Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

TURASCÁIL BAINISTíOCHTA
MANAGEMENT REPORT



Meán Fómhar 2026
September 2026

CORPORATE SERVICES & RURAL, COMMUNITY & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

CORPORATE SERVICES

OUT AND ABOUT WITH THE CATHAOIRLEACH



LAUNCH OF CORTOON LAVALLY COMMUNITY PARK

CUTTING THE RIBBON AT THE OPENING OF THE CLUB HOUSE IN KILCONLY





OPENING OF RECENTLY COMPLETED IMPROVEMENTS ST PORTUMNA GAA CLUB

LAUNCHING COMÓRTAS SACAIR NA GAELTACHTA AT BEARNA-NA FORBACHA UNITED





LACE MAKERS GROUP HEADFORD UNVEILING A PLAQUE ON THE SQUARE HEADFORD TO MARK THEIR TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

ARDRAHAN HERITAGE GROUP - SOUTH GALWAY MILESTONES PROJECT, LOOKING AT THE RESTORATION OF THE NINE MILESTONES BETWEEN GORT AND KILCOLGAN





FÉILE CHEOIL LARRY REYNOLDS LAUNCH IN BALLINASLOE ON 3RD SEPTEMBER 2026

GALWAY GAA HOMECOMING EVENTS

Galway County Council was pleased to support a series of homecoming events celebrating an exceptional year for Galway GAA. Events were held in the Fairgreen, Ballinasloe, for the Galway Senior Men's Hurling Team; in Tuam Stadium for the Galway Senior Ladies Football All-Ireland Champions;



and in Clarinbridge for the Galway Senior Camogie Team, hosted by Clarinbridge GAA Club and the Camogie Association with support from Galway County Council. The events were very well attended and provided an important opportunity for communities across the county to recognise the commitment, achievement and pride shown by all three teams. While the Hurling and Camogie final results did not go Galway's way, the homecomings allowed supporters to acknowledge both teams' outstanding seasons and their achievements as All-Ireland finalists. The celebration in Tuam Stadium marked the Galway Ladies Football Team's All-Ireland success and gave supporters, families and young people the opportunity to share in a significant sporting achievement for the county. Overall, the events reflected



the strong connection between Galway's communities and their county teams and were a fitting recognition of a memorable year for Galway GAA.







SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



The following provides an update on social media activity relating to Galway County Council's support for the recent Galway GAA homecoming events. Coverage across Council social media channels highlighted the homecomings for the Galway Senior Men's Hurling Team, the Galway Senior Ladies Football All-Ireland Champions and the Galway Senior Camogie Team. The posts generated strong public interest and positive engagement, reflecting the pride across the county in the teams' achievements and the importance of these events to local communities.







Instagram Statistics

The total views on the Galway hurling Homecoming post came to **23,473 of that 23,473 , 20,890** did not follow the Galway county council. We gained a total **26 new followers** from this post.

Facebook Statistics

The total number of views on the Galway Hurling Homecoming posts was **77,130. Of the total viewers, 55,752** did not follow Galway County Council . We **gained a total of 42 new followers** from these posts.





Instagram statitics

the total views on the Instagram posts related to the Galway ladies football came to a total of **12,335.** from that **12,335 , 8,403** of those viewers were not following Galway county council**. We gained a total of 20 new** followers from these posts

Facebook statistics

the total views on the Facebook posted related to the Galway ladies football came to a total of **129,203. from that 129,203. 58,176** of the views were from people that do not follow the Galway county council page. We gained a total of **60 followers** between all the Galway ladies football homecoming posts.







Facebook statistics

the total viewership on the Facebook posts related to the Galway camogie homecoming came to a total of **33,253. 22,708** of the people that viewed the posts did not follow the Galway county council. We gained a total of **11 new followers** from these posts.

Instagram statistics

The total viewership on the Galway Camogie post on Instagram was **328 of that 328. 186** of those viewers didn't follow Galway County Council on Instagram

RECORD EIGHT GALWAY PROJECTS SHORTLISTED FOR NATIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS

Eight projects led or supported by Galway County Council have been shortlisted for this year's Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards, the highest number of nominations secured by the council since the awards began.

Now in their 23rd year, the awards recognise work being carried out by Ireland's 31 local authorities across a range of areas including community development, social inclusion, climate action, recreation, culture and public services.

The Galway projects shortlisted are the Connemara Dementia Café Initiative, Park Lodge, the 60+ Climate Drive, the Tuam Palace Grounds Sensory Garden and Active Recreation project, Leenane Community Park, the Ballinasloe Multicultural Midsummer Festival, Tiny Mutiny and Scoil an Phiarsaigh 2025.

Cathaoirleach of the County of Galway Cllr Andrew Reddington said the shortlist was recognition of the work being carried out in communities throughout the county.

"It is vital that the excellent work carried out by local authorities is showcased to the wider community and that the contribution local government makes to people's lives every day is recognised," he said.

"Elected Members proudly support a wide range of community, cultural, social and environmental projects across Galway. To see eight projects shortlisted nationally is a tremendous achievement and a great recognition of the work being done by Council staff, community groups and organisations across the county."

Chief Executive Liam Conneally said, "The significant number of shortlisted projects reflects the ambitious approach Galway County Council has taken over the past number of years across a wide range of work areas."

"These nominations demonstrate the innovation and creativity of our elected members and staff, together with the collaborative approach we take in working with our communities and a wide range of partners and stakeholders."

Michael Owens, Director of Services with responsibility for Corporate Services and Rural, Community and Tourism Development and Integration, said the projects demonstrated the breadth of work being undertaken across the county.

“What is particularly encouraging is the diversity of the projects shortlisted. They reflect the breadth of work being undertaken by Galway County Council, from supporting people living with dementia and people with disabilities to climate action, recreation, community development, festivals, youth arts and cultural initiatives,” he said.

“These projects are rooted in the communities they serve, with many delivered in partnership with local groups, organisations, elected members and other stakeholders.”

SHORTLISTED PROJECTS

The **Connemara Dementia Café** Initiative has established five new monthly Dementia Cafés across the region, building on cafés in Roundstone and Letterfrack. Supported by Forum Connemara, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Galway County Council and funding partners, the cafés provide a welcoming, dementia friendly setting with refreshments, arts and crafts, gentle exercise and memory book projects.

Park Lodge is an accessible purpose-built supported home for three people with high support needs associated with intellectual disability and autism. The development located in Tuam provides a safe and comfortable living environment supporting residents' independence, wellbeing and quality of life. It is an example of the collaborative and partnership approach between Galway County Council and Ability West in accordance with the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Housing People with a Disability.

The **60+ Climate Drive** is a grassroots initiative founded by Jacinta Barrins and supported by Galway County Council through the Age Friendly Programme. The six-week course engages people aged over 60 in practical climate action and helps participants identify simple ways to reduce their carbon footprint.

The **Tuam Palace Grounds Sensory Garden and Active Recreation project** has transformed part of the historic grounds into an inclusive outdoor space combining a sensory garden with active recreation facilities, providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to connect with nature and improve health and wellbeing.

Leenane Community Park has been developed as a safe, sustainable and accessible recreational hub overlooking Killary Harbour. Improvements include walkways, seating and inclusive facilities, with the latest phase adding sensory play equipment for children and families.

The **Ballinasloe Multicultural Midsummer Festival** celebrates cultural diversity, inclusion and community spirit, bringing local people and newcomers together through food, music, dance, sports, games and activities for all ages.

Tiny Mutiny is an Arts Office supported youth arts programme giving teenagers across County Galway the opportunity to develop creative ideas with professional artist mentors and practical support. Now in its third year, it supports emerging artists across music, literature, film, visual art, illustration and poetry, culminating in a Culture Night showcase at The Mall Theatre in Tuam.

Scoil an Phiarsaigh 2025 was a two-day cultural and educational event in Ros Muc celebrating Patrick Pearse's connection to Connemara and his commitment to the Irish language, education and culture. The event brought together educators, students, artists and cultural figures and attracted more than 300 attendees.
The Excellence in Local Government Awards are sponsored by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Perigús. The awards ceremony will take place on Thursday, 26 November at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Northwood Park, Santry Demesne, Dublin 9.

FACILITIES

AUGHRIM CENTRE 2026 HERITAGE DAY EVENT – TO UNDERSTAND OUR PRESENT, WE MUST UNDERSTAND OUR PAST

The Aughrim Centre hosted another very successful Heritage Day event on August 22nd. Attendance was again at maximum capacity.

This important annual event reflects on one of the most significant and defining events in Irish history and the last great Open-Pitch battle in Ireland

Our sincere thanks to our speakers - George Geraghty, Joe Tully, Joseph Treacy and Eamonn O'Donoghue whose passion, expertise and commitment, to sharing the story of Aughrim, enabled attendees to connect with the people, experiences and realities behind the historical record. We also extend our thanks to James Treacy for his technical support on the day.

Through the insights offered through this event, visitors were given a deeper appreciation of how engaging with our past, helps us better understand our present.

Adding a truly moving dimension to the day were the evocative pipe tunes of the era, beautifully performed by Tommy Keane.

The Aughrim Centre honours the memory of those who fought and fell and reaffirms the importance of preserving and sharing our rich heritage.





LOCAL PRESS IN THE AREA CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR AUGHRIM 2026 SEASONAL OFFERING

Heritage Week Talk For Battle Of Aughrim

By Colm Croffy

The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre looks forward to hosting it's annual Heritage Day event on Saturday 22 August commencing at 11am. Hosted in collaboration with The Cath Eachroma Community group, this event will provide visitors with a wonderful and unique opportunity to learn of the journey of that day in 1691 and convey to attendees the importance of understanding our past, to be able to understand our present.



Attendees at a talk on The Heraldry of Irish Families.

Booking is advisable for this free event, which has become very popular in recent years. To register your interest, please telephone (090) 967 3939 or (087) 684 4253. You can also email battleofaughrim@galwaycoco.ie.

The centre has already hosted a number of talks this season much to the delight of visitors. The first talk was all about Celebrating a Lasting Legacy in Our Built Heritage. Padraic Kilduff, give a wonderful lecture celebrating one of our greatest County Surveyors: James Forth Kempster. Both Kempster and his sons left behind a remarkable architectural legacy, shaping not only Ballinasloe but communities across the country. This talk underpinned the necessity to continue to value, protect, and celebrate these historic Kempster structures, ensuring that the stories, skills, and heritage they represent are preserved for future generations.

The second talk saw Donal Burke taking to the podium to speak on The Heraldry of Irish Families, a fascinating exploration of signs, symbols and shields that flourished in Ireland in the late 1600s and thrived during the 1700s. There are gaps in the national heraldry records, owing to the Battle of Aughrim and the defeat of the Jacobites at the time.

On Friday 18 September, 1.15pm - 2.15pm, Pat Johnston will give a talk entitled, "Sure, that's women for you". This last of the Summer Series 2026 lectures will look at the histories of women who shaped independent Ireland and whose stories are only now coming to light. To book, visit: www.battleofaughrim.info/contact.

All events are free to the public and Galway County Council looks forward to warmly welcoming you on the day.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL LEISURE CENTRES IN TUAM AND BALLINASLOE – INVESTING IN PEOPLE, WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY

Galway County Council in conjunction with Coral Leisure are delighted to announce details of the upcoming refitting of the gyms in each Leisure Centre together with ancillary studio upgrades and refurbishment.

The gym refitting and studio upgrades will see in excess of € ½ million euro of investment across 2 of the most used facilities owned by Galway County Council and managed by Coral Leisure.

This investment is a huge show of confidence in the future of both leisure centres in Tuam and Ballinasloe and is future proofing the facilities for further growth in the coming years.



It is an investment in people, communities and a healthier future for generations to come. The upgraded facilities will empower individuals and families to make positive choices every day. Galway County Councils' investment reflects a bold vision for the future, recognising that strong communities are built on healthy, active and connected citizens. By providing more modern spaces that encourage participation, inclusion and lifelong wellness, Galway County Council is helping to create thriving towns where people can live well, age well and flourish together.

Now is the time to encourage people to embrace the opportunities these facilities will offer. Whether they are taking the first step on their fitness journey, looking to improve their wellbeing, reconnect with their community or support their family's health, we encourage everyone to get involved and make the most of these upgraded amenities.

Galway County Council further look forward to working in continued partnership with Coral Leisure Management Limited on both Leisure Centres over the years ahead.

The official relaunch of both Leisure Centres will take place on Saturday October 10th in Tuam (11.30am to 12.30) and in Ballinasloe on Saturday October 17th (11.30am to 12.30) with official ribbon cutting at 12.00 at each event. We look forward to seeing you there!


16 NEWS

Local Democracy in Action

Coimisiún na Meán

Coral and Council announce major investment in two Galway gyms

VOTER.IE

Elected Members are advised that, from 14th September 2026, Galway County Council will transition to Voter.ie. This is the new national online electoral registration platform provided for under the Electoral Reform Act 2022.

Voter.ie will replace **CheckTheRegister.ie** and will serve as the primary online portal for electors to:

- Check their electoral registration details
- Apply for inclusion on the Register of Electors
- Update their personal information, including changes of address

Dublin City Council has been designated as the lead local authority responsible for the management and operation of Voter.ie under a shared service arrangement on behalf of all 31 local authorities nationwide.
While the electoral registration system will be managed by Dublin City Council under this shared service, each local authority remains a separate Registration Authority under the Electoral Acts and is obliged to maintain and publish the register for its own administrative area to support the electoral process.

The transition to Voter.ie represents a significant step towards the modernisation of electoral registration services and will provide a single national platform for electors to manage their registration details.

RADIO CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT UPDATE LETTERS AND ENCOURAGE ELECTOR ENGAGEMENT

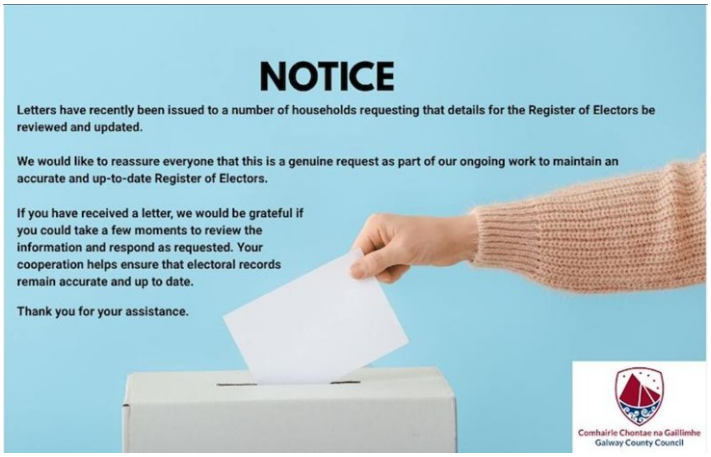
The Register of Electors Team commenced a three-week radio advertising campaign with Galway Bay FM on 31st August to support its ongoing work and to reinforce the recent correspondence issued to 22,480 electors requesting updates to their registration details.

The purpose of the update letters is to ask electors to review their registration details and provide any changes or missing information required to keep the Register of Electors accurate and up to date. The radio campaign supports this work by raising awareness of the letters issued, reassuring electors that the correspondence is genuine, and encouraging recipients to engage with the process.

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date elector information is essential to ensuring the integrity of the Register of Electors and the accuracy of electoral records.

Electors who receive a letter can respond and provide the requested information by: Email, Telephone or returning the completed form using the FREEPOST facility.

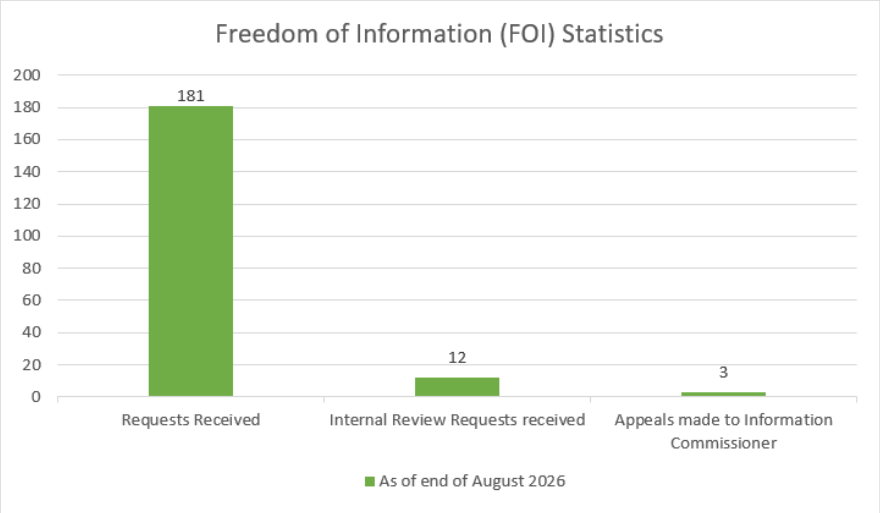
The co-operation of electors in responding to these requests is greatly appreciated and assists Galway County Council in maintaining a comprehensive and accurate Register of Electors.



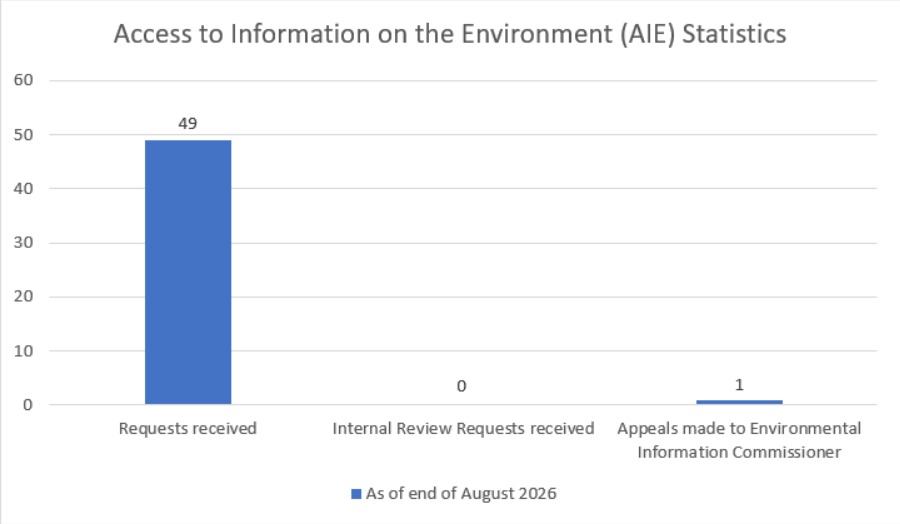
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION & DATA PROTECTION

2026 YEAR TO DATE STATISTICS TO 31.08.2026

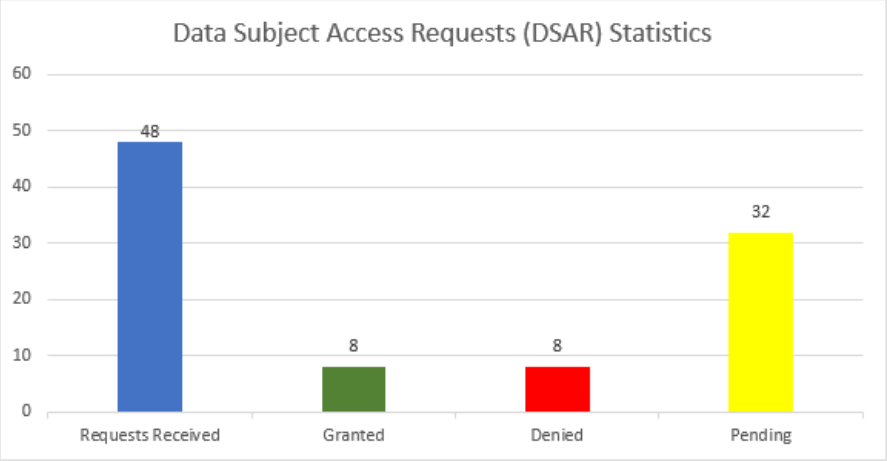
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT



DATA PROTECTION



48 requests received:

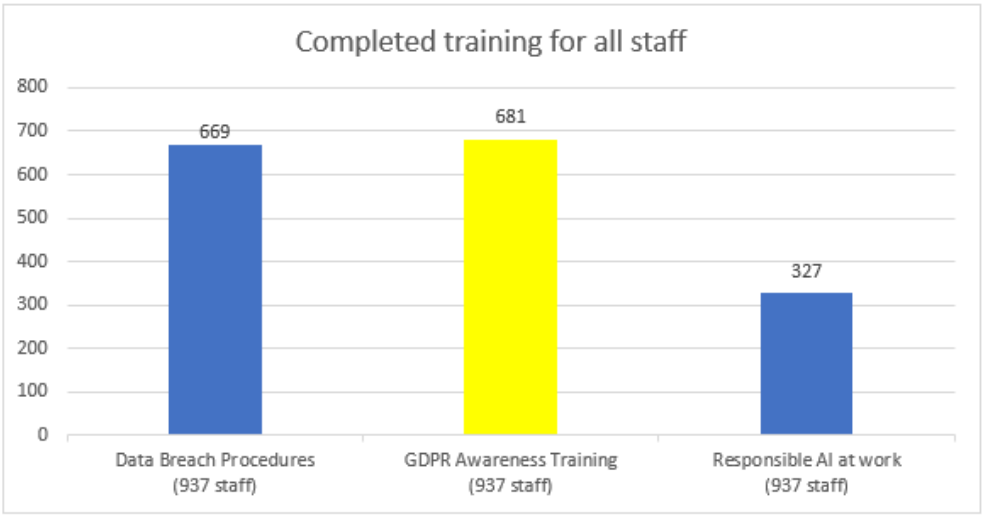
- 45 Subject Access Request
- 1 erasure request
- 2 Third party Subject Access Requests (An Garda Síochána)

8 granted, 8 denied, 32 pending decisions.

GDPR/DATA PROTECTION TRAINING:

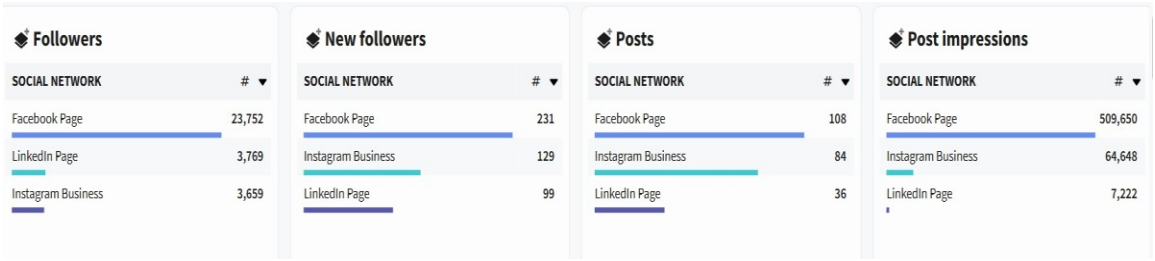
All staff are required to complete mandatory data protection training throughout the year covering GDPR awareness and data breach procedures. In August, a new training programme, “Responsible AI at work”, was launched and assigned to all staff.

In addition, two role-specific training courses were developed and introduced for Human Resources and Information Technology teams to address unit-specific responsibilities and compliance requirements.



RECREATION AND AMENITIES

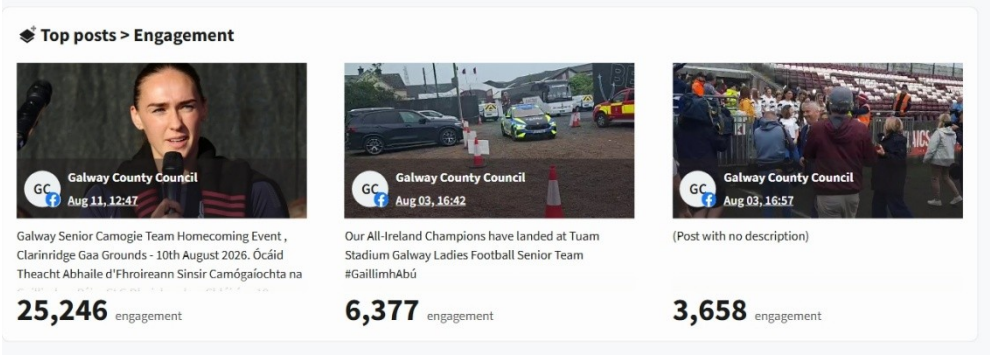
SOCIAL MEDIA



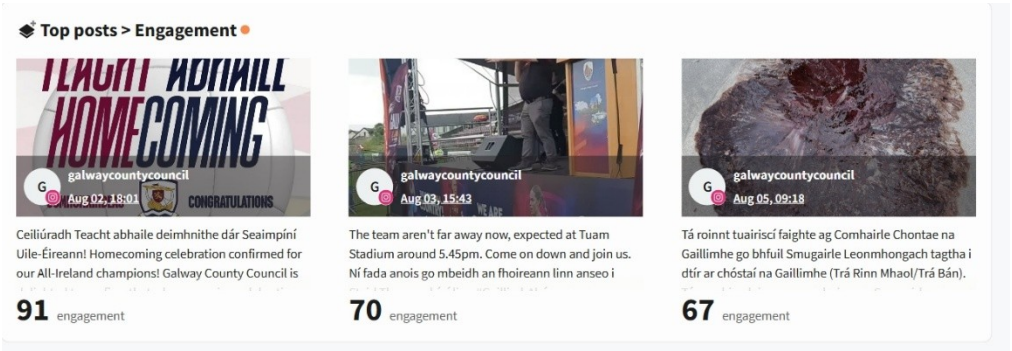
FACEBOOK

Total posts on all Social Media Platforms for August were 211, 69% of which were also posted in Irish. 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. *Posts Impressions - The number of times that posts on our Galway County Council Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts appeared on someone's screen. Content viewed includes posts, videos, and reels.

FACEBOOK TOP THREE POSTS



INSTAGRAM TOP THREE POSTS



LINKEDIN TOP THREE POSTS



COMMUNITY, RURAL & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & INTEGRATION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC PARTICPATION NETWORK (PPN)

Galway County PPN membership has continued to grow and now stands at 1,635 groups, spread across the Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental pillars. The PPN Annual report to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht was submitted on 31st August.

The PPN Secretariat meeting took place on the 16th September 2026. The PPN is organised a training session on Accessible Tourism, which took place in the Claregalway Hotel on the 14th September with training consultancy OHAC. This full day training gave attendees the skillset needed to improve inclusivity within the local tourism sector in County Galway. There were 30 spaces available on the course. This training was free to PPN member groups.



The PPN Plenary meeting will take place on the 7th October 2026 at 6pm in the Connemara Coast Hotel. The plenary is an excellent opportunity for groups to meet their representatives and network while learning all about the work of the PPN. Members will have the opportunity to talk to service providers about issues such as community group insurance, funding, climate action, social integration and much more. All welcome!

AGE FRIENDLY

The Older Persons Council (OPC) meeting took place on September 16th with key inputs being given on the Arts Plan from the Arts Officer and the Dementia Café initiative from the Healthy County Galway Coordinator.

Two Galway County projects have been shortlisted for the National Age Friendly Awards n Limerick in October. These are the Tuam Palace Grounds with an emphasis on the sensory garden and the Connemara Dementia Café initiative.

LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

An LCDC Meeting will be held online on the 22nd September. Agenda items include an update on LECP working group and SIOL programme. A presentation will also be presented on Rural Proofing.

PRIDE OF PLACE

GALWAY TOWNS SHOWCASE COMMUNITY SPIRIT IN PRIDE OF PLACE BID

Volunteers in Portumna and Tuam have put their communities in the spotlight during a two-day judging visit for the IPB Pride of Place competition. Pride of Place adjudicators Tom Dowling and Peter Hynes visited Portumna on Monday, 31st August before travelling to Tuam the following day, where they met volunteers, community groups, young people and local organisations. Portumna Tidy Towns and Tuam Women's Shed have been nominated by Galway County Council to represent the county in the 24th annual all-island competition, which recognises the achievements of voluntary groups and organisations working to improve local areas through volunteering, inclusion and regeneration. Pride of Place is about recognising people who give their time because they care about where they live.

Portumna Tidy Towns is representing Galway in the Community Tourism Initiative category. The group has led a range of projects aimed at improving the town's environment while showcasing its heritage and attractions, including Portumna Castle, the Blueway, Forest Park and the restored courthouse. The theme of the judges' visit to the town on Monday was 'Portumna - This is Us', with the town's community spirit, heritage and tourism offering taking centre stage. The judging began at the newly refurbished Portumna Courthouse with a performance by the Portumna Community School Chamber Choir. The judges then took part in an extensive tour of the town, including a boat trip on Lough Derg, Portumna Abbey, Portumna Castle and Gardens, the Arts Park and playground, the Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna Forest Park and Portumna Golf Course.



REPRESENTATIVES OF PORTUMNA TIDY TOWNS AND GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PICTURED WITH PRIDE OF PLACE ADJUDICATORS TOM DOWLING (SECOND FROM LEFT) AND PETER HYNES (SIXTH FROM LEFT) AT PORTUMNA MARINA

Tuam Women's Shed is representing Galway in the Inclusive Communities category. Established in 2021, the group has grown into an important community organisation focusing on wellbeing, inclusion and social connection. The judges visited Tuam Palace Grounds and met representatives of the local Indian community, Galway Sports Partnership youth leaders, Trinity Primary School and High Cross College, as well as Galway County Council's Integration Team. They also heard about health and accessibility initiatives involving the Irish Wheelchair Association, HSE and Ability West.

The visit included the Michael McGrath Sensory Garden and Nicola's Dog Park, with members of Tuam Tidy Towns, Circle of Friends and the Tuam Active Retirement Association also taking part.



REPRESENTATIVES OF TUAM WOMEN'S SHED AND GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PICTURED WITH PRIDE OF PLACE ADJUDICATORS TOM DOWLING (SIXTH FROM RIGHT) AND PETER HYNES (FOURTH FROM LEFT) AND LOCAL VOLUNTEERS AT THE PALACE GROUNDS

Organised by Co-operation Ireland and sponsored by IPB Insurance, the awards honour communities that have shown outstanding commitment to creating vibrant, inclusive and sustainable places to live. County Galway has enjoyed notable success in the competition in recent years. Clarinbridge won the 300-1,000 Population category at last year's awards in Limerick, while Creggs Rural Development Group secured victory in its category in 2023.

The winners of the 2026 IPB Pride of Place competition will be announced at the national awards ceremony in the Convention Centre Dublin on 24th October.

SIOL PROGRAMME

In July 2026, Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Dara Calleary TD, announced a new capital investment scheme that will target Small Areas of disadvantage in towns and cities across the country.

The scheme is known as SÍOL, which is the Irish word for seed. This stands for Scéim Infheistíochta ag Obair Le chéile, which translates to Working Together Investment Scheme.

The scheme is designed to target support to the urban areas with the highest concentration of disadvantage in the country, with a focus on delivering sustainable and long-term benefits to communities. It will fund a range of eligible projects, including community safety projects, public realms works, projects to support health and wellbeing initiatives, and projects that support access to education and training in community settings.

The electoral divisions of Ballinasloe Urban, Rural, Killure and Aughrim have been selected in this year's programme. An indicative allocation of approximately €335,000 has been assigned in respect of each of the above areas. A total of nine projects has been submitted to the DRCDG to the value of €386,370 for approval with a funding announcement to be made in October 2026.

TIDY TOWNS

A tidy towns seminar will take place on October 14th in the Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry. This event will provide an opportunity for Tidy Towns groups from across County Galway to hear from guest speakers and Council staff on initiatives, projects, and supports available to communities.

SAVE THE DATE
Tidy Towns Seminar
Hosted by Galway County Council - Community Section
Venue: Raheen Woods Hotel, Athenry, Co. Galway
Date: Wednesday, 14 October 2026
Time: 7.00pm - 9.00pm

Local Environment Action Fund (LEAF) support has been approved for twelve tidy towns locations across County Galway with the total fund amounting to €100,000. These locations include Tuam, Oranmore, Kilkerrin, An Spidéal, Abbey near Loughrea, Milltown, Portumna, Clifden, Woodford, Kinvara, Mountbellew and Ballygar.

TOWN AND VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEME-STREETSCAPE SCHEMES

Local Businesses and Residents in Killimor and Ahascragh have been busy over the summer months painting as part of the approved Streetscape and Shopfront Enhancement Schemes, funded under the 2025 Town and Village Renewal Programme.

To date in Killimor, €154,690 has been offered to 44 buildings / Applicants for the Shopfront/Painting Scheme with just over 26k of grants fully drawn-down. The success has been underlined by the support of Elected Members and the local community working hard to promote the Scheme and encourage owners/tenants to apply. Works are continuing at a pace with further claims due in September.

Ahascragh Streetscape Scheme had a total allocated amount of €250,000 by the DRCDG. Although it had got off to a slow start, at this point a total of €98,980.20 has been allocated to 24 buildings / Applicants.

The deadline for new applications was extended, and the community has responded with additional applications further to the support of local businesses, Elected Members Ahascragh Area Enhancement and the focus of the Rural Team Staff. The Renewal coincides with the centenary of the Church of Ireland in Ahascragh Village with the community getting ready to celebrate the centenary in the Autumn/Winter of 2026.

The impact of Painting works is evident in many visible improvements in both villages and a sense of renewal being reported by the Community Leaders. A further programme of public enhancement and small-scale landscaping in both villages will be agreed with the lead Committees to be implemented in Spring 2027.



BEFORE & AFTER - AHASCRAGH STREETSCAPE SCHEME





KILLIMOR STREETSCAPE SCHEME









RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



The closing date for submissions of applications under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2026/2027 Measure 1 and Project Development Measure (PDM) was 20 August 2026.

Applications received by Galway County Council are currently being assessed for submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht later this month. Funding approvals for Measure 1 and PDM applications are expected to be announced in Quarter 1 of 2027.

Applications for Measure 2 and Measure 3 funding remain open and may be submitted to Galway County Council until 10 November 2026.

Measure 2 funding provides funding of up to €200,000 at a 90% rate of aid for medium-scale projects involving the repair, upgrading or development of outdoor recreation infrastructure, including trails and amenities. Measure 3 funding provides funding of up to €500,000 at a 90% rate of aid to support large-scale strategic trail and amenity development projects, as well as significant repair and upgrade works. Funding approvals for Measure 2 and Measure 3 applications are expected to be announced in Quarter 1 of 2027.

Work on the Galway County Outdoor Recreation Strategy continues to progress. In-person consultation events have now been completed across all five Municipal Districts, with attendance exceeding 120 participants.

In addition, a countywide online survey has concluded, attracting 760 responses, providing valuable input to inform the development of the Strategy.

The Outdoor Recreation Strategy is now entering its final stages of development and is expected to reach final draft stage in October 2026, informed by the extensive stakeholder engagement and consultation undertaken to date. We would like to thank everyone who attended the in-person events and who completed the on-line survey.



Application forms for the 2026/2027 ORIS Scheme are available on Galway.ie or you can email outdoorrecreation@galwaycoco.ie to request access to the link.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

CUTURE NIGHT

Tractors will parade after dark, animation studios will open their doors, and libraries will fill with stories as Galway County gears up for Culture Night 2026. On Friday, 18th September, over 50 free events will bring music, theatre, art and celebration to towns and villages across the county, all part of Culture Night, a national moment celebrating the richness and diversity of culture in Ireland today.

Culture Night is a chance for people of all ages to experience the creativity happening across Galway County in familiar and unexpected places. Galway County Council Arts Office has curated, funded and coordinated this year's countywide programme, supporting artists, communities and cultural organisations to bring over 50 free events to towns, villages and islands across Galway County. The Arts Office is proud to make this ambitious programme possible and to support a night that is free, welcoming and open to all.

Multiple events including music, theatre, dance, visual arts, spoken word, poetry, zine-making, lectures, photography and crafts for all ages are happening throughout the day and late into the evening in a location near you including An Cheathrú Rua, An Spidéal, Athenry, Baile Chláir, Ballinasloe, Belclare, Carna, Clarinbridge, Clifden, Cúil na Ceártan, Gort, Indreabhán, Inis Oírr, Inisbofin, Kilchreest, Kilconly, Kiltartan, Kinvara, Loughrea, Maigh Cuilinn, Mountbellew, Newbridge, Oranmore, Oughterard, Portumna, Skehana, Tír an Fhia, Tuam and Woodford.

Eight Tonnes is Galway County's only Culture Night Late event this year and a flagship project within the programme. Presented by Galway County Council in partnership with Culture works, this after-dark performance, installation and tractor parade takes place in Ballinasloe from 9pm, transforming the much-loved tradition of tractor parades and vintage tractor runs into a unique late-night cultural spectacle.

Before attending Eight Tonnes, explore other exciting Culture Night events in Ballinasloe including Culture Night at Hymany Park - celebrating Traveller traditions in Ballinasloe with the Misleór Festival of Nomadic Cultures, and This Is Me, a junk journaling workshop with Group 8.

In West of the River Gallery Athenry, join artist John Cloonan for a Wire Tree Workshop inspired by the wild hawthorn trees of Conamara, followed by an acoustic set of original songs from local musician Sinead Murphy ahead of her debut single release.

At Loughrea Library, Remembering the Spaces That Shaped Us invites the community to a free, relaxed creative evening, sharing memories of place to create a personal postcard and help form the beginnings of a living community archive; no artistic skills needed, and all ages and backgrounds are welcome.

