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, WITH MICHELE AND POPPY CHAMBERS, MICHELE CHAMBERS CERAMICS



L-R: MS. AIDEEN FALLON, THE LITTLE SIOPA & MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL



MS. SYLVIA GORGONE, BRONTELWAY CHOCOLATE & MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL



L-R: MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL & MS. MARTHA BEGLEY SCHADE, GALWAY FAIRYTALES

FORUM CONNEMARA START UP BASICS TRAINING

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting entrepreneurship, the Local Enterprise Office Galway in collaboration with Forum Connemara hosted two dedicated 'Start Up Basics' training days for members of the Ukrainian community. The first took place on Monday, 10th November in An Crompan, An Cheathrú Rua, and the second on 17th November at the Station House Hotel in Clifden.

The programmes aimed to provide practical guidance and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, covering key topics such as business planning, marketing strategies, and financial management. Participants had the opportunity to engage with an experienced

trainer, ask questions, and learn about supports available through the Local Enterprise Office to help turn their business ideas into reality. LEO Galway organised a taster session of its Start Your Own Business course, a one-day programme designed to give participants a flavour of the full four-week training. This condensed session provided a structured overview of the essential steps and considerations involved in launching a business.



MS. ARIANNA
MCDONAGH, LEO
GALWAY WITH STUDENTS
FROM THE PROGRAMME

MS. NOREEN DONOHUE, LEO
GALWAY WITH PROGRAMME
PARTICIPANTS IN AN
CHEATHRÚ RUA



DESIGN MINGLE

On November 21st, the Local Enterprise Office Galway hosted an inspirational talk at CREW with award-winning service designer Sarah Heffernan. Known for her empathetic and curious approach, Sarah brought a unique perspective that balanced the bigger picture with fine detail throughout the service lifecycle.

With extensive experience across multiple industries, Sarah maintained a research-based, process-driven practice to deliver value and improve human experience. Her recent work focused on complex public sector environments, where she collaborated with diverse stakeholders to foster innovation and embed inclusive design practices. Ongoing engagement with service users and people with lived experience had been central to this work.



The talk formed part of **Design Mingle**, a vibrant networking event tailored for craft and design entrepreneurs. It provides a dynamic platform for creative minds to share ideas, collaborate, and build meaningful connections.

MS. SARAH HEFFERNAN (AWARD-WINNING SERVICE DESIGNER) AND PARTICIPANTS AT THE EVENT



THE NATIONAL HUB SUMMIT

The summit was packed with insightful speakers, knowledge sharing, and countless opportunities for networking. Attendees enjoyed the National Hub Expo, an excellent chance to connect with leading service providers and agencies, and to explore innovative solutions designed to help hubs grow.



MR. KENNY DEERY,
GALWAY COUNTY
COUNCIL AND MS.
CAILIOSA KEAVENY, LEO
GALWAY

MS. CAILOSA KEAVENY, LEO GALWAY,
PROMOTING THE LEO SUPPORTS TO
ATTENDEES AT THE EVENT



ATU IHUB DEMO DAY

On 19 November, the ATU iHub hosted its annual Demo Day, led by Turlough Rafferty, featuring an afternoon of technology innovation and collaboration across the regional enterprise ecosystem. The Local Enterprise Office Galway was represented by Sandra Regan and Mairéad Herlihy. Sandra delivered a presentation outlining the range of LEO supports



available to entrepreneurs, while the LEO stand facilitated direct engagement with attendees and provided valuable networking opportunities with founders and enterprise hub representatives.

MS. MARY RODGERS, PORTERSHED, MS. ROSANNA LOFTUS, MEDLINK GALWAY, MS. MAIREAD HERLIHY, LEO GALWAY

MS. SANDRA REGAN, LEO GALWAY



SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

FACEBOOK:

8.5 LIKES

REACH YEAR-TO-DATE: 31.1K

LINKEDIN:

1.6K FOLLOWERS

INSTAGRAM:

3.6K FOLLOWERS

REACH YEAR-TO-DATE: 26K

X (TWITTER):

5880 FOLLOWERS

WEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE PLAN

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Steering Committee Meeting for the West Regional Enterprise Plan took place at the Bia Innovation Campus in Athenry on November 10th where some 30 regional stakeholders and leaders came together along with Minister Alan Dillon, officials from the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment under the chairpersonship of Elaine Murphy, SVP Signify Ireland.



The meeting was opened by Chair, Elaine Murphy and Programme Manager Kenny Deery who were then followed by Minister Alan Dillon. Minister Dillon welcomed the permanent appointment of Kenny as Manager of the West Regional Enterprise Plan.

He applauded the collaboration that is taking place across the west between

industry, local authorities, stakeholders and agencies.

The organisations represented at the meeting were Enterprise Ireland, Ireland West Airport, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Galway Convention Bureau, Bia Innovation Campus, Western Development Commission, Connected Hubs Network, Atlantic Technological University, University of Galway, IDA Ireland, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB, Galway Roscommon ETB, Local Enterprise Offices from Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Galway County Council.

