

ISSUE 31
DEC 2021/JANV 2022

Little

FREE MAGAZINE

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OF CHRISTMAS

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- The Greyhound Blanch Village
- The Grasshopper Clonee
- Clonsilla Inn
- The Carpenter Inn
- The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown

EDITORIAL

As Little Village celebrates its sixth Christmas in print, COVID-19 celebrates its second. So on top of the food and charity mentioned in the poem above, there are worries about restrictions, adversely affected family gatherings and possible contractions of the virus.

To help to take our readers minds off of some of the stressful aspects of

the holiday season without resorting to playing Feliz Navidad on a loop until you go insane; we have compiled an interesting look at the history of Christmas, the abbreviation Xmas and a heart-rending Christmas story by Hans Christian Andersen to help us all to appreciate what we have, however little.

Thank you to all of our readers and advertising partners. Without you we are nothing. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Here's to 2022!



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Creative Top Publishing Ltd. publishes Little Village Magazine.

Company registration No. 534480

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MINISTER CALLS ON OLDER PERSONS TO AVAIL OF SENIORS ALERT SCHEME

Almost 18,000 participants in Dublin have availed of personal monitored alarms under the Scheme. Joe O'Brien TD, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development has encouraged vulnerable older persons to avail of personal monitored alarms through the Seniors Alert Scheme.

The Seniors Alert Scheme provides funding for a personal monitored alarm for vulnerable people aged over 65 throughout Ireland.

At the end of 2020, there were 662 registered community and voluntary organisations actively implementing the Seniors Alert Scheme in local towns, villages and communities across the country.

21 organisations across County Dublin are registered to implement the scheme. 17,589 older people in County Dublin have availed of personal monitored alarms under the scheme, making Dublin the county with the highest amount of older who have availed of the scheme of all counties in Ireland.

These organisations are involved in providing services for older people, such as the provision of befriending services and social supports, and have extensive networks among the local community.

Speaking about the Seniors Alert Scheme, Joe O'Brien TD, Minister of State said: "The Seniors Alert Scheme is a wonderful initiative as it enables vulnerable, older people to continue to live in their homes independently, bringing security and peace of mind to individuals and their families.

"I was delighted to meet with scheme participants and one of the locally registered SAS organisations actively implementing the scheme this morning. These organisations continue to support older people in the face of unprecedented challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"For many scheme participants and their families, the alarm has been a lifeline during this period, providing much needed reassurance that help was just a button push away in the event of an emergency.

"Particularly as we approach the winter months, I would encourage individuals to contact their local registered community group to access this life enriching support." The Department of Rural and Community Development funds this scheme with €5.1 million provided to the demand-led scheme in 2020. The 2020 Seniors Alert Scheme (SAS) Annual Report highlights the importance of the scheme over the past year:

In total, there were 76,286 participants approved for the SAS by the end of 2020, this includes 16,939 new participants that joined

in 2020. Including participants who joined in 2021, there are now over 80,000 people availing of scheme. Over half of SAS participants live alone (57%) while 7% are alone for significant periods of time. Almost two thirds (65%) of people accessing the scheme to date are female. At the end of 2020 there were 662 registered community and voluntary organisations actively implementing the SAS, of which 15 joined the scheme in 2020.

Pobal CEO, Ms Anna Shakespeare, said: "The Seniors Alert Scheme is a community-based scheme, which provides a free personal monitored alarm and one year's monitoring services to people of limited means aged 65 or older throughout Ireland. The alarm can be worn as a pendant around the neck or on the wrist like a watch. When pressed, it connects to a monitoring centre, ensuring assistance is always available no matter where the person is in their home. Pobal is committed to working closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development to raise awareness about the availability of this scheme, and encourages older people to contact their local community group to learn more about the Scheme. Applications can be made via your local SAS registered organisation, details of which can be found on www.pobal.ie."

Coordinator of An Síol Community Community Development Project (CDP) – Cabra, Mr Paul O'Farrell, said: "As a community organisation working in Dublin, I have seen the real benefits of the scheme and the peace of mind it brings to senior citizens across the community. This simple piece of equipment has saved many lives in both my community and communities across the country. It acts as additional support for seniors, bringing them a greater degree of security and independence in their own homes."

Ring in the festive cheer with the launch of Fingal's Christmas programme This year Christmas is back in full force and Fingal County Council is very happy to announce that the Grinch won't be stealing Christmas this year.

To spread the festive cheer, Christmas markets and Illuminate Fingal will be taking place across the County this December. The "In It Together" campaign will also help support local businesses and residents who will be able to make use of free parking locations at key spots in the run up to Christmas.