Portumna Courthouse, Town Hall, Courtyard Cafe and Shorelines Arts Festival are hosting an epic Culture Night Late programme across the three sites this year. With a three-round Art Battle in the Courthouse, a carefully selected series of delightful short films in the Town Hall, and performances by Lady Barbalade in the Cafe, the centre of Portumna will be transformed into a late-night oasis of arts and culture from 9pm-12am.

In Conamara South, Tarraingt Ceoil sees Áras Éanna host a walking disco, dancing from Áras Éanna down to Inis Oírr beach for a sunset celebration open to all.

Also, in Conamara South, Frame by Frame: Inside the World of Stop-Motion takes visitors behind the scenes of Stiúideo Fia, a professional stop-motion animation studio with live demonstrations, handcrafted puppets and sets, and the chance to try animation yourself.

In Tuam, Songs and Seasons with Wild Atlantic Strings in Candlelight sees the string ensemble perform a sublime hour of classical and folk favourites including highlights from Vivaldi's Four Seasons.

Also in Tuam, Tiny Mutiny x BROEI at The Mall Theatre, showcases original work by creative teenagers and young people from Galway County and Fryslân, The Netherlands. Both Tiny Mutiny and BROEI are youth-led arts projects that give teenagers and young people support to bring their creative ideas to life and to an audience. Expect amazing art, panel discussions, performances, screenings, and plenty of chances for audiences to ask questions. This event is supported by the EU Presidency Culture Programme.

With over 50 events taking place in Galway County on Friday 18th of September, audiences are encouraged to create their own Culture Night trail on culturenight.ie. Simply select the heart symbol to save them to your favourites.



Culture Night, an annual, all-island public event, is brought to you by the Arts Council. It is a national moment, celebrating culture, creativity and the arts and seeks to actively promote the belief that this rich and varied culture is alive, treasured and nurtured in people's lives, today and every day. It is delivered nationwide in cities, towns, villages and rural locations as well as online and through our media partners.

MUSICIAN ULTAN CONLON AND COMEDIAN BREDA LARKIN
PHOTO: CIARÁN MACCHONCARRAIGE

EIGHT TONNES

This September, Ballinasloe Square will host Eight Tonnes, an after-dark performance, installation and tractor parade. Drawing on the much-loved tradition of tractor parades and vintage tractor runs in rural Ireland, Eight Tonnes brings tractors, artists and performers together for a unique Culture Night Late event.

The event takes place as part of Galway County Council's programme this Culture Night in Ballinasloe on Friday, 18 September 2026 from 9pm at St. Michael's Square.

Eight Tonnes brings together an eclectic mix of artistic voices to celebrate Ballinasloe's agricultural heritage in a new light. Ballinasloe based performers Breda Larkin (comedian and performer) and Ultan Conlon (musician and composer) join Clifden-based dancer and choreographer Linda Schirmer, Dublin-based digital artist Kev Freeney and Limerick native and new media artist Scott Robinson to turn the familiar sight of a tractor parade into a striking night-time experience — part performance, part celebration, part tribute to the machinery and rhythms that shape rural life. The project is proud to have the support of Macra Galway whose links to young farmers reflect the community and agricultural spirit at the heart of Eight Tonnes. Dancers from In-Step Stage School Ballinasloe are also joining the project, working alongside dancer Linda Schirmer.

“Come and join in the wonder of Culture Night with Galway County Council and this brilliant lineup of local and national artists. It’s with pride that we welcome everyone in our community to witness this spectacle of tractors, light and performance.” Cllr. Andrew Reddington, Cathaoirleach, Galway County Council.

Eight Tonnes invites audiences to see something every day and essential to Ballinasloe's identity as the tractor, through an entirely new artistic lens, blending comedy, music, dance and digital art against the backdrop of the town's historic Square.

“This is a wonderful example of how creativity can draw its inspiration from Ballinasloe’s rich agricultural heritage. Galway County Council is proud to support ambitious cultural projects that celebrate local identity while creating unique opportunities to bring communities together.” Liam Conneally, Chief Executive, Galway County Council.

The event is free and family-friendly, and audiences from all walks of life are welcome. Performances start at 9pm and will finish no later than 10pm.

“As a farmer from Ballinasloe, I know how central the tractor is to a farmer's life, and I am delighted that it’s our main focus for 'Eight Tonnes'. It's a history of the 'culture' in agriculture, told through a reimagined tractor parade with light, dance and music. A fun way to look at how we work the land, and how that's changed over generations." Breda Larkin, comedian and performer.

“What makes Eight Tonnes such an exciting performance is the combination of artists from very different practices. They are creating an ambitious and playful event with tractors that reflects the richness of contemporary live performance in Ireland. It brings a whole new level of fun and creativity to the iconic tractor.” Sharon O’Grady, Arts Officer, Galway County Council.

Galway County Council Arts Office presents Eight Tonnes, a Culture Night Late event with artists Breda Larkin, Kev Freeney, Linda Schirmer, Scott Robinson and Ultan Conlon. Funded by the Arts Council, Department of Culture, Communications and Sport and Galway County Council. In partnership with Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre and Macra Galway. Produced by Culture Works.



EIGHT TONNES POSTER

EU PRESIDENCY CULTÚR 2026: TINY MUTINY X BROEI

Description Tiny Mutiny x BROEI is a free and family friendly Culture Night event at The Mall Theatre, Tuam showcasing original work by creative teenagers and young people from

Galway County and Fryslân, The Netherlands. Both Tiny Mutiny and BROEI are youth-led arts projects that give teenagers and young people support to bring their creative ideas to life and to an audience. Expect amazing art, panel discussions, performances, screenings, and plenty of chances for audiences to ask questions.

Tiny Mutiny 2026 Project Award artists are: Alannah Caddye (literature), Lauren Caine (film), Liam O'Connor (music) and Harlow Slattery Madden (sculpture). Tiny Mutiny 2026 First Sparks Bursary artists are: Abigale Heavey (poetry), Lainey Tighe and Lia Mae Coen (illustration).
BROEI artists are: Jennisja Palstra (music), Laura van der Heide (poetry), Lise Sophia Bijma (music), Ramlo Huseen (theatre), Roy Heitbrink (podcast) and Sander Van Den Bogert (film).
Tiny Mutiny 2026 is commissioned by Galway County Arts Office in partnership with Sparkcatchers! This Culture Night event is supported by Arts Council, BROEI, Creative Ireland, Culture Programme for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026, Galway County Council and produced by Sparkcatchers!



Artists from Tiny Mutiny, BROEI and Sparkcatchers! Creative Youth Committee will network and take part in a series of workshops the following day Saturday 19 September exploring artistic connections and shared interests.

TINY MUTINY X BROEI POSTER

ÁRAS ÉANNA ARTIST RESIDENCY

Congratulations to writer Fiona Hanley who has been awarded Galway County Council's 2026 September residency at Áras Éanna, Inis Oírr.
Fiona is a poet, dancer, and biodynamic craniosacral practitioner. Her practice is situated at the intersections of poetry, somatic movement, and touch-based listening. Fiona is interested in how writing can emerge through embodied states of attention and how movement, breath, rhythm, place and the more-than-human world can shape poetic form. During her residency Fiona will develop a body of poetic work that engages with the figure of Saint Gobnait and her presence within the landscape of Inis Oírr. This project will explore how myth and place-based memory persist within landscape, and how these traces can be encountered through embodied and somatic practices.



WRITER FIONA HANLEY

GALWAY THEATRE FESTIVAL – CUISLE RESIDENCY 2026

CUISLE is Galway Theatre Festival's artist development programme supporting theatre makers from Galway or with a strong connection to Galway and the West to develop bold new work and we couldn't be more excited about this year's cohort. Remee Cunningham, Ikenna Anyabuike, Amy Walsh, Alaoise Scherer, Andrew Galvin and Kathryn Uliana.
The six artists spent five days in Macnas Studio working on new ideas, collaborating and gaining dramaturgical support from the brilliant Gavin Kostick, Literary Manager at Fishamble: The New Play Company, all while meeting other Galway artists, catching some theatre in the evenings. 24-28 August.
CUISLE Residency is in partnership with Fishamble: The New Play Company and is part of Galway Theatre Festival's CUISLE Artist Development Programme, supported by the Arts Council of Ireland, Galway County Council and the Galway City Council Arts Office.

ARTS & DISABILITY PROJECT AWARD

Arts & Disability Project Award is funding for professional artists to deliver inclusive and supported collaborative arts projects with groups of people with disabilities in Galway County. This is the first year of this award and it aims to:

- Deliver high-quality, inclusive and supported collaborative arts projects with participants with disabilities
- Create innovative work that meaningfully involves people with disabilities
- Support the professional development of artists committed to collaborative arts and to working with people with disabilities
- Build a sustainable culture of access, equality, and leadership in the arts

Awards between €500 and €3,000 are available to apply for. Project activity can take place between November 2026 and April 2027. The deadline for applications is Friday 02 October at 4pm.Arts & Disability Project Award guidelines and application form can be found here: https://galwaycoco.submit.com/show/234



PHOTO : LIMELIGHT CREATIVE ARTS

CREATIVE PLACES TUAM

August focused on continued programme development and strengthening opportunities for artists and creative practitioners across Tuam. Key activity included the ongoing development of Tuam Artist Spotlight, with the exhibition rotating to its second featured artist, alongside the delivery of a Cultural Growth Fund information clinic and one-to-one support sessions for artists considering applying to the fund. The Sounding Tuam Open Call was launched, marking a further opportunity for creative engagement and participation within the programme. Programme planning and development continued across these areas, alongside ongoing artist and stakeholder engagement.

August in Numbers

- 13 Local artists attended Cultural Growth Fund 2026 Information Webinar
- 4 Soundboard 1-2-1's supporting 4 local artists
- 3 Local artists awarded Áras Éanna Artist in Residence
- 1 Creative Places national network meeting
- 1 Tuam Artist Spotlight in Connaughton's featuring 1 local artist

SOUNDING TUAM

The Sounding Tuam Expression of Interest was launched, inviting musicians and music makers connected to Tuam to express their interest in participating in the February Festival. The call will help identify local musicians and music makers to take part in the festival programme, with submissions open until 23rd October. Promotion and outreach are ongoing to encourage participation across the local music community.

Alongside the call, the Producer has continued with programme development, including making connections with potential participants and partners, attending site visits, and exploring opportunities and practical requirements for the festival.

Further details here: https://creativeplacestuam.ie/sounding-tuam-expression-of-interest/

TUAM ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

The second featured artist, Jennifer Cunningham, was launched as part of the Tuam Artist Spotlight, with work displayed in Connaughton's window and featured on the online platform. The Spotlight forms part of a wider exhibition of the artist's work, running alongside an exhibition at Tuam Library, providing increased visibility for the artist and their practice across two local venues. Expressions of interest remain open, with ongoing work to develop and expand the artist roster and create further opportunities for local artists to be featured.

Further details here: https://creativeplacestuam.ie/tuam-artist-spotlight-jennifer-cunningham/

ARTS ACTION GROUP

The call for expressions of interest for the Arts Action Group Tuam remained open throughout the reporting period, with ongoing submissions received from local artists and

creative practitioners. The call enters its final week, with submissions closing on 4 September, after which submissions will be reviewed and the next steps in establishing the group will be progressed.
Further details here: https://creativeplacestuam.ie/open-call-join-the-arts-action-group-for-tuam/

PARTNERSHIPS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Progressed the Integration Project with Galway Rural Development to the funding drawdown stage, with planning continuing towards the anticipated project start date.

CREATIVE PLACES NETWORK ENGAGEMENT

Attended the Creative Places network meeting, which provided an opportunity to share coordinator updates and review actions from the previous meeting. Discussions focused on an update for the upcoming Lead Partner meeting with The Arts Council of Ireland [10/09/2026, Dublin] and preparations for the Creative Places Baltinglass showcase and gathering in October [21st and 22nd]. The meeting also covered upcoming programme dates across the Creative Places network and coordination of shared timelines and priorities. A particularly relevant discussion focused on steering group structures and good practice guidelines, providing useful learning and considerations in relation to the ongoing development of Creative Places Tuam.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications activity during August focused on promoting Creative Places Tuam programmes, opportunities and supports, with particular emphasis on the Cultural Growth Fund 2026. Social media and the CPT website were used to promote the fund, information session, application deadline and one-to-one developmental support sessions.
Communications also supported the development of Sounding Tuam, promoting the open call for musicians and music-makers connected to Tuam to participate in the February festival. The second edition of the Creative Places Tuam monthly newsletter was launched in August, with content aligned with and extending the information shared across social media. The newsletter provides a consolidated platform for sharing CPT activity, opportunities and events. Development of the format will continue, with plans to introduce an ‘On Our Radar’ section highlighting upcoming arts and cultural events and opportunities from the wider area and sector, alongside a ‘Community Spotlight’ celebrating the communities, groups and people Creative Places Tuam works with.
Overall, communications continued to strengthen CPT’s visibility and provide accessible, consistent information to artists, creatives and communities connected to the programme.

CULTURAL GROWTH FUND 2026



The Cultural Growth Fund 2026 supports artists, individuals, groups and communities in Tuam to develop creative ideas and cultural activity. With three strands - Seed, Taking Root and Bloom - the fund offers awards from €500 to €3,000, alongside optional developmental support from the Creative Places Tuam team. Open Call for the Cultural Growth Fund is on-going. Closing dates 11th September 2026.
Further details here: https://creativeplacestuam.ie/creative-places-tuam-cultural-growth-fund-2026/

SOUNDBOARD 121

Looking for a sounding board for your ideas? Whether you need personalised feedback, career or professional development advice, guidance on a funding application, problem-solving specific creative challenges or just space to figure out your next step, Soundboard 121 offers supportive one-to-one sessions tailored for artists and creatives.
Booking Link: https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/dBXKX0oa

LOOP SESSION

Loop Session returns this September. Loop is a relaxed, social space for artists, creatives and curious minds to come together, share ideas and make connections. Whatever your creative practice - visual art, music, writing, performance, craft, film, dance, or something else entirely - you're welcome at Loop.

🎨 Bring something you're working on
💡 Bring an idea you'd like to explore
📝 Bring something you've made
✨ Or simply bring yourself and your curiosity

There's no pressure to present or perform, and no particular level of experience needed. Whether you're a regular or joining us for the first time, come as you are and join the conversation.

🎨 Next session: Thursday, 17th September 2026
🗓️ Every 3rd Thursday of the month
⏰ 19:00-21:00 at Brownes, The Square, Tuam

For enquiries contact info@creativeplacestuam.ie.

TUAM ARTIST SPOTLIGHT – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Creative Places Tuam is inviting artists and creatives connected to Tuam to take part in our Artist Spotlight series. The series offers an opportunity to introduce your practice, share what you're working on and connect with the local community through our communications channels. If you're a local artist or creative and would like to be featured, we'd love to hear

from you. Full details available online: https://creativeplacestuam.ie/call-for-expressions-of-interest-tuam-artist-spotlight-artist-roster/

UNESCO CITY OF FILM/ CEANTAR SCANNÁN - UCCN FILM SUBNETWORK MEETING

International Delegates in Galway for UNESCO Cities of Film Subnetwork Meeting – September 2026.

Ardán, as manager of Galway City of Film / Ceantar Scannán, welcomes delegates from designated UNESCO Creative Cities of Film around the world to Galway this September. Representatives from Sofia, Bulgaria; Gydnia, Poland; Bradford, UK; Valladolid, Spain; Bristol, UK; Sarajevo, Bosnia; Łódź, Poland; Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam; Cannes, France; Potsdam, Germany; Cluj-Napoca, Romania; Terrassa, Spain; São Paulo, Brazil; Wellington, New Zealand; Busan, South Korea; Yamagata, Japan; & Qingdao, China will attend.

The delegates will arrive in Galway on Sept 28th, where on their first night, they'll enjoy the Sunday screening of the Little Cinema/ Galway City of Film 48 Hour Challenge.
On Mon, Sept 29th, the delegates will enjoy the surroundings of Claregalway Castle for a day of meetings.
On Monday evening, the delegates will join local dignitaries and industry peers in St. Nicholas's Church for a celebration of Galway through the mediums of poetry, music, dance and film. The night will also include a collaboration with Belfast City of Music & Dublin City of Literature.

Following morning meetings, Tuesday will include a FAM (familiarisation) tour west to an Spidéal and the Ros Na Rún set, where the delegates will be introduced to local industry representatives including TG4, Danú Media and Fíbín Media. Tuesday evening will include a cultural exploration of Galway City and evening entertainment. The Subnetwork meeting concludes on Wed, Sept 30th, with the planning of network follow-ups and a handover to the 2027 host, Bristol.

Galway City of Film/ Ceantar Scannán is a UNESCO designation managed by Ardán on behalf of Galway City Council & Galway County Council, with additional support of Fís Éireann/ Screen Ireland & the Department of Culture, Communication & Sport.



The 2026 Film Subnetwork meeting has been made possible with additional support from Culture Ireland as part of 'Cultúr 2026: Sharing Ireland's Culture', the culture programme for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the EU 2026.

UNESCO CITIES OF FILM SUBNETWORK MEETING SEPTEMBER 2026

CREATIVE IRELAND PROGRAMME

The Creative Ireland Open Call deadline for drawdown is just one month away, and that means that many of our projects are coming to completion now. The success of the Creativity Newcomers approach to this year's Open Call is clear to see a broad variety of groups are engaging with publicly funded creative projects for the very first time. Below is a list of some projects that have been reported on over the past month.

GORT MODEL GROUP – THE GORT CASTLE MODEL BUILD

The Gort Model Group consists of a number of model building enthusiasts from Gort and the surrounding areas. They applied to the Creativity Newcomers grant and were successful in securing funding to work on their latest creation, a model of Gort Castle. Though the structure itself no longer stands, the group worked with castle expert Rory O'Shaughnessy carrying out desk research and field trips to bring their design as close to reality as possible. On Friday the 25th of August they unveiled their castle in O'Sullivan's Hotel. The session was open for members of the public to come and go with many of the Model Group sticking around to answer the many questions that people had about this wonderful structure.



GORT MODEL GROUP UNVEIL THEIR MODEL OF GORT CASTLE

Speaking to members of the group it was truly special to see the friendships that had emerged from a shared passion for creativity. The group already have plans for their next model build and will be applying to the main band of funding in 2027 now that they are officially no longer Newcomers.

EYRECOURT & DISTRICT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – CONSTRUCTIVE CREATIVITY: FROM TIMBER TO TECHNIC

Eyrecourt & District Community Development Co. Ltd put their Creativity Newcomers funding to a very practical use. They ran a series of upskilling workshops for residents of the local area. The project had two elements - A DIY/woodwork course for kids and women and a STEM Lego course for kids. Both were booked out to capacity with a huge interest. The DIY/woodwork element had separate classes for kids and women. Both were extremely well received and the group have been asked to run additional courses in the future, both at the same level and more advanced. The STEM Lego element was also very highly rated by the local kids and the parents have reported that this was something very different for the area. Many kids that attended both would never have had the opportunity before to do such activities. The women that did the DIY course all said they now felt able to tackle small tasks in their homes that they previously would not have had the confidence or knowledge on how to do.



HALF OF THE WOMEN'S DIY CLASS WITH PLANTERS THEY BUILT. PICTURED ABOVE IN USE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY



ATHENRY COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND GROUP – DRUMADORE WORKSHOP AT BIG DAY OUT 2026

Athenry's Big Day Out is an annual playground fundraiser that takes place in the town park, with creative play-based workshops, performances, and activities. This year, the Creative Ireland grant allowed the Athenry Playground Group to invite Drumadore, a Galway based drumming group, who provided drumming workshops at the event. The event was well-attended with over 1,000 people, and the workshop received an overwhelmingly positive response from attendees. The Drumadore workshop area was full the entire time, with crowds watching on and enjoying the music and activity.



CROWDS ENJOYING ATHENRY'S BIG DAY OUT 2026

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

LOCAL SPORTS PLAN UPDATE

Good progress has been made on the development of the new Local Sports Plan. The consultation phase has now been completed, incorporating in-person and online public consultations, as well as a series of one-to-one meetings and group stakeholder workshops with key partners, sports clubs, community organisations, National Governing Bodies and statutory agencies.

Alongside the consultation process, extensive desktop research, data analysis and policy reviews have been undertaken to ensure the plan is informed by local needs, participation trends and national strategic priorities. The strong level of engagement received has provided valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges facing sport and physical activity across Galway.

The next phase of the project will focus on the preparation of the draft Local Sports Plan, with consultation findings and research outcomes being translated into strategic priorities and actions. Following stakeholder review and final revisions, it is anticipated that the plan will be finalised and launched during Q4, providing a clear roadmap for the continued development of sport and physical activity opportunities across Galway.

ACTIVE ISLANDS SHOWCASE ON INIS MEÁIN

Galway Sports Partnership recently hosted representatives from Sport Ireland on Inis Meáin to showcase the impact of the Active Islands Project and highlight a range of community-based physical activity initiatives taking place on the island.

During the visit, Sport Ireland representatives observed a Youth Kayaking Camp, which provides young people with opportunities to develop water safety skills, confidence and participation in outdoor activities. They also took part in an Activator Poles session, demonstrating how accessible physical activity opportunities are being provided for adults and older adults within the community.



The programme also featured a Currach Rowing demonstration, celebrating the island's rich maritime heritage, and a taster session of the traditional local game CEAD, providing visitors with an insight into the unique sporting culture of Inis Meáin.

The visit highlighted the success of the Active Islands Project in supporting inclusive, sustainable and locally driven opportunities for people of all ages to be active, while strengthening community engagement across the island.

ACTIVE ISLANDS – BOXING ON INIS MÓR

In August, Boxing Ireland travelled to Inis Mór for the first time in 20 years to deliver a series of StartBox sessions for the local community. The programme provided opportunities for children, teenagers and adults to participate in structured boxing activities in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.

The sessions were designed to introduce participants to the fundamentals of boxing while promoting physical activity, confidence, discipline, teamwork and positive mental wellbeing. By offering sessions across different age groups, the programme encouraged participation from a broad section of the island community and provided an accessible opportunity for people of varying ages and experience levels to engage in sport.

The visit demonstrated the value of bringing sporting and youth-focused programmes directly into communities and provided participants with an opportunity to develop new skills, build confidence and engage positively with others through boxing.





SPORTS INCLUSION DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

The Sports Inclusion Disability Officer delivered Active Disability Ireland's Sports Inclusion Disability Awareness Training (SIDA) to staff at the Kingfisher Club, University of Galway, on 27 August. A total of 14 staff members from the gym, swimming pool and reception teams participated in the training. As frontline staff regularly engage with students, members and visitors with disabilities, the session focused on increasing disability awareness, promoting inclusive customer service practices, and enhancing staff confidence in supporting people with disabilities to access and participate in physical activity and leisure services. The training forms part of Galway Sports Partnership's ongoing commitment to improving inclusion and accessibility within community and recreational settings.

CORLANN SPORTS DAY

On 28 August, the Sports Inclusion Disability Officer attended the annual Sports Day organised by Corlann (formerly Brothers of Charity) Fáilte House Services. Galway Sports Partnership supported the event through the provision of sports and recreational equipment for adults with additional needs. This marked the fourth consecutive year of support for the event, reflecting the continued partnership between Galway Sports Partnership and Corlann in promoting physical activity, social engagement and inclusive recreational opportunities for service users. The event provided participants with an enjoyable and active day while fostering social inclusion and community participation.

OLDER ADULT HEALTH AND WELLBEING DAYS

Throughout the summer months, Galway Sports Partnership participated in a number of Older Adult Health and Wellbeing Days held in Lackagh, Kilconly and Dunmore. These events provided valuable opportunities to engage with older adults, promote the benefits of regular physical activity, and raise awareness of local programmes and supports available to enhance health and wellbeing.

Additional Health and Wellbeing Days are scheduled to take place in Portumna, Galway City and Mullagh in the coming months. The events are coordinated by Galway Rural

Development, Muintir na Tíre and the Marie Keating Foundation and bring together a range of organisations to provide information, health supports and opportunities for older adults to remain active, connected and engaged within their communities.

INCLUSIVE SUMMER CAMP GRANT SCHEME

Over the summer period, Galway Sports Partnership provided an Inclusive Summer Camp Grant Scheme to support sports clubs and inclusive community groups in delivering accessible and inclusive summer camp programmes. The initiative aimed to increase participation opportunities for children and young people of all abilities by reducing barriers to involvement and encouraging inclusive practices within local communities.

Following a competitive application process, 10 sports clubs and community groups were successful in securing funding. The grants supported the delivery of a wide range of inclusive activities, enabling organisations to enhance programme accessibility, provide additional supports and equipment where required, and create welcoming environments for participants with varying needs and abilities.



A total investment of over €4,000 has been allocated through the scheme.

The initiative contributed to Galway Sports Partnership's ongoing commitment to promoting inclusion in sport and physical activity and supporting local organisations to provide quality participation opportunities for all members of the community.

ESF+ SOCIAL INNOVATION IN SPORT

CLUB OSAAT – "4 PEAKS 4 EMPOWERMENT" PROJECT

Galway Sports Partnership was notified that it had successfully secured €30,000 through the ESF+ Social Innovation in Sport programme for Club OSAAT (One Step At A Time), representing the maximum funding available under the scheme. The funding will support the delivery of the "4 Peaks 4 Empowerment" project during 2027, an innovative initiative designed to support individuals in recovery through structured outdoor physical activity and personal development opportunities.

The project will involve participants undertaking a series of mountaineering challenges, including climbs of the highest peaks in Leinster (Lugnaquilla), Munster (Carrauntoohil) and Ulster (Slieve Donard). For the Connacht element of the programme, participants will climb Croagh Patrick. The initiative aims to build confidence, resilience, social connection and wellbeing through participation in challenging but achievable outdoor activities. Initial planning and development work commenced this month, with programme partners now

progressing project preparations ahead of delivery in 2027. Regular progress updates will be provided as the project develops.

NATIONAL ESF+ SPORT OFFICER MEETING

Galway City was selected as the host venue for the first National ESF+ Sport Officer Meeting to be held outside Dublin. Taking place from 15 to 16 September, the event brought together 24 Sports Innovation Officers from across Ireland to share learning, best practice and developments within the ESF+ Social Innovation in Sport programme.

The two-day programme highlighted a range of innovative and community-focused initiatives being delivered across Galway City and County, with a particular focus on the work of the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force, Venture Out and a number of strategic physical activity programmes targeting disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. The meeting provided an opportunity to showcase Galway's leadership in using sport and physical activity as tools for social inclusion, health improvement and community development, while also strengthening collaboration between Sports Partnerships and national stakeholders.

UKRAINIAN CULTURAL AND ACTIVE INTEGRATION PROJECT

Galway Sports Partnership launched a new pilot programme aimed at supporting the integration, wellbeing and social inclusion of older members of the Ukrainian community living in Galway. The programme engages 10 Ukrainian participants aged 50 years and over and combines physical activity with cultural exchange and social connection.

The initiative consists of eight dance-based sessions facilitated by Siobhan Manson of *The Dance Experience*. In addition to promoting physical activity, each session incorporates elements of culture, language and history, creating opportunities for participants to engage socially, build confidence and strengthen connections within their local communities. The programme reflects Galway Sports Partnership's commitment to fostering inclusion and supporting diverse communities through innovative participation initiatives. A further update and evaluation report will be provided following the programme's completion.

BALLINASLOE COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB

The Ballinasloe Community Sports Hub enjoyed a particularly busy and successful summer period, delivering a wide range of community-based activities and events that engaged people of all ages and abilities across the area. A highlight was the Hub's involvement in the Ballinasloe Mid-Summer Festival, which has since been shortlisted for a prestigious Local Authority Excellence Award, recognising the positive impact of the festival and the strong collaboration between local partners. Other successful initiatives included Pop-Up Games events in Hymany and St. Grellan's, which provided fun, inclusive opportunities for children and families to be active within their local communities. These activities, among many others delivered throughout the summer, helped strengthen community connections and promote participation in sport and physical activity.

As we move into the autumn period, the Hub is focused on delivering a diverse programme of activities targeting key community groups. Upcoming initiatives include swimming and boxing programmes designed to increase participation and provide accessible pathways into sport. We will also continue to support older adults through a range of physical activity classes delivered in partnership with Siel Bleu, helping participants maintain their health, mobility and social connections. In addition, we are excited to roll out the ABILITY Programme, an innovative initiative that provides people with disabilities the opportunity to gain coaching qualifications and develop leadership skills within sport. This programme represents an important step in creating more inclusive sporting environments while building local capacity and empowering participants to take an active role in their communities.

MEN ON THE MOVE



Men on the Move programmes in Letterfrack, Westside, Clonberne and Ballybane continue to be well supported and are scheduled to resume for the autumn season.
Participation levels across both the county and city remain strong, with the autumn period traditionally bringing an increase in engagement and the establishment of additional active groups.
Collaboration with specialist HSE healthcare staff has been further strengthened, enhancing programme delivery and providing valuable support to participants throughout the autumn programmes.

MEN'S STRENGTH PROGRAMME, INDREABHÁN

The inaugural Men's Strength programme commenced in Indreabhán in September and takes place every Monday evening at 5.00pm. Initial interest and participation have been encouraging, providing an additional opportunity for men in the area to engage in structured physical activity and improve their overall health and wellbeing.



WEEKENDS WITH DAD

As part of the autumn focus on intergenerational physical activity, the Weekends with Dad programme has provided fathers and their children with valuable opportunities to spend quality time together in a relaxed and supportive environment. The programme offers a welcome break from the demands of busy family schedules, which can often be centred around transporting children to and from various activities.

Delivered at the scenic Mellows Pitch and Putt Course, one of Galway's hidden gems, participants receive introductory coaching from Pitch and Putt Tutors before progressing to play the course together. The initiative promotes physical activity, family connection and positive wellbeing, while encouraging fathers and children to engage in shared recreational experiences outdoors.



Feedback from participants has been highly positive, with the programme continuing to demonstrate the value of intergenerational activities in supporting active and connected communities.

CASHEL ACTIVITY DAYS

Galway Sports Partnership delivered a range of physical activity sessions for both youth and older adult groups during the Cashel Activity Days. The activities provided opportunities for participants of all ages to engage in enjoyable, inclusive, and structured physical activity, supporting health, wellbeing, and social connection within the local community.

The initiative also highlighted the value of intergenerational and community-based engagement, ensuring that opportunities for participation were available to a diverse range of residents.







HER OUTDOORS WEEK 2026

HER Outdoors Week Galway 2026 was successfully delivered as part of Sport Ireland's national campaign to encourage more women and girls to enjoy the benefits of being active outdoors. The week showcased the wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities available across Galway, utilizing the county's coastline, lakes, trails, mountains and green

spaces. The programme was made possible through the support of participants, volunteers, sports clubs, activity providers, National Governing Bodies and community partners.
A diverse range of activities was offered throughout the week, including hill skills workshops, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, beginner windsurfing, buggy walks, archery taster sessions, learn-to-cycle opportunities and parkruns. These activities provided accessible and inclusive opportunities for women and girls of all ages and abilities to try new activities, develop skills, build confidence and connect with others in the outdoors.
The momentum from HER Outdoors Week continues through a number of Women in Sport initiatives taking place throughout August, including a series of Cycle Skills workshops with An Mheitheal Rothar, a Learn to Sail experience with Galway Bay Sailing Club in support of Breast Cancer Research, and a nature-based wellbeing programme for Women with Venture Out. These initiatives will provide further opportunities for women to build confidence, develop new skills and remain active outdoors.



ARCHERY WITH LOCH RIACH TRADITIONAL ARCHERY AT MONEYLEA, CO. GALWAY.

BUGGY BUDDIES

The HSE-funded Buggy Buddies programme has been successfully delivered to 228 women across Galway in 2026, with programmes running in Ballybane, Doughiska, Tuam, Salthill, Ballinasloe, An Cheathrú Rua (*Bugaí Beoga*) and Athenry. Demand remains strong, with many programmes reaching capacity. Two taster sessions were also delivered during HER Outdoors Week in Salthill and Merlin Woods.

Planning is now underway for the Autumn/Winter programmes. A particular success has been *Bugaí Beoga* in An Cheathrú Rua, delivered through Irish in partnership with Tuismitheoirí na Gaeltachta, which has led to participants establishing an independent weekly walking group, demonstrating sustainable community engagement beyond the initial programme.

OPEN WATER SWIMMING PROGRAMME

The Open Water Swimming Programme, delivered in partnership with Swim Ireland, continues to provide valuable opportunities for children, teenagers and adults across Galway. Following the successful delivery of two programme blocks during the summer, Block 3 is currently underway at Crab Pool, Salthill.
Delivered in Salthill, Loughrea and An Spideál, the programme supports participants in developing confidence, swimming competency and water safety skills in an open water



environment. Participation levels have remained strong, including among International Protection Applicants, asylum seekers and refugees, with particularly high engagement from women. The programme provides an effective progression pathway for both new and experienced open water swimmers.

HEALTHY COUNTY GALWAY

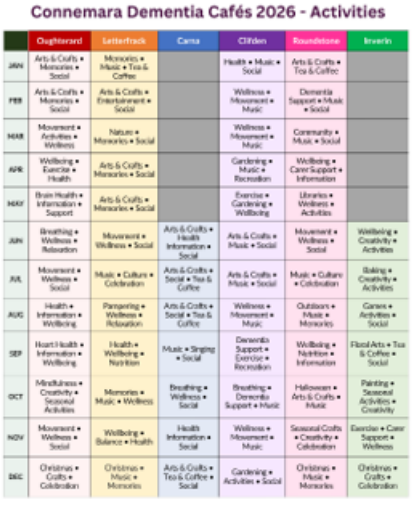
COUNTY GALWAY DEMENTIA CAFÉS INITIATIVE

The County Galway Dementia Cafés Initiative provides regular opportunities for people living with dementia, their families and carers to come together in a welcoming and supportive environment.



In 2026, seven Dementia Cafés are operating across County Galway, demonstrating the growing network of community-based supports available across the county. The schedule, activities infographic and map below provide an overview of the cafés, their locations and the range of activities planned throughout 2026.

The work of the County Galway Dementia Cafés Initiative has recently been recognised through shortlisting for both the Chambers Ireland Local Government Awards 2026 and the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards 2026. These nominations acknowledge the value of the cafés in supporting people living with dementia and their carers and the commitment of the many organisations, staff and volunteers involved.



Each café follows a monthly schedule, providing a consistent opportunity for social connection and engagement. The cafés offer a variety of activities throughout the year, including arts and crafts, music, exercise, reminiscence sessions, health and wellbeing talks, seasonal events and information supports. These activities are guided by the interests of participants and aim to promote wellbeing, inclusion and community participation.



Oughterard Lake Hotel	Letterfrack Wild Goat Cafe	Carna Emigrants Centre	Clifden District Hospital	Roundstone Bake-Away Café	Inverin An Tulach Baile na	Loughrea PRC
2nd Tuesday of the Month 1-3pm	1st Wednesday of the Month 2-4pm	3rd Wednesday of the Month 11-1pm	2nd Monday of the Month 11-1pm	4th Tuesday of the Month 12-2pm	3rd Wednesday of the Month 11-1pm	3rd Wednesday of the Month 2-4pm
13th of January	7th of January		12th of January			
10th of February	4th of February		9th of February			
10th of March	4th of March		9th of March			
14th of April	1st of April		13th of April	21st of April		
12th of May	6th of May		11th of May	26th of May		
9th of June	3rd of June	17th of June	8th of June	23rd of June	17th of June	
14th of July	1st of July	20th of July	13th of July	28th of July	22nd of July	15th of July
12th of August	5th of August	19th of August	10th of August	25th of August	19th of August	19th of August
8th of September	2nd of September	16th of September	14th of September	22nd of September	16th of September	16th of September
13th of October	7th of October	21st of October	12th of October	27th of October	21st of October	21st of October
10th of November	4th of November	18th of November	9th of November	24th of November	18th of November	18th of November
8th of December	2nd of December	16th of December	14th of December	19th of December	16th of December	16th of December

The initiative is delivered through collaboration between Galway County Council, Galway Age Friendly Programme, HSE, Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Forum Connemara, Galway Rural Development and a range of local organisations and volunteers. This partnership approach has supported the continued expansion of Dementia Cafés in both urban and rural communities.

Finally The Memory Café Initiative Connemara, in partnership with FORUM Connemara and the HSE, will host a Dementia Awareness Training session facilitated by the Dementia Services Information and Development Cy entre (DSIDC), St James's Hospital.



This free and interactive training aims to increase understanding of dementia and support the development of more dementia-inclusive communities. The session will explore dementia and its impact on the brain and memory, types of dementia, common signs and symptoms, and practical approaches to communication and interaction.

The training is open to family members, carers, volunteers, community organisations, service providers, and anyone interested in learning more about dementia and supporting people living with the condition.

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SELF-DEFENCE CLASSES



Healthy Galway, in partnership with Forum Connemara CLG, has supported the delivery of a series of free self-defence classes for women across County Galway. The initiative aims to provide women with practical self-defence skills while promoting confidence, personal safety awareness and physical wellbeing in a supportive and inclusive environment.

The classes are designed for women of all fitness levels and are delivered by a certified instructor. Participants are introduced to techniques that can help improve personal safety awareness while also encouraging physical activity and confidence building. The sessions provide an opportunity for women to learn new skills, meet others in their community and engage in a positive group experience.