L-R: MR. KENNY DEERY, WREP
PROGRAMME MANAGER, MS. ELAINE
MURPHY, CHAIR OF THE WEST REGIONAL
ENTERPRISE PLAN AND MINISTER ALAN
DILLON, MINISTER OF STATE FOR
ENTERPRISE, TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT



L-R: MS. CAROLINE MCDONAGH, HEAD OF
ENTERPRISE, LEO GALWAY, MINISTER ALAN
DILLON, MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENTERPRISE,
TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT, MS. LOUISE
WARD, HEAD OF ENTERPRISE, LEO
ROSCOMMON, MR. JOHN MAGEE, HEAD
OF ENTERPRISE, LEO MAYO AND MR. KENNY
DEERY, WREP PROGRAMME MANAGER



L-R: MR. KENNY DEERY, WREP PROGRAMME MANAGER, MS. MAJELLA MAHER, WEST REGIONAL MANAGER ENTERPRISE IRELAND, MINISTER ALAN DILLON, MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENTERPRISE, TOURISM AND EMPLOYMENT, MS. MS. GRAINNE SEXTON, IDA IRELAND AND MS. MIRIAM NÍ NEILL, UDARAS NA GAELTACHTA

DIGITAL TWIN SANDBOX INNOVATION WORKSHOP AT PORTERSHED

Under the auspices of the Regional Enterprise Plan a workshop was held, hosted by Kenny Deery at PorterShed, opened by Tomás Ó Siadhán, CEO of Údarás na Gaeltachta and facilitated by Diarmaid Upton, Director of Studio Saol and his team.

The focus of the workshop was looking at a new way of thinking in developing and delivering innovation systems or projects. The workshop centred around the MedTech Ecosystem in the West and in particular the use of a digital twin sandbox as a variation of an innovation lab. After initial ideation the conversation focused on a HealthTech Innovation Lab which is aligned to the work underway through the West Regional Enterprise Plan, in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta. A feasibility application for funding is being submitted to Enterprise Ireland under Stream 4 of the Smart Regions Funding to further develop this collaborative work.



MR. KENNY DEERY, WREP PROGRAMME MANAGER, OPENING THE WORKSHOP, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA, THE IRISH DESIGN INSTITUTE, ENTERPRISE IRELAND, EIRMERSIVE, THE MEDLINK CLUSTER & MEDTECH ENTREPRENEURS.



L-R: MR. KENNY DEERY, WREP PROGRAMME MANAGER, MS. LIZ CUNNINGHAM, AMCHAM PRESIDENT, MS. ELAINE MURPHY, FORMER AMCHAM PRESIDENT & CHAIR OF THE WEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE PLAN, MS. MARY BUCKLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IDA IRELAND & JULIANNE O'LEARY, US EMBASSY DUBLIN AT THE AMERICAN CHAMBER THANKSGIVING LUNCH IN DUBLIN

Kenny Deery, through the auspices of the West Regional Enterprise Plan (WREP) is working with the American Chamber of Commerce in Ireland (AmCham) to develop an industry needs survey of their members in the West. This will help influence the development of the next WREP but also understand the needs of industry from infrastructure and skills perspectives. In addition, one to one meetings with key site leaders will take place through the month of January 2026.

KEY PLANNING UPDATES

FORWARD PLANNING

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN/DEVELOPMENT PLAN VARIATION

Variation No. 1 of County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 was published as planned on 24th November 2025. Closing date for submissions is 12 noon on Tuesday 23rd December 2025. Public Consultation Drop-In Session being held on Thursday 4th December in Áras an Chontae. Webinar being hosted on Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 6.00 p.m. CE Report for Variation No. 1 to be with Members in late January 2026.

Updated HNDA has also been published and Settlement Capacity Audit

At this stage, it is expected that the CDP Review will commence in June 2026.

CDP MONITORING REPORT

Currently being considered by Forward Planning Team.

MONITORING OF GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

Ongoing monitoring of planning permissions, in particular with respect to residential planning applications. Policy objectives also actively being monitored.

VACANCY SURVEY

Vacancy survey is now underway.

URDF

Design Documents for design of local centre, ecopark and density typology study at Garraun have been completed. Contracts were signed for carpark design on 7th November 2025 to bring carpark design to planning application stage.

Steering group meeting held and included Systra re carpark design. Department Site meeting also held on 26 November 2025.

Call 4 expected to be announced shortly.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

14-day standstill period expired on 4th December. Contracts to issue thereafter.

BRIARHILL URBAN FRAMEWORK PLAN LANDS

Works under way to agree City/County Position Paper with respect to Eastern Environs LTP and Area Based Transport Assessment.

JOINT RETAIL STRATEGY

Joint Retail Strategy currently being finalised.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Review of Development Contributions currently underway by the Forward Planning Team. Report/Working Draft was presented to Executive Team in October.

CAHEROYN URBAN FRAMEWORK PLAN (ATHENRY)

Works progressing to deliver draft Caheroyn Urban Framework (Athenry).

UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

MA Planning Students graduated on 25 November. Records indicate that all students are in full employment.

AGENTS FORUM/SEMINAR – 12TH NOVEMBER 2025

Agent's Forum was held in Raheen Woods Hotel on Wednesday 12th November 2025. This provides an update to Agents on new planning legislation, Development Plan and negotiating the planning process.



MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AT THE AGENT'S FORUM IN RAHEEN WOODS

MR. LIAM HANRAHAN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES FOR PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL AT THE AGENT'S FORUM IN RAHEEN WOODS



PLANNING AGENT AND CONSERVATION OFFICER AT AGENT'S SEMINAR

CCMA/OPR TRAINING EVENT

CCMA/OPR Training Event took place on 21st October last on 2024 Planning Act – Part 3 Plans, Development Plans etc.

Second OPR training workshop took place on 19th November 2025 on Forward Planning.

HERITAGE OFFICE

PORTUMNA TO HOST NATIONAL FAMINE COMMEMORATION 2026

Galway County Council warmly welcomes the announcement by Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan T.D., that the 2026 National Famine

Commemoration will take place in Portumna, Co. Galway in May 2026. This marks the first time the State Commemoration will be held in County Galway.

The event will be held at the Irish Workhouse Centre, one of Ireland's most complete and historically significant workhouse complexes. The Centre is a fitting venue for this solemn occasion, offering a powerful and authentic setting to reflect on the hardship and loss experienced during An Gorta Mór.