The following locations and dates for Christmas Markets are:

- Blanchardstown Village - weekend of 4 - 5 December from 11am - 5pm
- Bremore Castle - each weekend from the 28th of November from 10am-4pm
- Swords Castle - the weekends of 27 - 28 November and 4 - 5 December from 11am-6pm
- Ardgillan Castle - 4th of December from 4pm - 8pm
- Baldoyle Village - Sunday 5th of December from 10am - 5pm
- Seamus Ennis Art Centre - 12th of December from 10:30am - 4:30pm

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh said: "It is wonderful to see the Christmas Markets return this festive season, and I'm sure many residents will be thrilled to hear that we will be expanding the number of markets to visit in key local hubs in the County. These markets give us an opportunity to not only support our local businesses but reduce our carbon footprint in doing so, something which benefits us all."

To help small businesses promote their Christmas offerings, the local authority has relaunched their "In It Together" campaign. Businesses who want to advertise their Christmas offerings free of charge need to sign up to the Council's virtual Christmas Shop which will be promoted through a digital and print media advertising campaign.

For those interested in having a presence on the dedicated page, email christmas@fingal.ie or for more information go to <https://www.fingal.ie/christmas>. AnnMarie Farrelly, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, said: "It has been a tough year for many businesses, so I encourage everyone to shop local during the Christmas period. This can be a magical time of year for people of all ages, and we will be doing our part by setting up festive lighting and decorations in towns and villages across the County. Many locations in Malahide, Blanchardstown, Swords and Balbriggan will also be showcasing digital display projections onto their iconic buildings."

To help attract residents to visit local businesses across Fingal, the Council will be providing free Saturday parking throughout December (4th, 11th & 18th) in pay and display locations in Balbriggan, Rush, Skerries, Swords and Malahide (Bridgefield Park only). Pay and display areas in Clonsilla have free parking on Saturdays all-year

round. For more information on free parking please visit: www.fingal.ie/news/free-saturday-parking-christmas-shopping For further details on what Christmas events are taking place, please see www.fingal.ie/events or follow us on Facebook or Twitter – [@fingalcoco](https://twitter.com/fingalcoco).



THERE IS A SOLUTION GROUP

Alcoholics Anonymous Corduff D15

Our Group meets every Saturday morning at 11am in the Corduff Community Resource Centre on Blackcourt Road and simultaneously online on:

Zoom Meeting ID: 898 5548 6555

Passcode: recovery

Our meeting is OPEN to anyone interested in learning about AA and how we help others affected by alcoholism. Alcoholics Anonymous is an international Fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem.

It is Non-Professional, Self-Supporting, Multiracial, Apolitical and available almost everywhere.

There are no Age or Educational requirements, membership is to ANYONE who wants to do something about their drinking problem.

WE CAN BE CONTACTED AT THE FOLLOWING:

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€8, 415 LOCAL LGBTQI FUNDING

Minister for Equality and Dublin West TD, Roderic O’Gorman has announced that €8,415 in funding will be granted to Dublin 15 organisation Empower under the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund 2021. The Fund will see a total of €1.5 million awarded to LGBTI+ organisations across Ireland.

Empower’s proposed project is to build LGBTI+ awareness among its staff and increase the organisation’s engagement with members of the LGBTI+ community in the Fingal area. It is one of 42 projects nationwide to promote the inclusion and welcoming of LGBTI+ people in communities across Ireland, address gaps in LGBTI+ services and support existing LGBTI+ community organisations.

With offices located in Clonsilla, Mulhuddart and Balbriggan, Empower supports people in the areas of community development, employment, training and health promotion, and responded to COVID-19 by offering its training and supports through online platforms.

Announcing the funding, Minister O’Gorman said:

“I am delighted to award LGBTI+ Community Services Funding to Empower, an organisation which has supported so

many individuals and families with access to jobs, education, training, mentoring and social inclusion. COVID-19 has been a challenging time for all of us, but particularly so for the more vulnerable and isolated communities, and I want to applaud the work of Empower in responding to the pandemic and adapting its services to deliver its training and supports online.

Community-based organisations like Empower play an important role providing LGBTI+ services and promoting the visibility and inclusion of LGBTI+ people in our cities, rural towns and villages. We know that LGBTI+ people can experience multiple discrimination barriers and isolation, and this additional funding will support Empower to engage those harder to reach communities, and support people from the LGBTI+ community, who may be experiencing digital poverty, to access a range of services and much needed supports online.

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Christmas Update for the Residents of Dublin 15

I hope you and your family are keeping well and getting ready for the holiday season. As we break for Christmas, I wish to take this opportunity to provide an update on some of the activities conducted and progress on some of the projects/initiatives throughout the year.