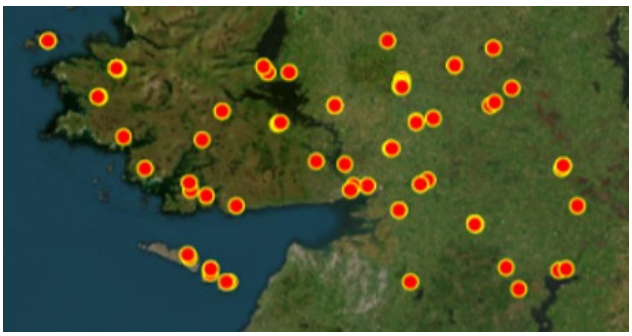
The programme was successfully delivered in Clifden, where participants had the opportunity to develop practical self-defence skills and increase their confidence in a welcoming and supportive setting. Following the success of the Clifden event, the programme is being expanded to Cill Chiaráin, with further delivery planned in Headford.



This initiative reflects Healthy Galway's commitment to supporting community wellbeing through accessible programmes that promote health, confidence and social inclusion. By bringing these opportunities to communities across the county, the programme seeks to ensure that women have access to practical skills training and wellbeing supports close to where they live.

HEALTHY GALWAY GIS MAPPING INITIATIVE

The Healthy Galway team has been working with the Galway County Council GIS team to develop an interactive map of Healthy Galway programmes and activities delivered across County Galway.



The map will provide a visual overview of social and leisure activities supported through Healthy Ireland funding, helping to demonstrate the reach of programmes across communities throughout the county. Users will be able to explore activities by location, category and year, making it easier to identify both current and previously delivered initiatives.

The Healthy Galway team has completed the data collection and input stage of the project. The final map is currently being generated by the GIS team and once completed, will serve as both a public information resource and an internal planning tool to support future programme development and reporting.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

CHICAGO & MILWAUKEE DELEGATION VISIT/MILWAUKEE IRISH FEST

Galway County Council participated in a highly successful delegation visit to Chicago and Milwaukee, USA, in August 2026. The visit centred on Galway's presence at the Milwaukee Irish Fest, the largest celebration of Irish culture in North America, providing an important platform to promote County Galway as a visitor destination and to strengthen long-standing transatlantic relationships.

The Galway County Council delegation included Cathaoirleach Andrew Reddington, Councillors Michael Maher, Tomás Grealish and Laurie Harney, together with staff representatives Liam Hanrahan and John Neary.
The principal audience at Milwaukee Irish Fest was a large North American consumer market with strong Irish heritage and cultural links. The festival attracts more than 130,000 visitors annually, with the audience predominantly comprising Irish-American and diaspora visitors, heritage-motivated travellers, family and multi-generational groups, and people interested in Irish culture, music, genealogy, language and travel. Its core catchment is the US Midwest and Northeast, making the event a significant gateway to a market with established affinity to Ireland and good transatlantic access to the West of Ireland.

Galway County Council's objective was to convert this cultural affinity into future visits by presenting County Galway as an accessible, experience-led destination offering heritage, landscapes, food, culture, outdoor activities and high-quality accommodation.
The Chicago programme built on Galway's long-standing historical ties with the city and provided an opportunity to strengthen these relationships through direct engagement with organisations and institutions connected to County Galway. The programme supported the development of existing partnerships and opened further opportunities for collaboration across civic, tourism, business, education and research networks.

Delivery of the initiative was led jointly by Galway County Council and Galway City Council in cooperation with Milwaukee Irish Fest/CelticMKE. The Galway stand was positioned in the festival's Irish Destinations area alongside Tourism Ireland, Aer Lingus and other Irish destinations, supporting coordinated destination promotion and clear messaging on access to the West of Ireland. The delegation's Galway partners included Galway Chamber, Galway Convention Bureau, Platform 94, University of Galway, Atlantic Technological University, Galway Technical Institute and Gaillimh le Gaeilge, each contributing sectoral expertise and extending the initiative's reach across tourism, enterprise, education, research, culture and language.

The wider Chicago and Wisconsin programme involved engagement with Chicago Sister Cities International, World Business Chicago, the Consulate General of Ireland in Chicago, the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor's Office of Community Engagement, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland's Chicago offices. Long-standing relationships with Milwaukee and Galway County Council's twinning partner, Washington County, provided an established civic framework for the visit. Collectively, these partnerships enhanced Galway's tourism profile, strengthened transatlantic networks and created opportunities for future collaboration in tourism, enterprise, education, culture and local government.

In addition to participating in Milwaukee Irish Fest, the delegation undertook a programme of civic, tourism and economic development engagements in Chicago and Milwaukee. A

particular highlight was the visit to West Bend, Washington County, Galway County Council's twinning partner, where meetings were held to reaffirm and strengthen the long-standing twinning relationship. Discussions focused on community development, tourism, local government collaboration and opportunities for future cooperation between the two regions.

The visit further enhanced Galway's profile in the important North American market, strengthened relationships with key diaspora, tourism and civic stakeholders, and reinforced Galway County Council's commitment to maintaining and developing strategic international partnership.



GALWAY CONVENTION BUREAU MANAGER NIAMH STACK SHOWCASING COUNTY GALWAY TO DELEGATES AS A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR BUSINESS EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND INCENTIVE TRAVEL.



GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES VISITING WASHINGTON COUNTY TO REINFORCE THE TWINNING PARTNERSHIP AND MEET WITH IRISH COMPANY KERRY.



MINISTER SEÁN CANNEY, CATHAOIRLEACH ANDREW REDDINGTON, CLLR LAURIE HARNEY, DOS LIAM HANRAHAN, AND CLLR TOMÁS GREALISH PRESENTING A COMMEMORATIVE GIFT TO MILWAUKEE ALDERMAN MICHAEL J. MURPHY

SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR IN PORTUMNA FOR GAELFORCE GREAT LAKE SWIM & FESTIVAL.

Gaelforce Great Lake Swim & Festival took place in Portumna attracting hundreds of swimmers, together with their families and supporters, to the town.

Excellent weather conditions contributed to a successful event on Lough Derg. In addition to the open-water swimming programme, the festival featured wellness activities, live music, watersports, family entertainment and a local market, creating a vibrant atmosphere in Portumna throughout the weekend.

The event was supported by Galway County Council and Fáilte Ireland, with Gaelforce working closely with Portumna Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and the wider community. This collaborative approach helped to create a welcoming, family-friendly event while generating increased visitor activity in the town.

The Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council, Cllr Andrew Reddington, attended the event and met with the Gaelforce team while viewing the activities taking place.

The successful event provided an opportunity to showcase Portumna and Lough Derg as an outdoor recreation and activity tourism destination, while supporting local businesses and encouraging visitors to experience the wider tourism offering of the area.

Following the success of the 2026 event, the Gaelforce Great Lake Swim & Festival is scheduled to return to Portumna on 10 July 2027.

Registration is now open at:
https://gaelforceevents.com/en/gaelforce-great-lake-swim



L-R: MONA PURCEL, RACE DIRECTOR, GAELFORCE EVENTS; ALICE SHERIDAN, GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL; CATHAOIRLEACH OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL, CLLR ANDREW REDDINGTON; CLLR JIMMY MCCLEARN; AND SHANE YOUNG, DIRECTOR, GAELFORCE EVENTS



SWIMMERS PREPARE TO TAKE TO THE WATER AT THE GAELFORCE GREAT LAKE SWIM IN PORTUMNA

JOYCE COUNTRY & WESTERN LAKES GEOPARK

July was a busy and productive month for the Geopark. Events like the Mary Robinson Conference, Cong Food Village Festival and Ballinrobe Heritage Day provided valuable opportunities to promote the Geopark. Also to engage with communities and visitors, develop new contacts and share its natural and cultural heritage. Together, these activities supported the Geopark's commitment to developing tourism that benefits local communities, protects the environment and enhances the visitor experience.



MARY ROBINSON CONFERENCE



BALLINROBE HERITAGE DAY

CONG FOOD VILLAGE FESTIVAL



FÉILE CHEOIL LARRY REYNOLDS 2026 – BALLINASLOE

Féile Cheoil Larry Reynolds 2026 took place in Ballinasloe over four days, 3rd – 6th September, bringing a lively programme of traditional music, sessions, competitions, workshops, performances and craft activities to the town.

The festival attracted visitors from across Ireland as well as international visitors from the United States, Europe and further afield. Strong attendance throughout the weekend contributed to a vibrant atmosphere in Ballinasloe, with local businesses, publicans, musicians, tutors, performers, crafters and sponsors all playing an important role in the delivery of the event.

The festival provided a positive opportunity to showcase Ballinasloe as a visitor destination and highlighted the contribution that traditional music and community-led festivals make to the wider tourism offering in County Galway. The event also supported increased activity within the town over the festival weekend and provided visitors with an opportunity to experience local culture, music and hospitality.

The organisers reported a very successful 2026 festival, with strong engagement across the various events and activities and visitors enjoying the atmosphere throughout the town.



MEMBERS OF THE FÉILE CHEOIL LARRY REYNOLDS FESTIVAL COMMITTEE PICTURED DURING THE SUCCESSFUL 2026 FESTIVAL IN BALLINASLOE

INTEGRATION

We welcomed new Integration Support Worker, Claire Higginbotham, to the team. Claire previously worked with the Social Inclusion section of the HSE, so will be a great addition.
The Integration Team are working with our local development partners to roll out information and support clinics to all accommodation centres for Ukrainians in the County, in relation to upcoming changes to their accommodation. State supported accommodation for Beneficiaries is being phased out, with 12 centres due to close by the end of October 2026, and a further 3 by the end of November.
There are currently 28 centres for Ukrainians across the county. The other centres will be phased out by March 2027. Some accommodation will be provided for vulnerable persons after October, and the Integration Team are supporting these persons to apply for this state supported accommodation.
Meanwhile we are continuing to roll out integration community events, where locals and newcomers can engage in shared projects. The Community Mural in Tuam was funded and supported by the Integration Team and Tuam Tidy Towns:



LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) continued to advance key actions throughout July and August, with a particular focus on planning, research, and consultation to inform the development of the Community Safety Plan. Activities during this period included preparing the format for the upcoming public meeting in September, conducting public safety consultations on Inis Mór, Inis Oírr, and Inis Meáin, and facilitating a focus group in partnership with the Galway Traveller Movement in Loughrea. The focus group was very well attended and provided valuable insights to support the partnership's work.

MEDIA TRAINING

Members of the LCSP participated in practical media skills training delivered by Carr Communications. The training focused on developing confidence and effectiveness when engaging with the media, particularly in interview situations. Participants were encouraged to prepare and present real-life, work-related scenarios, including both positive news stories and potentially challenging or crisis situations, and to practice communicating these in a media interview setting.

A key aspect of the training was helping participants identify and articulate clear, concise messages for their target audience. Members learned the importance of preparing relevant facts and supporting information in advance, ensuring they could respond confidently and accurately to media questions.

The practical interview exercises, which were recorded and assessed by the course tutor, provided participants with an opportunity to review and improve their interview

techniques, message delivery, and overall media presence. This enabled members to strengthen their communication skills and enhance their ability to represent the LCSP and communicate community safety initiatives effectively to the public and media.
The LCSP Co-Ordinator attended the conference "Building Cohesive, Safer Communities: Law Enforcement and Faith Partnerships in Preventing Extremism", jointly organised by the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities and An Garda Síochána - enhanced understanding of the role of multi-agency partnerships in preventing radicalisation and violent extremism. The event highlighted the importance of community cohesion, trust-building, interfaith engagement, and early intervention approaches in creating safer communities. Learning from the conference supports the objectives of community safety by promoting collaborative, preventative strategies that strengthen community resilience, improve relationships between statutory agencies and local communities, and address factors that contribute to social exclusion and vulnerability.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS MONTH

- Increased awareness of the LCSP through public consultations and focus groups
- Continued to contact various agencies and improve collaboration
- Progress the community safety plan in collaboration with the 'working group'
- Increased visibility of LCSP activities within the community through attending events, sending out introductions, emails, and continuous social media content.

ONGOING WORK

- Continue undertaking research and evidence gathering to inform and strengthen the Community Safety Plan
- Continue to raise awareness of the Community Safety Partnership and reach a wider and more diverse audience across the community
- Organise public meeting in September to provide an update on progress and encourage further community participation in the planning process
- Publish statutory notices and promotional advertisements for the public meeting in local newspapers to maximise awareness and attendance
- Continue working with the Working Group to appoint a consultant to undertake analysis of consultation findings and support the development of the Community Safety Plan
- Progress the next stages of Community Safety Plan development, ensuring that community feedback, research, and stakeholder input are effectively incorporated

FINANCE, MOTOR TAX, ICT & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

FINANCE

Galway County Council

1. Major Expenditure & Income by Division with 2026 Adopted Budget

Six months ended 30 June 2026

	EXPENDITURE				INCOME			
Service Division Description	Exp to date Jun-26	Budget 2026	Remaining 2026	% Spent 2026	Inc to date Jun-26	Budget 2026	Not Rec'd 2026	% Rec'd 2026
A - Housing and Building	18,119,409	33,379,922	15,260,513	54%	12,645,644	25,679,918	13,034,274	49%
B - Road Transport & Safety	21,763,669	65,452,781	43,689,112	33%	13,938,772	48,488,139	34,549,367	29%
C - Water Services	5,465,839	15,227,429	9,761,590	36%	2,527,252	13,077,493	10,550,241	19%
D - Development Management	9,922,142	23,458,564	13,536,422	42%	4,172,963	8,799,256	4,626,293	47%
E - Environmental Services	13,598,508	31,335,984	17,737,476	43%	3,501,267	12,109,116	8,607,849	29%
F - Recreation and Amenity	5,623,460	13,920,190	8,296,730	40%	2,472,409	6,082,759	3,610,350	41%
G - Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	859,800	2,875,609	2,015,809	30%	225,672	1,482,270	1,256,598	15%
H - Miscellaneous/Shared Services	6,516,628	17,617,716	11,101,088	37%	8,884,316	19,896,665	11,012,349	45%
J - Central Management Charges	-	-	-			-	-	
LG - Local Government Fund / General Purpose Grant	-	-	-		12,095,455	24,190,909	12,095,454	50%
RA - Rates	-	-	-		21,314,490	43,461,670	22,147,180	49%
GRAND TOTAL	81,869,454	203,268,195	121,398,741	40%	81,778,241	203,268,195	121,489,954	40%

2. Performance of Local Authority Revenue Collection levels June 2026

	Total for Collection	Collected Jun-26	Arrears Jun-26	% Collected
Rates	47,518,295	26,295,872	21,222,423	61%
Rents	7,759,194	5,917,186	1,842,008	76%
Housing Loans	1,484,928	1,204,125	280,803	81%

3. Recourse to Overdraft facility

Number of days in overdraft	0
Estimate Interest Incurred	0

HUMAN RESOURCES, CITY & COUNTY LIBRARIES & ENVIRONMENT

LIBRARY SERVICES

The figures for July and August 2026 highlight the vital role Galway's libraries continue to play as one of the county's most heavily used public services. Over the two-month period, libraries welcomed 87,549 visits, facilitated 98,067 physical loans, recorded 203,608 uses of digital services, and attracted 2,299 new members, demonstrating strong engagement across every aspect of service delivery. These figures reflect not only the enduring demand for books and information, but also the growing importance of libraries as accessible community spaces, digital gateways, learning hubs and cultural resources. With more than 301,000 physical and digital lending transactions completed during the summer months alone, Galway Libraries continue to provide significant social, educational and economic value, supporting individuals, families, students and communities throughout the county. This period also coincided with the delivery of key national library initiatives, most notably the Right to Read programme and the annual Summer Stars Reading Adventure, which encourages children to continue reading throughout the school holidays and helps prevent the decline in literacy levels often associated with the summer break. The exceptionally high levels of borrowing, library visits and family engagement recorded during July and August

demonstrate the impact of these initiatives in fostering a lifelong love of reading, improving literacy outcomes and reinforcing the library's role in supporting educational achievement and social inclusion. Through these programmes, Galway Libraries continue to contribute meaningfully to national policy objectives while providing opportunities for learning, creativity and participation for children and families across the county.

ATHENRY LIBRARY

Athenry Library enjoyed a vibrant and busy July, with a fantastic programme of activities engaging children and families throughout the month. Our weekly Wednesday Duplo sessions proved particularly popular, providing young children with an opportunity to explore their creativity, develop problem-solving skills and enjoy social interaction in a fun and welcoming environment.

We were also delighted to host an Agrikids Farm Safety Workshop, which attracted an enthusiastic group of young participants. The children demonstrated an impressive level of engagement, asking thoughtful questions and contributing insightful observations throughout the session. The workshop offered valuable lessons on staying safe around farms and agricultural machinery, delivered in an interactive and age-appropriate way.

Adding to the month's activity, we welcomed a group of 25 children from a local Summer Camp for a special library visit. The group enjoyed exploring the library, learning about the wide range of resources and services available, and discovering how the library can support learning, creativity and enjoyment throughout the year. The visit was a wonderful opportunity to introduce new young users to the library and encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning.

BALLYBANE LIBRARY

Summer was action-packed in Ballybane Library and programming was supported by Creative Ireland. The library delivered a diverse range of summer events for children and teenagers, including a crochet camp, creative writing workshops, monster pockets workshop, fabric portrait workshop, t-shirt upcycling workshop, and chess classes. Over 80 children and teenagers engaged in these events over July and August.



UPCYCLED T-SHIRTS FOR TEENS – BALLYBANE LIBRARY



CREATIVE WRITING FOR 8–13-YEAR-OLDS – BALLYBANE LIBRARY

Each event accommodated between 8 and 10 participants and was consistently oversubscribed, demonstrating the strong demand for creative and cultural programming within the local community. These events were primarily facilitated by local community artists, providing valuable opportunities for participants to engage with creative practitioners from the area.



FACILITATOR ROWENA, MAKING TEXTILE PORTRAITS FROM RECYCLED FABRICS



FELT BIRD WORKSHOP 8–10-YEAR-OLDS – BALLYBANE LIBRARY

In addition to the Creative Ireland summer events, Ballybane rolled out its Summer Stars Reading Challenge and hosted several Family Storytime and Activity Sessions.

Ballybane Library also continued to host its regular Creative Writing and Ciorcal Comhrá sessions every Thursday morning and a Parent & Toddler Group meeting every Friday.



Story Time & feed-the-fish on Saturdays remains a firm favourite - we had lots of children who were eager to help us feed our goldfish!

SATURDAY STORY TIME: TEDDY BEARS PICNIC FOR LITTLE ONES – BALLYBANE LIBRARY

The library also continues to serve as an important community meeting space, regularly hosting meetings for La Leche League of Ireland, the HSE's Starting Solid Foods programme, and a Breastfeeding Support Group facilitated by lactation consultants and Public Health Nurses.

Throughout July, the library's exhibition space featured a varied collection of Fine Art works by Nova, a contemporary art collective based on the east side of Galway City. The exhibition enhanced the library environment and provided visitors with the opportunity to engage with the work of local artists.

In August, 'Crochet in the Park' a local crochet group installed 5 large-scale nature themed crochet wall hangings, which had their debut outing for the Eastside Arts Festival. Over 27 women in the community came together in Galway Libraries, resource centres, and kitchen tables, to contribute their knowledge and skills, creating these stunning wall hangings. The crochet panels are bright, cheerful, and catching the eye and imagination of all our patrons.



BRANCH LIBRARIAN – JOANNA JUSZCZAK HURLEY PICTURED WITH 'CROCHET IN THE PARK' PANELS ON DISPLAY IN BALLYBANE LIBRARY FOR AUGUST

BALLINASLOE LIBRARY

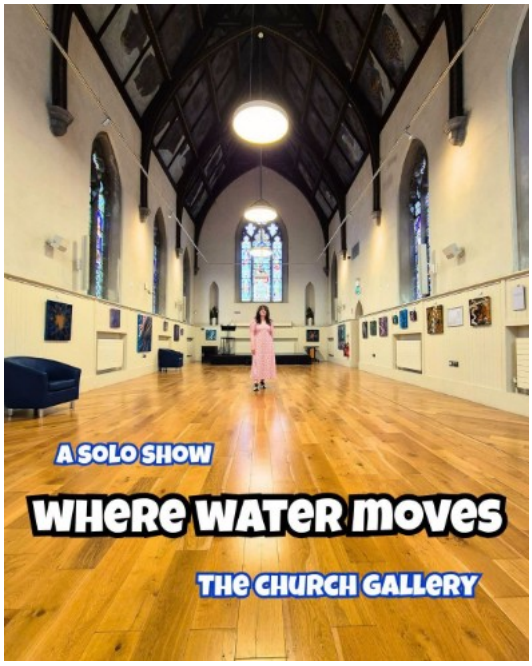
Ballinasloe Library enjoyed a busy July and August. Highlights included the launch of *Sweep Down to the Sea: The Songs of Percy French* with a lively performance by Ultan Conlon and Eleanor Shanley. Summer Stars was particularly successful, with over 370 children registering to take part. There were lots of fun activities for children, including a fresh flower 'Make and Do' activity, LEGO flower building, and a Jackson Pollock-inspired Paint Splash workshop. Our regular Friday afternoon storytimes, freeplay LEGO sessions, and Duplo offered something for all ages. August featured an Agrikids family-day, with storytelling, jumbo Connect 4 and the Schools Library team. National Heritage Week is always important in Ballinasloe and our programme including the launch of the *Inniu Agus Inné* history podcast, a presentation on the Irish harp by Úna Ní Fhlannagáin, Traveller heritage events, conservation and biodiversity talks, and a Curlew lino print workshop.



THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH AND PREVIEW OF THE SHOW 'SWEEP DOWN TO THE SEA: THE SONGS OF PERCY FRENCH' WAS HELD IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY ON THE 30TH JULY. THERE WAS A PACKED AUDIENCE THERE TO ENJOY THE SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY ELEANOR SHANLEY AND ULTAN CONLON

EUROPE DIRECT BALLINASLOE RECENTLY TOOK PART IN A STUDY TRIP TO AUSTRIA, WHERE WE MET COLLEAGUES FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATION IN AUSTRIA, EUROPE DIRECT VIENNA, AND THE EU DELEGATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA. WE ALSO HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF VISITING UN VIENNA





SARAH LOUGHNANE'S EXHIBITION 'WHERE WATER MOVES' RAN FOR THE MONTH OF JULY IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY. THE EXHIBITION EXPLORES WATER - ITS MOVEMENT, ITS DEPTH, AND THE LIFE THAT EMERGES AT ITS SURFACE.



OUR SUMMER STARS 'FLOWERS MAKE & DO' IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY WAS FILLED WITH CREATIVITY!



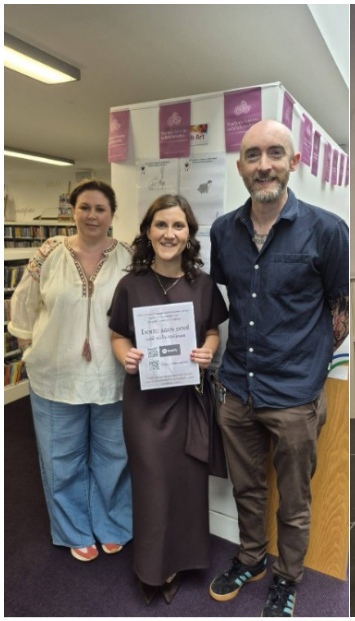
CHILDREN CREATED LOVELY LEGO FLOWERS AS A SUMMER STARS ACTIVITY IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY.



CHILDREN CREATED THEIR OWN JACKSON POLLOCK IMPRESSIONS WITH OUR 'PAINT SPLASH' EVENT IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY. IT WAS GREAT FUN!



THE AGRIKIDS VAN WAS IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY FOR A FULL DAY. THERE WERE THREE STORYTIMES, JUMBO CONNECT 4 AND THE SCHOOLS VAN VISITED





THE LAUNCH OF THE IRISH HISTORY PODCAST INNIU AGUS INNÉ WAS HELD IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY AS PART OF NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK. THE PHOTO FEATURES ABBIE MCGOWAN, PHOTOGRAPHED HERE WITH STAFF MARY HEALY AND JOE JENNINGS

ÚNA NÍ FHLANNAGÁIN GAVE A CAPTIVATING PERFORMANCE AND PRESENTATION EXPLORING THE RICH HISTORY AND ENDURING BEAUTY OF THE IRISH HARP FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK





'IF HAZEL COULD TALK, SHARING TRAVELLER HERITAGE IN BALLINASLOE' WAS A LOVELY EVENT IN BALLINASLOE LIBRARY ORGANISED BY MISELEÓR FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK.



BALLINASLOE LIBRARY HELD A CURLEW LINO PRINT WORKSHOP WITH RÓISÍN DOHERTY FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK. THE ACTIVITY FOLLOWED A TALK ON THE CURLEW BY BREEDING WADERS EIP.



GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL'S ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION OFFICER, ANNE MARIE CUSACK, SPOKE AT BALLINASLOE LIBRARY FOR NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK



LEABHARLANN NA CEATHRÚN RUA

AN CEART CHUN LÉITHEOIREACHTA

AM SCÉALAÍOCHTA

Bhí dhá am scéalaíochta arís againn i mí Iúil. Bhí Tara i gceannas ar Am Scéalaíochta agus Ealaíne ar an 11 Iúil. Bhí scéal amháin acu agus ansin rinne siad smugairle róin. Bhí an-spraoi acu! Tháinig Nóirín Ní Cheannabháin agus Séamasín chugainn ar an 25 Iúil chun am scéalaíochta speisialta eile a reáchtáil. Bhain na gasúir sult as na scéalta a léigh sí.
Bhí Am Scéalaíochta agus Ealaíne againn freisin ar an 15 Lúnasa, mar pháirt de Sheachtain Náisiúnta na hOidhreachta. Léigh Tara scéal do na páistí a dtógann inspioráid ó stair na Gaillimhe, Síscéal ó Ghaillimh le Caitriona Sweeney. Ansin bhí séisiún spraiúil ealaíne acu le Nuala.



EALAÍN LE NUALA



CUAIRTEANNA EILE Ó SCOILEANNA & GRÚPAÍ ÁITIÚLA

Bhí cuairteanna againn ó neart grúpaí ó campaí samhraidh ó timpeall na háite. Tháinig siad chun breathnú ar na leabhair, spraoi leis na breagáin agus an Tovertafel a n-úsáid. Bhí cuairteanna rialta againn freisin ó na heagraíochtaí cúraim.





AM SCÉALAÍOCHTA LE TARA

ÉIRE SHLÁINTIÚIL/SCILEANNA DON SAOL

ÍOGA DO CHÚRAMÓIRÍ

Thosaigh na séisiúin íoga le Sinéad arís ar an 14 Iúil, agus lean siad go dtí deireadh mí Lúnasa. Cuireadh iad ar fáil do chúramóirí, tuismitheoirí agus daoine atá ag obair mar SNA. Buíochas ó chroí leis an Galway Autism Partnership a chur an maoiniú ar fáil. Beidh Sinéad ar ais linn arís i mí Meán Fómhair.

SCÉALTA EILE

Bhí na laethanta saoire againn i mí Iúil agus mí Lúnasa, agus mar sin bhí na hócáidí seachtainiúil sa leabharlann ag dul ó neart go neart! Bhí tóir ar an gClub Lego ach go háirithe. Leanfaidh muid leis na hócáidí seo agus na daltaí ag filleadh ar an scoil.
Chomh maith leis an Am Scéalaíochta, chuir muid Taispeántas Béaloidis le chéile do Sheachtain Náisiúnta na hOidhreachta. Thóg muid píosaí ó Bhailiúchán na Scol a bhailigh páistí na Ceathrún Rua, agus chuir muid ar taispeáint in éineacht le beagán eolais faoin mbailiúchán féin. Fuair muid aiseolas álainn, agus fiú d'aithin cúpla duine na hainmneacha! Buíochas ó chroí leis an Cnuasach Bhéaloideas Éireann as ucht cead a thabhairt dúinn na píosaí a úsáid.

RIGHT TO READ

STORYTIME

We had two storytime events again this month. Tara was in charge of our storytime and art session on July 11th. They enjoyed a story and then they made jellyfish. They had a lot of fun! Nóirín Ní Cheannabháin and Séamasín visited us on July 25th to run another special storytime.
We also had a storytime and art session on August 15 as part of National Heritage Week. Tara read the children a story inspired by Galway's history, Síscéal ó Ghaillimh. Following on from the story, the children had a fun-filled art session with Nuala.

VISITS FROM SCHOOLS AND OTHER GROUPS

We had visits from summer camp groups from around the region. They came to look at the books, play with the toys and to use the Tovertafel. We also had regular visits from local care services.

HEALTHY IRELAND/SKILLS FOR LIFE

YOGA FOR CARERS

The yoga sessions with Sinéad started again on July 14th. They are run for carers, parents and SNAs. Many thanks to the Galway Autism Partnership who provided the funding.

OTHER NEWS

The holidays had well and truly landed in July and August, and so the weekly events in the library went from strength to strength! The Lego Club has been especially popular. We plan to continue these events into the school year.

As well as integrating our monthly storytime into National Heritage Week, we also put together a Folklore Exhibition. We took pieces from the Schools' Collection that had been collected by children in An Cheathrú Rua and displayed them alongside some information about the collection itself. There was a lovely response, and some even spotted names they recognised! Many thanks to the National Folklore Collection for letting us use the pieces.

CLIFDEN LIBRARY

SUMMER READING AND LIBRARY ENGAGEMENT

Clifden Library experienced a vibrant and well-attended summer period, with strong levels of visitor engagement throughout July and August. The library's collection continued to be in high demand, with newly acquired titles proving particularly popular among borrowers.

The Hublet tablet service was especially well used during the summer months, providing an engaging digital resource for visitors of all ages, particularly younger library users.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The annual Summer Stars Reading Adventure was a notable success, attracting enthusiastic participation from young readers across the community. The library also welcomed a number of new members who received their Little Library Bags, supporting early literacy development and encouraging lifelong reading habits.

Creative engagement remained strong throughout the summer, with children contributing artwork that was proudly displayed within the library. New board games added to the library's recreational offering were also well received by both younger and older visitors.

CLUBS AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES

The return of the Junior Chess Club provided opportunities for participants to develop their skills through enjoyable and friendly competition.

In July, Clifden Library was pleased to host the Connemara Astronomy Club, which delivered an informative and well-attended presentation by Paul Evans on *The Upcoming Eclipses and How to See Them*.

As the summer programme concluded, the library hosted a further craft workshop with Damien Marshall. The event attracted a full attendance and provided an enjoyable creative experience for participants.

HERITAGE AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

The library continued to support local and international family history research. During the reporting period, visitors from the United States and Canada availed of the library's genealogical resources while tracing their ancestral connections to the area. Staff assisted researchers through the use of JSTOR and other available online resources.

LOOKING AHEAD

With the arrival of September, Clifden Library looks forward to an active autumn programme, welcoming returning users and engaging new audiences through a range of cultural, educational and community initiatives.

GALWAY CITY LIBRARY

On Tuesday 4 August, artist Sarah Martyn launched her art exhibition “Voices of the Land” which featured new paintings inspired by coastal landscapes, together with a series of abstract works exploring their colours, textures, and rhythms. This was attended by An Cathaoirleach Cllr. Andrew Reddington

LAUNCH OF SARAH MARTYN'S ART EXHIBITION



Órfhlaith Foyle’s Creative Writing workshop series concluded with some excellent feedback received from participants. This 5-week workshop series was funded by Creative Ireland via Galway City Council.
Artist Eva O’Byrne began a 4-week workshop series on making pull-up books.
The air-clay workshop run by staff member Mary McHugh saw some great creativity taking place





AIR-CLAY WORKSHOP

TABLETOP GAMING SESSIONS RUN BY FORÓIGE VOLUNTEERS







LEGO WORKSHOP AS PART OF SUMMER STARS PROGRAMMING

WORKSHOP BY THE WESTERN FAMILY HISTORY ASSOCIATION HELD TO MARK NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK





LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARIAN, MARION NIKOLAKOS, SPEAKING ABOUT RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE LOCAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

EXHIBITION BY ARTIST SCOTT HARTNEY, CELEBRATING THE ARCHITECTURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF IRELAND- PART OF HERITAGE WEEK PROGRAMMING





LOUGHREA LIBRARY

Loughrea Library: A Summer of Learning, Creativity and Community

RIGHT TO READ

Loughrea Library enjoyed a vibrant and busy period under the Right to Read programme, welcoming numerous classes from local schools participating in Summer Provision schemes. Pupils of all ages, from infant classes through to senior primary levels, visited the library throughout the summer, discovering books, exploring the collection and experiencing the library as an inviting space for learning and imagination.

These visits provided valuable opportunities to introduce children to the range of resources available through the public library service, while also encouraging a lifelong love of reading. Many of the visiting children were making repeat visits during the summer, allowing them to build familiarity with the library and develop confidence in using its services.
A particular highlight was a special storytime event featuring *Simon's Surprise*, delivered by Diane Bayliss of the Road Safety Authority. The engaging session combined storytelling with important road safety messages, capturing the attention of young listeners and demonstrating how libraries can support learning beyond the classroom through creative partnerships.

Adult readers also continued to engage with the library through the ongoing activities of both the Grey Lake Book Club and Loughrea Library Book Club. These regular gatherings provided opportunities for readers to explore a diverse range of literature, exchange ideas and develop social connections through a shared enjoyment of books. The continued enthusiasm for these groups highlights the important role libraries play in fostering reading communities across all age groups.

Summer Stars once again proved to be one of the highlights of the school holiday period in Loughrea Library. Hundreds of children registered for the national reading challenge, demonstrating the enduring popularity of reading initiatives that encourage children to maintain their reading habits during the summer months.
The programme was complemented by a diverse schedule of creative and educational activities. Young people had the opportunity to develop new skills and express their creativity through friendship bracelet workshops, where colourful creations and new friendships were formed, and a lively tie-dye and T-shirt decorating session that transformed ordinary clothing into vibrant works of art.
Creativity and environmental awareness came together during a hugely enjoyable Junk Art Day, where recycled materials were transformed into imaginative robots, monsters and other fantastic creations. The workshop encouraged children to think differently about everyday materials while demonstrating the value of reuse and sustainability through hands-on learning.
Library staff also shared their expertise beyond Loughrea, with staff member Gretel facilitating a stone-painting workshop in Woodford Library, showcasing the collaborative spirit that exists across Galway Public Libraries.



Farm Safety Week provided another important learning opportunity for children and families. A dedicated display of books, posters and activity sheets raised awareness of key farm safety messages, while an engaging AgriKids event combined education and fun to promote safe behaviour around farm machinery, animals and rural environments.

AGRI-KIDS FARM SAFETY EVENT

The summer programme concluded with a creative crafts day that invited participants of all ages to design and create their own holiday postcards. The event provided a relaxed and welcoming environment where families could spend time together, explore their artistic talents and celebrate the spirit of summer.

Heritage Week brought a rich and varied programme of cultural and educational events to Loughrea Library, highlighting the unique history, archaeology, wildlife and traditions of County Galway.

Visitors were invited to explore the story of the library building itself during an Open Door Day, which provided fascinating insights into its history and architectural features. This event encouraged members of the public to view the building from a fresh perspective and appreciate its place within the local community.



OPEN DOOR DAY TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK

Nature and conservation featured prominently through a compelling lecture by Dr Andrea Parisi on the curlew, one of Ireland's most threatened bird species. The event offered attendees an enlightening insight into conservation challenges and ongoing efforts to protect this iconic bird.



LECTURE BY DR. ANDREA PARISI ON THE CURLEW. EVENT ORGANISED BY MARY HEALY, LIBRARY STAFF



The built heritage of the region was explored in a fascinating presentation on the medieval architecture of Loughrea Parish. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the historical structures that continue to shape the local landscape and cultural identity of the area.

THE MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE OF LOUGHREA PARISH, TALK BY GARRY DEMPSEY, LECTURER AT ATU, ARRANGED BY GALWAY HERITAGE OFFICER

Local history and storytelling came vividly to life through Tomás Mac Conmara's lecture on County Galway's recorded memories, which explored the value of oral history in preserving community experiences and personal stories for future generations.

LECTURE BY TOMÁS MAC CONMARA 'VOICES ACROSS TIME: COUNTY GALWAY THROUGH RECORDED MEMORY' EVENT ORGANISED BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL'S HERITAGE OFFICER



Heritage Week also included an interactive session with Galway Community Archaeologist Bernadette Doherty, giving visitors an opportunity to handle replica artefacts, ask questions and gain a deeper appreciation for archaeology and the stories hidden beneath our feet. The week concluded with an imaginative stone-painting workshop inspired by ancient Irish designs. Children explored traditional motifs and artistic techniques while creating their own colourful pieces inspired by Ireland's rich cultural heritage.



ASK THE ARCHAEOLOGIST: Q&A AND REPLICA ARTEFACTS ON DISPLAY PRESENTED BY GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST BERNADETTE DOHERTY

FAMILY TIME AT THE LIBRARY

Families continued to make Loughrea Library a popular destination throughout the summer. Toddler storytime sessions combined stories, songs and LEGO Duplo play to create enjoyable early-years experiences that supported language development, creativity and social interaction.