Galway County Council spearheaded the submission to host the 2026 National Famine Commemoration in Portumna, working closely with the Irish Workhouse Centre and local community organisations. This collaborative effort reflects the strong commitment from Galway County Council, the Irish Workhouse Centre and the local community to honouring the memory of those who suffered during the Great Irish Famine.

The programme will include military honours and a wreath-laying ceremony to remember all those who perished during this tragic period in Irish history.

Minister O'Donovan stated:

“The Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna stands on a site of immense historical significance, offering a uniquely fitting setting for reflection on one of the most defining and tragic periods in our nation’s history.”

Cllr David Collins, Cathaoirleach, Galway County Council, said:

“We are honoured that Portumna has been chosen to host this important national event. It will provide a solemn opportunity to reflect on An Gorta Mór, to remember those who suffered and perished, and to ensure that this defining tragedy in our history is never forgotten.”



IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE,
PORTUMNA. PHOTO CREDIT:
IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE
ARCHIVES

Liam Conneally, Chief Executive, Galway County Council, added:

“Galway County Council looks forward to working with the Department, the Irish Workhouse Centre, and local communities to deliver a dignified and meaningful

commemoration that honours those who suffered during An Gorta Mór and strengthens our connections with the global Irish diaspora.”

Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services – Economic Development & Planning, commented:

“From Galway County Council’s point of view, we are proud to be working with the Irish Workhouse Centre Portumna on this project. The regeneration of Portumna Courthouse earlier in the year and the ongoing work at Portumna Castle, harbour and forest trails will provide a town engagement opportunity that can complement the sombre and respectful commemoration at the Workhouse.”

Michael Owens, Director of Services, Corporate Services, Rural, Community & Tourism Development and Integration, stated:

“This announcement is the result of a strong partnership between Galway County Council, the Irish Workhouse Centre, and the people of Portumna. Together, we will ensure that the 2026 National Famine Commemoration is a respectful and impactful event that deepens public understanding of An Gorta Mór and its enduring legacy.”

IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE, MEDICS ROOM.
PHOTO CREDIT: IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE ARCHIVES



IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE PORTUMNA
KIERAN TOUHY EXHIBITION. PHOTO CREDIT:
IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE ARCHIVES

Heritage Officer Marie Mannion noted that Galway County Council’s bid to host the National Famine Commemoration in Portumna reflects the deep impact the Great Famine had on the county, where thousands suffered, died or were forced to leave.

"With its original buildings, extensive grounds and experience hosting large gatherings, the Centre is an ideal setting to remember those affected by the famine," she said. "The Council, Centre and local community, including schools, volunteers and cultural groups, are committed to working with the National Famine Commemoration Committee to deliver a programme that is respectful and engaging."

IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE MUSEUM.
PHOTO CREDIT: IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE



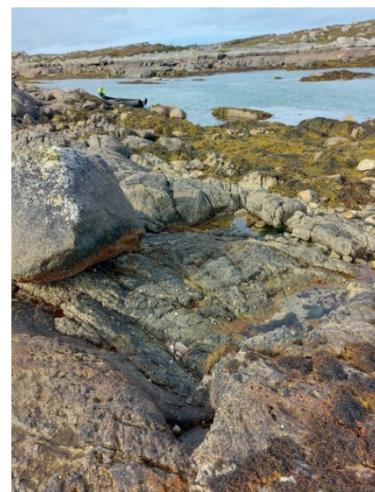
HOLY WELLS AUDIT 2025

The aim of the Audit of the Holy Wells of the County of Galway is to collect and collate information which may be in danger of being lost due to a largely, older generational knowledge base and land development pressures, including drainage and/or clearance. The data being collected through the County-wide audit of each holy well includes location, infrastructure, physical condition, access, protection status, ownership, archaeology, biodiversity, traditions, folklore, oral heritage and customs associated with and connected to the holy wells. This information will be used to develop high quality promotional resources for this aspect of the County's Heritage in the longer term.

In 2025, the aim was to create a community-based fact-finding process which would explore previously unrecorded memories, stories, traditions, customs, current use or non-use associated with the unique large number of tidal holy wells that occur in the South Connemara region and in particular their connection to St Colmcille.

The Holy Wells of Galway Audit 2025 focused on South Connemara, particularly Ceantar na nOileáin, to document tidal pothole holy wells and their links to St. Colmcille. The work aimed to preserve oral traditions, folklore, and ecological data while fostering community engagement. Translation of Schools Manuscripts Collection was also undertaken.

TOBAR NA SUL AN CHREAPACH ISLAND. PHOTO CREDIT:
ZENA HOCTOR



References to holy wells in the 1930s Schools Manuscripts Collection were identified across 47 schools in South Connemara. Material from 25 schools was translated from Irish to English, adding valuable historical context. These translations were uploaded to the Galway Holy Wells Survey123 platform and forwarded to the National Folklore Collection.

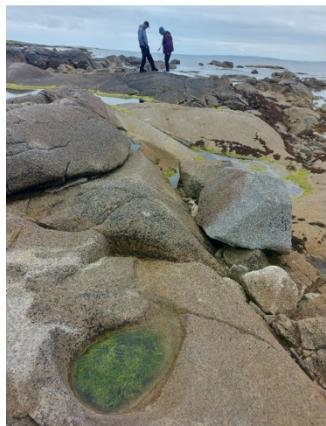
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Two major bilingual consultation events were held:

Leitir Mealláin (June 11, 2025): 20 participants shared knowledge of wells, cures, and traditions. New sites were identified, including Tobairín na Caillí Golam and Tobar Colmcille on Golam Head.