Age Friendly Programme hosted by FCC to celebrate Positive Ageing Week

Fingal County Council Age Friendly Programme 'Re-Connecting Communities by Reframing Ageing' an outdoor event was hosted at Hartstown, Blanchardstown to celebrate Positive Ageing Week. The highlight of this event was for us to reframe our attitudes towards ageing and begin the Global Campaign to combat ageism. It is one of the brilliant initiatives to reconnect with your locality in person.

The Tour de Corduff

On 20th Oct I was able to attend and support 'The Tour de Corduff' event organised at St. Patrick's Junior & Senior National School. A great initiative to raise awareness of mental health, Jigsaw services and fundraiser for Jigsaw.





Churchfields Site

The Church Fields Link Road project will open a greenfield site for the development of approximately 1,000 new-build homes of mixed tenure residential development including social, affordable purchase and cost rental homes with associated community facilities and sustainable transport provision. The urban design for the scheme is currently being finalised, an overview of the key elements of the proposals are:

- **1,000 Houses & Apartments**
- **60% Affordable and 40% Social**
- **Service site fund of €24million**
- **Green Infrastructure at design stage**
- **Housing currently being designed for planning application**



BASE Enterprise Park Electric Vehicle Charging points - Mulhuddart

Charging points are located to the rear of the Michael Gavin Building (MGB BASE Head Office). To use these points, you must first download and install the EO app on your smartphone or tablet and set up an account.



Church Fields Link Road and Cycle Network Project



Permission was granted and construction is underway for 800m of road including upgrade works to Wellview Avenue with high quality cycling and pedestrian facilities as well as an additional 1.5km of fully segregated cycling and pedestrian facilities linking into the school's campus on the Powerstown Road at Gaelscoil an Chuilinn and Powerstown Educate Together National School.

Please feel free to get in contact with me about any concerns within the community or follow my social media accounts for regular updates.

*Wishing you
and your
family a Merry
Christmas
and a Happy
New Year!*



The most powerful force in the universe

Albert Einstein reputedly once said “The most powerful force in the universe is compound interest”. It’s one of the biggest financial advantages and powerful tools that any of us can easily access and yet so many of us just continue to interrupt it and get in the way of it.



Put simply, money that earns money, earns money. Compound interest occurs when the interest that accrues to an amount of money in turn accrues interest itself. It’s no different if it is interest being earned on a deposit account, a dividend being paid on a share, a coupon being paid on a bond and so on. The principle is the same when the money you earn on the original amount is added to that original sum, which in turn creates a larger sum which can now earn interest. A few examples will illustrate the exponential power of allowing time take its course on the original sum of money.

If you started at age 20 putting away €361 each month, earning an annual rate of return of 6%, then at age 65 (typical retirement age) you would have €1 million. If you wait until 25 years of age, then the monthly amount required to reach €1 million by 65 would be €500. So you can see that when you start saving outweighs how much you save. Naturally the expected annual rate of return will depend on the level of risk you take but the concept remains the same.

Like many people, I like a coffee in the morning but let’s say from age 20 to age 65 you didn’t have that single cup of coffee each weekday. If the €3 that you spent on your daily coffee (5 days a week) was invested at the same rate of 6% per annum then you would have saved €166,396 by age 65. So you get the picture by now. The purpose of the examples is to show about compounding interest and opportunity costs. It’s just as valid to use this argument about other things you consume on a regular basis and the effect of diverting some of that disposable income towards savings which can compound over a long period of time. It’s the same force at work when

“If you started at age 20 putting away €361 each month, earning an annual rate of return of 6%, then at age 65 you would have €1 MILLION”

you plug your mortgage details into an online calculator to see the effect of ‘overpaying’ your monthly mortgage payments by a certain amount. This has the effect of reducing the term of the loan and the overall cost of capital paid during the lifetime of the loan.

The Rule of 72 is well known in finance for estimating an investment’s doubling time. When 72 is divided by the rate of return per period, you get the approximate number of periods (usually years) required for that investment to double in value. For example if an investment is compounding each year at a growth rate of 6% then that investment will double in 12 years (72 divided by 6).

So I hope you can see now the power of long term, uninterrupted saving where you just sit back and let compound interest do all the hard work!



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The firm was founded by Conor Martin in 2014 to provide a personal, professional and financial advisory service helping clients and their families to achieve their financial objectives. Conor has over 23 years combined experience in Capital Markets, Banking, Investment and Wealth Management working for Bank of America, AIB, Davy and Smith & Williamson throughout his career. He has an extensive financial products knowledge and advises on all aspects of pensions, wealth management, succession /estate planning, protection and retirement planning. Conor has achieved the internationally recognized Certified Financial Planner (CFP) accreditation. He is also a keen sportsman having won 2 All-Ireland Senior football titles playing in goals for Meath in the 90's. Conor also enjoys coaching underage GAA teams and is a self-confessed fine-weather golfer.