Regular LEGO and board game sessions transformed the library into a lively space where children and parents could learn, play and spend quality time together. These informal family activities encouraged creativity, teamwork and problem-solving while strengthening the library's role as a welcoming community hub.

Across the summer, families returned week after week to enjoy these free opportunities to connect, relax and participate in shared activities in a safe and welcoming environment.

AGE FRIENDLY INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Loughrea Library continued to support older members of the community through a range of age-friendly initiatives designed to encourage participation, creativity and social connection. The library's weekly adult craft group remained a valued social outlet, bringing people together to share skills, learn new techniques and enjoy conversation in a relaxed setting. The sessions fostered creativity while helping to combat social isolation and strengthen community connections.

A major cultural highlight was the Loughrea Music Club classical music concert featuring the Grey Lake Quartet and writer Máire Hughes. The event showcased the library as a venue for high-quality cultural programming while also supporting the charitable work of Mary's Meals.





LOUGHREA MUSIC CLUB CLASSICAL MUSIC CONCERT, FEATURING THE GREY LAKE QUARTET AND WRITER MÁIRE HUGHES

COMMUNITY SOCIAL MORNING

Community Social Mornings provided further opportunities for people to gather in an informal and welcoming atmosphere. Visitors enjoyed tea and coffee, read newspapers, completed crosswords, played board games and cards, and most importantly, spent time connecting with others. These gatherings continue to demonstrate the important role libraries play in promoting wellbeing, inclusion and community cohesion.



Throughout the summer period, Loughrea Library remained a vibrant centre of learning, creativity, culture and connection, offering meaningful opportunities for people of all ages to read, learn, create and participate in community life.

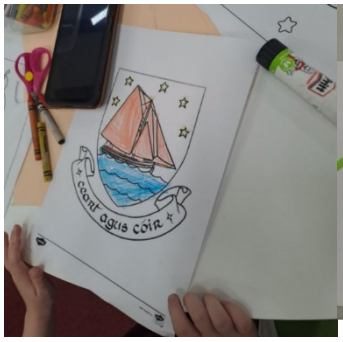
ORANMORE LIBRARY

July and August were very busy months at Oranmore Library. In addition to hosting our regular Book Clubs, Poetry Reading Group, Storytime and DUPLO mornings we also hosted events for the Summer Stars Reading Challenge and distributed Little Library Bags to those starting school in September.

The Summer Reading Challenge took precedence at Oranmore Library during July and August. Over 600 children registered with Oranmore Library for the challenge. Staff were very busy organising and running events as well as serving the constant stream of patrons using our services.

Staff found time to create displays in support of our Galway LGFA and Camogie teams and a special Arts & Craft event focusing on making banners and colouring our county crests. It was a wonderful family event that was enjoyed by all and added to the excitement of the upcoming matches and instilling pride of place.

ART WORKSHOP SUPPORTING GALWAY LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL AND CAMOGIE PLAYERS













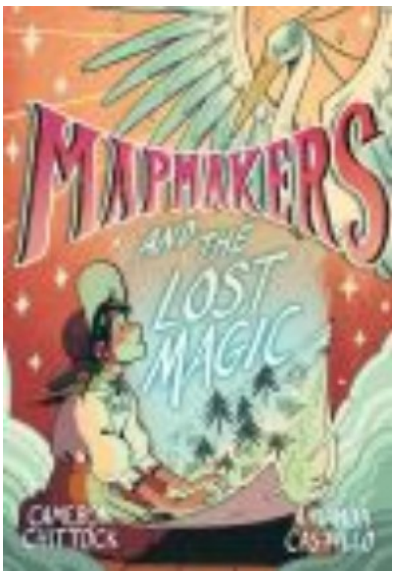


GAILLIMH ABÚ! - GOOD LUCK GALWAY!

All our Summer Stars Arts & Crafts events were very well attended. The LEGO sessions were also popular.



There has been great interest in our Children's Comic Book Club with a waiting list developing quickly. Numbers are limited and the possibility of a second session is being explored. Our Comic Book Club is aimed at 9–12-year-olds. The session involves discussing the graphic novel assigned and a corresponding fun craft activity.







AGRIKIDS



WONDERFUL NEW BOOKS FOR LIBRARY PATRONS









Oranmore Library hosted a Storytime with music event with Miss Dolly in August. This event proved extremely popular with all ages. There was barely space to park a buggy! The children enjoyed this interactive event, dancing, waving scarves to mimic the wind, bursting bubbles and singing along.



STORYTIME WITH MISS DOLLY

From August 15th-23rd we celebrated Heritage Week at Oranmore Library with an Open-Door event, welcoming visitors into our heritage building to view the unusual self-supporting ceiling and stained-glass windows made by Mayer of Munich. We also hosted a Heritage Arts & Crafts themed event and a “Build your favourite Galway Landmark with LEGO” event. These events incorporated heritage with activities which appealed to children and made learning about our local heritage fun.

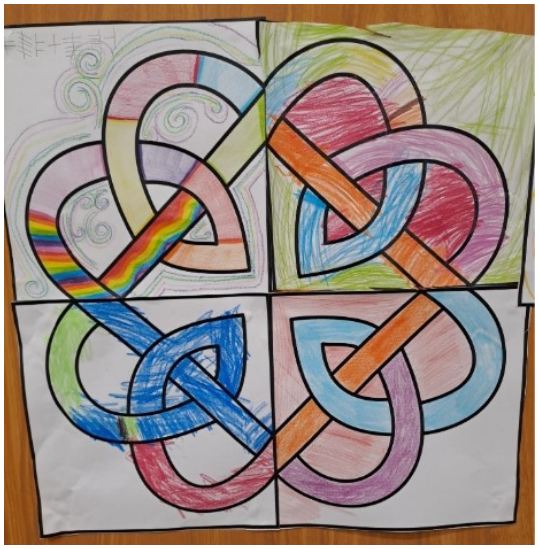
Staff created displays from our Local Studies Collections for Heritage Week which were well received. The books had to be replenished several times.





NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK DISPLAYS

One of the options for our Heritage Arts & Crafts was the creation of Celtic Symbols. Children coloured in sections of a celtic design and were shown how the Celtic Symbol was completed when the sections were put together. Information was provided on Celtic Design for those who were interested.





HERITAGE WEEK DISPLAY

Photos of popular Galway Landmarks were displayed to provide inspiration for the “Build your favourite Galway Landmark with LEGO” session.





BUILD YOUR FAVOURITE GALWAY LANDMARK



NEW BOOKS FOR TEENAGERS



Our last Summer Stars event took place on August 28th with a Storytime with Diane Bayliss from the RSA. Diane provided information of road safety, answered many questions and listened to many stories about near misses from the children! Over 50 children attended this event.

A SUMMER TO REMEMBER AT OUGHTERARD PUBLIC LIBRARY

As the seasons begin to change and autumn approaches, it is a wonderful opportunity to look back on another busy and enjoyable summer at Oughterard Public Library. We would like to thank everyone who visited, participated in our events, and made the library such a vibrant community space over the past few months.

For the latest news, updates, and upcoming events, be sure to follow us on Facebook: @OughterardPublicLibrary.

DINOSAUR FOSSIL EXHIBITION

One of the highlights of the summer was our fascinating Dinosaur Fossil Exhibition, generously loaned to us by University College Cork from their hugely successful *Domain of the Dinosaurs* exhibition.

The travelling collection featured a selection of some of their most impressive specimens, and we were delighted to welcome it to Oughterard. Hundreds of visitors had the unique opportunity to see, and even hold, genuine prehistoric remains, including a dinosaur skull, footprint, tooth, and even a sample of fossilised dinosaur dung!

Adding to the excitement, some of the specimens had scientists in Cork scratching their heads. Which dinosaur left behind a footprint with such enormous claws? What creature possessed teeth this sharp? Fortunately, Oughterard is home to many enthusiastic young dinosaur experts who eagerly rose to the challenge. After much discussion and debate, they confidently identified the mystery fossils. Their suggestions have now been sent to the professors in Cork, and we are sure they will be relieved to finally have these prehistoric mysteries solved!





DINOSAUR FOSSILS

LITTLE LIBRARY BAGS

If there is a child in your family starting Junior Infants this year, be sure to call into the library and pick up one of our Little Library Bags.

These charming tote bags are filled with stories about starting school, making new friends, and embracing new adventures. Bags are available in both Irish and English while stocks last.

SUMMER STARS READING PROGRAMME

Once again, the young readers of Oughterard have impressed us with their enthusiasm and commitment as they took part in the Summer Stars Reading Programme.
At the time of writing, we are still finalising arrangements for the awards ceremony. Parents will be contacted as soon as a date has been confirmed. The ceremony is always a fun and memorable occasion, and we look forward to celebrating the achievements of all our participants.
Congratulations and well done to everyone who took part this year!

WEEKLY STORYTIME

Join us every Wednesday at 3.00 pm for our relaxed and enjoyable Storytime Session. Children can enjoy stories, colouring activities, and a friendly atmosphere. Sessions are suitable for children up to 7 years of age, and all are welcome.

LEARNING SUPPORTS

The library continues to offer a range of educational supports for children and families, including:

- See and Learn Packs available for loan with a referral letter from Down Syndrome Ireland, Galway Branch.
- Touch-type Read and Spell (TTRS) licences available.
- Nessy licences available.

LIBRARY SERVICES

A wide range of services is available to library members, including:

- Printing
- Photocopying
- Scanning
- Public Access PCs
- Free Wi-Fi

INIS OÍRR

EITLÍONN SUMMER STARS I LEABHARLANN INIS OÍRR

Rinne Leabharlann Bhrainsí Inis Oírr ceiliúradh ar chlár Summer Stars na bliana seo le réimse bríomhar imeachtaí agus gníomhaíochtaí a spreag cruthaitheacht, foghlaim agus rannpháirtíocht phobail.

Ba bhuaicphointe ar leith é taispeántas ealaíne pobail na leabharlainne ar théama na n-éan. Tugadh cuireadh do chuairteoirí de gach aois éan a mhaisiú agus é a chur le suiteáil “ealta” a bhí ag fás sa leabharlann. Bhí an-tóir ar an ngníomhaíocht shimplí ach mhealltach seo, agus chuir breis agus 100 rannpháirtí a gcruthuithe ildaite leis i rith an tsamhraidh.
Mar chuid de chlár mhí Lúil, cuireadh seó puipéad i láthair ag ealaíontóir áitiúil, a chuir an lucht féachana faoi gheasa lena leagan bunaidh de ‘Na Trí Mhuc Bheaga’. Tar éis an léirithe, ghlac páistí páirt i gceardlann phraiticiúil inar dhear siad a gcuid puipéad féin agus inar bhain siad úsáid as amharclann na bpuipéad chun a gcuid scéalta a thabhairt chun beatha trí shúgradh samhlaíoch.

I mí Lúnasa, d’óstáil an leabharlann dhá cheardlann bheoshruthaithe i gcomhar le hIonad Pointe Ceangail Leathanbhanda Chomhairle Contae na Gaillimhe agus The Ark. Sa cheardlann ‘Wild Songs’, threoraigh an ceoltóir Ríona Sally Hartman páistí óga agus a dtuismitheoirí ar eachtra cheolmhar dhátheangach lán de cheol, gluaiseacht agus spraoi. Idir an dá linn, spreag ‘What If We Just Invent It?’, faoi stiúir Róisín White, rannpháirtithe chun a samhlaíocht a scaoileadh saor agus aireagáin úra a dhearadh agus a mhúnlú, ó shandail ghlanta coise don trá go casadóirí cliste leathanaigh leabhar!

Le chéile, chothaigh na himeachtaí seo fiosracht, cruthaitheacht agus foghlaim spraíúil, rud a d’fhág gur eispéireas taitneamhach agus cuimhneacháin é Summer Stars 2026 do phobal Inis Oírr.

SUMMER STARS TAKES FLIGHT AT INIS OÍRR LIBRARY

Inis Oírr Branch Library celebrated this year's Summer Stars programme with a vibrant range of activities that encouraged creativity, learning, and community participation.

A particular highlight was the library's bird-themed community art display. Visitors of all ages were invited to decorate a bird and add it to a growing "flock" installation in the library. The simple but engaging activity proved hugely popular, with more than 100 participants contributing their colourful creations throughout the summer.

July's programme featured a puppet show by a local artist, who delighted audiences with an original retelling of ‘The Three Little Pigs’. Following the performance, children took part in a hands-on workshop where they crafted their own puppets and used the puppet theatre to bring their stories to life through imaginative play.

In August, the library hosted two live-streamed workshops in collaboration with Galway County Council's Broadband Connection Point Centre and The Ark. In ‘Wild Songs’, musician Ríona Sally Hartman led young children and their parents on a bilingual musical adventure filled with music, movement, and fun. Meanwhile, ‘What If We Just Invent It?’, facilitated by

Róisín White, inspired participants to unleash their creativity by designing and modelling original inventions, from foot-cleaning beach sandals to ingenious book-page turners!

Together, these events fostered curiosity, creativity, and playful learning, making Summer Stars 2026 a memorable and enjoyable experience for the Inis Oírr community.



ÉIN MHAISITHE



PUIPÉID AGUS AMHARCLANN NA BPUIPÉAD



PORTUMNA LIBRARY

Our popular Ciorcal Comhrá continued to bring people together every second Tuesday, creating a welcoming space for conversation, laughter and a well-earned cup of tea. The sessions offer a relaxed opportunity to use and enjoy Irish, with participants of all abilities and backgrounds encouraged to join in. The friendly atmosphere, combined with plenty of craic agus comhrá, has made this a much-anticipated event in our monthly calendar.
The library was buzzing with creativity throughout the Summer Stars Reading Adventure, with a series of fully booked Arts and Crafts workshops led by Laurie from *The Learning*

Garden. Children, young adults and adults alike embraced the opportunity to get creative, producing imaginative artwork while enjoying a fun and social environment. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm and engagement across all age groups during the summer programme.

Our enthusiastic Adult Book Club gathered once again to discuss *Go as a River* by Shelley Read. Members enjoyed a lively and thoughtful discussion, sharing insights and reflections on the novel's themes, characters and unforgettable setting. The book club continues to be a valued space for readers to connect, discover new perspectives and share their love of books.

Meanwhile, our Community Jigsaw Puzzle Table has become one of the library's most popular attractions. The current 1,000-piece puzzle has encouraged visitors of all ages to stop by, contribute a few pieces and chat with fellow puzzle enthusiasts. The table has created many unexpected conversations and connections, and such is its popularity that we may soon need to consider a booking system!

We were delighted to welcome Diane from the Road Safety Authority (RSA) for a special Storytime session focused on road safety awareness. Through stories, discussion and interactive learning, children enjoyed an engaging introduction to important road safety messages in a fun and age-appropriate way.

Fridays continue to be busy and enjoyable in the library, with our Freeplay LEGO and DUPLO sessions offering children a chance to build, create and let their imaginations run wild. Storytime sessions also take place where staffing allows, providing opportunities to introduce young readers to the joy of books and storytelling.

Every day, visitors can enjoy a wide variety of activities available throughout the library. From puzzles and word searches to colouring sheets and creative challenges, there is always something on hand to entertain, engage and inspire library users of all ages.

Our well-used Games Shelf remains a fantastic resource for bringing people together. Whether visitors are playing with friends, family members or meeting someone new, the games provide a fun and informal way to connect, socialise and spend time in the library.

We always look forward to the weekly visits from the members and staff of Ability West's Portumna Hub, whose enthusiasm and friendly presence are an important part of our library community. These regular visits highlight the library's role as an inclusive and welcoming space for everyone.

Our Print Service continues to be in high demand and remains an important gateway service for many members of the community. It regularly introduces new visitors to the library, many of whom return to discover the wide range of resources, activities and supports available.

We were also delighted to host several summer visits from Portumna Primary School's extra provision classes. The children enjoyed a variety of activities including colouring, games, LEGO and DUPLO, with plenty of fun, laughter and creativity throughout each visit. It was wonderful to see the library filled with such energy and excitement.

As always, it is rewarding to see the library serving as a free, accessible and welcoming community space. Whether people come to read, create, learn, meet friends, access services or simply enjoy a quiet moment, the library remains a place where everyone belongs. No appointment is needed, there is no expectation to spend money, and there is always something to do... or simply a comfortable space in which to do nothing at all.



VISIT BY RSA TO PORTUMNA LIBRARY



VISIT BY SUMMER PROVISION CLASS TO PORTUMNA LIBRARY

TUAM LIBRARY

Tuam's regular library events continued; weekly baby & toddler rhyme times, storytime for primary school children, adult craft sessions and Lego free play on Saturdays. Book clubs were paused for the summer and will be restarting on September 26. The monthly breastfeeding support group facilitated by the local community health nurse continues. Margaret Garvey has continued to make book deliveries to housebound patrons.



Tuam's local branch of the Irish Wheelchair Association visited the library as a group, were introduced to the services in the library and online, with group members joining the library.

ART WORKSHOPS WITH LOCAL ARTIST KATHY ROSS

STORYTELLER NIALL DEBURCA WITH A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE OF 30 CHILDREN.





SUPPORTED BY CREATIVE IRELAND, TUAM LIBRARY ORGANISED A SERIES OF DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS ROLE-PLAYING GAMING WORKSHOPS

FOR ADULTS, LOCAL ARTIST JENNIFER CUNNINGHAM HELD WORKSHOPS FOR 12 ATTENDEES. THEIR ARTWORK WILL BE EXHIBITED IN THE LIBRARY IN SEPTEMBER.



WESTSIDE LIBRARY

It was another busy summer in Westside Library, with the Westside Arts Festival (WAF), the Summer Stars National Reading Programme and the completion of a six-week Financial Literacy Programme creating a hive of activity in and around the branch. Together, these initiatives offered a diverse range of learning, cultural, and creative opportunities for children and adults.

Now in its third decade, the Westside Arts Festival was once again a resounding success, reflecting the library's strong connections within the local community. Delivery of the festival relied on close collaboration with the Family Resource Centre, Youth Work Ireland,

Galway City Partnership and Tusla. The 2026 festival theme*, In the Stream of Time*, encouraged participants to explore memories, heritage, change, and aspirations for the future.

Festival highlights included *Favourite Memories, Future Dreams*, an exhibition showcasing artwork created by second-class pupils from Scoil Bhríde, Shantalla. Working with Galway artist Anna Rozanska-Batra, the children produced imaginative pieces inspired by treasured memories and hopes for the future. The project was supported by Galway City Council and Creative Ireland.

Also, on display throughout the festival and beyond was *Brush Strokes*, an exhibition by acclaimed artist and stroke survivor Brendan McHugh. Showcasing his artistic journey and resilience, the exhibition attracted significant interest from visitors and added a valuable cultural dimension to the festival programme.

Across the festival, 40 events were delivered by partner organisations. Westside Library's contribution began with Duplo Freeplay, which attracted strong attendance. This was followed by a special Storytime with Community Gardaí Kevin and Noel, who entertained a large audience before giving children an exciting tour of the Garda van. Three contemporary dance workshops delivered by TADA Dance engaged children up to 12 years of age, while the festival concluded with two storytelling sessions by renowned storyteller Wayne O'Connor, whose energetic performances, drawing on myths, fantasy and folklore, captivated audiences of all ages.

Collectively, the festival brought hundreds of people from diverse backgrounds into Westside Library, further strengthening its role as a vibrant and inclusive community hub.

Over five weeks, Westside Library also delivered eight children's workshops, the majority of which were facilitated by library staff. Activities included Friendship Bracelet Making, Crossbody Bag Designing, Finger Painting, Canvas Quote Card Making, two Ozobots coding sessions, Clay Modelling and Trinket Box Making. These workshops encouraged creativity, collaboration, and self-expression, while also introducing participants to new skills, including basic coding concepts through colour-coded programming. All eight workshops were full to capacity.





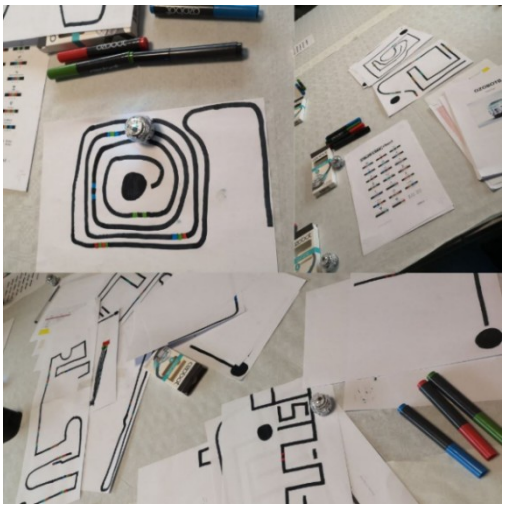
FRIENDSHIP BRACELET MAKING AND CROSSBODY BAG DESIGN



HAPPY FACES AND MESSY FINGERS ENJOYING THE FINGER-PAINTING AT WESTSIDE LIBRARY



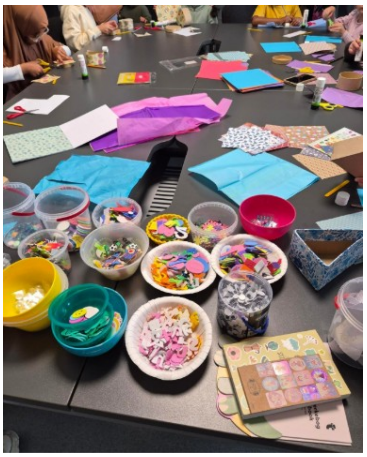
OZOBOTS



TRINKET BOX MAKING

The programme demonstrated the library's ability to deliver engaging, high-quality activities using existing makerspace resources. By maximising available materials and equipment and promoting upcycling and recycling wherever possible, Westside Library provided a sustainable and cost-effective programme while maintaining a strong focus on creativity, learning and community engagement.

As part of the Summer Stars National Reading Programme, hundreds of children registered for the annual reading challenge, receiving their own booklet, bookmark and bag. The strong uptake highlights the continued popularity of the programme and the library's commitment to





fostering a lifelong love of reading among young people.

Adult programming proved popular throughout the summer. The Piano and Tea Afternoon, hosted by talented local pianist Desiree Oduah, provided a relaxing and welcoming space where visitors enjoyed live music while reading, socialising or simply taking time out with a cup of tea or coffee. We also had Music Unveiled: an afternoon of music from the ConTempo Quartet, as well as unique perspectives from Dr. Amanda Heery (Department of Music, University of Galway) and Galway-based composer Dr. Jane O'Leary. In all, 36 people attended, which was a fantastic turnout.

Julie Anne de Brún facilitated Grúpa Tuismitheoirí agus Leanaí during July and August, offering parents, babies and toddlers the opportunity to engage with the Irish language through stories, songs and play in a friendly and supportive environment.



AFTERNOON TEA AND PIANO RECITAL AND GRÚPA TUIMITHEOIRÍ AGUS LEANAÍ

The summer also marked the successful completion of the Financial Literacy Programme, part-funded through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund (CIF) and delivered in Westside Library and Loughrea Family Resource Centre. The programme was implemented in partnership with Galway City Partnership and Galway Rural Development and aimed to improve financial literacy through a series of practical workshops and information sessions. A key element of the programme entitled Y*our Money, Your Future,* delivered by Evelyn Cormican of Blueprint Coaching, equipped participants with practical knowledge and skills to support informed financial decision-making and personal wellbeing. As part of the Skills for Life initiative, it demonstrated the value of collaborative partnerships in supporting community education, lifelong learning, and personal development.



YOUR MONEY, YOUR FUTURE – ATTENDEES AT FINANCIAL LITERACY COURSE

Finally, an information session with Miriam Walsh Guidance Officer with Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB), outlined the wide range of education and training opportunities available locally. The session provided valuable information on pathways to further learning, skills development and career progression, complementing the programme's focus on empowering individuals to improve their personal and financial wellbeing.

ENVIRONMENT

BURIAL GROUNDS

BURIAL GROUND IMPROVEMENT WORKS

The Environment Department implemented this new grant scheme in 2026 to improve accessibility in burial grounds, in partnership with local committees. The grant scheme is funding by both the council (70%) and the local burial ground committees contributing up to 30% of the funding. Seven projects were chosen for works to be carried out in 2026 and all National Monument Service approvals have now been received for the projects, and once match funding contributions are received from the committees, the Council will instruct the Contractors to commence works and will arrange all necessary supervision of works in compliance with NMS approvals. Woodford Burial Ground is the first project completed, with the works comprising resurfacing of the existing pathways through the burial ground with tar to provide a clear and smooth surface.



COMPLETED ACCESSBILITIY WORKS AT WOODFORD BURIAL GROUND

WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

GORT CIVIC AMENITY SITE

Construction works at Gort Civic Amenity Site are progressing well. All drainage works have now been completed, including the foul water connection and watermain installation. The concrete slab has been successfully constructed, and the new roller gate has been installed. These completed elements represent significant progress towards the overall project delivery.



ONGOING WORKS AT GORT CIVIC AMENITY SITE

DOG CONTROL

PROMOTION OF RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

749 dog licences were purchased during the month of August, 498 of which were purchased at local post offices. 6,203 licences have been purchased year to date.

Our dog warden service carried out responsible dog ownership campaigns in the Na Forbacha, Maigh Cuilinn areas of the county as well as a number of housing estates in Ballinasloe town during the month of August

The Council continues to partner with MADRA on Millie's Fund, the neutering scheme for both male and female dogs in the county. The scheme continues to receive a strong level of interest, with 79 applications submitted by dog owners across the County to date in 2026.

DOG CONTROL & ENFORCEMENT

One fixed penalty notice was issued by the Council's dog warden service during the month of. August. 32 fixed penalty notices have been issued year to date by the dog wardens for offences under the Control of Dogs Act with 7 paid in full, 7 partially paid through agreed payment plans with 4 files sent to the law agents to initiate legal proceedings in respect of unpaid fixed penalty notices. The remainder of the notices issued are being processed through the system.

DOG SHELTER

24 dogs came through the Council's dog warden shelter during the month of August.

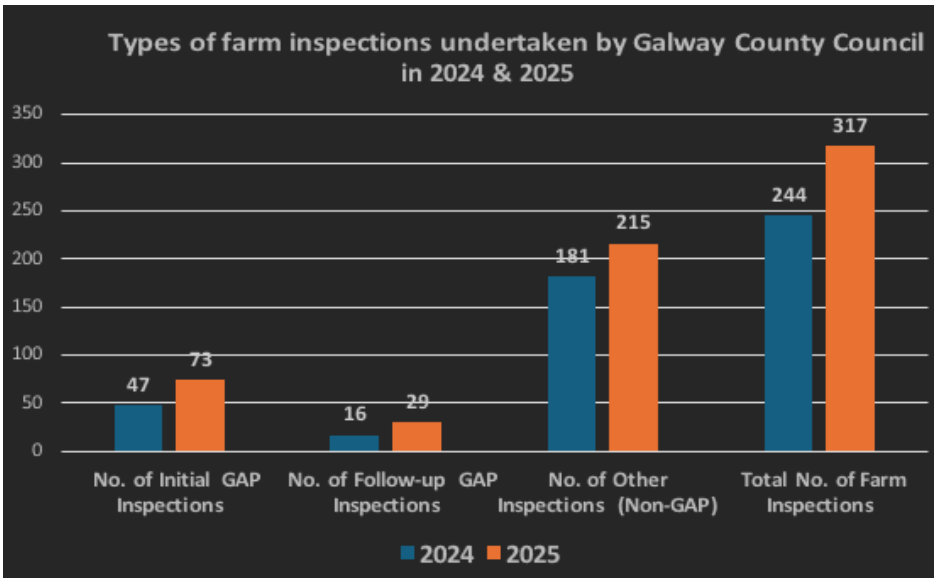
ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT

AGRICULTURE MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT

The following are extracts from an EPA report which give an overview of Galway County Council's farm inspection activities for 2024 and 2025:

Number of Farm Inspections	2024	2025
No. of Initial GAP Inspections	47	73
No. of Follow-up GAP Inspections	16	29
No. of Other Inspections (Non-GAP)	181	215
Total No. of Farm Inspections	244	317

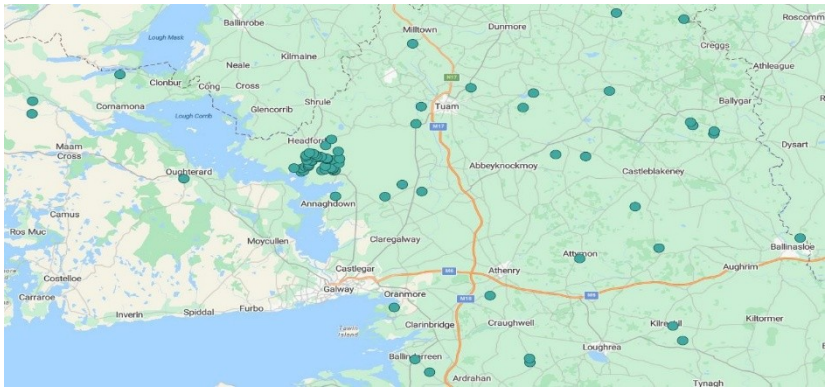
% of Inspection Targets	2024	2025
Initial GAP Inspection Target	38	72
% Completed by Galway County Council	**124**	**101**



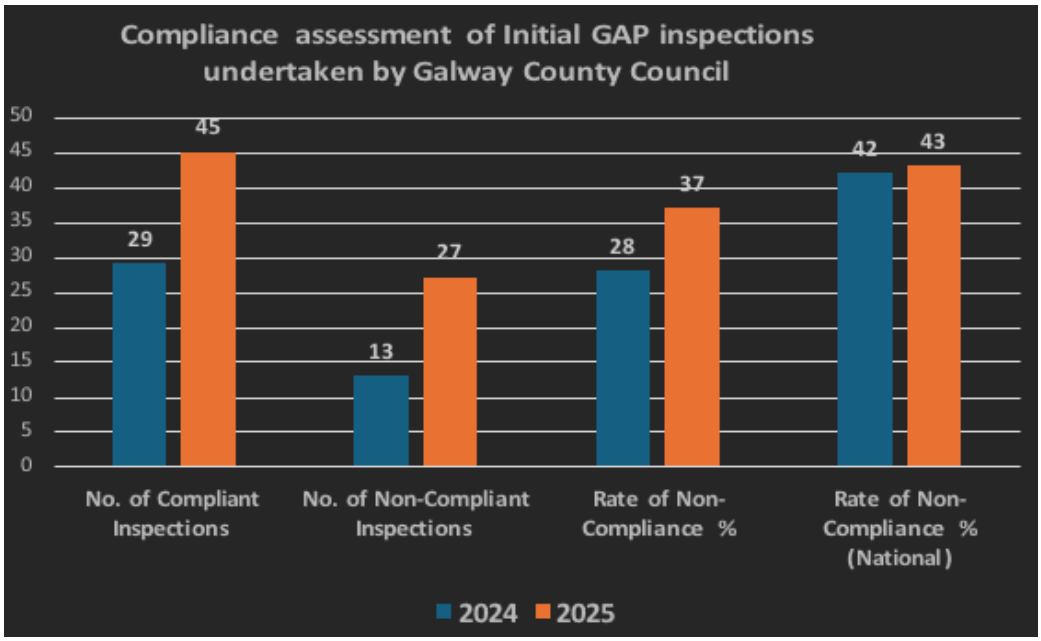
SUMMARY OF THE TYPES OF FARM INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL.

TYPES OF FARM INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2024 AND 2025.

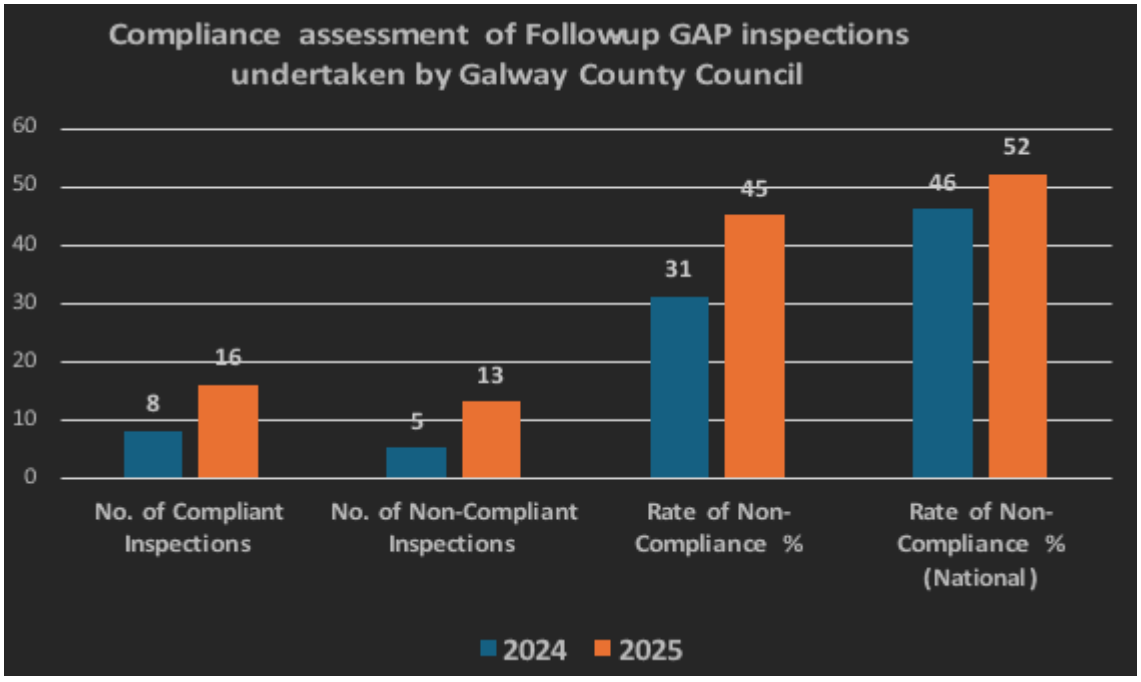
Galway County Council increased their farm inspection activity in 2025 compared to 2024 following the recruitment of dedicated resources for the NAIP (National Agricultural Inspection Programme). They completed 73 initial GAP inspections in 2025 and exceeded their NAIP inspection target in both years. Galway County Council undertook more follow-up GAP inspections in 2025 than 2024. Follow-up inspections are important as they determine if the issues causing non-compliance are being addressed potentially leading to improvements in water quality. Galway County Council undertook high numbers of other farm inspections in response to planning applications, incidents and complaints in 2024 and 2025.



GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE INITIAL GAP INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2025.



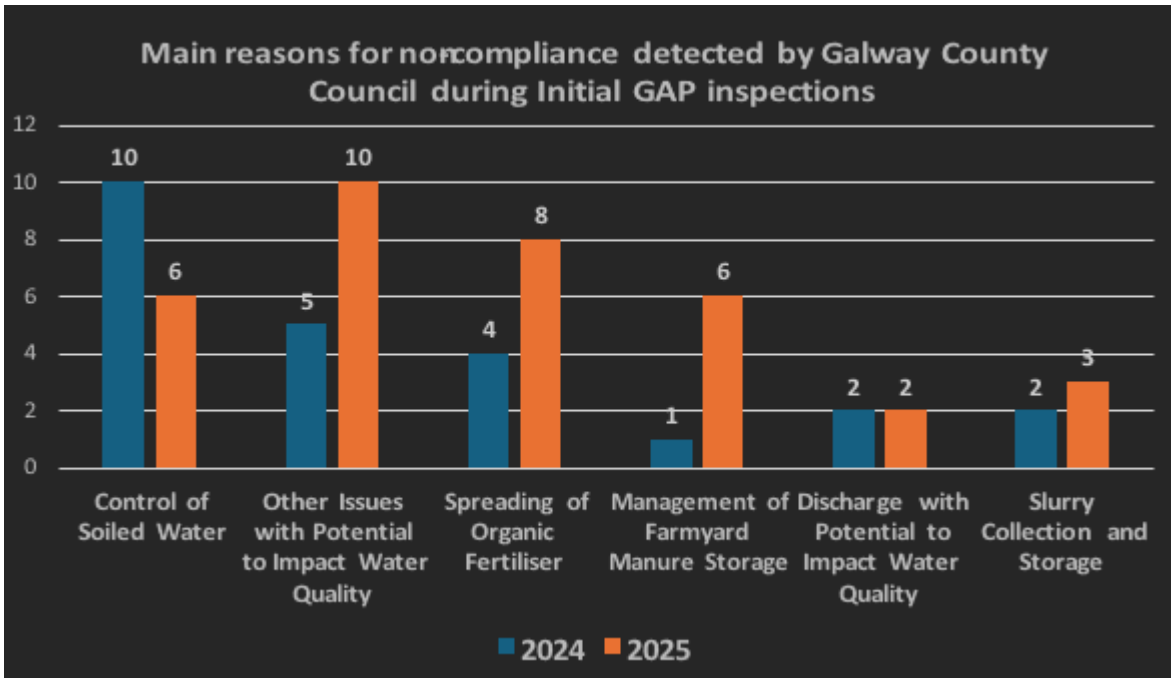
COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT OF INITIAL GAP INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2024 AND 2025.



COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT OF FOLLOW-UP GAP INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2024 AND 2025.