Carna (June 12, 2025): 19 attendees provided insights into wells such as Tobar Naomh Anna and Tobar Muire and facilitated access to previously unreachable sites.

MAP USED FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION WORKSHOP.



Follow-up visits enabled the researcher to locate 12 wells, five of which were offshore and accessible only by boat.

TOBAR COLMCILLE FEENISH ISLAND PHOTO CREDIT: ZENA HOCTOR

FILM PRODUCTION

A bilingual film, *Toibreacha Beannaithe Cholm Cille*, was produced and launched during Heritage Week. It features interviews on the cultural significance of St. Colmcille's wells and remains available online. Please see:

<https://heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org/content/places/holy-wells-of-the-county-of-galway/toibreacha-agus-bad-cholmcille>

HERITAGE WEEK EXHIBITION

A permanent outdoor bilingual photographic exhibition was installed at Ionad Oidreachta, Leitir Mealláin. Ten panels showcased the diversity of wells and associated traditions. The launch event attracted over 80 attendees and included a screening of the film. The project won the National Heritage Week Irish Language Award 2025, boosting local heritage pride.

MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLING

Twenty-one wells were surveyed for freshwater invertebrates to assess water quality. Seventeen yielded samples, including sensitive EPT species (mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies).

Pollution sensitivity scores ranged from 1 to 7.2, indicating generally good water quality in many wells. Findings suggest holy wells may serve as refuges for rare species like *Proasellus meridianus*.

PODCASTS

Two podcasts were produced:

Interviews during the annual pattern day at Tobar Chiaráin, Cill Chiaráin, capturing living traditions. A discussion with local organisers on the project's impact and future plans. Both are available on the "Our Holy Wells Series." Please see

https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/beogalway/episodes/2025-11-18T12_54_40-08_00

<https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/beogalway>



ST COLMCILLE'S WELL AND BOTHAR NA NAOMH DINISH ISLAND. PHOTO CREDIT: ZENA HOCTOR

DATA MANAGEMENT

All collected data—including translations, field observations, ecological results, and community feedback—were uploaded to the Galway Holy Wells Survey123 platform for integration into a future interactive GIS map. Impact and Recommendations

Phase 6 strengthened community ties uncovered previously unrecorded wells, and enhanced awareness of South Conamara's unique tidal holy wells. The success of the Heritage Week event and national award fostered momentum for future projects, including a proposed booklet on tidal wells and a county-wide publication. Continued collaboration with local heritage groups and development of an interactive online map are recommended. The project was funded by The Heritage Council and Galway County Council and supported by the local communities in South Conamara in Carna and Leitir Mealláin and Comhar Congeal, Oifigeach Pleanáil Teanga, Chonamara Láir, and Údáras na Gaeltachta.

GALWAY COUNTY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST PROJECT 2025– SUMMARY REPORT

The Galway County Community Archaeologist Project, funded by Galway County Council and The Heritage Council, aims to promote awareness, knowledge, and best practice in relation to archaeological heritage across County Galway. The role involves supporting communities, individuals, and heritage groups through advice, training, and practical engagement.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Increase public understanding of archaeological heritage.
- Support voluntary groups in conservation and management of historic sites.
- Facilitate compliance with National Monuments Service guidelines.
- Promote heritage education and community participation.



GALWAY COMMUNITY
ARCHAEOLOGIST, BERNIE DOHERTY
WITH STUDENTS FROM KILTORMER
N.S.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Support to Heritage Groups: Assisted over 40 groups and individuals, equating to approximately 650 voluntary days.

Events & Outreach: Delivered talks, workshops, and presentations during Heritage Week, Walled Towns Festivals, and local heritage events.

Heritage in Schools: Rolled out pilot programmes for Junior and Senior Cycle students, including TY projects.

MAJOR PROJECTS

Digitisation of Graveyards: Training and site visits for recording memorials in archaeological sensitive areas.

Community Monuments Fund: Supported 15 applications; nine projects funded in 2025, including Story Maps and conservation works.

Story Maps & Media: Developed digital resources showcasing Galway's archaeological sites, podcasts, and videos.

Dead Zoo Project: Collaborated with the National Museum of Ireland on natural history and archaeology links.

For more information please see:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8ef529b34852438b9dbd4e20cf74dc81>



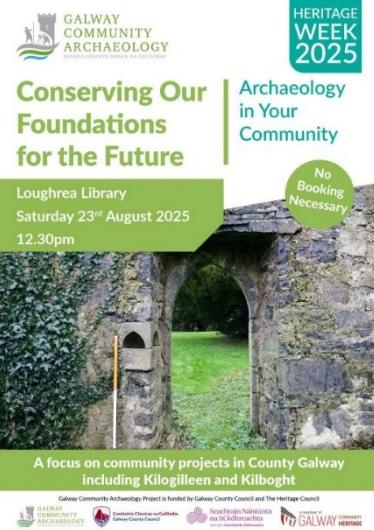
MS. BERNIE DOHERTY, GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST AND THE CRANES, CULTURE & CEREMONY IN WOODLAWN.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

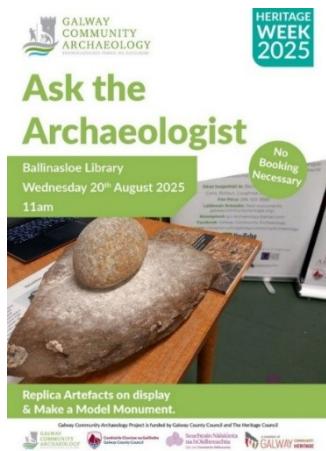
- Over 1,000 followers on Facebook and growing Instagram presence.
- National recognition for conservation projects at Killbot and Abbeygormican.
- Successful Heritage Council funding for 19 community projects.
- Delivered training, mentoring, and guidance on conservation plans and funding applications.