Lisa Coghlan BBS (Business & Management), QFA



Lisa is one of our advisors who has built up a comprehensive knowledge in the financial services industry through a variety of customer focused roles including business banking, conduct risk and mortgages working for AIB and the Central Bank of Ireland. Lisa is passionate about empowering and supporting clients to make clear & educated financial decisions for their immediate and future goals. Outside of work, Lisa enjoys staying active and spends her evenings in the gym, hiking or walking with friends. When she's not doing those things you can usually find her eating or travelling!

Councillor

John Walsh

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Dear Resident,

I hope you and your family are well and staying safe. I have included a brief update on some of my work recently.

CRISIS IN SCHOOL PLACES

Once again, many parents and children across Dublin 15 face long waiting lists for primary and especially post-primary schools. All the post-primary schools in the Castleknock-Carpenterstown planning area are heavily over-subscribed and have waiting lists for the next academic year. Yet again parents have been let down by bad planning on the part of the Department of Education and by decisions to allow large-scale development without school and community infrastructure.

Children must not be left without a school place in their own catchment area or forced to study for years in temporary accommodation. I am lobbying the Minister of Education and Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board to ensure that:

- A new Extension is provided as soon as possible for **Castleknock Community College** which took an extra class from last year to meet the shortfall in post-primary places.
- A site and permanent building plan are identified urgently for **Ériu Community College** which is in temporary accommodation in Hansfield.
- The new permanent building for the **Edmund Rice secondary school (ERST)** on the Phoenix Park Racecourse is fully in place by September 2022.

CLONSILLA DEVELOPMENT REJECTED BY FINGAL COUNCIL

Fingal Council has refused permission for the proposed development by Bartra Property on the Porterstown Road (**FW21A/0171**). I made a submission objecting to this development due to concerns expressed by residents at a local public meeting via Zoom. The Planning department refused permission on the basis that:

- "The proposed development by virtue of the proximity to site boundaries, lack of pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site to public transport facilities and potential interaction with the Dart+ West and Royal Canal Greenway projects, would fail to provide a satisfactory development strategy for the site and would be contrary to the Fingal County Development Plan."
- "The proposed development due to its scale, layout, massing and design, deficiencies in green infrastructure including insufficient open space and inadequate hedgerow and tree protection, would result in adverse impacts on biodiversity, the visual amenities of the area, overlooking of existing and the future residential units and would fail to provide a satisfactory standard of residential amenity."



PROTECTING THE LIFFEY VALLEY

Recent media reports indicate that three billionaire developers are seeking to initiate a development of 5,000 housing units in the Liffey Valley. This is a far-reaching rezoning plan which would lead to massive development in a sensitive ecological landscape and would devastate the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area. I will be opposing any rezoning here as it would compromise the distinctive character, priceless environment and natural beauty of the Special Amenity Area. There are extensive land banks in Dublin 15 already zoned for housing. The next development plan must prioritise delivery of affordable housing in our area without damaging green infrastructure.



SHACKLETON GARDENS WEEKEND OPENING

Following the opening of Shackleton Gardens to the public in September, I had made representations for the Gardens to open more at weekends to make this fantastic amenity more widely available. The Council confirmed recently that Shackleton Gardens will be open from 9am until 4pm every Sunday until further notice.

BLANCHARDSTOWN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Congratulations to everyone involved in organising the Christmas Market in Blanchardstown, including Fingal Events department, Scoil Bhríde Girls National School and all the local businesses and voluntary organisations which participated in the Market. It was a great opportunity to shop local and support our local businesses this Christmas.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

I would like to wish you a very happy Christmas and very best wishes for the new year.

John



Working with Cllr Mary McCamley

THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

When most people think of Christmas stories, they think of the many short stories by the great Charles Dickens such as; *The Chimes* and of course; *A Christmas Carol*. In the Dickensian style, there may be some hard times but everything works out for everyone and all live happily ever after.

The following short story by Hans Christian Andersen who, while making us appreciate what we have as Dickens does; he takes a far more Melancholic approach.

The Little Matchstick Girl - Hans Christian Andersen It was so terribly cold. It was so terribly cold. Snow falling, and it was almost dark. Evening came on, the last evening of the year. In the cold and gloom a poor little girl, bareheaded and barefoot, was walking through the streets. Of course when she had left her house she'd had slippers on, but what good had they been? They were very big slippers, way too big for her, for they belonged to her mother. The little girl had lost them running across the road, where two carriages had rattled by terribly fast. One slipper she'd not been able to find again, and a boy had run off with the other, saying he could use it very well as a cradle some day when he had children of his own. And so the little girl walked on her naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried several packages of matches, and she held a box of them in her hand. No one had bought any from her all day long, and no one had given her a cent.

Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along, a picture of misery, poor little girl! The snowflakes fell on her

long fair hair, which hung in pretty curls over her neck. In all the windows lights were shining, and there was a wonderful smell of roast goose, for it was New Year's eve. Yes, she thought of that!

In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected farther out into the street than the other, she sat down and drew up her little feet under her. She was getting colder and colder, but did not dare to go home, for she had sold no matches, nor earned a single cent, and her father would surely beat her. Besides, it was cold at home, for they had nothing over them but a roof through which the wind whistled even though the biggest cracks had been stuffed with straw and rags.

Her hands were almost dead with cold. Oh, how much one little match might warm her! If she could only take one from the box and rub it against the wall and warm her hands. She drew one out. R-r-ratch! How it sputtered and burned! It made a warm, bright flame, like a little candle, as she held her hands over it; but it gave a strange light! It really seemed to the little girl as if she were sitting before a great iron stove with shining brass knobs and a brass cover. How wonderfully the fire burned! How comfortable it was! The youngster stretched out her feet to warm them too; then the little flame went out, the stove vanished, and



It was late at night one bitterly cold Christmas Eve. Everyone was hurrying home but a little motherless match girl, who was still wandering about in the snow, trying to sell her boxes of matches to the passers-by. If only she could take a few pennies to her father to buy some food. But, alas, not a single box had she sold all day!

she had only the remains of the burnt match in her hand.

She struck another match against the wall. It burned brightly, and when the light fell upon the wall it became transparent like a thin veil, and she could see through it into a room. On the table a snow-white cloth was spread, and on it stood a shining dinner service. The roast goose steamed gloriously, stuffed with apples and prunes. And what was still better, the goose jumped down from the dish and waddled along the floor with a knife and fork in its breast, right over to the little girl. Then the match went out, and she could see only the thick, cold wall. She lighted another match. Then she was sitting under the most beautiful Christmas tree. It was much larger and much more beautiful than the one she had seen last Christmas through the glass door at the rich merchant's home. Thousands of candles burned on the green branches, and colored pictures like those in the printshops looked down at her. The little girl reached both her hands toward them. Then the match went out. But the Christmas lights mounted higher. She saw them now as bright stars in the sky. One of them fell down, forming a long line of fire.

"Now someone is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star fell down a

soul went up to God.

She rubbed another match against the wall. It became bright again, and in the glow the old grandmother stood clear and shining, kind and lovely. "Grandmother!" cried the child. "Oh, take me with you! I know you will disappear when the match is burned out. You will vanish like the warm stove, the wonderful roast goose and the beautiful big Christmas tree!"

And she quickly struck the whole bundle of matches, for she wished to keep her grandmother with her. And the matches burned with such a glow that it became brighter than daylight. Grandmother had never been so grand and beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and both of them flew in brightness and joy above the earth, very, very high, and up there was neither cold, nor hunger, nor fear—they were with God.

But in the corner, leaning against the wall, sat the little girl with red cheeks and smiling mouth, frozen to death on the last evening of the old year. The New Year's sun rose upon a little pathetic figure. The child sat there, stiff and cold, holding the matches, of which one bundle was almost burned. "She wanted to warm herself," the people said. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, and how happily she had gone with her old grandmother into the bright New Year.

THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas, Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus.

The English term Christmas (“mass on Christ’s day”) is of fairly recent origin.

The earlier term Yule may have derived from the Germanic or the Anglo-Saxon age, which referred to the feast of the winter solstice. The corresponding terms in other languages—Navidad in Spanish, Natale in Italian, Noël in French—all probably denote nativity. The German word Weihnachten denotes “hallowed night.” Since the early 20th century, Christmas has also been a secular family holiday, observed by Christians and non-Christians alike, devoid of Christian elements, and marked by an increasingly elaborate exchange of gifts. In this secular Christmas celebration, a mythical figure named Santa Claus plays the pivotal role.