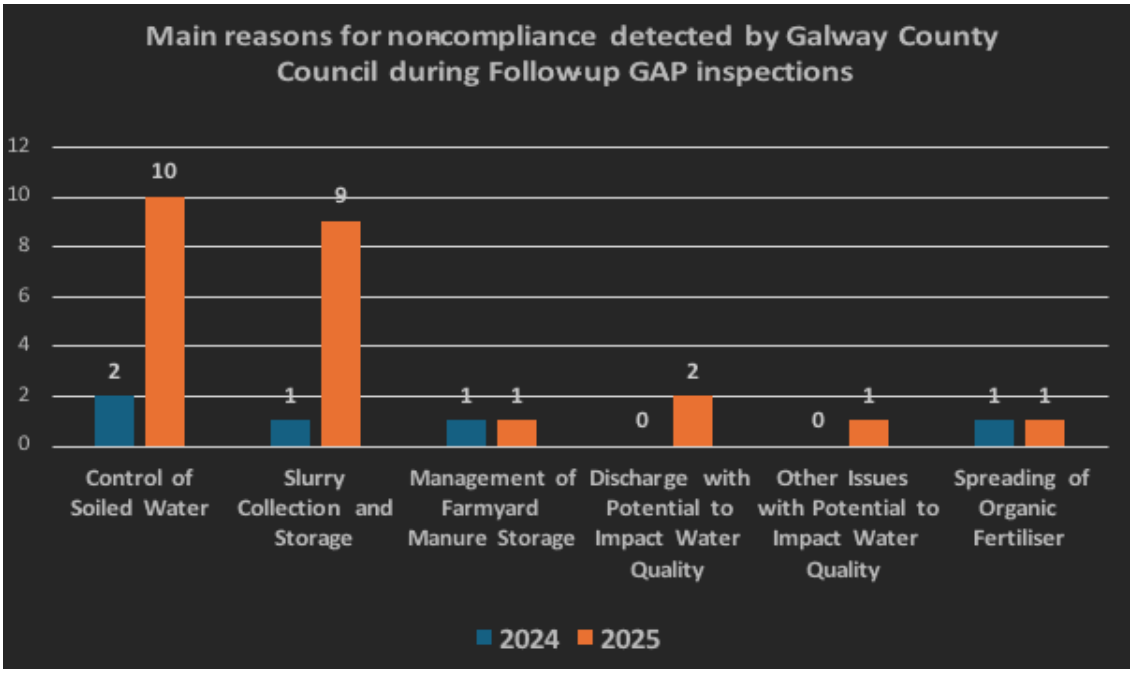
Galway County Council increased their farm inspection activity and detected more non-compliances during initial GAP inspections in 2025. The rate of non-compliance for initial GAP inspections was lower than the national rate in 2024 but similar to the national rate in 2025. The number of follow-up GAP inspections undertaken by Galway

County Council increased slightly in 2025 compared to 2024. The rate of non-compliance for follow-up inspections was lower than the national rate in 2024 but similar to the national rate in 2025.



MAIN REASONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE DETECTED DURING INITIAL GAP INSPECTIONS BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL.

The top three reasons for non-compliance detected by Galway County Council during initial GAP inspections in 2025 were other issues with potential to impact water quality, spreading of organic fertilisers, and management of farmyard manure storage which are similar to the main reasons found nationally.



MAIN REASONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE DETECTED DURING FOLLOW-UP GAP INSPECTIONS BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL.

The main reasons for non-compliance detected by Galway County Council during follow-up GAP inspections in 2025 were the control of soiled water, and slurry collection and storage which are similar to the main reasons found nationally.

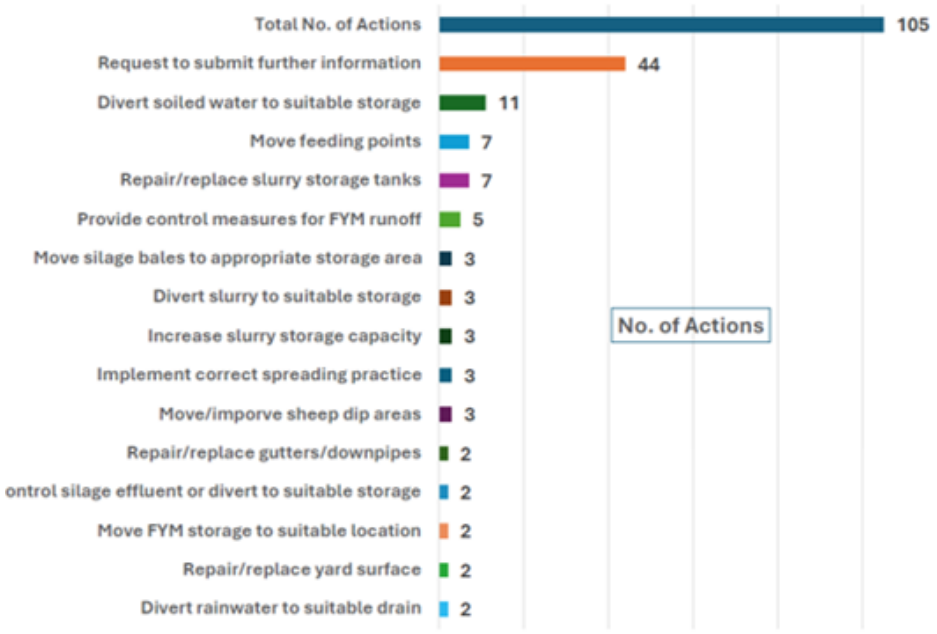
Specific issues found during farm inspections undertaken by Galway County Council: Galway County Council identified a total of 79 specific issues during farm inspections undertaken in 2025 which are illustrated in the table below. The top five most significant were issues with supplementary feeding points (9 occurrences), inappropriate spreading practice for organic fertiliser (8 occurrences), runoff from FYM not controlled (7 occurrences), slurry running into drainage ditches (7 occurrences) and soiled water running to surface waters (6 occurrences).



SPECIFIC ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL DURING FARM INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN IN 2025

TYPES OF CORRECTIVE ACTIONS REQUESTED BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

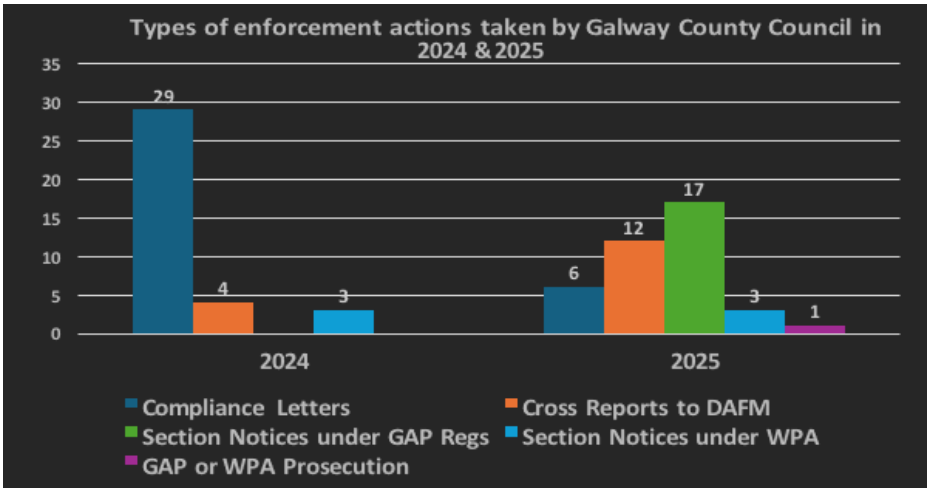
Galway County Council requested a total of 105 corrective actions following farm inspections in 2025 (including the submission to farmers of 44 requests for further information). The main corrective actions requested were to divert soiled water to suitable storage (11 actions), move feeding points (7 actions), repair/replace slurry storage tanks (7 actions) and provide control measures for FYM runoff (5 actions).



TYPES OF CORRECTIVE ACTIONS REQUESTED BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL FOLLOWING FARM INSPECTIONS IN 2025.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Galway County Council took more enforcement actions in 2025 than 2024. They took a total of 54 enforcement actions in 2025 (equivalent to 40 enforcement actions grouped by herd number). They issued six compliance letters and 20 section notices to farmers in 2025. Galway County Council issued four cross reports to the DAFM in 2024 which increased to 12 cross reports in 2025. One legal action was initiated by Galway County Council under the Water Pollution Act/GAP Regulations in 2025.



TYPES OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS (GROUPED BY HERD NO.) TAKEN BY GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL FOLLOWING FARM INSPECTIONS IN 2024 & 2025.

KEY PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED FOR GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL IN 2026

- Galway County Council must sustain the increased level of farm inspection activity achieved in 2025.
- Galway County Council shall undertake more follow-up GAP inspections to close out outstanding cases and ensure full compliance with the GAP Regulations.

- Galway County Council shall continue to implement the GAP Regulations using stronger enforcement measures, including more cross-reporting to DAFM and, where necessary, the use of prosecutions to achieve compliance.
- The EPA will continue to monitor and assess how local authorities utilise the full range of enforcement powers available to them.

LITTER ENFORCEMENT

Four on-the-spot fines were issued by the Council's Community Warden service for offences under the Litter Pollution Act during the month of August - 93 fines under the Act have been issued in the year to date with 50 paid in full, 3 being paid through agreed payment plans, 11 referred to the law agent to initiate legal proceedings and a further 8 still being processed through the system.

The fixed payment litter fine has now increased from €150 to €250 from 1st September 2026. The increase follows a change to Section 28 of the Litter Pollution Act, provided for through the commencement of Section 26 of the Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2026 nationally. The first fine issued for the new monetary amount was issued by Community Warden Thomas O'Sullivan on 3rd September 2026 for a littering offence witnessed at the textile banks in Athenry.



SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION OF INCREASE IN LITTER FINE

WATER POLLUTION MONITORING & ENFORCEMENT

Environment staff are continuing to investigate a pollution incident in a river in the Gort area. Uisce Eireann are also carrying out their own investigations. The sewer and storm water networks are both being assessed with a number of wastewater misconnections to the storm network already identified. A Section 12 Notice under the Water Pollution Act has already been issued to one business owner and dye testing is also planned identify any other issues.

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

A working group meeting for planning for the 4th Cycle Water Action Plan took place to discuss proposed changes to how the Septic Tank grants are administered, and to enable local authorities to propose new areas for action under the upcoming plan.

TRAINING

Follow-up online nature-based solutions training took place covering implementation of some of the following measures in public and private projects in the county: Tree pits, Swales, Rain gardens, ponds.

The Environmental Enforcement Team are currently undertaking a series of Information Workshops for members of the public to provide information on environmental regulation activities in the areas of agriculture, water quality, septic tanks litter & waste management. There will also be a Q&A session at the end of presentations to enable members of the public to ask questions and seek clarity on areas of interest. The sessions will be held as follows:

7th September @ 7pm – Gullanes Hotel, Ballinasloe
14th September @ 7pm – Ard Rí Hotel, Tuam.
21st September @ 7pm – Raheen Hotel, Athenry.
5th October @ 7pm – Connemara Lake Hotel, Oughterard.

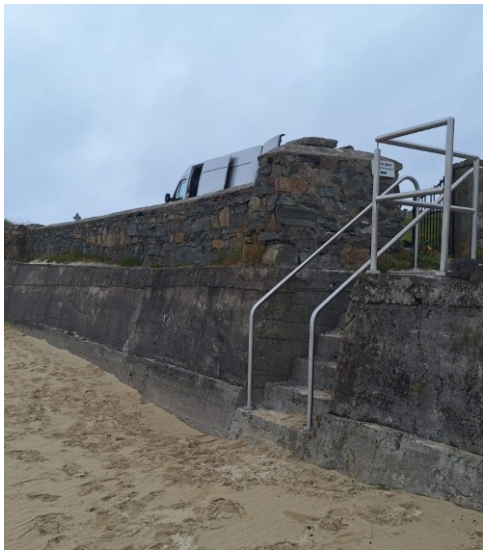
BATHING WATERS & WATER SAFETY

BEACH LIFEGUARDING

As the 2026 bathing season draws to a close, the Water Safety Shared Service has remained extremely busy supporting public safety at beaches and bathing areas across the county. A prolonged period of exceptional warm weather and sustained high visitor numbers throughout the summer placed significant demands on lifeguard and rescue services. The Water Safety Shared Service provided extensive safety advice to members of the public, responded to numerous incidents, and carried out rescues where necessary.
Between June and August 2026, lifeguards carried out 72 rescues, including rescues involving can buoys, rescue tubes and rescue boards. In addition, 459 assistance incidents were recorded, 15,140 instances of verbal safety advice were provided to beach users, and 3,254 potential accidents were prevented through proactive lifeguard intervention. One non-fatal drowning incident was recorded during the season, while lifeguards also reunited 8 missing children with their families. These statistics demonstrate the vital role played by Galway's lifeguard service in preventing accidents, educating beach users, and ensuring a safe environment for the large numbers of residents and visitors who used the county's bathing waters during the exceptionally busy 2026 season.

IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT BEACHES

Works have continued across our designated bathing areas to enhance accessibility and safety for users with some of these works being as follows:





INSTALLATION OF HANDRAIL AND RAILING AT GURTEEN BEACH ROUNDSTONE



INSTALLATION OF BEACH WHEELCHAIR STORAGE UNITS AT 5 BEACHES TO ENABLE YEAR-ROUND ACCESS

NEW HANDRAILS INSTALLED AT LONG POINT LOUGHREA





NEW SHOWER ENCLOSURE INSTALLED AT TRÁ MÓR, INDREABHÁN

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

COMPOSTING AND RECYCLING FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Twelve schools registered their interest in taking part in this pilot scheme which is funded by Galway County Council and the Regional Waste Management Offices. The programme includes a mix of practical activities on composting and educational activities on recycling.

MOBILE WEEE COLLECTIONS

WEEE Ireland, the Irish compliance scheme for electrical and battery recycling, will hold a series of WEEE collections throughout County Galway starting on Tuesday 6th October 2026. These collections allow people from towns and villages across the county to dispose of any household electrical, electronic, or battery equipment and batteries, in a safe and environmentally friendly manner. The collections are scheduled for the following locations in Galway:

Tuesday 6th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Glenamaddy	SuperValu Car Park	Glenamaddy, Co. Galway F45CT80
Wednesday 7th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Athenry	Athenry Mart	Athenry, Co. Galway H65DW74
Tuesday 13th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Headford	Headford Mart	Headford, Co. Galway H91K7TH
Thursday 15th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Indreabhán	Comharchumann Shailearna Teo.	Na hAille, Indreabhán, Co. Galway H91W925
Tuesday 20th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Leitir Móir	Car Park opposite church	Leitir Móir, Co. Galway H91F5W4
Thursday 22nd October 2026	10am - 4pm	Maam Cross	Maam Cross Mart	Maam Cross, Co. Galway H91 V520

Tuesday 27th October 2026	10am - 4pm	Maigh Cuilinn	Handball Alley at GAA Pitch	Maigh Cuilinn, Co. Galway H91WTW5
Thursday 29th October 2026	10am - 4pm	An Spidéal	An Spidéal GAA Club Pitch	An Spidéal, Co. Galway H91NR71
Tuesday 3rd November 2026	10am - 4pm	Woodford	Tommy Larkin's GAA Club	Woodford, Co Galway H62XW18
Thursday 5th November 2026	10am - 4pm	Williamstown	GAA Pitch	Williamstown, Co. Galway F45DT73
Tuesday 10th November 2026	10am - 4pm	Carnmore	Carnmore GAA Pitch	Carnmore, Oranmore, Co. Galway H91T383
Thursday 12th November 2026	10am - 4pm	Monivea	Monivea/Abbey GAA Pitch	Monivea, Co. Galway H65YX78

Further information from WEEE Ireland https://www.weeeireland.ie/contact/ or 012999320

GUM LITTER TASKFORCE CAMPAIGN 2026

Galway County Council, in partnership with Tuam Tidy Towns, welcomed the Gum Litter Taskforce Roadshow to Co. Galway to promote cleaner communities, gum disposal and a circular economy. Despite inclement weather conditions, there was huge local support for the initiative and local promotion of the event in The Tuam Herald. This event builds on the purchase of a specialised portable Gum Litter Removal Machine by Tuam Tidy Towns under the Community Support Schemes and will involve an ongoing education and awareness campaign in the town to tackle gum litter blackspots.




Tuam Herald
NEWS
Tuam chewing gum to be tackled by new machine

ATTENDEES AT THE EVENT AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLE IN THE TUAM HERALD

FARM HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION DAY

A Farm Hazardous Waste Collection Day will place at Ballinasloe Co-Op Mart, H53 YT53, Co. Galway on Tuesday 29th September between 9am and 5pm.



ADVICE ON HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION PREPARATION

HOUSING

HOUSING MAINTENANCE

STOCK CONDITION SURVEYS

Galway County Council is undertaking Condition Stock Surveys across the full Housing Stock. The surveys provide essential information to support planned maintenance programmes, future improvement work, budgeting, health and safety standards, and planning for the long-term management of the Council's housing stock. The surveys assist in identifying properties that require repairs, upgrades, or energy efficiency improvements, helping to ensure that housing stock is maintained to an appropriate standard and that resources are allocated effectively.

The target for 2026 is to complete Condition Stock Surveys on 15% of the housing stock. The condition stock surveys will be completed by Galway County Councils internal technical team and external contractor Assess Ireland.

As of September 2026, Galway County Council has a housing stock of over 3,500 properties. 310 surveys have been completed, 58% of the target. There will be a projected increase in the number of surveys completed by year end with Assess Ireland expanding their team to carry out further surveys to support the 2026 target.







TOBAR AN LUACHRA, BEARNA

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There were 120 unique applications received for the 33 Affordable properties advertised in Phase 1 of Fearann Na hEascrach, Raheen Road, Athenry. Almost all of the houses have been allocated. It is planned that Phase 2 of Fearann Na hEascrach will be advertised in October. In addition, there were 19 applications received for the 3 x Part V properties advertised in An Móinéar Ard, Kinvara. All have been allocated to applicants.



COMPLETED UNITS FROM THE FEARANN NA HEASCRACH ESTATE IN ATHENRY

Applications for Phase 2 of Fearann na hEascrach will be accepted via an online application portal which will go live on Thursday October 1st 2026 at 10.00am. 37 three-bedroom houses are being delivered in the second phase of the development. Further information on

the Fearrann Na hEascrach scheme, including the Scheme of Priority, link to the application form, and support documentation required is available at www.galway.ie/starterhomes.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME

The Traveller Liaison Officer has successfully coordinated a series of regular information sessions for housing applicants who identify as Travellers in collaboration with Brú Bríde and the Galway Traveller Movement. These information sessions provide information and guidance to Social Housing applicants and tenants on housing related matters.

Following a successful application through the Dormant Accounts Fund, refurbishment works are underway on the Community Facility at the Tuam Halting Site. Once completed, the facility will provide a valuable community space for residents of the halting site to facilitate training programmes, information sessions and after school activities. These will be delivered by and in collaboration with Brú Bríde and the Family Resource Centre.

The refurbishment of the Tuam Halting Site Community Facility is expected to be completed by the end of September 2026.

REFURBISHMENT OF TUAM HALTING SITE COMMUNITY FACILITY



BEFORE

AFTER





BEFORE

AFTER



TENANT PURCHASE SCHEME

The Tenant (Incremental) Purchase Scheme 2016 gives eligible local authority tenants the opportunity to purchase their home at a discounted price. If your application is approved, the Council will sell the property to you and apply an incremental purchase charge that reduces over time, provided you comply with the conditions of the scheme.

WHO CAN APPLY?

You may be eligible to apply if you:

- ✅ Have been in receipt of social housing support for at least 10 years
- ✅ Have a minimum annual reckonable income of €11,000
- ✅ Have a satisfactory rent payment record
- ✅ Are not engaged in anti-social behaviour

✅ Have not previously purchased a property under an earlier tenant purchase scheme

HOW DOES THE SCHEME WORK?

→ Submit an application to Galway County Council.
→ The Council assesses your eligibility.
→ The market value of the property is determined.
→ A discount is applied based on your income.
→ You purchase the property at a reduced price.
→ An incremental purchase charge is registered against the property.

WHAT IS THE INCREMENTAL PURCHASE CHARGE?

The incremental purchase charge equals the value of the discount you receive when purchasing your home. The charge remains on the property for 20 years, 25 years, or 30 years depending on the level of discount provided. The charge reduces by 2% each year. If all scheme conditions are met, the charge reduces to zero at the end of the charge period.

SELLING YOUR HOME

You may sell your home at any time, subject to Council approval. However, if the property is sold before the charge period has expired, the outstanding balance of the incremental purchase charge must be repaid to Galway County Council.

EXCLUDED PROPERTIES

The following property types are generally excluded:

❌ Apartments
❌ Flats
❌ Maisonettes
❌ Duplexes
❌ Housing designed specifically for older persons
❌ Certain disability-specific housing
❌ Traveller group housing schemes
❌ Mobile homes and caravans
❌ Part V properties transferred to local authorities
❌ Properties reserved for specific Council purposes

If you are unsure whether your property qualifies, or if you require additional information or to obtain an application form, please contact:

Email: tenantpurchase@galwaycoco.ie
Phone: 091 509324

ACTIVITY UPDATE:

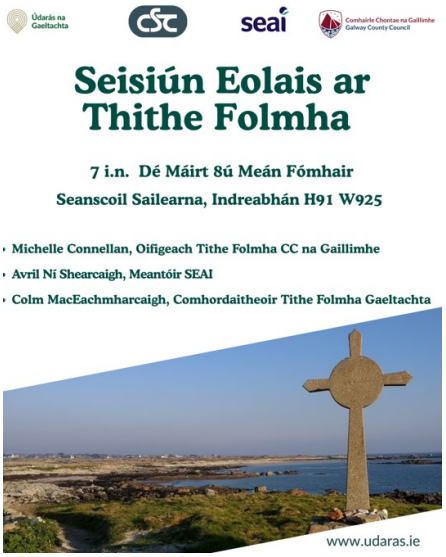
The Tenant Purchase Scheme continues to show strong activity, with 36 active cases currently progressing through the various stages of the process. To date in 2026, 19 valid applications have been received. Progress is being maintained across all stages, including 6 cases at valuation stage, 14 cases where offers have been issued, 9 cases with legal agents for completion of documentation, and 7 offers currently being progressed. A total of 12 sales have been completed to date.

VACANT HOMES

VACANT PROPERTY REFURBISHMENT GRANTS (CROÍ CÓNAITHE SCHEME)

There continues to be a high level of interest in the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants (Croí Cónaithe Scheme). Galway County Council has received 763 applications since the beginning of the scheme with 564 applications approved to a value in excess of 32 million euros, a further 34 applications are in progress with the balance having been withdrawn or rejected due to ineligibility for the scheme. 181 Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants, with a total value of €9,934,723.24 have been paid to applicants to date, representing a significant investment in local communities.

The Vacant Homes Officer (VHO) attended an information event in the Comhar Chuigéal, Leitir Mealláin on Thursday 11th of June and another information event is taking place in the Seanscoil Sailearna, Indreabhán H91PW35 from 7pm on Tuesday 08th of September. Information on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL), Housing Grants, and the Vacant Homes Schemes including the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants (Croí Cónaithe Scheme) is provided by the VHO at these events.





L-R: EILÍN PEIRCÍN, BAINISTEOIR COMHAR CHUIGÉAL, MICHELLE CONNELLAN VACANT HOMES OFFICER, COLM MAC EACHMHARCAIGH, VACANT HOMES CO-ORDINATOR AN GHAELTACHT, MARION NÍ CHADHAIN, ÚDARAS NA GAELTACHTA, AND PÁRAIC BAIRÉAD BAINISTEOIR, GFI GAILLIMH.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOME LOANS

A Housing Loans Information Session was held in the Tuam Municipal District on 22 July 2026, and a similar session is scheduled for the Athenry Municipal District.

The Housing Home Loans Team will recommence fortnightly information sessions on September 9th 2026 in Áras an Chontae covering both the Local Authority Home Loan and the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan schemes. These sessions provide one-to-one guidance on housing loan eligibility criteria and the application process, helping prospective applicants to better understand the schemes available to them. They have proven effective in increasing awareness of the loan types and reducing the number of incomplete or invalid applications received.

Additional information sessions will be delivered in the Conamara Municipal District in the coming months. Information on the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, which can be used in conjunction with the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan, as well as the Housing Adaptation Grants for Older People and Disabled People, is also available at these sessions.
All information sessions are promoted through social media channels, and an information brochure on the available loan schemes has been published and distributed to all Municipal District offices.
In 2026 26 housing loan applications were received, with 11 approved to date. A number of applications received were invalid. The maximum property value of 345,000 applicable for Local Authority Home Loans does not accurately reflect the price of properties on sale on the open market.

CONTRACT SIGNING FOR THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT FARRANNAMARTIN, TUAM

A contract signing ceremony for the Farrannamartin, Tuam Residential Development, took place in Áras an Chontae on 13 August 2026, marking a significant milestone in the delivery of new housing within the county. The €15.1m social housing scheme will deliver 62 homes in Tuam around one kilometre from the town centre and Construction is due to begin later this month.

The scheme is being funded under the Government's Social Housing Investment Programme (SHIP), with construction expected to be completed in April 2028.

The Farrannamartin project is being delivered by OCC Construction. The design team comprises Collins Rolston Architects and Vincent Hannon Architects, Gilligan & Partners and MFA Consulting Engineers, AH Design and Engineering Design Consultants, and AtkinsRéalis.



PICTURED AT ÁRAS AN CHONTAE FOR THE SIGNING OF THE €15.1 MILLION CONTRACT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN TUAM. FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: DAMIEN O'BRIEN, CONTRACTS MANAGER, OCC; PETER O'CONNELL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, OCC; LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE; MICHAEL REGAN, LEAS CATHAOIRLEACH; MARY HOADE, TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT CATHAOIRLEACH; AND LIADHAN KEADY, CORPORATE SERVICES. BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: KIERAN KEON, ACTING HOUSING DIRECTOR (SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER); CIARA MCDONAGH, EXECUTIVE ARCHITECT; UINSINN FINN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES; ALAN BROGAN, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER; DONAGH MARK KILLILEA, MUNICIPAL DISTRICT LEAS CATHAOIRLEACH; DAMIEN REDINGTON, SENIOR ENGINEER; AND KEVIN GAVIN, ASSISTANT ENGINEER.



ARCHITECTS' DRAWINGS FOR THE €15.1 MILLION SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN TUAM.

CONTRACT SIGNING GORT MHAOILIR ATHENRY

Galway County Council has appointed C&N Higgins Construction as the contractor for the delivery of 43 social housing units at Gort Mhaoilir, Athenry.

The development will be constructed on a 1.8-hectare site located approximately 1km from Athenry town centre, with construction scheduled to commence in the coming weeks and completion anticipated in early 2028.

The scheme will provide 43 homes, including universally designed units, together with associated infrastructure works comprising roads, footpaths, car and cycle parking, public lighting, landscaping, signage and related site services.

The design team comprises Studio PKA & Van Dijk Architects as architects, SDS Consulting Engineers and MFA Consulting Engineers providing civil and structural engineering services, CBS Consulting and EDC Progressive Engineering as mechanical and electrical engineers, and Mulcahy McDonagh and Partners as quantity surveyors.

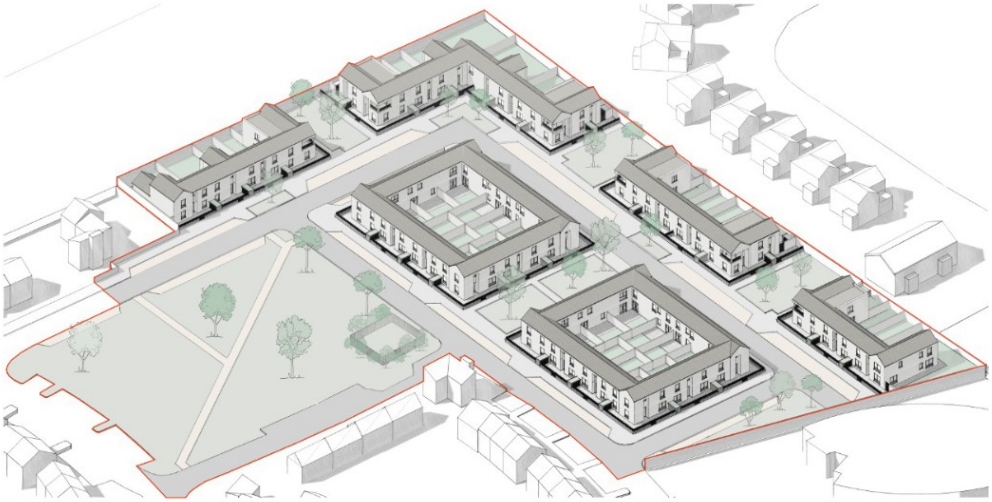
The development represents a significant addition to Galway County Council's social housing programme and will contribute to meeting identified housing need in the Athenry area.





GORT MHAOILIR
3D STREETVIEW

GORT MHAOILIR VISUAL



PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, FIRE & EMERGENCY & CLIMATE CHANGE

ATHENRY NORTHERN RING ROAD

A new section of the Athenry Norther Ring Road opened on Friday 11th September2026.

Minister of State for International and Road Transport, Logistics, Rail and Ports, Sean Canney, T.D., officially opened the western section of the Galway County Council scheme. The section of road connects the previous sections delivered by Galway County Council and IDA Ireland, providing a continuous route between the Tuam Road and the M6 motorway junction.

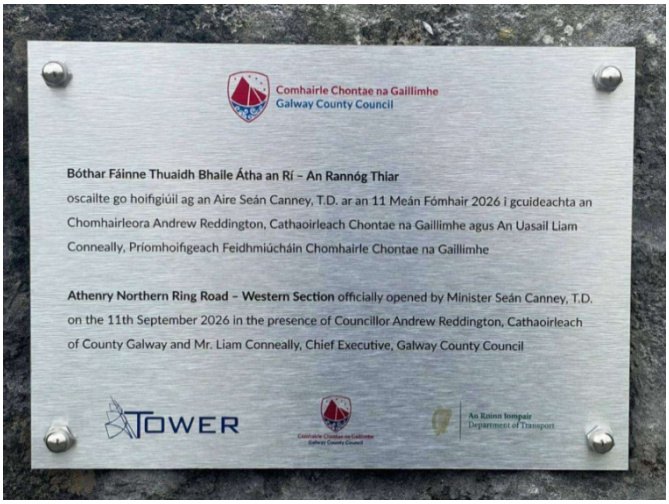
Construction of this latest section began in June 2025 and was carried out by Tower Plant and Civil Engineering on behalf of Galway County Council. The tender value was €2.3m with the estimated final construction value will be circa €2.5m.
Note: These figures exclude land costs, GCC costs etc.

MINISTER SEÁN CANNEY & AN CATHAOIRLEACH ANDREW REDDINGTON CUTTING THE RIBBON AT THE ATHENRY NORTHEN RING ROAD - WESTERN SECTION. ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE MR. ALBERT DOLAN, T.D., ATHENRY MD ELECTED MEMBERS, MR. LIAM CONNEALLY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, AND MR. UINSINN FINN, DIRECTOR OF SERVICES

PHOTO CREDIT : THOMAS O'SULLIVAN







ROAD TRAFFIC (SPECIAL SPEED LIMITS)

COUNTY GALWAY BYE-LAWS 2026

In December 2025, Galway County Council commenced Phase 2 of the National Speed Limit Review, with a presentation to the Physical Development, Transportation and Emergency Services SPC.
The national review is primarily focused on the introduction of 30km/h speed limits in built-up and urban areas.

With the agreement of the SPC, the executive commenced engagement with An Garda Síochána, adjoining LAs and District engineers. A review was undertaken of all speed limits submissions received since our last full review in 2019. In accordance with the DoT Guidelines, a review was also undertaken of existing speed limits in the county.

Having considered all feedback and submissions, draft bye-laws were prepared in accordance with the Guidelines. Between January and April 2026, each MD was visited twice. At the first meeting, Councillors were introduced to the new Guidelines and the draft bye-laws were circulated. This was followed up with a workshop in each MD, where Councillors raised queries and discussed specific locations.

Following a final review of the feedback from the workshops, TII was consulted in mid-August. This consultation focused on proposed 30km/h cores on the national road network. The feedback from TII was incorporated into the final draft proposals.

A fortnight in advance of the documents going on public display (11th September), a link of the final Municipal District maps was sent to each Councillor. The draft bye-laws will remain on public display until the 12th October.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Significant progress has been made across the Active Travel Programme, Safe Routes to School Programme, Community Transport Studies, and the Bus Stop Enhancement Programme during September 2026. Several schemes have advanced through design and consultation stages, while a number of construction projects are now substantially complete or progressing towards tender and construction.

ACTIVE TRAVEL DESIGN SCHEMES

ORANMORE TO TRAIN STATION PHASE 4

The scheme remains in Phase 4 and is progressing through the detailed design process.

BALLINASLOE BRIDGE STREET TO HARRIS ROAD PHASE 5

The construction tender was issued at the end of August 2026. A decision on EU JTF START funding is expected during September 2026.

TUAM VICAR STREET TO SPORTS GROUNDS, DUBLIN ROAD (R332) PHASE 3

The preliminary design is being finalised, with the scheme expected to proceed to the Section 38 process in the coming weeks.

ATHENRY CHURCH STREET TO TUAM ROAD (VIA STATION ROAD) PHASE 3

Consultation on the Emerging Preferred Option is scheduled for September 2026.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT ST. JOSEPH'S ROAD, PORTUMNA PHASES 6 - 7

Road Safety Audit Stage 3 has been completed, with remedial works scheduled for September 2026.

GLENBRACK ROAD, GORT PHASE 1

Land dedication has been secured, and the project is currently at the Preliminary Design stage, which is being undertaken by Brendan Slevin Engineers.

Upon receipt of the preliminary design, environmental consultants will be engaged to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening. Subject to the outcome of this process, the project will then progress to the Part 8 planning process**,** anticipated in Q4 2026 / Q1 2027**.**

HEADFORD ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME PHASES 5 - 6

The scheme is substantially complete.

HEADFORD – WORKS COMPLETE



LOUGHREA ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME PHASE 3

Consultation on the Emerging Preferred Option is scheduled for September 18th, 2026.

KINVARA PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS PHASE 1

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) requested an additional Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Turning Movement Survey at junctions in the vicinity of the proposed pedestrian crossings. The Active Travel team subsequently procured a specialist survey company to undertake the assessment. The survey has been completed, and the findings have been reviewed.

The Feasibility and Options Report for the two proposed pedestrian crossings in Kinvara is being updated to incorporate the survey findings and will be resubmitted to TII in the coming days. Upon finalisation of the Feasibility and Options Report, the project will progress to the Preliminary Design stage, which will include Road Safety Audits, drainage design, and the development of detailed design proposals.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAMME

SRTS R1 ORANMORE CALASANCTIUS, GAELSCOIL DE HIDE & SCOIL ÍOSA PHASES 5 - 6

Works at Scoil Íosa are substantially complete. Works at Calasanctius College and Gaelscoil de hÍde are nearing completion, with approximately 85% of works completed.



GAELSCOIL DE HIDE – WORKS NEARING COMPLETION

SRTS R1 SCOIL CHROÍ NAOFA, ATHENRY PHASE 5

Tender documentation is currently being compiled.

SRTS R1 ATHENRY BOYS NATIONAL SCHOOL PHASE 3

Coordination continues with the Regeneration team regarding the adjacent scheme.

SRTS R2 SCOIL SAILEARNA, INDREABHÁN PHASE 5

Tender documentation has been finalised and is expected to be published at the end of September.

SRTS R2 SCOIL NA BHFORBACHA PHASE 6

Construction is scheduled to commence in mid-September.

SRTS R2 ST. BRENDAN'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, LOUGHREA PHASE 4

Gateway 3 approval has been received. Dates for the Section 38 process are to be confirmed.

SRTS R2 GORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL PHASE 5

Tender documentation is being finalised.

SRTS R2 BALLINDERREEN NATIONAL SCHOOL PHASE 2

Landowner agreements remain ongoing.

SRTS PROGRAMME (R3/R4)

SCOIL SHÉAMAIS NAOFA, BEARNA AND TUAM EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL PHASE 1

An Taisce surveys have been completed and an Outline Delivery Plan has been prepared.

CARNAUN NS, ATHENRY; COLDWOOD NS, CRAUGHWELL; CRUMLIN NS, BALLYGLUNIN, KILLEEN NS, BALLYSHRULE, PORTUMNA; SCOIL ÁINE NAOFA, LOCH CUTRA, GORT, ST. CUAN'S NS, KILCOONA, HEADFORD PHASE 5

Contractors have been appointed funding and delivery sequencing are to be confirmed with the NTA.

MILTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL, MILTOWN & CORRANDRUM PHASES 3 - 5

Design development remains ongoing in conjunction with TII requirements.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S NS, CLONTUSKERT; KILLEENEEN NS, CRAUGHWELL; ST. THOMAS NS, PETERSWELL PHASE 6



Construction commenced during the week beginning 24 August 2026.

KILLEENEEN NS – WORKS COMMENCED



ST. THOMAS' NS – WORKS COMMENCED

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STUDIES

A total of six Community Transport Studies are currently underway.
Completed - Kinvara
Draft Stage – Oughterard; Clifden; Maigh Cuilinn; Portumna; Headford

BUS STOP ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

Construction of six new bus stops, including shelters, is scheduled to commence in mid-September 2026.