HERITAGE WEEK EVENT IN WOODLAWN

The Galway County Community Archaeologist Project plays a vital role in safeguarding archaeological heritage through community collaboration, education, and best practice. Its success is evident in the strong engagement, award-winning projects, and innovative digital initiatives that connect people with their heritage.



FIONN PRIMARY SCIENCE 2002-2005 GALWAY 'FIONN', 'FUTURE SCIENTIST' & 'BEO' SCHOOLS



In 2002, the Galway Education Centre rolled out the 'Fionn' project to 35 Galway schools, a government-funded programme to prepare teachers for the introduction of science into the Irish primary curriculum in 2004.

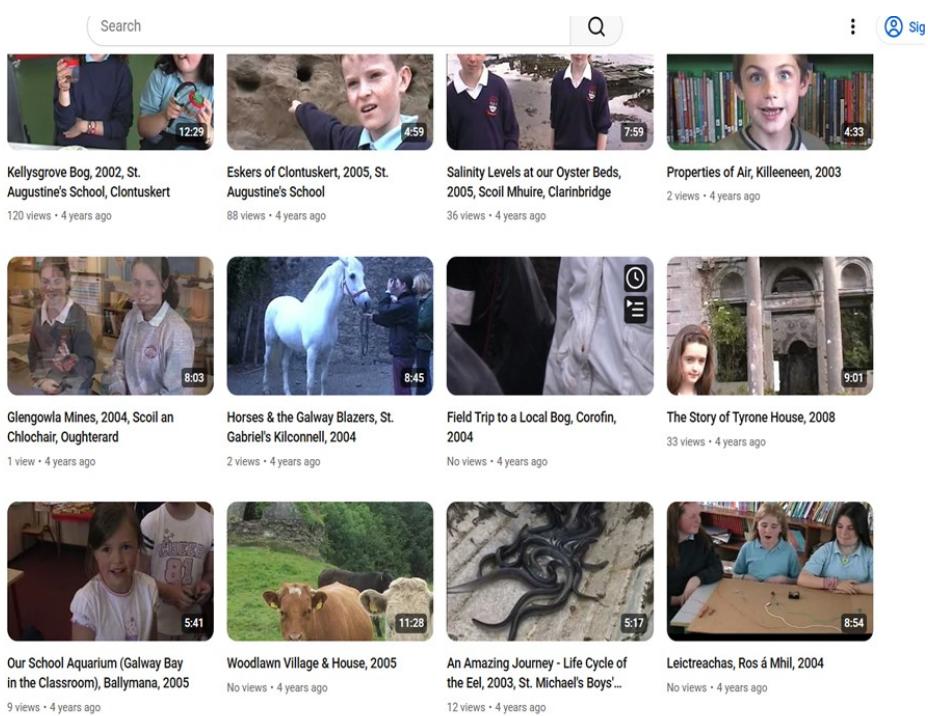
Each participating school was provided with a laptop, a high speed (ISDN) Internet line, a handheld movie camera and movie production training in order to make a series of child-centric videos every year for four years related to science and technology but taking in other aspects of the school curriculum such as languages, music, history, geography and art.

After Fionn ended in 2005, film production from Galway schools continued under Medtronic's 'Scientist of the Future' and the BEO local heritage digital archives project organised by the Digital Enterprise Research Institute (DERI) at NUI Galway in association with Galway County Heritage Office and the Education Centre.

There are now 125 films transferred to YouTube



<https://www.youtube.com/@galwayfionnfuturescientist605/videos>



BIODIVERSITY

An invasive species alert was issued for Demon Shrimp *Deprogrammers haemobaphes* by the Biodiversity Office on foot of an announcement by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Demon shrimp has been recorded in Portumna, Cluandavaughn Harbour and Rossmore, as well as other Killaloe, Mountshannon Quay, the Marina near Whitegate, Dromineer, Garrykennedy, Terryglass, This species poses a serious threat to our local biodiversity and waterways.

To help prevent its spread, all water users and anyone carrying out works in or near water must follow strict biosecurity measures — particularly around the Shannon waterways, but also across the county.

Follow the “Check, Clean, Dry” code:

- Check all equipment and clothing for plant or animal material.
- Clean off any debris thoroughly.
- Dry everything completely before moving to another water body.



Cooperation from the public is vital to protect our rivers and lakes.

To learn more about invasive species and biosecurity visit:

<https://invasives.ie/species-alerts/demon-shrimp/>

PHOTO: ADULT DEMON SHRIMP (PHOTO CREDIT DR. JAN ROBERT BAARS)

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

Athenry/Oranmore Municipal District Annual Roads programme is practically complete.

Below is an overview of projects:

PAVEMENT WORKS

- Restoration Maintenance (Surface Dressing) - 100% Complete (15 sites)
- Restoration Improvement (Overlay/inlay works) – 100% Complete (20 sites)
 - o Additional allocation in September for 3 sites – (100% complete)
- Slurry Sealing – 100% complete (10 sites) – Pre Restoration Maintenance.



RESURFACING ON
OLD LIMERICK
ROAD,
ORANMORE – NOV
2025



RESURFACING WORKS, OLD DUBLIN ROAD,
ORANMORE

SAFETY IMPROVEMENT WORKS

3 Sites included in programme.

- Site 1 & 2 at Carnmore Cross & on the R339 adjacent to Galway Airport entrance. Contractor has been appointed to carry out works which will involve stud (cat's eyes) replacement, replenishment of existing road markings, introduction of additional signage & micro-texturing works to pavement.