The early Christian community distinguished between the identification of the date of Jesus’ birth and the liturgical celebration of that event. The actual observance of the day of Jesus’ birth was long in coming. In particular, during the first two centuries of Christianity there was strong opposition to recognizing birthdays of martyrs or, for that matter, of Jesus. Numerous Church Fathers offered sarcastic comments about the pagan custom of celebrating birthdays when, in fact, saints and martyrs should be honoured on the days of their martyrdom—their true “birthdays,” from the church’s perspective

The precise origin of assigning December 25 as the birth date of Jesus is unclear. The New Testament provides no clues in this regard. December 25 was first identified as the date of Jesus’ birth by Sextus Julius Africanus in 221 and later became the universally accepted date. One widespread explanation of the origin of this date is that December 25 was the Christianizing of the dies solis invicti nati (“day of the birth of the unconquered Christian writers frequently made the connection between the rebirth of the sun and the birth of the Son. One of the difficulties with this view is that it suggests a nonchalant willingness on the part of the Christian church to appropriate a pagan festival

when the early church was so intent on distinguishing itself categorically from pagan belief frequently made the connection between the rebirth of the sun and the birth of the Son.

A second view suggests that December 25 became the date of Jesus’ birth by a priori reasoning that identified the spring equinox as the date of the creation of the world and the fourth day of creation, when the light was created, as the day of Jesus’ conception (i.e., March 25). December 25, nine months later, then became the date of Jesus’ birth. For a long time the celebration of Jesus’ birth was observed in conjunction with his baptism, celebrated January 6.

Christmas began to be widely celebrated with a specific liturgy in the 9th century but did not attain the liturgical importance of either Good Friday or Easter, the other two major Christian holidays. Roman Catholic churches celebrate the first Christmas mass at midnight, and Protestant churches have increasingly held Christmas candlelight services late on the evening of December 24. A special service of “lessons and carols” intertwines Christmas carols with Scripture readings narrating salvation history from the Fall in the Garden of Eden to the coming of Christ. The service, inaugurated by E.W. Benson and adopted at the University of Cambridge, has become widely popular. None of the contemporary Christmas customs have their origin in theological or liturgical affirmations, and most are of fairly recent date. The Renaissance humanist Sebastian Brant recorded, in *Das Narrenschiff* (1494; *The Ship of Fools*), the custom of placing branches of fir trees in houses. Even though there is some uncertainty about the precise date and origin of the tradition of the Christmas tree, it appears that fir trees decorated with apples were first known in Strasbourg in 1605. The first use of candles on such trees is recorded by a Silesian duchess in 1611. The Advent wreath—made of fir branches, with four candles



denoting the four Sundays of the Advent season—is of even more recent origin, especially in North America. The custom, which began in the 19th century but had roots in the 16th, originally involved a fir wreath with 24 candles (the 24 days before Christmas, starting December 1), but the awkwardness of having so many candles on the wreath reduced the number to four. An analogous custom is the Advent calendar, which provides 24 openings, one to be opened each day beginning December 1. According to tradition, the calendar was created in the 19th century by a Munich housewife who tired of having to answer endlessly when Christmas would come. The first commercial calendars were printed in Germany in 1851. The intense preparation for Christmas that is part of the commercialization of the holiday has blurred the traditional liturgical distinction between Advent and the Christmas season, as can be seen by the placement of Christmas trees in sanctuaries well before December 25. Toward the end of the 18th century the practice of giving gifts to family members became well established. Theologically, the feast day reminded Christians of God's gift of Jesus to humankind even as the coming of the Wise Men, or Magi, to Bethlehem suggested that Christmas was somehow related to giving gifts. The practice of giving gifts, which goes back to the 15th century, contributed to the view that Christmas was a secular holiday focused on family and friends. This was one reason why Puritans in Old and

New England opposed the celebration of Christmas and in both England and America succeeded in banning its observance.

The tradition of celebrating Christmas as a secular family holiday is splendidly illustrated by a number of English "Christmas" carols such as "Here We Come A-Wassailing" or "Deck the Halls." It can also be seen in the practice of sending Christmas cards, which began in England in the 19th century. Moreover, in countries such as Austria and Germany, the connection between the Christian festival and the family holiday is made by identifying the Christ Child as the giver of gifts to the family. In some European countries, St. Nicholas appears on his feast day (December 6) bringing modest gifts of candy and other gifts to children. In North America the pre-Christmas role of the Christian saint Nicholas was transformed, under the influence of the poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (or "Twas the Night Before Christmas"), into the increasingly central role of Santa Claus as the source of Christmas gifts for the family. While both name and attire—a version of the traditional dress of bishop—of Santa Claus reveal his Christian roots, and his role of querying children about their past behaviour replicates that of St. Nicholas, he is seen as a secular figure. In Australia, where people attend open-air concerts of Christmas carols and have their Christmas dinner on the beach, Santa Claus wears red swimming trunks as well as a white beard.



Mulhuddart: A Brief History of two Local Landmarks

The well at Mulhuddart came to prominence during Norman times and is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. This is unique in that Holy wells are more often than not sacred pagan springs that have been converted to Christian shrines Another.