BSEP ORANMORE – WORKS COMMENCED

A Technical Engineering Consultant has been appointed to progress the design of bus stop upgrades at 17 locations throughout County Galway. The locations included are as follows:

Location	Direction	Infrastructure
Milltown	Southbound	Shelter
Tuam Cathedral		Shelter
N83- Corofin Cross	Southbound	Shelter
LIDL, Tuam	Westbound	Shelter
Cornamona	Eastbound	Shelter
An Fhairche/Clonbur	Eastbound	Shelter
Ballygar	Southbound	Shelter
Ballindereen	Northbound	Shelter
Craughwell	Westbound	Shelter
Kinvara	Northbound	Shelter
Eyrecourt	Northbound	Shelter
Loughrea	Westbound	Shelter
Monivea	Southbound	Shelter
Leitir Mealláin	Eastbound	Shelter
Leitir Mór	Northbound	Shelter
Cill Chiaráin	Eastbound	Shelter

PURCHASE OF NEW VELOCITY PATCHER

Galway County Council have just taken delivery of a new Velocity Patcher unit. This will increase to five the number of such machines in operation across the county.

The additional patcher will meet an identified need and will augment the existing capacity to deal with road repair requirements particularly over the demanding winter period.

Velocity Patchers are an essential tool in ensuring the safe and efficient repair of potholes and maintaining a fit for purpose road network. They clean out the pothole using compressed air and fill the hole with a computer calibrated mix of hot material. It is a much safer procedure than the traditional repair operation, it only involves the driver of the patcher unit and does not require a traffic management crew. Overall, use of a Velocity Patcher provides a cheaper, more effective, and safer outcome. Their use makes it possible to carry out more road repairs than traditional techniques at a lower cost.

The new machine was purchased, after a tender competition, from Archway Products Ltd. (Leitrim) at a cost of €379,402 incl. VAT. The cost was partially offset by a Department of Transport grant in the amount of €100,000. The new patcher is being brought into use with immediate effect.

This purchase was enabled by the provision made through the 2026 budget process for the phased renewal of the council's plant of machinery fleet, and support of the Elected Members for this wider investment programme is acknowledged.



VELOCITY PATCHER IN THE MACHINERY YARD, SANDY ROAD.



COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION FUND

Communities supported through the 2nd round of the Community Climate Action Fund have begun delivering projects. Recent completions include the installation of solar panels and low energy lighting at the Mall Theatre, Tuam, and a water refill station at the Ballinderreen Community Centre.





CRUINNIU NA MBÁD

Through sponsorship and participation in Cuan Beo's community engagement and environmental awareness events at Cruinniú na mBád, the Climate Action Unit contributed to initiatives promoting climate action, biodiversity and the sustainable management of

Galway Bay's coastal environment. We were delighted to have the opportunity to highlight the great climate action work being undertaken by communities across County Galway to President Catherine Connolly.





GALWAY COUNTY FOOD & SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

Galway County Council held the first meeting of the newly established Galway County Food & Sustainability Forum in June at the BIA Innovator Campus.

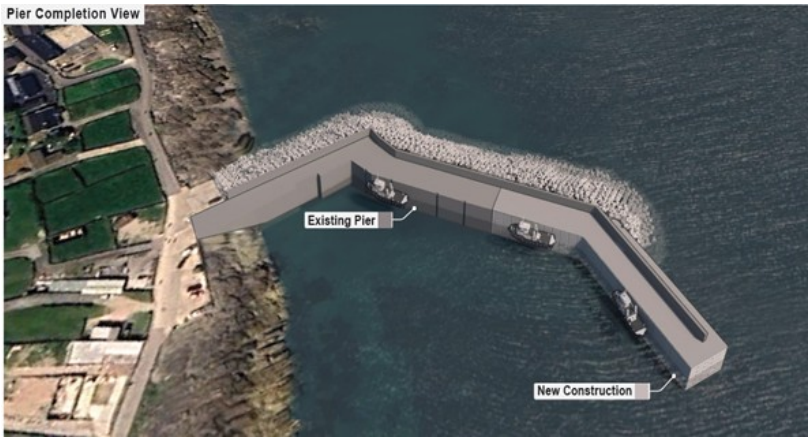
Established through the @CIBUS Interreg Europe project the Forum brings together representatives from public bodies, community organisations, education, research and the food sector to support collaboration on food-waste prevention, food redistribution, sustainable procurement, food education and the circular economy.



INIS OÍRR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Works continues to progress well on the Inis Oírr pier redevelopment project. A total funding package of €35.75 million has been approved for these works which comprise the construction of a protective breakwater along with a 90m long extension. This will provide much improved protection to vessels in the harbour than is currently afforded while also resulting in a total length of 135m of additional berthage.

The completed scheme will ensure that wave heights within the harbour are greatly reduced increasing safety and extending the time period the pier is usable, contributing significantly to the island's commercial potential while ensuring enhanced quality of life.



VIEW OF THE COMPLETED PROJECT

The works programme extends over two summer seasons, with overall completion projected for the latter part of 2027. The projected 2026 works programme is substantially complete at this point. The key elements of work undertaken are outlined below:

- The inner block of the pier extension is in place (the further extension including the summer berth will be installed in 2027).
- Import of stone fill to rear of existing pier for the first section of breakwater is complete and stone has been shaped to profile. Placement of x-blocs has commenced in the second half of August and is progressing well.
- The dredging crew are on site and that operation is underway. The blasting required to complete the dredging is scheduled in the coming weeks and there has been significant communication with all relevant stakeholders in relation to this.
- Traffic management on the island is in place and is working well.
- Casting of rock armour units is fully complete.
- Casting of the pier extension units for the 2027 works is continuing.
- Overall, from a programme perspective, the work is on track to meet projected stage of completion by the end of this year.
- Engagement and co-ordination with pier users and island residents is an important feature of the project and will continue through to its completion.

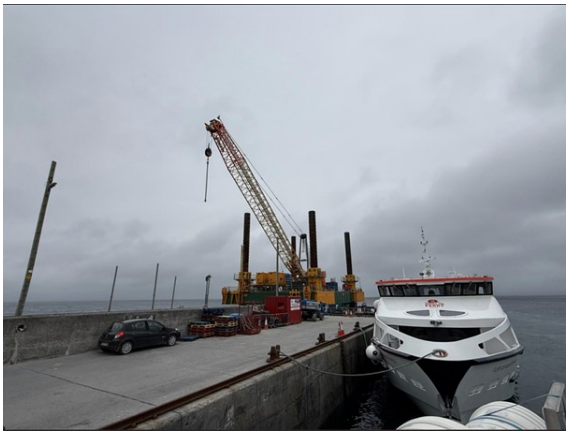
The selection of pictures below shows the status of construction in late August.



JACK UP BARGE AND CRANE, WITH PIER EXTENSION IN FOREGROUND



VIEW SHOWING IMPORTED STONE FILL BREAKWATER CORE



INTERACTION OF WORKS WITH ONGOING PIER USE



X-BLOCS STORED AT SITE COMPOUND ON THE ISLAND READY TO BE INSTALLED

UISCE ÉIREANN WATER SERVICES WORKSHOP

Uisce Éireann will host its annual Water Services Workshop for Galway County Councillors on Monday, 9 November 2026, from 2pm to 3.30pm in the Council Chamber, Prospect Hill, Galway. The workshop will provide Members with an opportunity to engage directly with Uisce Éireann representatives on water services matters affecting the county. An online attendance facility will also be provided. Members wishing to raise specific issues are encouraged to submit queries in advance to tdixon@galwaycoco.ie by Friday, 23rd October to assist with preparation for the workshop.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY ALERTS

Two Safety Alerts were issued during July and August 2026:

- HSA Driving for Work Risk Management Inspection Campaign
- HSA Accidental Drinking of Chemicals in the Workplace

All Safety Alerts (current and past) are on the Intranet/SharePoint for reference and action.

HSA DRIVING FOR WORK RISK MANAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

In July, the Health and Safety Authority launched a nationwide inspection campaign focused on managing driving-for-work risks. The campaign highlights that work-related driving must be managed as a workplace activity, with appropriate controls for drivers, vehicles and journeys.

Relevant departments were asked to deliver the campaign information through toolbox talks, review vehicle checks and maintenance records, confirm grey-fleet controls, and reinforce reporting of work-related road traffic collisions and near misses. The Safety Team also progressed a review of **SP44 Galway County Council Driving for Work Policy**, with consultation planned for September.

QUADRA - INTERNAL SYSTEM AUDITS

The ISO 45001 Internal Audit Schedule 2026 remains available on the Intranet/SharePoint. Five of the six audits scheduled for Q2 were completed, with departmental actions being progressed for close-out. The internal audit programme resumed in August, with a total of seven inspections completed YTD. Upcoming audits will cover the Vaccination Procedure, Housing, Connemara Municipal District, Flood Relief/Roads Drainage Projects, and the Safety Management System (Health and Safety Section). The Regeneration Team audit remains deferred until November 2026 to align with a live project.

HSA / NSAI AUDITS

Seven HSA inspections were completed across Connemara Municipal District sites, resulting in 26 actions. The required response and action plans were submitted by the end of July,

and progress continues to be monitored through operational meetings and follow-up communication with the HSA.

The NSAI ISO 45001 surveillance audit in May confirmed continued certification. The audit identified two minor non-conformances for the NRPO, and corrective actions are being progressed. Galway City Fire Station received no findings and was commended. The next NSAI audit is scheduled for November 2026.

HEALTH CHECKS 2026

The 2026 staff Health Screening Programme, delivered by Medmark Occupational Healthcare, completed 261 confidential screenings at County Hall and Centre Point from 345 expressions of interest. Municipal District sessions are scheduled for 5–23 October 2026, with booking information to be issued to staff closer to the start date.

FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OPERATIONS

The new and recently delivered rescue boat for the Salmon Weir was trialed (28 August 2026) on the river as part of the acceptance process. Galway City Council have begun the process of carrying out modifications to the agreed mooring site at the OPW compound at the Salmon Weir. The first round of training for already power boat- qualified operators is planned for the end of October and early November. We are awaiting a date for the official handover and initial public demonstration from Galway County Council, Galway City Council and Claddagh Watch. It is hoped that the boat will be fully operational at the end of Q1 2027.



TRIALING OF NEW RESCUE BOAT - SAMON WEIR

NEW HAZARDOUS METERIALS UNIT

The fit out of the new hazardous materials (HAZMAT) unit continued at Sidhean Teo in An Spidéal. Final adjustments will now be completed with an expected operational date of mid-October 2026. The review of existing HAZMAT equipment has been completed, and new replacement equipment ordered is scheduled to be delivered by the end of September 2026. Training for the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) deployment has commenced and is due to be completed by mid-October 2026.

NEW HAZARDOUS MATERIALS UNIT – FIT OUT





ROSENBAUER RM35 ROV

REVIEW OF GALWAY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (GRFS) FOAM UNIT

A review of the GFRS Foam Unit will commence at the end of September 2026. This unit is key to responding to high hazard and upper tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites including the Circle K fuel terminal in Galway Port. The review will assess the current state of equipment and training, in addition to integration needs for the new High Volume Pumping Regional Hub. A re-equipment and refresher training programme for 2027 will likely be required, and this will dovetail with the review of the Circle K Fuel Terminal inter-agency External Emergency Plan which is due under the COMAH regulations in 2027.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

LOUGHREA FIRE STATION

Construction of the new Loughrea Fire Station by Burns Construction and Civil Engineering Ltd commenced on the 31 August 2026. The anticipated completion date is October 2027.



Training for the crew on the aerial ladder platform, which is due to be based in the new station, is scheduled to start in November 2026.

PROPOSED NEW FIRE STATION LOUGHREA

BRIGADE MECHANICS WORKSHOP ATHENRY

The Part 8 planning application was submitted on the 03 July 2026 and the public consultation process ended on the 14 August 2026. The CE report is now awaited and approval of the Part 8 application by Athenry Oranmore MDC will see the start of the detailed design process.



PROPOSED NEW BRIGADE MECHANICS WORKSHOP ATHENRY

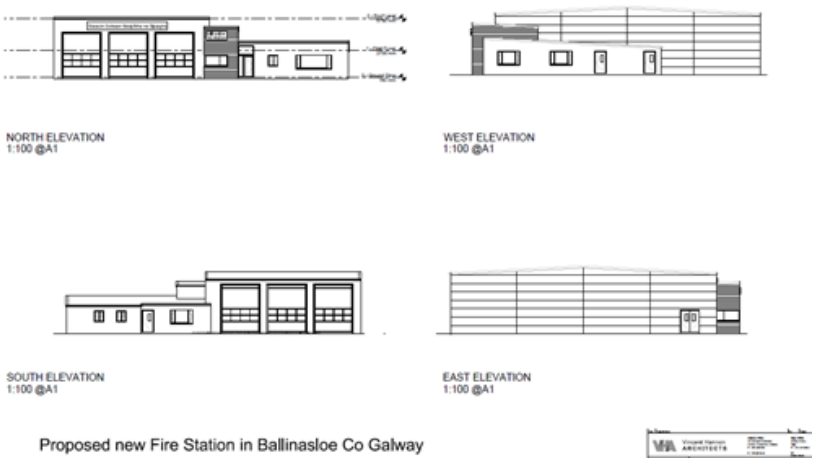
HEADQUARTERS AND GALWAY CITY FIRE STATION

Permission for the appointment of a design team for the development of preliminary design proposals was received from the National Directorate for Fire & Emergency Management. Variation number 4 to the City Development Plan has already been circulated to statutory bodies and is now scheduled to go forward for public consultation in early September 2026, with a decision expected by Galway City Council in October 2026. Work is continuing in relation to the process for the appointment of the design team, with appointment due once the site has been rezoned, assuming variation 4 is approved by Galway City Council. Consultation with residents was completed jointly with Galway City Council on the 05 August 2026 and the reaction was very positive.

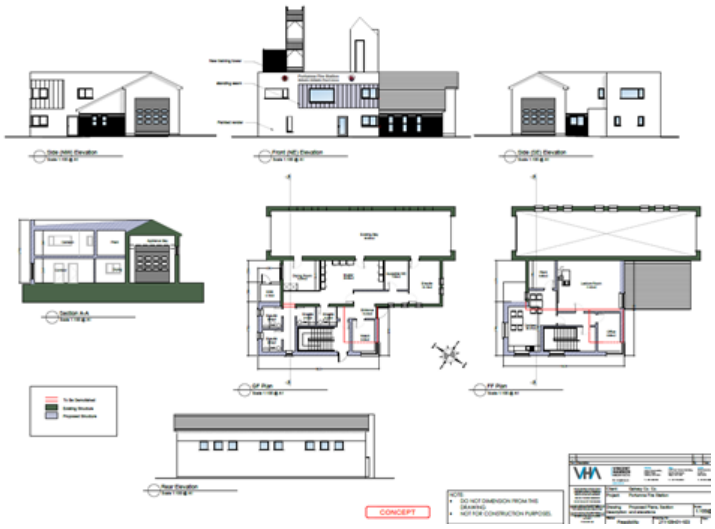
PROPOSED NEW BALLINASLOE FIRE STATION

The previously submitted Project Brief for Ballinasloe Fire Station is to be reviewed and re-submitted to the National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management (NDFEM).

PROPOSED NEW BALLINASLOE FIRE STATION



PROPOSED RE-DEVELOPMENT OF PORTUMNA FIRE STATION



A capital appraisal for this project was submitted to the NDFEM on the 09 December 2024, and a reply is still awaited. The project would involve a new upper storey extension on the existing site.

PROPOSED NEW PORTUMNA FIRE STATION

PROPOSED RE-DEVELOPMENT OF INIS MOR FIRE STATION

Prices have been sought for the assessment of the existing station and site on at Árainn Fire Station. The development of a concept design will allow a capital appraisal to be submitted to the NDFEM in due course. Given the unique situation at Árainn Fire Station, liaison with other agencies will be undertaken to see if a cost sharing approach might be viable for this project.

NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE (USAR) PROJECT

Urban Search and Rescue training continues. 6 students participated in a national USAR building collapse exercise in Ballyroan, Co Laois on the 24 July 2026. GFRS deployed their USAR ROV and demonstrated their remote surveillance capability. A similar exercise involving Laois FRS USAR team is scheduled for Galway in early December 2026 and two buildings for demolition have been secured for the exercise which will assess our training today and our mobilisation procedures.







CIVIL DEFENCE

ACTIVITIES

Units provided medical and first aid cover at various events across the City and County in support of their communities. Events were hosted in Caltra, Oranmore, Salthill, Galway

Harbour, Tynagh, Oughterard, Loughrea, and the Galway International Arts Festival (GIAF), which took place across Galway City over two nights during the festival.
The Civil Defence Officer and Assistant Civil Defence Officer attended CPC Training on Team Building and Leadership Development at the Hudson Bay Hotel, Athlone, arranged by the Civil Defence Branch.
Galway Civil Defence participated in the Emergency Services Open Day at Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa, Renmore, Galway. The event was hosted by the Defence Forces. All services were represented, sharing knowledge and displaying some of their equipment.
Volunteers from the Oranmore Unit responded to a request to transport a vulnerable patient to a vital outpatient appointment and safely return them to their care facility.
Galway City Unit was called by An Garda Síochána (AGS) to assist in the search for a missing night swimmer in Salthill. Search crews subsequently stood down when the swimmer made their way to safety.
Galway Civil Defence volunteers provided first aid and medical cover at the homecoming civic receptions for the Galway Senior Hurling Team at Ballinasloe, Fair Green, and Pearse Stadium, Salthill.
Galway Civil Defence volunteers were also requested to provide first aid and medical assistance to Mayo Civil Defence at the homecoming event for the victorious Mayo GAA Senior Team in Castlebar. A total of 14 volunteers attended, supported by two ambulances and two 4x4 vehicles.

TRAINING

Cardiac First Response Community (CFR-C) and First Aid Response (FAR) courses were completed, with all participants successfully passing their assessments.

The Rescue Association of Ireland hosted a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training day at Galway Airport. Members of Galway Civil Defence attended this worthwhile skills- and lecture-based training event.

GALWAY CITY & COUNTY ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY 2026-2030

Galway County Council launched the ‘Galway City and County Road Safety Strategy 2026-2030’, on 1st September, ‘26. The Strategy aims to halve the number of deaths and serious injuries on roads in Co. Galway.
The new Road Safety Strategy sets annual targets for each year between now and 2030, when it is hoped there will be a 50% reduction in the incidence of death and life-changing injuries.



The measures form part of a joint effort by Galway City and County Councils, with the support of the An Garda Síochána, Road Safety Authority and various other stakeholders. They have been devised as part of the 'Vision Zero' national campaign, which aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities by 2050.

There are around 7,000km of public roads across Co. Galway. A total of 51 people died on them between 2021 and 2025. Some 360 others sustained serious injuries as a result of traffic-related collisions in the county during the same period. More than half of those were involved in collisions on roads with speed limits of 80km/h or higher, while young people aged between 16 and 25 accounted for more than one in five casualties. The strategy aims for a 15% reduction from the most recent figures in 2027, rising to 50% by 2030.

It sets out a number of actions intended to assist with this goal. These include a reduction in speed-related collisions, better road infrastructure, stronger enforcement and encouraging safer journeys by all road users.

Those behind the strategy say it recognises that mistakes cannot be eliminated, the road network, vehicle safety and speed management can be improved to prevent deaths and life-changing injuries.

Leas-Cathaoirleach of Galway County Council Michael Regan said that changing driver behaviour was central to improving road safety. He said that in this regard, there was an onus on everyone to play a part in trying to achieve the goals set out in the strategy.

Liam Conneally, Chief Executive of Galway County Council, said, "The Council has responsibility for almost 7,000 kilometres of roads, and our priority is clear: to make every one of those roads safer. Every collision prevented and every life saved matters. This strategy brings together our partners and communities with one shared goal, to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Galway's roads."

Deirdre Caulfield, Road Safety Officer, with Galway County Council stated: 'Road safety is an issue that affects every person, every day. Across Galway, people are walking, cycling, commuting, bringing children to school and travelling for work and leisure. Behind every collision statistic is a person. It is a family, a friend and a community dealing with consequences that can last a lifetime. We must be clear: deaths and serious injuries on our roads are not inevitable. They are not simply the price we pay for mobility. There were 171

fatalities on our roads in 2024, 184 fatalities in 2025 and 128 so far in 2026. Every road user has a responsibility to make safer choices and every organisation involved has a responsibility to help create safer roads.



If you would like a copy of the Strategy, please email: roads@galwaycoco.ie or phone: 091 509309.





PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DATA

Key Statistics : 1st January – 31st August 2026	
Applications Received/Valid	1702/1315 (77%)
Granted	1027
Grant Rate	83%
Refused	202
Breakdown of Decisions Granted Outline (4)	
Permission (772)	
Retention (219)	
Permission Consequent (6)	
Extension of Duration (26)	
Percentage of applications received via Portal/Hardcopy	87%

Key Statistics : 1st January – 31st August 2026	
Stage 1 LRD Meetings (Section 247)	2
Stage 2 LRD Meetings (Section 32B)	2
Major Meetings	12 (8 RED III pp meetings)
SID Meetings	
Red III Applications	12

Section 5 Exempted Development Applications *Key Statistics 1st January, 2026 - 31st August, 2026*	
Exempt	61
Not Exempt	41
Not Development	2
FI	5
Withdrawn	1
Decision Pending	19
Appealed	4
Total	**133**

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.

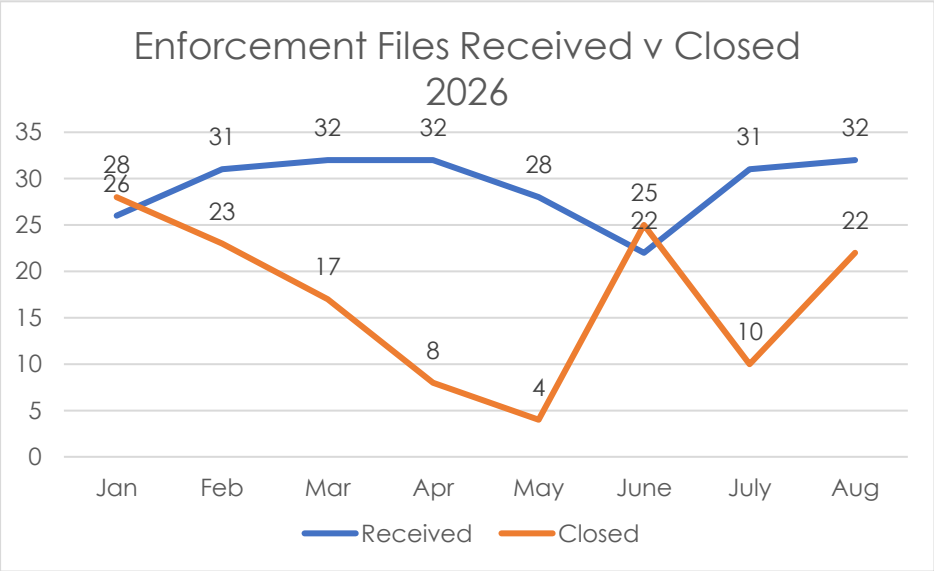
PLANNING MEETINGS BY MONTH 2026

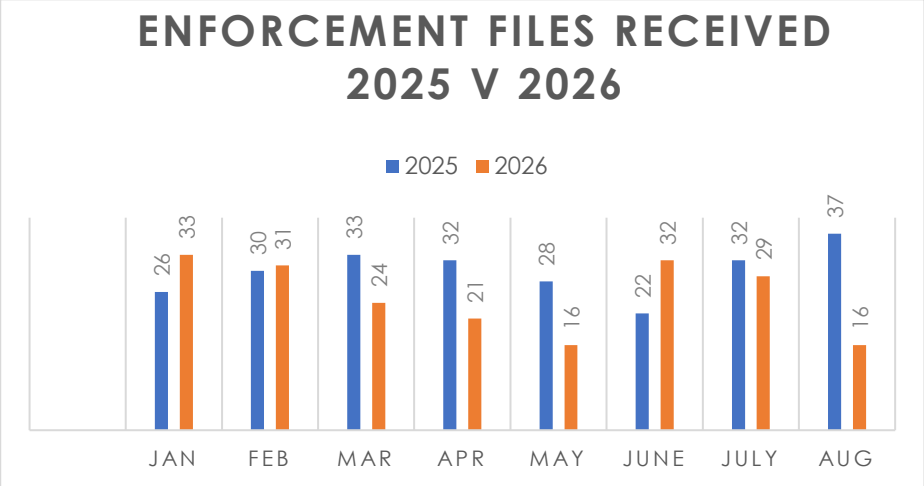
PRE PLANNING MEETINGS BY MONTH

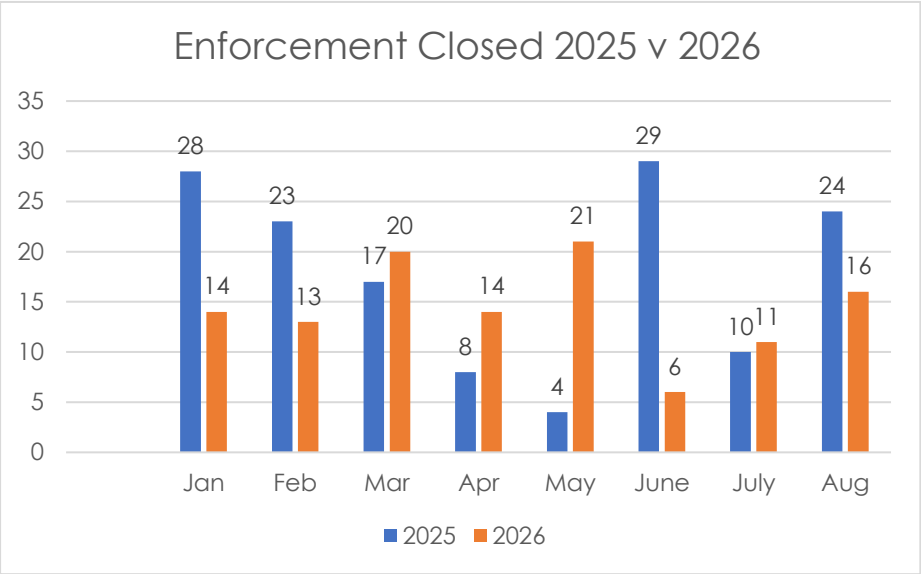
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Total ytd
Athenry/Oranmore	3	3	3	4	0	0	4	0	17
Ballinasloe	0	4	1	7	2	0	3	1	18
Connemara N&S	7	0	8	6	2	5	3	0	31
Loughrea	5	1	5	9	4	1	8	0	33
Tuam	2	0	2	7	1	0	3	0	15
Total	**17**	**8**	**19**	**33**	**9**	**6**	**21**	**1**	**114**

ENFORCEMENT

There are 28 cases listed for court hearing and mention to date in September.







KEY PLANNING UPDATES

CDP MONITORING REPORT

The CDP Monitoring Report is now drafted, and the Environmental Reports are being considered. It is anticipated that the report will be furnished to the Members in early Q4 for their consideration.

Statutory extension to Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 expected Q4/Q1 – further details to follow.

MONITORING OF GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

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

URDF

Final Car-Park design almost complete and Part 8 Planning expected to be lodged in Q4 subject to screening. Discussions with the NTA with respect to the carpark design have also taken place.

Funding options for the construction of the carpark are being explored.

Main rail infrastructure works (Passing Loop; Platform) have commenced at Oranmore Train Station. Completion date expected Q4 2027.

No update re: URDF Call 4 Applications.

REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Publication of Draft RSES expected in Q4.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Further to Joint SPC and Elected Members Drop-In Session held in June, draft Strategy currently being formulated.

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Review of Development Contributions Scheme has commenced. Awaiting feedback with respect to spending priorities for each Directorate.

CAHEROYN URBAN FRAMEWORK PLAN (ATHENRY)

Draft Caheroyn Urban Framework Plan (Athenry) to be presented to Oranmore/Athenry MD for review/comment.

UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Student placements with students from MA in Planning and Development at UG completing a 12-week work placement programme across the Planning Section is currently underway.

HERITAGE OFFICE

NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK 2026



Pictured at the launch of the Lackagh Museum Oral History Project at Lackagh were (back – from left) Gerry McDonagh, Chairman of Lackagh Museum and Community Development Association; Austin O'Brien; Seamus Gallagher, Co-ordinator of the Lackagh Museum Oral History Project: Seamus Murphy and Joe Kelly, with (front) John McDonagh; Anne Keating, Mary Ellen Costello, Alice O'Brien and Bridie O'Brien.

HERITAGE WEEK LACKAGH ORAL HERITAGE LAUNCH CONNACHT TRIBUNE

National Heritage Week 2026, held from 15th to 23rd August, was another outstanding success across the county of Galway, with 130 registered events taking place throughout the county, demonstrating the strength of community engagement in heritage, culture, biodiversity, local history, archaeology, architecture and folklore. The programme showcased the rich and diverse heritage of the county of Galway and involved community groups, volunteers, libraries, schools, heritage organisations and public bodies working together to create a varied and accessible programme for residents and visitors alike. The

Heritage Office of Galway County Council provide support and assistance to many groups with regards to the promotion of and assistance in the delivery of their events.

HERITAGE WEEK LAUNCH OF AN GORTA MÓR Í MAIGH CUILLINN CONNACHT TRIBUNE



Connacht Tribune Friday, August 21, 2026

OIDHREACHT MHAIGH CUILINN MOYCULLEN HERITAGE Ár Scéalta Ghorta Our Famine Stories

OIDHREACHT MHAIGH CUILINN MOYCULLEN HERITAGE Ár Scéalta Ghorta Our Famine S

Adrienne Uí Chatháin, Eithne Nic Dhonnchadha and Nuala Nic Dhonnchadha at Moycullen Heritage's relaunch by Breandan Mac Suibhne of the 1997 publication "An Gorta Mór i Maigh Cuilinn".



Ár Scéalta Ghorta Our Famine Stories

MHAIGH CUILINN MOYCULLEN HERI

Ár Scéalta Ghorta

Moycullen Heritage marked National Heritage Week with the relaunch by Breandan Mac Suibhne of 1997 publication "An Gorta Mór i Maigh Cuilinn". Attended Hazel Morrison, Mary O'Shea, Breandan Mac Suibhne and Paula Lydon. PHOTO SEAN LYDON.

HERITAGE WEEK MOUNTBELLEW WALLED GARDEN TUAM HERALD COVERAGE



Thursday August 27, 2026 Tuam Herald www.tuamherald.ie

NEWS

Trojan restoration work is showcased at historic garden

Volunteers are bringing history to life

By Neha Kumari

VISITORS to Mountbellew enjoyed a great day of exploring the local history and heritage with a trip to the Living Bog and a walk around the historic Walled Garden.

There local groups including Mountbellew Vintage Club, Mountbellew Heritage & Tourism Network and Galway's Living Bog came together to mark National Heritage Day while offering a unique insight into the remnants of Mountbellew's past.

Visitors took part in a guided walk of Carrowsaggypul Bog (Galway's Living Bog) where they were introduced to "one of Ireland's most precious and endangered landscapes".

Galway's Living Bog is one of the 12 sites which has been restored under Ireland's Living Bog Project and designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

One of the participants, Patricia Mitchell told *The Tuam Herald* that the walk was really insightful, as they got to witness and understand "the history and the complicated ecosystem of these landscapes".

She felt it was a great experience for her and the other visitors who joined the walk.

"There were a lot of other people from UK and America, who were really interested in these landscapes," she remarked.

"The Bog Walk was followed by an informative talk and visit to Mountbellew's historic Walled Garden, parts of which have been restored by the volunteers of Mountbellew Heritage & Tourism Network.

President of the group Jimmy Noone addressed the crowd informing them about the conservation works carried out on the 4.2 acres of garden, which was originally used as a vegetable garden by the Bellew family.

The group has successfully refurbished the high walls surrounding the garden and most of the original pathways – now making a 700 meter walking trail.

"The garden consisted of vegetable patches along with a glass house with furnace and heating system," stated Mr Noone.

They have also restored the bell hanging over the main iron gate. "The bell was used to tell the workers to hide when special guests were visiting," he explained.

The visitors were also brought around to see some of the old fruit trees including a peach tree that has been in the garden for over 100 years.

Along with the walks, a special display of vintage tractors, cars and a 1924 Porter F-Type steam roller were put together right outside the Walled Garden by the Mountbellew Vintage Club.

Decommissioned in 1955, the steam roller has been preserved by the group and is currently undergoing a restoration process too.

"We have most of the restoration done, just a few more bits and bobs and it will be fit to go," explained Eugene Crehan.

It was fascinating to see the machinery up close and understand the mechanism behind steam engines and how the steering was controlled by thick iron chains.

Another visitor John Hanberry from Tuam believes that events like these are a great way to reconnect with the local history.

"I am interested in the heritage and it's great to see the work they have done on the garden," he said.

JIMMY Noone gives a talk at the Heritage Day in Mountbellew.

EUGENE Crehan and Michael Joe Cunningham, who are members of Mountbellew Vintage Club.

JOAN and Denis McHugh with their daughter Denise at the heritage event in Mountbellew.

THE restored bell at the top of the entrance gates to the walled garden.

CHRISTINA Higgins, Pauline Gavin, Mary Burke, Geraldine Noone, Kathleen Gavin and Lucy Wallace, at the heritage event in Mountbellew.

ALL PHOTOS: RAY FINN

In addition to the extensive programme of physical events, County Galway was represented through two Digital Heritage Projects on the National Heritage Week website. Both projects were developed by Milltown Heritage Group and focused on preserving and sharing local heritage through digital means:

Preserving Our School Heritage: Digitised Records from Belmont, Dalgin, Kilgevrin and Milltown National Schools The Forgotten Photograph

These projects provide valuable online access to local historical resources and demonstrate the growing role of digital technologies in preserving community heritage.

HERITAGE WEEK GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST TUAM HERALD COVERAGE



12 Thursday August 27, 2026 Tuam Herald www.tuamherald.ie

NEWS

Hands-on learning of the past

Event in Tuam Library a success

By Nesha Kumari

CHILDREN were excited to learn about archaeology and play with various ancient tools during a National Heritage Week event in Tuam Library.

The 'Ask the Archaeologist' event featured an interactive workshop by Galway Community Archaeologist Bernie Doherty. She introduced the attendees to some archaeological artifacts, fossils and milling tools used by communities in different eras.

Archaeologist in the making, fourth-class pupil in Tuam, Vivian Adrian cancelled his visit to the Fun Fair in Galway and asked his mum to bring him to the workshop instead.

He told *The Tuam Herald* that he has a great interest in archaeology and the workshop was very exciting for him.

His favourite part were the fossils that he was able to touch and hold.

"It seemed like it's a fossil from a dinosaur", he said.

Amy Flaherty was there with her two children Jack and Hannah. "It's a fantastic experience not just for the children but for adults as well. We are also learning something new along with them," she said.

Hannah and Jack tried their hand with the manual stone mills which were used for grinding grains in the past.

Archaeologist Bernie Doherty explained that she uses the replicas of tools and sand bones to let the children get more involved and understand what is being showed to them.

"Generally, in museums or other archaeological sites, people are not allowed to touch things. So, here we have replica artifacts and tools which are used to let people get a hands-on experience," she explained.

Ms Doherty also uses sand bones and sticks to recreate historical monuments which has proven to be one of the most enjoyable activities for children.

"Children often associate archaeology with fossils or dinosaurs but it is actually the study of human activity," she continued.

"Through events like these I give them an insight into Irish archaeology, along with our natural and cultural heritage," she added.

The Community Archaeology Programme is funded by the Galway County Council and the Heritage Council.

DANIEL O'Connor, Mizbath Samuel, Delpha Jacob with Bernie Doherty, Galway Community Archaeologist.

CHILDREN got a taste of what milling grain in the past was like.

AMY Flaherty with her son Jack enjoying the event at Tuam Library.

TUAM Library staff member Margaret Garvey with Marion Mullins and her grandchild Dylan and Reece Flynn.

JENNIFER Daniel with her sons Vivian and Therwin at the heritage week event in Tuam Library.

ALL PHOTOS: RAY RYAN

AOIFE Moran with her children Elena and Holly at Tuam Library.

Heritage Week events took place across all Municipal Districts, reflecting the remarkable breadth of heritage activity throughout the county. The following is a small example of events held in each municipal district

ATHENRY-ORANMORE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Guided tours of the historic Dominican Priory, Athenry highlighted the medieval heritage of one of Ireland's most important monastic sites.

In Clarinbridge, a Children's Heritage Ramble introduced younger audiences to local history and place-based heritage.

BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT



12 News Friday, August 28, 2026 Connacht Tribune

Shaped by power of community

Heritage Week exhibition prompts former Minister to reflect on the energy of his native place

Ciaran Cannon

DO you believe that the place in which you grow up can shape the person you become? I do. Perhaps that's because I was fortunate enough to be raised in a truly remarkable place called Killullagh.

It was there that I first learned the power of community, the value of imagination and, most importantly, the belief that nothing was impossible.

Last weekend, Killullagh Killimordaly Heritage Group marked National Heritage Week with a major exhibition and conference on the contemporary history of our community – and that prompted my reflections.