LINE
REPLENISHMENT &
STUD
REPLACEMENT
ON R354
APPROACHING
CARNMORE
CROSS

ANTI-SKID
SURFACING
CARNMORE
CROSS



Site 3 – Derrydonnell Cross – 100% Complete.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE

3 sites included in programme.

- Carrowmoneash storm upgrade works - 100% complete
- Aucloggeen Drainage – Landowner issues resolved; Contractor appointed to carry out works – Ongoing. Workd will commence Late Dec/Early Jan.
- Coolarne Retaining Wall– 100% complete by direct labour crew.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES (CIS)

5 sites included in Programme.

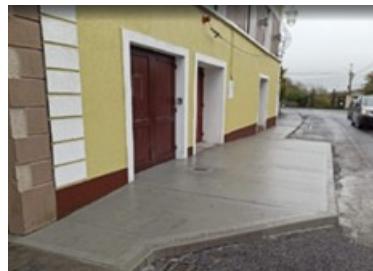
- New Line Junction, Athenry 90% complete. Awaiting ESB connection to power up Pedestrian lights.
- Clocmaol – Setting back boundary wall – 40 % complete – Ongoing
- Footpath Replacement Works to Old Church St, Court Lane, McDonald Lane in Athenry. Contractor commenced Mid-October. 85% complete. Ongoing



FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT –
BRIDGE STREET, ATHENRY
(BEFORE & AFTER)

FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT –
COURT LANE/BRIDGE STREET,
ATHENRY





IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY
AT ATHENRY COMMUNITY
CENTRE

CROSSING FACILITIES – CLARKE STREET, ATHENRY



FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT – COURT LANE, ATHENRY

- Footpath Replacement works to Cuillaurbau, Athenry 100% complete by Direct labour Crew
- Lydican – Ongoing. Contractor appointed for resurfacing works. Due to Commence Mid Dec.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES (LIS)

- 3 sites included in round 1 allocation – 100% complete
- 3 sites included in Round 2 allocation (Sept) - 90% complete.

HEDGE CUTTING PROGRAMME

- Local road hedgecutting programme – 90% complete
- National & Regional Road hedgecutting programme – 100% complete.
- N67/R446 Dual Carriageway maintenance programme – Ongoing - 5 litter picks/Grass cuts carried out to date. Hedgecutting to commence Dec/Jan.

SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

- Belville- Landowners negotiation still ongoing. Several discussions have taken place to date
- Athenry Outer Ring Road. – works progressing to date.

OTHER



FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENT WORKS & PL INSTALLATION, MONIVEA

BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

Ballinasloe MD staff and contractors on its behalf continued the delivery of the remaining projects on the 2025 roadworks programme throughout the MD. Progress on the delivery of the roads programme for Ballinasloe MD is presented below.

Programme	Project Details	Status
RI (Overlays)	Contracts nr 1 and nr 3 (61 jobs)	96% completed
RM (Surface Dressing)	Contract Nr. 2 (41 jobs)	100 % completed
Climate-Change	L-3405 Mounthazel GC/25/014	Completed
	L34153 Aughrim Culvert GC/25/018	Completed
	R339 Ballynamona, Menlough GC/25/004	To commence
Low-Cost-Safety	LCS R364 Castletown Cross Bsloe North GC/BS/25/003	Completed
Community Involvement Schemes	8 projects	Completed & Ongoing
Local Improvement Schemes	8 projects	100% Completed

During November, the following RI overlays were completed: BN-25-20 – Gowla, BN-25-21 – Skehanagh, BN-25-29 - Kilmore, Ballygar, BN-25-37 – Gunnoude, BS-25-23 – Cappataggle. Contractors will complete RI overlay/inlays at Cloonkeen and an additional job at Poolboy, Ballinasloe in early January 2026.

Works were completed on the Climate Adaptation Project in Aughrim to replace and upgrade an existing culvert in Cloonameeragaun between St. Gabriel's GAA changing rooms

and the Cloonameeragaun Abbey/Ecclesiastical Remains. Additional road drainage network (50m) on the L34153 is being constructed as an extension of the recently upgrade culvert.

Works were on-going on construction of footpaths in Williamstown and Mountbellew and on the CIS projects in Ballinasloe North Area with resurfacing works at Patch, Moylough.

In November, Ballinasloe MD direct labour crews worked on upgrades to graveyards at Glenamaddy and Creagh, Ballinasloe. Works were completed to raise gateway and entrance to mitigate flooding at the entrance to graveyard at Glenamaddy and further works were completed at Creagh on the new urn plots section to facilitate burials of ashes and erection of headstones at urn burials.

Hedge cutting across the Ballinasloe MD is being progressed across the MD, with hedge cutting of Regional Roads completed and continues the local roads.

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF WORKS UNDERTAKEN IN NOVEMBER 2025



OVERLAY WORKS - BS-25-23 – CAPPATAGGLE



OVERLAY WORKS - BN-25-37 GUNNOUDE



RESURFACING UNDER CIS.80.23 - L-3203-31, L-3203-35 – PATCH, MOYLOUGH

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW URN PLOTS AT
CREAGH CEMETERY



CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

UPDATE ON ROADS PROGRAMME FOR CONAMARA – DECEMBER 2025

		CONAMARA MD – RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT (RI)	STATUS
Road Class.	Road No.	Road Name	
R	341	Ballyconneely Roundstone	Complete
R	344	Inagh	Complete
R	336	Leenane	Complete
R	341	Bridge Street	Yet to Commence
R	340	Gleann Chatha	Complete
R	340-83	Doire Iorrais	Complete
R	336	Foraí Maola	Complete
L	11063	Mannin low rd	Complete
L	5132	Errislannin High Rd	Complete
L	51253	Faul	Complete
L	5116	Claddaghduff	Complete
L	5113	Cloone	Complete
L	51033	Rosroe	Complete
L	51374	Glencoaghan	Complete
L	11072	Ballyconneely Old Graveyard	Complete
L	5300	Gleantreague	Complete
L	53262	Drumsnauv	Complete
L	1301	Finny	Complete
L	5327	Glann	Complete
L	1310	New Village	Complete
L	53283	Leam	Complete
L	1202	Doire Fhearta	Complete