Unique point is that usually such shrines were given the name of a local saint. The well house was erected in the early 18th century by nuns from a Dublin convent. During that century huge crowds would amass here on the 8th September (Ladys Day), the feast of the birth of the Virgin Mary. Pilgrims came from all over north County Dublin hoping to get a cure for sprains or rheumatism.

Like most festivals around this time alcohol was sold and drunkenness and fighting became common. Donnybrook Fair being the most famous after its very negative first hand account by a British dignitary. In fact the word "Donneybrook" no being a synonym for a fight stems from this.

The parish priest at Blanchardstown tried to ban the sale of alcohol from the many tents erected at the holy well. In 1760 it was reported that Edward Campbell, a gentleman's servant, died from wounds received after a fight at Lady's Well.

Nearby this tragic scene is Mulhuddart cemetery Mulhuddart Cemetery is among the oldest cemeteries in Ireland still in use, with gravemarkers going back to the 1300s. The cemetery grew slowly around the grounds of the Church of Mary. The ruins of the church are still inside the cemetery. The graveyard surrounds the ruins of an old church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The church was returned as in satisfactory condition in 1615, but by 1630 Archbishop Bulkeley reported that the chancel and nave

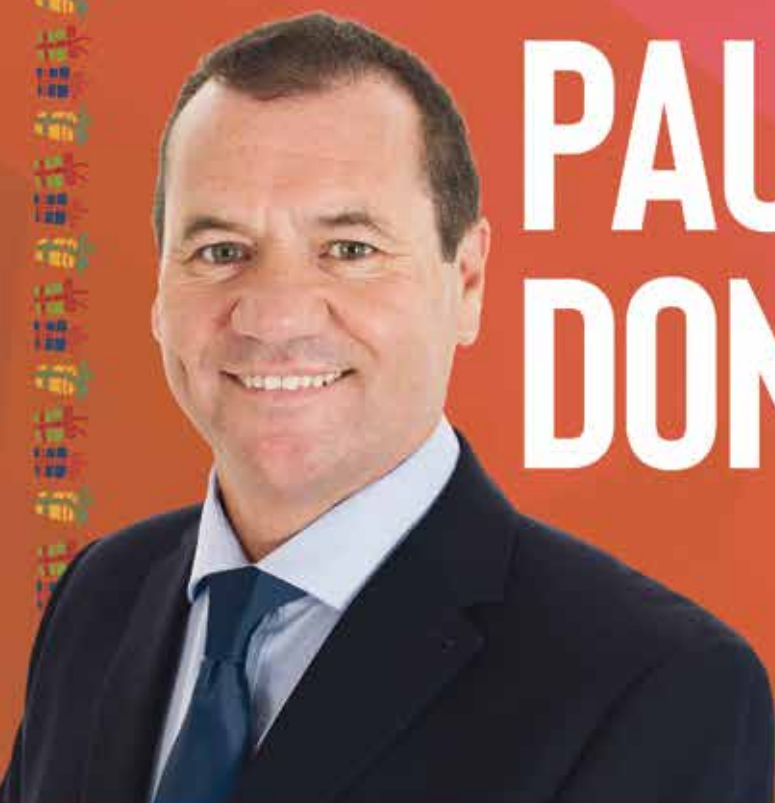
were in ruins. A note on the visit of Isaac Butler to the site was printed in the JRSAL in 1892. In 1690 a company of Col. Foulke's men were reputedly murdered while taking shelter there. Afterwards several of those deemed to have been responsible for the murders were executed. There is a local tradition that there was a tunnel connecting the burial ground to Luttrellstown Castle, 2 miles away. Burial place of Carmelites and Franciscans of the Third Order, 1811. Burial place of the Clergy of John's Lane, Dublin 1773. Burial place of the Rorke family of Tyrellstown House. A Mrs Rose Nugent is buried here who died in 1756 aged a hundred and ten.

Dr. Egan transcribes the epitaph on a headstone for Rose Corrigan, who died aged 19, erected by her husband Patrick of the Coombe, Baker, as follows:

*Most lov'd, the daughter dear,
Who ne'er knew joy, but friendship might divide,
Or gave her husband grief but when she died.
How vain is reason, eloquence how weak,
If Pat must tell what Rose cannot speak.
Oh let thy once lov'd Pat inscribe thy stone
And with a mother sorrow mix his own."*

Records for more modern burials begin in 1891 to the present day.

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Fingal celebrates diversity across the county with launch of “We Are Fingal Campaign”

Fingal County Council has today unveiled a new campaign around efforts to build a more socially integrated community that not only accepts and respects everyone's differences but celebrates the important contributions that residents make locally.