At first glance, the Killullagh of the early 1970s seemed much like countless other villages across Ireland: a collection of houses, a church, a school, a pub, a post office, a shop and a place affectionately known simply as 'the hall', the old schoolhouse left vacant when our new school opened in 1958.

Outwardly, it was quiet and conservative, a place where people appeared to live much as generations before them had done.

But beneath that unassuming exterior, something remarkable was beginning to happen, driven by a group of local teenagers who kept asking one simple question: "why not?"

And perhaps even more importantly, the elders of our community gave these young people the support and the space to do a little dreaming.

Behind the hall, that old schoolhouse, lay a piece of unused ground which just happened to resemble the shape of a tennis court, or at least it did in the eyes of those young people.

Until then, tennis clubs in County Galway were found mainly in Galway city and in larger towns such as Loughrea and Ballinasloe.

In the first tangible expression of "why not?", that group of young dreamers organised countless fundraising events, including an arduous sponsored ten-mile walk. The elders sowed in with tractors, trailers and muscle, the court was built, and Killullagh Tennis Club was born.

That magical place became the natural gathering point for my friends and me throughout our teenage years. We spent almost every day of our summer holidays sitting on the concrete steps beside the court, patiently waiting for our turn to play.

Before long, we realised that the waiting was every bit as enjoyable as the playing. Endless evenings were passed around and played on someone's newly acquired plastic tiaster.

Those conversations allowed us to grow together, to test our ideas, form our opinions, share our worries and learn how to listen to one another.

Without ever realising it, those long hours on the concrete steps were helping to shape the young people we were becoming.

Emboldened by the success of their first project, the young dreamers turned their attention to another sporting ambition, establishing a local soccer club.

Flashback... Killullagh cast members of "Hewers of Coal", which won the Connacht FTAA Drama Competition in 1980! Back – from left: Liam Lawless, Michael McGloin and Patrick McGloin, with (front) Karrill Hanlon, Ciaran Cannon and Marie Leahy.

At the time, formally organised soccer clubs were virtually unknown outside Galway city, but once again they asked, "why not?" In 1979, the aptly named Killullagh Pioneers FC was born.

Now, 47 years later, that pioneering spirit remains as strong as ever. The club has more than 700 members and has developed facilities that rank among the finest in the West of Ireland.

The 1970s were long before the internet, and one channel television offered little distraction from winter nights that seemed to stretch on forever.

For the young dreamers, there were few opportunities to meet and socialise, other than among them. Long before mobile phones and text messages were common, Saturday evenings across Ireland, the idea of forming their own drama group began to take shape.

Killullagh Drama Group was established with a particular focus on the one act play, and soon those long winter evenings were filled with rehearsals, set building and preparations for performance.

After several seasons competing on the national circuit, and inspired by the drama festivals emerging elsewhere, the group decided to establish a festival of its own.

The Killullagh Drama Festival was launched in 1981, and the week of performances held each Easter soon became one of the highlights of the national calendar.

Drama groups travelled from across the country to perform in the hall, bringing with them new stories, new voices and a sense that this small rural community was connected to a much wider world.

As the festival's reputation grew, so too did the professionalism and ambition of those who organised it. Before long, household names such as Mick Lally, Biddy White-Lennon and Anna Manahan were coming to Killullagh to serve as adjudicators.

That such giants of Irish theatre would travel to a village to a small hall Galtrim to judge was a measure of how far the festival had come, and of what could be achieved when imagination was matched by determination.

That same spark of imagination led to the establishment of Killullagh Youth Club in the late 1970s. By then, the young dreamers were in their late teens and early twenties, and their attention turned to the generation coming behind them.

They recognised that younger members of the community needed a place to meet, make friends, discover new interests and broaden their horizons.

Affiliation with the National Federation of Youth Clubs brought access to new activities, opportunities and experiences, opening another exciting chapter in the life of this closely connected community.

Based on past successes on the soccer field with Killullagh Pioneers FC, and the experience of playing indoor soccer in Loughrea Temperance Hall every winter, Killullagh Youth Club soon began to compete in the indoor national five-a-side series.

Under the careful mentorship of club leaders, success soon came their way, with a number of county championship successes.

All of that hard work and "why not" attitude culminated in Killullagh winning the girls U-16 national championship in 1984 and the boys U-19 national the year after.

Those victories were more than sporting triumphs. They were also proof that young people from a small rural community could compete with, and defeat, the very best in the country.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of Killullagh Youth Club was that it operated with remarkably little adult direction.

It was conceived, organised and run by young people, for young people. The trust and responsibility placed in its members fostered independence, maturity and a deep sense of self-reliance.

We learned not merely to take part, but to organise, to lead and to take responsibility for one another.

Nowhere was this more apparent than on our annual youth club tour. Each summer, we hired a bus from Donoghue's in Clarinbridge, chose a destination from the extensive network of An Óige youth hostels and headed off for the weekend.

We travelled to Donegal, Kerry, Wicklow and many other parts of the country. We climbed mountains, swam in lakes, went to the beach and built sandcastles in the rain, simply happy to be among friends who cared for one another.

Our older members were natural leaders who quietly assumed responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the entire group.

We might not have recognised it at the time, but each of those weekends was an exercise in trust, cooperation and community. They taught us that leadership was not about status or authority, but about taking responsibility for others.

I am now sixty now, and I remain profoundly grateful to those young leaders, the people who kept asking, "why not?"

They led us more than build a tennis court, establish clubs or create a drama festival. They created a culture of possibility. They gave us the confidence to imagine, to organise, to lead and to believe that we did not have to wait for someone else to make things happen.

So, can the place in which you grow up shape the person you become? With the correct question. Killullagh shaped me. Because the people who lived there taught me that no idea was too ambitious, no obstacle was insurmountable and nothing was impossible.

The 1924 Aveling Porter F-Type Steam Roller Display at Mountbellew Walled Garden celebrated industrial and transport heritage.

Ballinasloe Library hosted a diverse programme including the launch of a history podcast on the former convent building, heritage open days and talks on local biodiversity and Traveller heritage.

HERITAGE WEEK KILTULLAGH KILLIMORDALY CONNACHT TRIBUNE COVERAGE

LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

The Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna marked its heritage through talks including From Preservation to Progress: 20 Years Behind Us, 20 Years Ahead and exhibitions of artefacts from the Workhouse Museum.

Woodford Heritage Centre hosted events exploring twentieth-century census records and family history research.



The LACDA 'Milestones Men', from left: Jerry O'Sullivan, Seán Bermingham, Michael Helly, and Seán Nelly.



A new heritage sign at Coole gives information about roads and transport in 18th-century Ireland and about the LACDA milestones project.

HERITAGE WEEK ARDRAHAN MILESTONE PROJECT LAUNCH CONNACHT TRIBUNE

TUAM MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Milltown Heritage Group organised a Community Museum Open Day and Heritage Exhibition, highlighting local collections and community history.



www.tuamherald.ie Tuam Herald Thursday August 27 2026 15

NEWS

Tuam's heritage showcased in new walking trail

• Ideas sought for use of old mill

By Patrick Flaherty

A NEW map guiding locals and visitors along a walking heritage trail of Tuam was launched at the weekend.

The looped trail will begin and end at the Town Hall and will feature the miniature red Tuam chairs originally installed as part of a public art project in 2015. The leaflet featuring original artwork by Tuam artist Jennifer Cunningham was developed by Tuam Heritage group and aims to promote the town's main heritage sites along the five-kilometre route while celebrating the iconic Tuam chair.

Eight small sculptural metal chairs have been installed in public places throughout the town. They are visible, but not accessible and are modelled on the three-legged chair, which has become an unofficial emblem of Tuam.

The trail was launched at the Tuam Mill for Heritage Week by local artist and member of the Friends of Tuam Heritage group, Midie Corcoran. Midie is also a descendent of the original millers in the town.

"The one good thing about not being able to meet inside the mill is that we are all gathered outside this historic building, admiring the magnificent red chair that is now placed upon one of its windows," stated Midie.

"I'd like to think my ancestors are looking down upon it too, happy to see people enjoying the building. These replica chairs will showcase significant places around the town. We plan to create more in the future."

The five-kilometre route takes people to some of the town's many historic landmarks such as the Cathedral of the Assumption, St Mary's Cathedral, Temple Jarlath, the Town Hall and the Little Mill.

The project came about after interest in the chair increased last year following a film produced by James Ryan and co-ordinated by the local heritage group. The three-legged chair has been manufactured in the town since the 1960s, but its design in Connacht is thought to date back to the 18th century. It is still in production in Tuam, courtesy of John and Gabriel Blake of Corrib Crafts. The Friends of

MIDIE Corcoran pictured with many of his ancestors, the Farrells, who built the Tuam mill along with many others at the planting of a tree in memory of Dr. Tony Claffey and the launch of the Tuam Chair Walking Trail map. PHOTOS: JACINTA HAW

JUSTIN Claffey, nephew of Dr Tony Claffey with former editor of *The Tuam Herald* David Burke at the planting of a tree in memory of the late Dr. Tony Claffey.

> **It's important that the decision on the building's future is not just made by those working on the plan...**

Tuam Heritage used this extra interest as a launching pad to create their new walking trail.

"I'd like to thank Galway County Council, especially Marie Mannion, the Heritage Officer, whose team offered us so much support. It was grants from them and the West Midlands Credit Union that made all this possible," stated Helen Gillard from Friends of Tuam Heritage.

"I need to also pay tribute to the contributions of the members of the Tuam Men's Shed, who created the replica chairs, and Jennifer Cunningham for the wonderful artwork in the leaflet. This is a great publication, which will be enjoyed by all who use it."

The launch was preceded by a tree-planting ceremony organised by members of the Mill Museum Trust, honouring the life of the late Tuam historian Dr Tony Claffey, a member of the Trust since its creation in the 1970s.

Members of his family planted the tree in the corner of Rory O'Connor Park, a place that may been lost to redevelopment only for his interventions to preserve the area over the past few decades. Former *Tuam Herald* editor David Burke and Dr Riana O'Dwyer of the Mill Trust were among those to pay tribute to the late teacher and historian.

The event also saw Cllr Shaun Cunniffe, a member of the Mill Museum Trust, and Paul Mannion, an architect in charge of the conservation plan for the mill building, give updates on the future refurbishments of the mill and miller's cottage.

FUTURE CHALLENGE

"Our challenge is to see what we can use the mill for in the future. I could see it being partly opened for milling, alongside facilitating community events when refurbished," Paul Mannion told *The Tuam Herald*.

"We visited a similar mill in Wales, where a woman was able to make products with just a fraction of the milling facilities being operational. We could easily replicate that should we get enough funding.

"It's important that the decision on the building's future is not just made by those working on the plan. Members of the community need to be consulted too. That's what's great about events like today. I've already spoken to so many people here, who gave me their ideas," he concluded.

TRUSTEES of the Little Mill Mary Burke, Cllr Shaun Cunniffe, Sally-Ann Flanagan, Patricia King Callaghan, Aoife Burke, Andrew Carney and Helen Gillard made a special presentation to Riana O'Dwyer for her many years of commitment to the project at the Little Mill.

JUSTIN Claffey, plants a tree in memory of his uncle, the late Dr. Tony Claffey along with Cllr Shaun Cunniffe and Tony's sister Anna Claffey, Galway.

Tuam Library hosted Ask the Archaeologist, providing an engaging introduction to our local archaeological heritage for younger audiences.

HERITAGE WEEK TUAM WALKING TRAIL TUAM HERALD

CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Irish-language and family-focused events such as Am Scéalaíochta agus Ealaíne, An Cheathrú Rua celebrated local culture and traditions through storytelling and art.

Connemara-based genealogy and local history events, including talks on twentieth-century census records in Letterfrack, encouraged public exploration of local heritage and ancestry.

The strong participation across all areas of the county demonstrates the continuing success of National Heritage Week as a platform for community engagement, lifelong learning and the promotion of County Galway's rich natural, built and cultural heritage. The Heritage Office acknowledges the significant contribution of local heritage groups, community organisations, libraries, volunteers, speakers and partners whose commitment ensured another highly successful programme of Heritage Week events across County Galway.

ATHENRY WALLED TOWN DAY CELEBRATES 20 YEARS WITH OUTSTANDING SUCCESS



PARTICIPANTS AT THE MACE & SEAL TOURNAMENT. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

Despite less-than-ideal weather conditions, Athenry Walled Town Day 2026 proved to be an outstanding success on Sunday, with an estimated 8,000 people attending throughout the day and enjoying a packed programme of heritage, culture, music, crafts, family entertainment and medieval spectacles. The event marked the 20th anniversary of the popular festival and attracted visitors from across Galway and beyond.



JAY RYAN ENTHRALS THE AUDIENCE WITH HIS "FLEA CIRCUS". PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

Held in Athenry Community Park and the Athenry Heritage Centre, the free family event transformed the medieval town into a vibrant celebration of heritage and community spirit. Visitors embraced the day despite the damp weather, enjoying an entertaining and educational programme that showcased the rich history and cultural heritage of Athenry.

A particular highlight was the Mace & Seal Tournament, the first official Buhurt International Tournament ever held in Ireland, which brought elite medieval combat competitors to the historic town. Crowds were also captivated by performances from the Red Earls Consort, Ancient Music Ireland, and musician Úna Ní Flannagáin, who presented a specially commissioned composition to celebrate the festival's 20th anniversary entitled Athenry Abú.



ÚNA NÍ FLANNAGÁIN, CARMEL DEMPSEY AND MIKE STUART ENTERTAIN THE AUDIENCE AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWN DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

Families enjoyed a wide range of activities including archery, puppet shows, storytelling, drum workshops, music, magic shows, birds of prey displays, medieval crafts and interactive demonstrations. Guided tours of Athenry's medieval streets offered visitors an opportunity to explore one of Ireland's best preserved medieval towns.

MAGIC SHOW AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWN DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOURK





MARIA HITCHCOX, ARTIST AT THE EXHIBITION "ONE HERITAGE, MANY WALLS" PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

The event also highlighted creativity and inclusion through the Athenry Creative Walls Project, developed by participants from the Skylark Centre/Corlann, Athenry in collaboration with artist Maria Hitchcox, while the exhibition "One Heritage, Many Walls" explored the shared heritage and cultural connections between Athenry and historic walled towns across Europe.



DRUMMADORE DRUMMING SESSION AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWNS DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

Alan Burgess of Athenry Heritage Centre said:

"We are thrilled with the success of this year's event, particularly as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of Athenry Walled Town Day. The enthusiasm of visitors, performers, volunteers, community groups and exhibitors created a wonderful atmosphere throughout the day. It demonstrates the value of heritage as a driver of community connection and cultural tourism."



THE BIRDS OF PREY WERE A GREAT ATTRACTION AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWNS DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer with Galway County Council, said:

"We were delighted with the response to Athenry Walled Town Day. Despite the damp weather, people came out in large numbers to enjoy the wide range of activities and events on offer throughout the town. It was particularly encouraging to see so many families and visitors taking part in the tours, workshops, performances and demonstrations. The event once again showed the strong interest in Athenry's heritage and the important role it plays in bringing people together and supporting local tourism."



ANNA O'DONNELL, FOOD HISTORIAN SHOWCASING IRISH AND EUROPEAN MEDIEVAL FOODS. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

This year's event had a strong European dimension, including an exhibition entitled 'One Heritage, Many Walls' that explores the shared heritage and cultural links between Athenry and historic walled towns across Europe. The programme was supported by Galway County Council and The Heritage Council, with additional funding provided through Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026 Culture Programme, helping to highlight Athenry's connections to Europe's rich walled town heritage.



YOUNG LORDS AND LADIES TAKING PART IN COMBAT AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWNS DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK

The organisers have extended their thanks to the many volunteers, community organisations, performers, craftspeople and sponsors who contributed to the success of the festival. Special acknowledgement was given to The Heritage Council, Galway County Council, Athenry Arts and Heritage Centre, Athenry Community Council, Athenry Tidy

Towns, local businesses and the numerous community groups whose support ensured another memorable day for the town.



BODHRÁN MAKING AT ATHENRY WALLED TOWNS DAY. PHOTO CREDIT: HANY MARZOUK



Athenry Walled Town Day continues to be one of the region's flagship heritage events, celebrating the town's remarkable medieval legacy while creating an inclusive and enjoyable experience for visitors of all ages.

HERITAGE WEEK TOUR HIGHLIGHTS EAST GALWAY'S HIDDEN TREASURES AND REMARKABLE VOLUNTEER SPIRIT



HERITAGE ENTHUSIASTS VISIT TO ATHENRY HERITAGE CENTRE. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

A full bus of heritage enthusiasts, together with additional visitors joining at locations along the route, enjoyed a memorable journey through the rich history, landscapes and community heritage of East Galway during the recent "Explore the Treasures of East Galway" Heritage Week Bus Tour. The tour visited a range of remarkable heritage sites including Athenry Arts & Heritage Centre, Dunmore MacHales GAA Centre, Templetogher Mill in Williamstown, and Ballinakill Abbey in Glinsk, showcasing the outstanding voluntary work being undertaken to preserve and promote heritage across the region.



MEDIEVAL RE-ENACTMENT HERITAGE PRESENTATION AT ATHENRY HERITAGE CENTRE. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

The day began at Athenry Arts & Heritage Centre, where visitors were treated to an engaging and highly interactive heritage re-enactment exploring the fascinating history of medieval Athenry. Participants embraced the experience by dressing in medieval costume and trying their hand at archery, bringing the stories of one of Ireland's finest walled towns vividly to life.



GROUP AT DUNMORE MACHALES GAA CENTRE. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

The group then travelled to Dunmore MacHales GAA Centre, where they were welcomed by local community representative Albert Comer. Zena Hoctor, Heritage Consultant provided an introduction to the Holy Wells of Galway project before the premiere screening of the specially commissioned short film, *Tobar an Croise Naomha, Cappagh*, which celebrates one of East Galway's treasured pilgrimage sites. The film was warmly received and highlighted the importance of recording and protecting local traditions and spiritual heritage.



ALBERT COMER, DUNMORE, ZENA HOCTOR, HERITAGE COUNSULTANT AND MEMBERS OF CAPPAGH HOLY WELL GROUPS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE SHORT FILM, TOBAR AN CROISE NAOMHA, CAPPAGH. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

FRAN MURPHY, TONY MURPHY, MILLTOWN HERITAGE FRONT ROW. GRAHAM MARLOW, MARGARET MARLOW, BERNIE DOHERTY, GALWAY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGIST, MARIE MANNION, HERITAGE OFFICER AT THE LAUNCH OF THE SHORT FILM, TOBAR AN CROISE NAOMHA, CAPPAGH. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY



Following the film launch, the tour continued to Templetogher Mill Heritage Complex, Williamstown, where visitors received a fascinating insight into one of East Galway's most impressive community led conservation projects. Leo and Eileen Finnegan, Oliver Lennon and members of Williamstown Heritage Group, together with Noel Finnegan of Williamstown Tidy Towns, outlined the extensive restoration and conservation work completed at the mill complex and its associated buildings.



SOME OF THE ATTENDEES AT TEMPLETOGHER MILL COMPLEX, WILLIAMSTOWN WITH LEO FINNEGAN, WILLIAMSTOWN HERITAGE. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

They also showcased a range of other heritage initiatives being undertaken in the area. Visitors were amazed by both the scale of the restoration and the dedication of the volunteers who have transformed the site. The project recently received national recognition when it featured on RTÉ's Nationwide, demonstrating the significance of this remarkable heritage achievement.

TEMPLETOGHER MILL. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY



The final stop of the day was Ballinakill Abbey, Glinsk, one of East Galway's most important medieval ecclesiastical sites. Community volunteer Marty Ward guided participants through the history of the abbey, outlining the extensive Conservation Management Plan completed for the site and the conservation works undertaken to date. As a special memento of the visit, each participant received a copy of a specially commissioned book on Ballinakill Abbey authored by Marty, ensuring that the story of this remarkable monument could be shared more widely.



BALLINAKILL ABBEY, GLINSK. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

The event highlighted the hidden heritage treasures of East Galway and, most importantly, the extraordinary commitment of local communities and volunteers who continue to preserve and celebrate their heritage for future generations. From medieval history and sacred landscapes to industrial heritage and conservation projects, the tour demonstrated the depth and diversity of East Galway's cultural heritage.



MARTY WARD, GLINSK WITH HIS GRANDSONS AT HIS TALK ABOUT BALLINAKILL ABBEY. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINA FAHY

Speaking after the event, Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Galway County Council praised the enthusiasm of participants and the generosity of the local groups who shared their knowledge and passion throughout the day. The bus tour proved to be a fitting celebration of National Heritage Week, showcasing not only East Galway's remarkable heritage assets but also the vibrant communities working tirelessly to protect them.

The Heritage Office of Galway County Council would like to thank all of the community groups, speakers, guides and volunteers who helped make the event such a success and provided visitors with an unforgettable journey through the treasures of East Galway.

TRACING YOUR GALWAY ROOTS: DISCOVER YOUR FAMILY HISTORY



PART OF AUDIENCE AT TRACING YOUR GALWAY ROOTS: DISCOVER YOUR FAMILY HISTORY. PHOTO CREDIT ANTOINETTE LYDON

As part of National Heritage Week 2026, Galway County Council hosted the highly successful "Tracing Your Galway Roots: Discover Your Family History" event in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Galway. The event provided members of the public with an opportunity to learn more about genealogy, local history and family heritage through a series of expert presentations and a practical workshop.

The programme featured presentations on the 1926 Census by Dr Marie Leoutre of the National Archives of Ireland, the Digital Mapping of Galway County Graveyards Project by Marie Mannion and David Nolan, and the Baile Beo: Reclaiming Irish Place Names Project 2026 by David McGinn. Attendees also participated in a hands-on genealogy workshop with expert genealogists and heritage groups, gaining practical guidance on researching family histories and accessing genealogical resources.

The event attracted over 80 participants, demonstrating the strong public interest in genealogy and family history across County Galway. Feedback from attendees was extremely positive, with participants welcoming the opportunity to engage directly with experts, discover new research tools and resources, and connect with others interested in exploring their heritage.

The event formed part of the implementation of the *Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030 a*nd highlighted the value of collaborative partnerships between Galway County Council, Galway County Libraries, the National Archives of Ireland, genealogy groups and local heritage organisations in promoting access to heritage and historical records.

HERITAGE WEEK TOUR REVEALED THE RICH STORIES OF NORTH CONNEMARA'S LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE



PART OF GROUP VISITING ROSS RAILWAY STATION. PHOTO CREDIT: ANTOINETTE LYDON

A full bus of heritage enthusiasts from right across County Galway enjoyed an exceptional journey through the rich history, archaeology, geology and landscapes of North Connemara during a special Heritage Week bus tour led by renowned archaeologist and historian Michael Gibbons.

The tour provided participants with a unique opportunity to explore some of North Connemara's most significant heritage sites while gaining a deeper appreciation of the area's remarkable cultural and natural landscape. Throughout the day, visitors were treated to a series of engaging talks and site visits that brought the heritage of the region vividly to life.

One of the highlights of the tour was a visit to Ross Railway Station, generously hosted by Ambrose Joyce. Participants were captivated by the history of the station and its role in the development of the area, with many describing the visit as one of the most memorable aspects of the day.

Attendees also enjoyed a fascinating talk on Connemara marble, gaining an insight into the geological origins, cultural significance and enduring legacy of one of Ireland's most distinctive natural resources.

A particular highlight was the expert interpretation provided by Michael Gibbons, whose exceptional knowledge and enthusiasm transformed the North Connemara landscape into a living story. Through a masterful blend of archaeology, history, folklore and environmental insight, he explained how the region's mountains, valleys, bogs, coastlines and settlements have been shaped over thousands of years. Participants came away with a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the unique landscape of North Connemara.



LISTENING TO MICHAEL GIBBONS SPEAK ABOUT THE RENVYLE PENINSULA. PHOTO CREDIT: ANTOINETTE LYDON

The strong attendance from communities across County Galway reflected the growing interest in local heritage and the value people place on learning more about the places and traditions that have shaped the county.

Galway County Council Heritage Office would like to sincerely acknowledge the tremendous support and assistance of Maigh Cuilinn Heritage and Oughterard Heritage in helping to organise and deliver the event. Special thanks are also extended to Galway Community Archaeologist Bernie Doherty, whose expertise, enthusiasm and practical support were instrumental in ensuring the success of the tour.

EXPLORING THE CONNEMARA LANDSCAPE WITH MICHAEL GIBBONS. PHOTO CREDIT: HAZEL MORRISON



The North Connemara Bus Tour was a wonderful example of how collaboration, local knowledge and expert interpretation can bring heritage to life, leaving participants with lasting memories and a renewed appreciation of one of Galway's most spectacular and historically rich regions.

LOUGHREA HERITAGE WEEK 2026 A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

Packed Programme of Walks, Talks, Music, Archaeology, Nature and Family History Attracts Strong Public Interest



ON A WALKING TOUR OF MEDIEVAL LOUGHREA WITH DR CHRISTY CUNNIFFE. PHOTO CREDIT: MARIE MANNION

Loughrea's National Heritage Week 2026 celebrations have been hailed as a tremendous success, with large audiences attending a vibrant and diverse programme of events exploring the town's rich cultural, built and natural heritage. Throughout the week, visitors, local residents, heritage enthusiasts and families participated in a variety of engaging activities that celebrated the many stories, traditions and landscapes that make Loughrea unique.

The programme was organised by the Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee, Loughrea Library, Galway Community Archaeology, Galway County Council's Heritage Office and local partners. Events explored themes ranging from medieval history and archaeology to biodiversity, music, oral history and creativity.

Among the highlights was *The Curlew: A Wader at Risk*, which examined the conservation challenges facing one of Ireland's most endangered bird species. Audiences also enjoyed *Voices Across Time: County Galway Through Recorded Memory*, presented by Tomás Mac Conmara, which demonstrated the importance of oral history in preserving local memories, traditions and community experiences. Heritage enthusiasts had the opportunity to engage directly with archaeologist Bernie Doherty during the popular Ask the Archaeologist session at Loughrea Library.

The medieval heritage of the area was further explored through The Medieval Architecture of Loughrea Parish, presented by Gary Dempsey of Atlantic Technological University Galway. The talk examined the remarkable ecclesiastical and historic buildings that continue to shape the character and identity of the town.



RAY GATELY GIVING AN INSIGHT INTO THE STAINED-GLASS COLLECTION OF ST BRENDAN'S CATHEDRAL. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

The internationally renowned stained-glass collection of St Brendan's Cathedral attracted significant interest during a guided tour led by local heritage guide Ray Gately. Participants learned about the work of celebrated artists including Michael Healy, Evie Hone and Sarah Purser, while gaining a deeper appreciation of the cathedral's significance as a centre of Celtic Revival art and home to one of Ireland's finest collections of stained glass.



RAY GATELY, CLLR MICHAEL 'MOEGIE' MAHER AND A GROUP ENJOYING A WALK OF THE MEDIEVAL TOWN OF LOUGHREA. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

Loughrea's fascinating past was also brought to life through guided heritage walks led by Dr Christy Cunniffe and Ray Gately. Participants explored the town's streets, monuments and architectural treasures while discovering the story of the settlement founded by Richard de Burgo in the thirteenth century. The walks attracted exceptionally strong attendance and generated enthusiastic feedback from attendees.

A particular highlight for younger audiences was a series of innovative Music Generation workshops for children undertaken by GRETB. These interactive sessions introduced participants to the creative possibilities of music-making through technology, encouraging them to experiment with sound, rhythm and composition in a fun and engaging

environment. The workshops provided an exciting opportunity for children to explore their creativity while connecting with the theme of cultural expression through music.



CLLR MICHAEL 'MOEGIE' MAHER, CHAIRPERSON LOUGHREA MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL, MADELINE FLEMING, MARIE MANNION, HERITAGE OFFICER, PADRAIG CONNAUGHTON AND GERRY FAHY. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY.

Heritage Week concluded on a high note with *Echoes of Ireland and Europe: Music Through the Ages* at the Loughrea Hotel & Spa. Featuring acclaimed musicians Padraig Connaughton and Madeline Fleming, accompanied by Gerry Fahy, the concert took audiences on a musical journey spanning centuries. Exploring the connections between Irish and European musical traditions, the performance demonstrated how music has travelled across cultures and generations.



CARMELITE ABBEY, LOUGHREA. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

Chairperson of the Loughrea Medieval Festival Committee, Cllr Michael "Moegie" Maher, welcomed the success of the programme:

"Heritage Week 2026 was a wonderful celebration of everything that makes Loughrea special. It was fantastic to see such strong community participation across the week, with people of all ages engaging with our history, traditions and culture. The enthusiasm shown by attendees highlights the pride that exists in our town's heritage. I would like to sincerely

thank all our organisers, speakers, performers, volunteers and supporters who helped make the week such a tremendous success."

Heritage Officer Marie Mannion praised the collaborative effort behind the events:

"Loughrea once again demonstrated the strength of community heritage in action. Heritage Week provides a unique opportunity for people to connect with local history, share stories and celebrate the places and traditions that shape our identity. The success of this year's programme reflects the dedication of local heritage groups, community organisations, our library service, volunteers and partners who worked so hard to deliver such a varied and engaging programme. It is particularly encouraging to see so many families and young people taking part."



MUSIC GENERATION WORKSHOP. PHOTO CREDIT: JACINTA FAHY

The success of Heritage Week 2026 highlights the enduring value of heritage as a source of learning, creativity and community connection. Organisers expressed their appreciation to Galway County Council, The Heritage Council, participating organisations, venue providers and everyone who contributed to and supported the week's activities. The strong attendance and positive public response demonstrate that Loughrea's rich heritage continues to inspire, educate and bring people together.

TAKING THE PAST FORWARD

Taking the Past Forward is a unique free heritage training programme designed to help local communities discover, record and celebrate the rich heritage of their area. Through hands-on learning and community collaboration, participants will gain practical skills in identifying, documenting and digitally presenting local heritage features while working alongside heritage experts Zena Hoctor and Dr Christy Cunniffe. Supported by the Galway County Council Heritage Office, this exciting initiative is ideal for Community Heritage Groups, Tidy Towns groups, Men's and Women's Sheds, CE Schemes and anyone with an interest in local history and heritage, with



no prior experience required. The programme begins on Tuesday, 22 September 2026 and runs every Tuesday for five weeks, from 10.00am to 1.00pm, at Kinvara Community Centre, Glebe Road, Kinvara, H91 WC64. Places are limited and early booking is advised. To reserve a place, email zenahoctor@gmail.com before Friday, 18 September 2026.

BIODIVERSITY

NATIONAL HERITAGE WEEK 2026

FRASS BOG WALK – GLENAMADDY

As part of National Heritage Week 2026, Galway County Council hosted a guided walk at Frass Bog, Glenamaddy, on 18 August in partnership with Geological Survey Ireland, Glenamaddy Tidy Towns and the Frass Greenway Committee. The event highlighted the biodiversity, hydrology and geology of Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC and provided an opportunity for participants to learn about the ecological importance of these protected habitats.

The walk was led by Rosina Joyce, Biodiversity Officer with Galway County Council and Dr Siobhán Power of Geological Survey Ireland, who is also a member of the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Forum. NPWS Ranger Raedon Doyle also attended and spoke to participants about the conservation importance of the site and the management of protected habitats. The event supported Galway County Council's ongoing biodiversity awareness and community engagement objectives and helped raise awareness of the natural heritage value of one of County Galway's most significant peatland and turlough habitats.



LAUNCH OF *CLADÁI INIS MEÁIN* BOOKLET

As part of National Heritage Week 2026, Galway County Council supported the launch of *Cladái Inis Meáin (The Shores of Inis Meáin)*, a new bilingual booklet exploring the seaweeds, seashells, folklore and coastal biodiversity of Inis Meáin. The project was funded through the Creative Ireland Programme and Galway County Council's Biodiversity Office, with research and content developed by Áedín Ní Thiarnaigh.

The booklet was launched at Ionad Pobail Inis Meáin and brought together members of the local community to celebrate the island's rich coastal heritage. Combining ecological information with local folklore, traditional knowledge and Irish-language names for coastal species, the publication highlights the close relationship between the people of Inis Meáin and their coastal environment.

Speakers at the launch included Áedín Ní Thiarnaigh, who researched and wrote the booklet, Rosina Joyce, Biodiversity Officer and Maureen Ní Choincheannáin, Oifigeach Pleanála Teanga Inis Meáin. The speakers highlighted the importance of recording and sharing local knowledge, folklore and biodiversity information and ensuring that this heritage is passed on to future generations.



8 | NUACHT

Leabhrán dátheangach a cheiliúrann oidhreacht nádúrtha Inis Meáin seolta

Aedín Ní Thiarnaigh agus thíos, le Éanna Taimín Meachair

Iascach Inlíne Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

Ceannasaí um Chlaochlú Digiteach agus TFC

An bhfuil tú réidh le ceannaireacht a thabhairt ar an gclaochlú digiteach agus fiorthionchar a imirt?

Spéis agat ann?

Le tuilleadh eolais a fháil faoin bpost seo, tabhair cuairt ar:

Sprioc-dháta: 5 i.n., Dé Céadaoin, an 16 Meán Fómhair 2026.

Is Fiosrúr Comhdheiseanna é Iascach Inlíne Éireann.

FOCLÓIRÍN

creagach: craggy
oidhreacht: heritage
treoir dhraíochtúla: ecological guide

The project supports Galway County Council's objectives of promoting biodiversity awareness, celebrating cultural heritage and strengthening community engagement with the natural environment. Copies of *Cladái Inis Meáin* have been distributed throughout the island and are also available online, helping to make this valuable record of Inis Meáin's natural and cultural heritage accessible to a wider audience.

The event and new booklet received widespread press and media attention. The booklet is available to read online and will be distributed to all of the branches of Galway County Libraries.



Connacht Tribune Friday, August 28, 2026 Arts & Culture 55

New bilingual booklet on Inis Meáin's rich coastal heritage

A NEW bilingual booklet featuring previously undocumented folklore about Inis Meáin's rich coastal heritage was launched this week on the island.

'Cladaí Inis Meáin' (The Shores of Inis Meáin) is a practical field guide which explores local traditions, names and stories about the seaweeds and seashells found on the rocky shores of the island – the middle of the three Aran Islands. It includes details about seaweed harvesting, local proverbs, children's rhymes and names unique to Inis Meáin, as well as ecological information about the island's coastal biodiversity.

The booklet, based on research and fieldwork conducted by folklorist and Inis Meáin resident, Aedín Ní Thiarnaigh, was funded by Pleanáil Teanga Inis Meáin, Galway County Council's Biodiversity Office and Creative Ireland. The aim is to conserve and promote the island's local traditions and to highlight its rich biodiversity.

Aedín Ní Thiarnaigh who researched and wrote the booklet making a presentation to Taimín Meachair for his contributions.

Juda Uí Loinsigh and her granddaughter Annie Daly browsing Cladaí Inis Meáin. PHOTOS SEÁN LYDON

"As an island community, the seashore is so deeply interwoven with the local culture on Inis Meáin, and it was amazing to hear all the various ways that the different seaweeds were used here – for farming, for food, and as an important source of income," said Aedín. "Even now, in a fast-paced and high-tech era, these traditions are still very much part and parcel of island life, and it's important to recognise and celebrate that.

"People often don't realise how unique the culture of Inis Meáin is", she added. "The Aran Islands often get grouped together and treated as one entity, but each island has its own traditions and they all have immense cultural value. The folklore and local names compiled in 'Cladaí Inis Meáin' are an excellent example of this."

At the launch of the booklet at Ionad Pobail Inis Meáin, local Irish Language Planning Officer of the project, Maureen Ní Choincheananinn, highlighted the national importance of the bilingual publication.

"Not only does 'Cladaí Inis Meáin' celebrate the marine environment, it captures a wealth of heritage, local folklore and our local dialect," said Maureen. "It's important to support projects like this because the preservation of local knowledge and of the environment are intertwined. At a time when fewer and fewer people are working on the shores compared with generations past, projects like this help to share generational knowledge with the wider community, and preserve it before it might be lost."

Galway County Council Biodiversity Officer, Rosina Joyce, said the project was important on many levels.

"This beautiful booklet will help more people to connect with and learn about precious coastal habitats and the species they support. The more people understand and connect with nature, the more likely they are to value and care for it."

'Cladaí Inis Meáin' will be distributed across the island, in libraries throughout the county and will be freely accessible online.

A WILD STORY ABOUT TUAM. A WILD STORY ABOUT TUAM

As part of National Heritage Week 2026, Galway County Council's Biodiversity Office A Wild Story About Tuam in Tuam Library, with the support of the library branch staff. The family-friendly storytelling event invited children and parents to discover the surprising wildlife that shares the town with them and to see familiar places through the eyes of nature.

Through stories, pictures and sound recordings, participants learned about some of the wildlife found in and around Tuam, including swifts that spend most of their lives in the air, foxes that visit the Palace Grounds after dark, bats hunting insects along the River Nanny, peregrine falcons near the cathedral, peacock butterflies, common carder bees, trout in the river and giant hogweed. Children also had the opportunity to listen to a variety of animal sounds and learn more about the lives of these species and the habitats they depend on.

The event encouraged curiosity about local biodiversity and highlighted the importance of nature in urban areas. It also demonstrated how storytelling can be used to engage children and families with wildlife and foster a greater appreciation of the natural heritage found on their doorstep.