L	52291	Leitir Caladh	Complete
L	52334	Trá Bháin	Complete
L	52346-2	Truscain	Complete
L	52332	Tobar Naomh Anna	Complete
L	5238	Camus Íochtar	Complete
L	5242-16	Garafin	Complete
L	52441	Ard Mhór Ó Thuaidh	Complete
L	12075	Domhras	Complete
L	1320-22	An Spidéal Maigh Cuilinn	Complete
L	5395	Baile an tSagaírt	Complete
L	53951	Baile an tSleibhe	Complete
L	1200-24	Ros an Mhíl	Complete
L	5366-19	Rocks Rd	Complete
L	5362	Gortmore	Complete
L	5345-17	Doon High Road	Complete
L	5361-8	Park, Roscahill	Complete
L	5376	Claideach	Complete
L	5347-10	Knockaunranny	Complete
L	53946	Pairc Thoir	Complete
R	341-341	Salt Lake Bridge (Additional RI Job)	Yet to Commence
R	336	Cinn Mhara (Additional RI Job)	Nearing Completion
		CONAMARA MD – Restoration Maintenance GRANT (RM)	
Road Class.	Road No.	Road Name	
R	341	Ballinahinch	Complete
R	379	Cleggan	Complete
R	336	Bothúna	Complete
R	336	Na Minna	Complete
R	336	Na Doirriú	Complete
R	336	Leitir Mucú	Complete
R	374	Tuairín	Complete
R	374	Leic	Complete
L	1105	Bog Road	Complete
L	5132	Low rd Errislannin	Complete
L	5117	Aughrus Beg	Complete
L	51372	Imleach Mór	Complete
L	51372	Imleach Mór	Complete
		CONAMARA MD – Restoration Maintenance GRANT (RM)	

L	1104	Sky Rd Letterdean	Complete
L	1310	Gortdrishagh-Glann Rd	Complete
L	1103	Ballynew	Complete
L	5300	Bothán - Gleantreague	Complete
L	1304	Ardan Cong	Complete
L	5341	Maghera More	Complete
L	5101	Glennagevlagh	Complete
L	11031	Bannouges	Complete
L	11034	Ross Moyard	Complete
L	51101	Rossadillisk Salerno	Complete
L	11023	Rossadillisk	Complete
L	51311	Munga	Complete
L	11056	Inis Ni	Complete
L	5219	Trá an Doilín	Complete
L	1206-51	Maíros	Complete
		CONAMARA MD –DISCRETIONARY GRANT (DG)	
Road Class.	Road No.	Road Name	
L	51255	Riverside Clifden	Complete
L	51372	Imleach Mór	Complete
L	11059	Inis Ní	Complete
L	52285	Leitir Caladh	Complete
L	1205-14	Doire Iorrais	Complete
L	5396-13	Baile Liam	Complete
L	5354	Garrynagry	Complete

The Conamara Municipal District Roads Programme is practically complete.

There were 76 roads on the original 2025 programme for resurfacing. Only one projects remains outstanding, Bridge St. in Clifden. Due to circumstances outside our control, the appointed Overlays Contractor has confirmed that will now be completed in January 2026.

The MD received almost €140,000 in additional Restoration Improvement funding in October which allowed us to cover over-spends on certain projects, but we added two new projects, one in Cinn Mhara in Conamara South and one at Salt Lake Bridge in Conamara North.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME PROJECTS

Round 2 LIS Projects have taken priority over the past number of weeks, with a very short turnaround between End of September Funding confirmation and End October deadline for

drawdown of the funding. The MD received funding for 9 LIS Round 2 roads in total, 8 of which are complete and 1 nearing completion

CONAMARA MD – LIS ROUND 2 PROJECTS		
Road Number/Road Name	Engineering Area	Status
Dolan	Conamara North	Complete
Coogla Road	Conamara North	Complete
Shannakeela	Conamara North	Complete
Gowlaun Road	Conamara North	Nearly Complete
Aillebrack, Ballyconneely	Conamara North	Complete
Keadin	Conamara North	Complete
Knockavoddy (Na Forbacha)	Conamara South	Complete
Na Creagain	Conamara South	Complete
Cathair/Ceapach an Chuais	Conamara South	Complete

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION (CCAR) PROJECTS

- Ardnagreevagh Renvyle – Works ongoing
- Crumlin, Cornamona - Works complete
- Clancy's Wall – Works completed in November
- Maigh Cuilinn SW – Project tendered, Tender Evaluation complete, Contractor appointed.

SAFETY IMPROVEMENT WORKS

R345 Máimín - Works completed in early November

VERGE MAINTENANCE

P&D Lydon commenced verge trimming on the N59 at Leenaun week ending 21st November. They are employing 3 tractors in convoy, with an instruction given to trim continuously from one end of the MD to the other, as far as the boundary with the City Council area.

Verge trimming on Regional and Local Primary roads commenced in the Conamara North Eng Area in November 2025 and are ongoing in the Conamara South area.

Water Table clearance works were undertaken by Colas Contracting week ending 21st November between Glenlo Abbey and the Maigh Cuilinn Bypass. Similar works are planned for the Conamara North Engineering area early in the new year.



LIS.183.25 CNOCÁN AN BHODAIGH, NA FORBACHA

STORM AMY FLASH FLOOD DAMAGE, L-1301 LP ROAD, NA GRINGEACHA, MAUM VALLEY.

TEMPORARY REPAIR WORKS PLANNED IN DECEMBER, WEATHER PERMITTING



PHOTO OF RECENTLY SURFACED FOOTPATH AT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTATION LOCATION, CLANCYS WALL, R336

UPGRADE OF JUNCTIONS NEAR AN SPORTLANN SPORTS FACILITY, NA FORBACHA



LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

PRIMARY FOCUS OF ACTIVITY

Works on the Roads Programme are almost at full completion with the Dublin Rd. and Abbey St. being the final two Restoration Improvement Grant projects of 2025. All other ancillary projects, such as Community Involvement Schemes, Local Improvement Schemes,

Drainage District Maintenance, Low-Cost Safety Improvement Schemes, Climate Change and Adaptation Schemes, Former National Overlays etc., are now all substantially complete. This represents well over 100 individual projects where road, drainage or safety improvements have taken place in 2025. Importantly, this figure is not inclusive of works that have been carried out as part of routine road maintenance repairs, emergency and flood response, town and village maintenance, hedge cutting, maintenance of road markings and signs, and a host of other activities that local authority roads crews attend to on a daily basis.

As we approach the Christmas period, salt storage bins are again available at the following locations:

1. Loughrea - Station Road Car Park
2. Portumna – Car Park to the rear of the Library/Council Offices
3. Gort – Car Park to the front of the Fire Station/Council Office
4. Clarinbridge – Car Park to the front of the GAA Grounds
5. Peterswell – Adjacent to the Community Centre
6. Kinvara – Adjacent to Slipway.
7. Killimor – Old National School
8. Eyrecourt – Carpark
9. Kiltormer – Square
10. Tynagh – Across from Hurling Pitch
11. Woodford – Across from Church/Graveyard

The salt will be available on a first come/first served basis for use by local Voluntary and Community Groups or businesses to maintain footpaths and public spaces within the reduced speed limit zones of our Towns and Villages free of ice. The sites were selected based on their accessibility and location within a reduced speed limit zone so that they can be safely attending to by the public and stocked by our crews.

We have also advised the local elected members of the following additional roads that we will be addressing in the coming weeks:

1. L-82493 – Pollacurra. Full extents of the public road. Previously advised of a 200m section only.
2. L-85823 – Knockakilleen
3. L-43012 - Kiltormer East
4. L-88041 - Graigueagowan
5. L-85198 – Kilbeacanty
6. L-85601 – Keamsellagh West
7. L-4300 - Gortavoher to Ardberreen (Approximately 1km of the Mullagh to Kiltormer Road)
8. L-4195 - Carra (Approximately 1km)
9. L-4322 - Oxgrove (Approximately 200m)

10. Junction of R352 and L-4318 known locally as the “Point of the Wood”

An overview of other works on-going is as follows:



ROAD DRAINAGE, MAINTENANCE WORKS

STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT – LOUGHREA TOWN



ROAD RESTORATION WORKS AT BEECHGROVE ESTATE, ORANMORE



REPLACEMENT OF ROAD STUDS "CATS EYES" ON THE R380



TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON THE R446 APPROACH TO CRAUGHWELL VILLAGE.

TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES

The Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) is a collaborative initiative between Galway County Council and local communities to improve minor and local roads that are not included in the main maintenance programme. Communities contribute a portion of the cost, enabling essential works that enhance safety and accessibility.

RECENT ACTIVITY IN TUAM MD

Number of CIS Projects Completed: 6

Total Cost: €207,000

Delivery: Combination of direct labour and contractors

WORKS INCLUDED

- Drainage improvements
- Setting back boundaries to improve visibility for motorists
- Installation of passing bays on narrow stretches of carriageway



COMPLETED PROJECTS

- CIS.12.23 – Kilgil
- CIS.05.23 – Chapel Road
- CIS.04.23 – Carareagh
- CIS.45.23 – Ballybawn
- CIS.51.23 – Ballybawn Headford
- CIS.48.23 – Bunatobber

BENEFITS OF THE TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT SCHEMES

- Improved road safety and visibility
- Enhanced drainage and resilience
- Better connectivity for rural communities

WINTER MAINTENANCE WORKS – TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

OVERVIEW

Winter maintenance activities have been ongoing across the Tuam Municipal District to ensure road safety and address seasonal challenges caused by heavy leaf fall and adverse weather conditions.

KEY WORKS UNDERTAKEN

DRAINAGE MAINTENANCE:

Cleaning and jetting of gullies and piped systems following blockages caused by autumn leaf fall. Contractors have commenced opening drainage channels along National and Regional Roads to alleviate surface water and reduce the risk of flooding.



IRONWORK REPAIRS:

Replacement and repair of manhole covers and gully grates to maintain structural integrity and safety.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT:

Hedge cutting continues across the district to improve visibility and road safety.



CARRIAGEWAY REPAIRS:

Ongoing pothole repairs carried out by Velocity Patcher units and road repair crews to address surface defects.

PUBLIC LIGHTING:

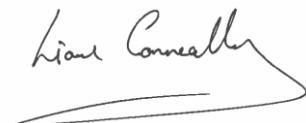
Installation and activation of new public lights in Tuam town, improving pedestrian safety and visibility during winter months.



BENEFITS

- Enhanced drainage reduces surface water hazards.
- Improved visibility and safer road conditions for motorists.
- Upgraded lighting contributes to community safety and accessibility.

Mise, le meas,



Chief Executive
Galway County Council

10th December 2025