The storytelling session formed part of a project supported under the Heritage Council's Grants Programme 2026 and contributed to Galway County Council's ongoing biodiversity awareness and education objectives.

BUILT HERITAGE

CONSERVATION CLINICS

Galway County Council, in collaboration with the National Built Heritage Service, hosted Conservation Clinics offering FREE consultations with an RIAI Conservation Grade 2 Architect / Chartered Surveyor / Conservation accredited Engineer. Consultations were designed for building owners and occupiers to discuss and receive expert advice on the conservation of their historic buildings. This initiative supports best conservation practice and helps ensure the conservation of the built heritage of County Galway.



CLIFDEN LIBRARY: L-R STEPHEN FOYLE, FOYLES HOTEL, SIOBHAN ROCHE CONNEMARA CHAMBER, PAUL RODDY CHARTERED SURVEYOR, PATRICIA O'TOOLE CONNEMARA CHAMBER, ANNMARIE CUSACK ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION OFFICER, DON SILKE RIAI CONSERVATION GRADE 2 ARCHITECT AND SIMON ASHE PRESIDENT OF THE CONNEMARA CHAMBER (2ND ROW)



GORT TOWNHALL, THURSDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER: L-R, ANNMARIE CUSACK ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION OFFICER, GERALDINE MC MANUS RIAI CONSERVATION GRADE 2 ARCHITECT, TREVOR WOODS TWCE CONSERVATION ACCREDITED ENGINEER, BRIAN AND MARGARET HORAN; HORAN ANTIQUES AND ADAM STONEMAN. PHOTOS COURTES OF EIMEAR DOLAN.

HISTORIC GARDEN & DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

NBHS An tSeirbhís Oidhreachta Tógtha Náisiúnta National Built Heritage Service | Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe Galway County Council

Galway County Council, in collaboration with the National Built Heritage Service, and Cian Cunniffe Estate Manager, Kieran Laverty Activities Manager and Jason Deasy Falconer Ballynahinch Castle Hotel & Estate hosted a workshop with local schoolchildren from Scoil Mhuire in the Ballynahinch Demense.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARK FURNISS

The event was centred on the historic garden and designed landscape to increase awareness of this often-overlooked aspect of our heritage. The priority was to engage with new audiences, local people, schools and young people.





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 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

To assist the small business community in meeting the challenges of the business world, LEO Galway provides a wide range of high-quality training supports which are tailored to meet specific business requirements.

Our short training courses have now commenced this month for the Autumn schedule.

SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE

3rd September	How to sell on Amazon.
8th & 9th September	Email Marketing.
10th September	The EU AI Act.
17th September	Brand Storytelling.
22nd September	How to master your VAT return.
24th September	Beginners guide to social media.
29th September & 6th October	Marketing techniques for your business.

BUSINESS ADVISORY CLINIC

Our Business Advisory sessions give clients the opportunity to speak with one of our business advisors, who offer general guidance on starting a new business or expanding on an existing business.

During the session, our advisors will outline the supports available through the Local

Enterprise Office, including training, mentoring, and any other relevant services suited to the client's stage of business.
Each advisory session is a free 30-minute consultation and runs weekly throughout the year. A €10 deposit is required at the time of booking; this is fully refundable once the client attends the appointment or provides at least 48 hours' cancellation notice.
Please keep an eye on our website for the upcoming available dates.

MENTORING

Our mentoring programme is designed to match 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 and more. A mentoring session consists of 3 hours of support from the mentor.

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS PROGRAMME (SYOB)

LEO Galway runs a Start Your Own Business (SYOB) programme, providing aspiring entrepreneurs with practical guidance and support. Each programme accommodates up to 16 participants, ensuring an interactive and focused learning environment.
The programme introduces participants to the fundamentals of starting a business, including business planning, legal and registration requirements, record keeping, taxation, cashflow, market research, marketing, competition, costing and pricing, networking, guidance on developing and growing a business, as well as an overview of LEO funding and supports.

Our most recent SYOB program commenced at the end of August and will run until 22nd September, taking place twice a week on an evening schedule.

Monday Aug 31st 6.30-9.30	Business & Self Appraisal, Goal Setting, The Business Plan
Tuesday Sept 1st 6.30-9.30	Legal Structures, Registration, Responsibilities, Records
Monday Sept 7th 6.30-9:30	Record Keeping & Taxation continued, VAT & Cash Flow
Tuesday Sept 8th 6.30-9:30	Marketing & the Business Plan, Research
Monday Sept 14th 6.30-9:30	Market Research, Product and Promotion

Wednesday Sept 16th 6.30-9:30	Market Research, Competition, Costing & Pricing
Monday Sept 21st 6.30-9:30	Networking, Marketing review, Leo Galway Guest, Funding and Supports
Tuesday Sept 22nd 6.30-9:30	Personal Management, Going forward with your business plan; Growing your business

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 just 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 the end of the programme, participants will have strengthened their strategic capabilities, scaled their ventures, and joined a powerful network of growth-focused leaders. This programme started in November 2025 in the Galway County Council offices.

STRATEGIC DIGITAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The Local Enterprise Office is delivering a Strategic Digital Management Programme in from September to November to support micro and small enterprises to improve productivity, efficiency and business performance through the effective use of digital tools and systems.

The programme should assist businesses to:

- Identify opportunities to optimise existing digital systems
- Improve internal management processes through digital solutions
- Make informed decisions regarding future digital investment
- Embed digital thinking within day-to-day business operations

The programme will enable participating businesses to:

- Assess their current level of digital maturity
- Identify gaps and inefficiencies in existing digital systems
- Prioritise practical digital improvements aligned with business goals
- Develop and begin implementing a clear Digital Action Plan

EXPORT & SALES SCALE PROGRAMME 2026

The Export & Sales Scale Programme will commence in October and is designed for established businesses that are currently exporting and wish to accelerate growth in international markets through strategic planning, channel development, and export expansion.

The programme is open to eligible businesses that meet Local Enterprise Office Terms & Conditions and have achieved a minimum of €10,000 in export sales within the previous 12 months.

The programme consists of:

- Module 1: Export Expansion
- Module 2: Global Distribution & Channel Management
- Module 3: Business Planning & Action
- Final 1:1 Internationalisation Plan

UPCOMING EVENTS

LOCAL FOOD & CRAFT GIFT FAIR 2026

The Local Food & Craft Gift Fair will return to the Black Box Theatre from November 24th to 29th 2026. The event is expected to be the largest and most vibrant fair to date, providing a platform for artisan food producers and craft businesses from across Galway City and County to showcase and sell their products.

The fair will feature a diverse range of high-quality locally produced goods, including Homemade and artisan foods, ceramics and pottery, handcrafted jewellery, textiles and woodwork and blacksmith creations. The event aims to support local enterprise, promote Galway's creative and food sectors, and provide exhibitors with an opportunity to connect with customers during the Christmas shopping season. Efforts are ongoing to promote the opportunity and encourage participation from local food and craft producers throughout the county.



NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026

SMEs play a vital role in local communities across Ireland by creating jobs, generating income, and providing essential services. To showcase and support these businesses, the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) host the *Local Enterprise Village* at the National Ploughing Championships. The initiative features 31 businesses, one from each LEO, and provides them with the opportunity to exhibit to almost 250,000 visitors over the three-day event. The Village highlights the strength of Ireland's small business sector and the impact of LEO support in helping entrepreneurs grow successful enterprises. This year's National Ploughing



Championship will be held in Screggan, Tullamore from September 15th to 17th. This year LEO Galway will be represented by Woolow.

NETWORK IRELAND NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

LEO Galway is a sponsor of the conference, which will take place at DEXCOM Stadium, Galway, on Friday, 18 September 2026. The event will run from approximately 9:30am to 3:30pm and will feature keynote speakers, workshops, panel discussions, exhibition stands, and both formal and informal networking opportunities.

GET EXPORTING AMBITION ROADSHOW 2026

The Get Exporting Ambition Roadshow 2026 will take place in Galway on 1 October 2026 at the Radisson Red Hotel, offering Irish SMEs an opportunity to build export readiness and explore international growth opportunities. Designed for businesses preparing to export for the first time or expand into new markets, the event will cover export opportunities, pricing, tariffs, routes to market and insights from successful Irish exporters. The Get Exporting programme, developed in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, InterTradeIreland, Local Enterprise Offices and Údarás na Gaeltachta, supports Irish manufacturing and internationally traded services companies in developing the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in international markets.



PAST EVENTS

PATHWAY TO INNOVATE LUNCH & LEARN EVENT – 15TH JULY 2026

The LEO Galway team attended the Pathway to Innovate Lunch & Learn event hosted at Platform94 in partnership with Data2Sustain, Ireland's European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH), and WestBIC. The event focused on supporting businesses in their digital transformation journey and highlighted the range of innovation supports available to SMEs. Attendees received presentations on the four core pillars of EDIH support:

- Test Before Invest
- Business Support and Access to Finance
- Skills and Training
- Access to an Ecosystem of Expertise

The session provided valuable insights into how businesses can access specialist expertise, training, and innovation supports to accelerate digital adoption and growth. Presentations from the Data2Sustain team outlined practical pathways for businesses to test new technologies, build digital capabilities, and connect with relevant innovation partners. The event formed part of the wider Pathway to Innovate initiative and provided an opportunity to raise awareness of supports available to LEO clients seeking to enhance competitiveness through innovation and digital transformation.



SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

FACEBOOK:	8.6k Followers	Reach: 6.6k
INSTAGRAM:	3.8k Followers	Reach: 4.2k
LINKEDIN:	1.8k Followers	Impressions: 1.9k

REGENERATION SCHEMES

TOWN CENTRE FIRST (TCF) PROGRAMME

ATHENRY

The Athenry Town team have been working closely with the TRO and Consultants LUC in the final stages of completing the TCF plan. The plan is now going through environmental screening and will be formally launched before the end of the year.

BALLINASLOE

The Regeneration team launched the Ballinasloe Town Centre First Plan on Monday, 29 June, in the Ballinasloe Enterprise Hub, Society Street, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. The event marked an important milestone in the ongoing regeneration of Ballinasloe town centre and brought together local representatives, community stakeholders and project partners involved in shaping the plan.



The Ballinasloe Town Centre First Plan has been developed through the Government's Town Centre First Policy and funded by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly through the European Regional Development Fund under the THRIVE programme.

The plan provides a community-led, plan-based framework for revitalising the town centre, supporting economic and social development, addressing vacancy and dereliction, and strengthening Ballinasloe's role as a key urban centre in east County Galway.

The Ballinasloe Town Centre First Plan is a non-statutory framework that aligns with the Galway County Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Ballinasloe Local Area Plan 2022–2028. Its purpose is to help prioritise and sequence the delivery of town centre objectives in a coordinated and phased manner, creating a strong pipeline of regeneration projects that can be progressed through appropriate funding opportunities.



The plan was developed in partnership between Galway County Council's Town Regeneration Officer and Regeneration Team, the Ballinasloe Town Team, consultants The Paul Hogarth Company, elected members of the Ballinasloe Municipal District, and the wider local community. Public engagement formed a central part of the process and helped shape the projects and priorities identified in the final plan.

OUGHTERARD

The Town Regeneration Officer (TRO) is continuing to support local communities in establishing Town Teams. An Oughterard Town team has now been established following an EOI process.

The TRO continues to support additional Town teams in Oranmore, Gort and Headford.

PORTUMNA

PORTUMNA COURTHOUSE

New monthly activities started in the Courthouse in June with the first Monthly Market on 12th June, featuring 12 local vendors. The market continues on the first Friday of each month until Christmas.



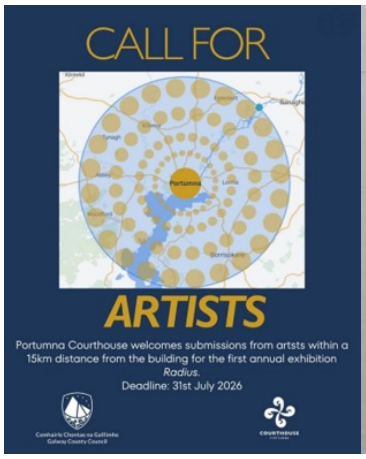






MONTHLY ARTIST MEETUPS & COMMUNITY EXHIBITION

The regular Artist Meetup event was held on Thursday August 27th. The event was an opportunity for local creatives to get together in a casual capacity and discuss opportunities to collaborate. The Radius exhibition ran for 10 days in August and featured artists living and working within 15km of the Courthouse.









REPAIR CAFÉ

The Courthouse was delighted to host a Repair Café gathering on Saturday August 8th. The event had volunteers from Galway repair Café on site to facilitate a mending workshop and assist with household repairs.









PRIDE OF PLACE

The Courthouse was delighted to host the evaluation team from the Pride of Place awards on August 31st. Galway County Council have nominated Portumna, led by Portumna Tidy Towns under the tourism category.





PORTUMNA PUBLIC REALM

The Portumna Public Realm Enhancement scheme Part 8 planning application is currently on hold pending the acquisition of suitable lands to provide off street parking to complement the main scheme. A meeting was held with officials from the Department of Rural and Community Development in August who recommended an application to the Department under the Town and Village Land Acquisition Scheme in 2027.

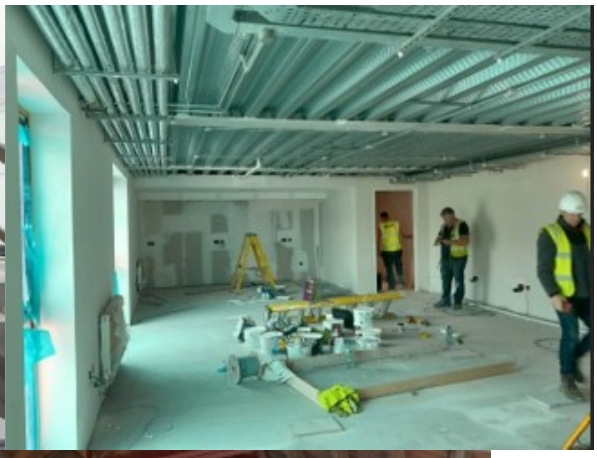
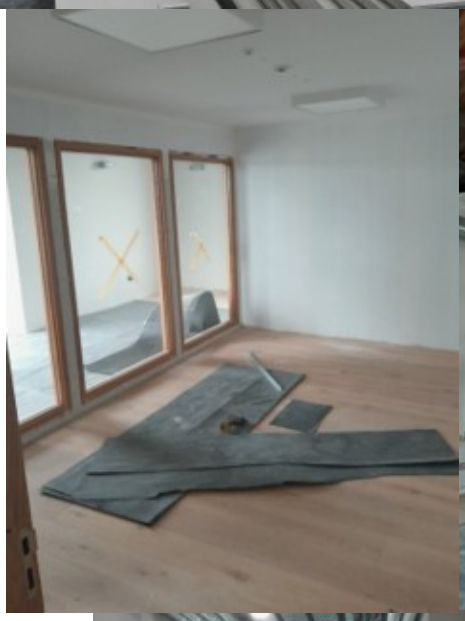
LOUGHREA

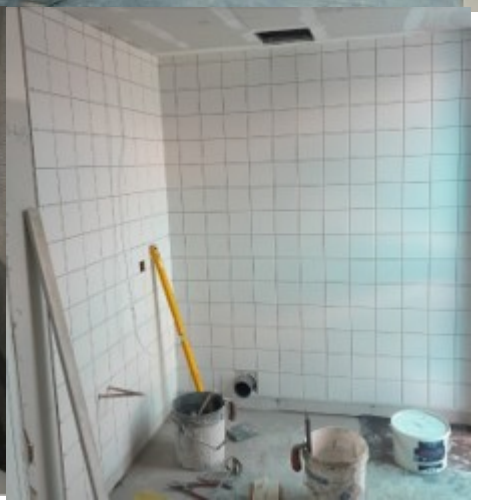
LOUGHREA TOWN HALL

Finna Construction are progressing with works internally and to the rear of the site with a projected completion date of October 2026 followed by a soft launch of the facility by the Regeneration Team with the local community over the following months. Vicki Clough, Operations Manager with attend the November meeting of the Municipal District to meet with Elected Members and discuss plans and the operational model for the building.



Expressions of Interest remain open for the rental of desks and office pods on the enterprise floor of the building.

THE COTTAGE, CHURCH STREET LOUGHREA



It is proposed to develop the site of the derelict cottage on Church Street, Loughrea.



The proposal will include the replacement of the existing cottage, which dates back to the early 1800's, with a 'shadow' structure of the cottage itself. The intention is to retain the presence and form of the cottage which contributes to the character of the street.



The new structure will form a gateway to the open space to the rear which will be shared with the town hall and potentially be the location of the trader's market and community events. The facade of the new structure will fold back so as to form a covered, outdoor traders space. When the facade is in the closed position it will secure the gateway to the site beyond. A structural report has been prepared which recommends the removal of the cottage. A planning application for the replacement structure will be lodged in the coming weeks.





PROPOSED REPLACEMENT STRUCTURE TO CHURCH LANE – 3D MODEL





THE LONG POINT, LOUGHREA

A Part 10 planning application for the redevelopment of Long Point has been approved. An application under Category 1 of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund has been



submitted to the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht. A decision is expected by the end of the year.



ATHENRY

ATHENRY PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENT SCHEME

Following a detailed application by the Regeneration Team, Athenry was granted €6,075,518.40 Rural Regeneration Development Funding for the Athenry Public Realm Enhancement Scheme Phase1 and the redevelopment of Somers House Burke's Lane to provide a Community and Enterprise Hub.

The detailed design of the public Realm scheme (drainage, m&e, alignment, pavement) continues, led by Tobin Engineers. Liaison with Uisce Éireann and ESB to facilitate the construction of public realm scheme in parallel with works required by these statutory undertakers.

The project will be divided into two separate contracts given the requirements of ESB for undergrounding their services and incorporating SIRO broadband services.

ATHENRY COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE HUB

3no. tenders have been received for the refurbishment of the property at Burkes Lane. The design team are currently carrying out an evaluation of the tenders. It is expected that the tender process will conclude by the end of the year subject to approval by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht and subject to the available funding envelope.



PROPOSED SHOPFRONT



PROPOSED MULTI-PURPOSE MEETING / MEDIA ROOM



PROPOSED COMMUNITY/MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING ROOM

NEW CAR PARK SITE



Design works are progressing on the site including engagement with the active travel team to coordinate junction and safety improvements at the site.

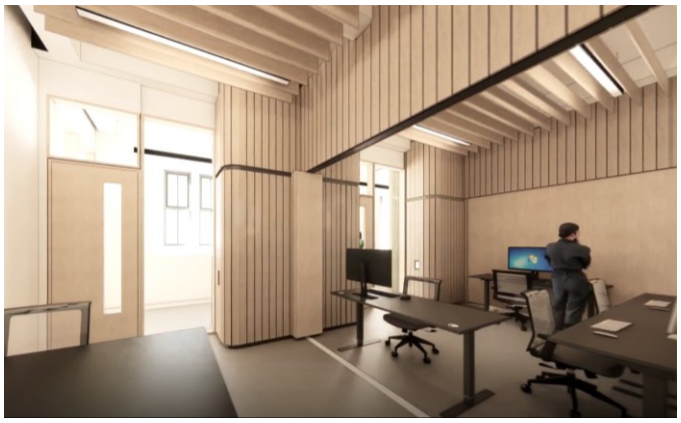
TUAM

TUAM TOWN HALL

The registration of Tuam Town Hall to the ownership of Galway County Council remains with Táilte Éireann. Tender documents have been developed and will be published on etenders as soon as the registration is complete.



PROPOSED MULTI-FUNCTION SPACE



PROPOSED CO-WORKING/OFFICE SPACE

TUAM STATION BUILDING: REPURPOSING, RENOVATION AND EXTENSION

The renovation and extension of the Tuam Station Building has been designed in-house by the Regeneration Team. Funding was sought and granted by the NWRA through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) THRIVE of €6.6 million euros.

A design team led by O'C&C Architects have been appointed by Galway County Council to progress the project through the detailed design, tender and construction stages.



EXISTING CONDITION

PROPOSED INTERIOR



CLIFDEN

The Clifden Part 10 planning application to An Coimisiún Pleanála was approved in November 2025. Phase 1 of the project, the Beach Road Quay and Harbour Park is the subject of a Category 1 capital funding application under the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF). A decision is expected before the end of the year.



HARBOUR PARK PROPOSED

BEACH ROAD PROPOSED



GORT

GORT PUBLIC REALM

The Gort Public Realm scheme was granted planning Permission by An Coimisiún Pleanála in January and is now subject to a Judicial Review by an individual, which has held the project in abeyance until the case has proceeded through the courts.

BARRACK STREET, GORT.

Barrack Street, Gort - Archaeological Testing at site GA 122-097 recorded as the potential site of King Guaire's Castle.

Through Time Ltd Archaeology has been appointed to conduct excavations at the site to determine if King Guaire's Castle was indeed located at the former military barracks parade ground. There is no record of previous excavations having been undertaken at the site and therefore this is a brilliant opportunity to uncover an important piece of the history of Gort Inse Guaire.

Halfway through the six days of excavations no evidence of the castle has been found, however a variety of interesting discoveries have been made which piece together an intriguing picture of post-medieval and 17th century life on Barrack Street.

A shard of post-medieval glass has been discovered which predates the military barracks. The location of the water pump, which was surrounded by cut stone flags, clay brick drainage channels, and cobbles, has also been discovered.

SISTERS OF MERCY CONVENT



The Regeneration Team submitted a successful application for funding under Category 2 of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to purchase the former Convent and Primary School in Gort Town Centre. This project was identified as a priority within the Gort TCF Plan. The property purchase is now going through the conveyancing process and is anticipated to be completed by the end of this year. The Regen Team will then progress to the design stage of the project, engaging further with key stakeholders as well as the broader local community.

ORANMORE

RINVILLE PARK SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The plan for Rinville is currently going through environmental screening and the final document is projected to be published by the end of Q4 2026.



REGENERATION SCHEMES

TOWNS AND CITIES REGENERATION INVESTMENT FUND

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, James Browne TD announced a new Towns and Cities Regeneration Investment Fund to replace the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) which will provide greater focus on disadvantaged areas and widen the scope of eligibility to include more smaller towns.

We await the announcement from the Minister on the successful applications under the funding stream. Galway County Council submitted 6 applications, two in each of the eligible towns of Tuam, Oranmore (Garraun) and Ballinasloe.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE- DERELICT SITES UPDATE

The Project Management Office has now taken responsibility for Derelict Sites.
The PMO are working on a strategic approach to dealing with Derelict Sites into the future.
A working group has been set up between the PMO office and the Housing Department.
This group is working in partnership to progress vacant homes identified that may be suitable under the Derelict Sites Act.
The no of properties on the Derelict Sites Register has increased from 7 to 15. As part of the strategy new IT systems are being put in place and the website will be updated to reflect this.
In the last 3 months, 29 no. Section 8(2), 7 no. Section 8(7) and 4 Section 11 notices have been served. This has resulted in positive improvements without further progress under the legislation as can be seen in the properties pictured below in Roundstone and Headford.



ROUNDSTONE BEFORE AND AFTER





BRIDGE STREET, HEADFORD, BEFORE AND AFTER



MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ATHENRY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ANNUAL ROADS PROGRAMME

The Annual Schedule of Proposed Works for the Municipal District, including the proposed 2026 Annual Roads Programme, was presented to the elected members at a special meeting held on 31 March. Members were advised that the 2026 Roads Programme comprises the following elements:

- 23 Restoration Improvement (RI) projects, with a total allocation of €2,423,237
    - Works currently ongoing 3 areas left to complete
- 13 Restoration Maintenance (RM) projects, with a total allocation of €550,598
    - Micros surfacing Completed – Surface dressing Completed
- 5 Discretionary Grant projects, with a total allocation of €83,467
    - Works ongoing 1 area remaining

PROGRAMME INCLUDES FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR:

- National, Regional, and Local Road maintenance
- Climate adaptation schemes
- Low-cost safety schemes
- Bridge repair works
- Local and regional road drainage works

CONTRACTORS AND DESIGNERS CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING.

McGraths Continuing on N84 works for NRDO

PMCE completing designs for Low-Cost Accident Schemes

Tenders being sought for Cregmore Street lighting

Swarco – Fitting Anti Vandal Covers to Cregmore Bridge traffic lights

Gabion Baskets in Coolarne ongoing

Site investigation works for Ryehill Culvert completed – Uisce Eireann approval required

Crews have also remained focused on network maintenance; Drainage works complete in Cor an Dola and direct labour roadworks in planned for Western area starting next week.

SAMPLE PHOTOS OF ONGOING WORKS:



SURFACE DRESSING WORKS @ MACE

FOOTPATH REPLACEMENT WORKS @ ARD AOIBHINN





GABION BASKETS @ COOLARNE

DRAINAGE WORKS @ GLOVES





NEW BRIDGE @ GLOVES

SURFACE REPAIRS @ MARKET SQUARE ATHENRY





SURFACE DRESSING @ CARNAKELLY

SURFACE DRESSING @ GORTNALONE





DRAINAGE WORKS @ MIRAH

SURFACE DRESSING @ FRENCHFORT



BALLINASLOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

ROADS PROGRAMME 2026

During July and August 2026 Ballinasloe MD continued to deliver the primary elements of the annual roadworks programme, restoration improvement (RI) and restoration maintenance (RM).

During July and August 2026, MD crews were focused on maintenance of public roads in terms pothole repairs and Drainage improvement works including the L-34071 Alloonbaun Climate Change job and various other culvert repairs at Rooaun (Eyrecourt), Woodlawn and Kilnahowan.

During August 2026, Restoration Improvement (RI) works were completed by direct labour on BN-26-25 – Cooloo and BS-26-06 – Lowville.

By the end of August 2026 all restoration maintenance grant (surface dressing) projects were completed in Ballinasloe Municipal District. In August 2026 surface dressing of sections of the following additional local roads were completed: - Cloonmergaun (Aughrim), Woodlawn, Gortfada (New Inn).

An outline of the current status is presented here, along with photos of works completed below.

- 36 no. Restoration Improvement Grant (RI) projects - 28 overlays Complete (78%)
- 41 no. Restoration Maintenance Grant (RM) projects – 41 Complete (100%)
- 5 no. Discretionary Grant (Local Tertiary Roads) – 5 Complete (100%)

Separately, roadworks projects granted funding in 2026 under Strategic Rehabilitation Regional Roads(1), LIS (2), CIS(5), Climate-Change(3), Low-Cost-Safety(2), are all being

prepared by the MD technical teams and by MD crews on site. The Local Improvement Scheme Project LIS 165/21 Island West to Briarforth was completed and works commenced on the CIS 89.25 Creggaun project.

Tender for the appointment of Consulting Engineers for the Strategic Improvement of the Strategic Improvement of the R357/R446 Staggered Junction at Creagh, Ballinasloe Town was advertised on the 14th July 2026. Following a tender evaluation Tobin were deemed to be the successful tenderer.



SURFACE DRESSING COMPLETED ON L-34153 AT CLOONMERGAUN AUGHRIM



L-34153 AT CLOONMERGAUN AUGHRIM



SURFACE DRESSING COMPLETED ON THE L-74462 AT WOODLAWN.

GRANULAR OVERLAY OF THE L-74201 LOWVILLE BEFORE SURFACE DRESSING





SURFACE DRESSING OF GRANULAR OVERLAY OF THE L-74201 LOWVILLE

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION FUND 2024 - PUBLIC TOILET UPGRADE PROJECT AT ST MICHAELS SQUARE

Consultants SDS Ltd. completed the detailed design of the St. Michael's Toilet Refurbishment and tenders will be invited in September from contractors to undertake the works.

BALLINASLOE FAIR AND FESTIVAL 2026

The Ballinasloe Fair and Festival 2026 will run from Sunday 4th October 2026 until Saturday 10th October 2026. Galway County Council has appointed Safe Events Global to undertake the role of Event Manager. A meeting of the Ballinasloe Fair and Festival Co-ordinating Committee was held on 28th August 2026.

CONAMARA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT UPDATE

The Schedule of Municipal District works are well progressed by this stage of the year. 97% of the Overlays Contract has been delivered by our appointed contractor, McGraths Limestone Cong Ltd, with only the installation of road markings and prismatic studs left outstanding on a small number of schemes. In terms of the Direct Labour managed roads projects, we are at 90% completion stage.

Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience projects are progressing well at Maigh Cuilinn and Na Gringeacha in the Maum valley.

Community Involvement Schemes are gaining traction, in particular at Carrowmanagh, Oughterard.

In Conamara South, the local GSS is preparing to mobilise to Inis Mór to undertake road improvement works on 2 No. LIS projects on Inis Mór island, with a scheduled start date of 14th September. One of our long-standing outdoor staff on Inis Mór, Máirtín Joyce will be retiring at the end of the month, so these will be the last two projects he works on after years of stirling service to the local island community.

On the mainland, attention is turning to maintenance works such as Drainage, opening of water tables, verge maintenance along the National, Regional and Local roads. The local area office staff have tendered for these works in advance of the Bird Nesting season and harsher winter weather. A sample of photos from the MD are included below.



CN-RI-05
BARNANORAN ROAD
IN CONAMARA
NORTH



NEW MASONRY WALL WITH CONCRETE INFILL BEING BUILT BY SMD CONTRACTS, TO PROTECT INIS BOFIN PIER ROAD, WITH DEPARTMENT OF RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DRCD) FUNDING



CIS IN CARROWMANAGH NEAR ST PAUL'S SECONDARY SCHOOL & SCOIL CHUIMÍN & CAITRÍONA NATIONAL SCHOOL – TREES HAVE BEEN FELLED AND FRONT BOUNDARY WALL IN THE PROCESS OF BEING SET BACK AT PINCH POINT

REILIG CHILL ÉINDE ON INIS MÓR – 140M OF GRAVEYARD PROMONTORY PERIMETER WALL WAS REPAIRED. WORKS COMPLETED LATE AUGUST – MANAGED BY THE AREA OFFICE STAFF IN AN CHEATHRÚ RUA. QUALITY SERVICE PROVIDED BY MAIN CONTRACTOR, LOCKHART PLANT LTD.





500M OF THE N59 EAST OF CLIFDEN UNDERWENT IMPROVEMENT WORKS WITH EMERGENCY PAVEMENT SCHEME FUNDING FROM THE TII

LOUGHREA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

PRIMARY FOCUS OF ACTIVITY

Work on the 2026 Roads Programme is progressing well, but a significant number of projects are still outstanding. The 2026 Road Programme includes 53 Restoration Improvement Grant (RIG) projects, 23 Restoration Maintenance Grant (RMG) projects, 9 Discretionary Grant (DG) projects, 4 Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience projects, 5 Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) projects, 3 Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) projects and 4 Low-Cost Safety Improvement (LCSI) scheme projects.

We continue to address NOM and LPT funded projects, complete improvement works at our Depots, carry out localised drainage maintenance, road repairs and all other routine maintenance work as resources allow. Hedge cutting on the National and Regional roads has commenced under contract. Hedge cutting on the local road network under Galway County Council's own direct supervisory control has also commenced.
A high-level overview is as follows:

- 53 No. Restoration Improvement Grant projects - 28 Complete (53%)
- 23 No. Restoration Maintenance Grant (RMG) projects – 23 Complete (100%)

- 9 No. Local Tertiary Roads – 3 Complete (33%)
- 4 No. Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Schemes – 3 Complete. 1 Yet To Commence
- 4 No. Low-Cost Safety Improvement Works – Road Safety Audits completed on two projects. Consultant appointed on third project.
- LIS Schemes – 1 of 3 complete.
- CIS Schemes – 5 progressing. 1 of 5 complete.

A sample of works on-going is as follows:



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND RESILENCE SCHEME - GORTANUMERA RETAINING WALL AND ROAD WORK







GRASS CUTTING AND REMOVAL TO IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY, CORRY'S FIELD, LOUGHREA.



ON-GOING ROAD WORKS (INCLUDING SURFACE DRESSING) AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND RESILENCE SCHEME - GRANNAGH





CIS AT CORBALLYMORE BALLINROOAUN



TUAM 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN'S TWINNING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BAVARIAN CITY OF STRAUBING.

A delegation from Tuam, led by Municipal District Cathaoirleach Cllr Mary Hoade, is visiting Straubing, Germany, to mark the 35th anniversary of the towns' twinning partnership. The visit includes civic events, youth work discussions and participation in Bavaria's renowned Gäubodenvolksfest festival. Established in the 1980s and formally ratified in 1991, the partnership has fostered strong links in education, culture, tourism and business, including annual student exchanges since 1989. Speakers from both towns highlighted the enduring friendships, community connections and shared heritage that have sustained the relationship and continue to strengthen ties for future generations.





CIVIC HOMECOMING RECEPTION FOR GALWAY LADIES FOOTBALL SENIOR TEAM - 3RD AUGUST

Tuam Stadium hosted a highly successful Civic Homecoming Reception on 3 August to celebrate the Galway Ladies Football Senior Team's All-Ireland victory. The event brought together players, management, supporters and the wider community to mark this historic achievement. Galway County Council extended its sincere appreciation to all agencies, organisations, volunteers, contractors and staff who contributed to the planning and delivery of the event, ensuring a safe, well-organised and memorable occasion. Special thanks are due to the thousands of supporters whose enthusiasm and Galway pride created



a fantastic atmosphere. Congratulations are extended to the players, management and backroom team on bringing the Brendan Martin Cup home to Galway.

Gaillimh Abú.





L-R: CLLR PETER KEAVENEY, CLLR. SIOBHAN MCHUGH, MR. JOHN COYLE, SENIOR EXECUTIVE ENGINEER



CLLR. MARY MCHUGH ALONG WITH A MEMBER OF AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

TUAM ROADS PROGRAMME

KILBANNON REALIGNMENT SCHEME UPDATE

The R332 Kilbannon Road Realignment – overall project progress of 67%, with significant advancement across all phases, including completion of major earthworks, drainage, pavement construction, ducting, accommodation works and utility diversions. Key challenges remain due to poor ground conditions requiring additional excavation and capping works, buried Eir infrastructure affecting drainage installation, and unforeseen watermain works on the L2210, resulting in programme delays. Additional resources have been deployed to mitigate delays and maintain project momentum.



SURFACE DRESSING PROGRAMME

The 2026 Tuam Surface Dressing Programme has been completed successfully, delivering essential road maintenance works across the municipal district. All direct labour projects were finished on schedule, while the contract programme was delivered by Kiely Brothers Carriageways Ltd., marking the company's first major project in Ireland. The works included traditional surface dressing along with the introduction of the innovative Kiely Lock encapsulation process, designed to improve durability and extend pavement life. The programme was completed efficiently, with high standards of safety and minimal disruption to road users. The successful delivery demonstrates a strong commitment to maintaining and enhancing the local road network.





ROAD IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

The Tuam Municipal District Office worked in partnership with the Active Travel Team to successfully complete the Clarin Road Project in Headford. The scheme was delivered on schedule, before schools reopened, and within budget. Works included new footpaths, traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossings, a full road overlay, and new road markings. The coordinated efforts of the Active Travel Team, Tuam MD, Harringtons and Colas have significantly improved safety, accessibility, and the overall quality of the route for all road users.





OTHER WORKS



Works under the Community Involvement Schemes in Bunatobber are nearing completion. These projects were delivered with significant local participation and have improved pedestrian safety, visibility, and overall road safety in the area.

The schemes benefited from strong community cooperation and support, together with the assistance of the Tuam Area Office and Roads Crew. The collaborative approach adopted helped ensure the successful delivery of the works and demonstrates the value of community involvement in local infrastructure projects.

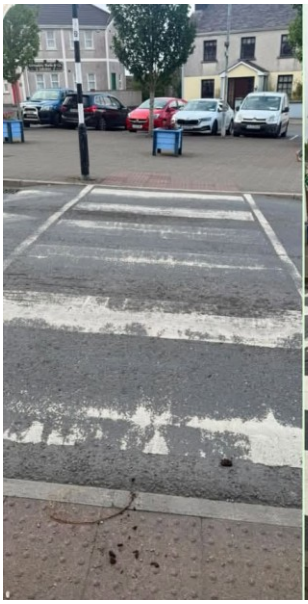
Works under the Abbeyknockmoy Community Involvement Scheme have also progressed successfully, with local cooperation contributing to improvements in road safety, sightlines, and accessibility for all road users.

Separately, resurfacing works on the R333 Belclare Road have been completed, with associated embankment improvement works currently being undertaken by the Roads Crew.













UPGRADING OF LINEMARKING IN HEADFORD TOWN

NATIONAL ROAD SCHEMES

Works continued across the County on the National Road network during the past month, with a number of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) funded projects either completed or commenced. These included the completion of a pavement improvement scheme on the N59 east of Clifden, the commencement of a 2 km HD28 pavement renewal scheme on the N84 between Cor an Dola Cross and Grange Junction, and the delivery of a drainage improvement scheme at Rosscahill on the N59, all of which contribute to improving the safety, resilience and long-term condition of the national road network throughout the County.



N59 EAST OF CLIFDEN



N59 DRAINAGE WORKS ROSCAHILL



N84 COR AN DOLA CROSS



Mise, le meas,

Chief Executive
Galway County Council

21st September 2026