The “We Are Fingal” campaign will highlight the work the Council have been doing to help support its citizens and demonstrate the commitment it has to ensure it meets the needs of the hugely diverse population that can be found across the county. The campaign will run across social media channels as well as roadside billboards, digital displays in shopping centres, Tesco stores and in bus shelters in the Fingal region.

The Council is using the campaign to draw attention to its diverse and dynamic workforce, who bring different skills, talent and lived experiences to the work it does. It believes that having such a diverse team in place not only helps add richness to the workplace but helps the

council to better understand those it represents. It will also encourage citizens to participate in local life and help influence the decisions that affect their everyday lives.

Irish society has seen rapid immigration and changes over the last two decades, changes that have incorporated a much higher level of cultural and ethnic diversity. The impact of the increase of people from migrant backgrounds has brought many benefits into Fingal, including new businesses, cultural richness and new languages skills. While diversity brings plenty of opportunities, it can also present challenges. To that end, the Council continues to work alongside the community to ensure all the necessary resources are available to enhance the quality of life for all residents as Fingal continues to grow.



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INCREASED EXPENDITURE APPROVED FOR FINGAL IN 2022 BUDGET

In order to keep pace with continued growth across the county, Fingal County Council has adopted a spending plan of around €300m for 2022 which will help deliver improved services and see support remain in place to help reenergise economic development in a post-Covid environment. Agreed by Fingal's Councillors, the €299.8m budget will enable the Council to continue to provide the high level of services that have come to be expected in Ireland's youngest county.

The budget is an increase of around €13m from the previous year and means the equivalent of €1012 per head of population will be spent in a number of key areas such as roads, parks, housing and the environment. While it comes against a backdrop of ever-increasing demands for the wide array of services that the council delivers, there have been no rises made to commercial rates or Local Property Tax.

There is significant increases in the budget to help deliver a range of operational services across local communities, including road maintenance, traffic management, increased street cleaning, improvement works at parks and open spaces, as well as for projects as part of the Council's efforts to encourage active travel. Some €1.2m has also been set aside to assist the recovery and development of the tourism sector in Fingal.

The Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh said: "This is a very positive and well-balanced budget which will play an important role in Fingal's ongoing economic recovery. It confirms that we are committed to undertaking the necessary steps to help progress the best possible outcomes from our

citizens and that we can continue to encourage business development opportunities.

"In doing so, we have once again been able to increase the services and support available for the people of Fingal, something which is testament to the excellent work of the Council's leadership team and its staff. They have been at the frontline of our efforts to deliver our key priorities in order to make Fingal a great place in which to live, work and invest."

Welcoming the increased budget, Fingal County Council Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly said: "In bringing this budget to Council we wanted to ensure that we would not only be able to enhance the services we provide, but also be in a position to deliver several new initiatives that will benefit and support our communities.

"I am particularly grateful for the high level of engagement afforded to us by the Elected Members across the year as we kept them updated on the strategic issues we have faced and as we looked to shape our vision for the future.

"We have a great opportunity to enhance the quality of life for our citizens and also improve the way we deliver our services to meet their changing needs. A budget of nearly €300m



goes some way to helping support our local businesses and ensures that we can provide our towns and communities across the county the right environment to thrive.”

Investment in housing and building once again makes up the largest allocation of funding, accounting for about 30 per cent of the overall budget. The Council’s social housing stock is increasing annually due to additional properties provided under the housing delivery pipeline – it will manage in excess of 6,200 homes in 2022 and there is significant provision (€12m) made for funding the maintenance and improvement of the local authorities housing units across the year. Around €2.5m has also been budgeted to tackle homelessness as part of the council’s commitment to the work undertaken by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

The budget includes allocations to the following key areas:

- €89.1m – Housing & Building
- €32.7m – Road Transport & Safety
- €19.4m – Water Services
- €24.9m – Development Management
- €49.4m – Environmental Services
- €52.3m – Recreation & Amenity

- €1.5m – Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare
- €30.4m – Miscellaneous Services

While there was a reduced number of events held in 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions, funding allocated for 2022 will allow Fingal to host several key events which had been postponed or cancelled throughout the pandemic and means it will be able to further develop its culture and arts programme. That will see the highly popular Flavours of Fingal return in July 2022 and see further steps taken to develop key projects such as the Swords Cultural Quarter. There is also more funding available for heritage properties.

There are also further commitments made to caring for the environment, with investment into air quality, noise pollution, biodiversity initiatives, cycling schemes, and improvements to green spaces. Climate action is increasingly being integrated into the Council’s policies and plans, including a growing fleet of fully electric vehicles, LED streetlighting and other energy efficiencies.

The Budget comes on the back of Fingal’s three-year, €784m capital spending plan which was presented to Councillors in October. Money from the programme will be spread to approximately 230 projects across the County.

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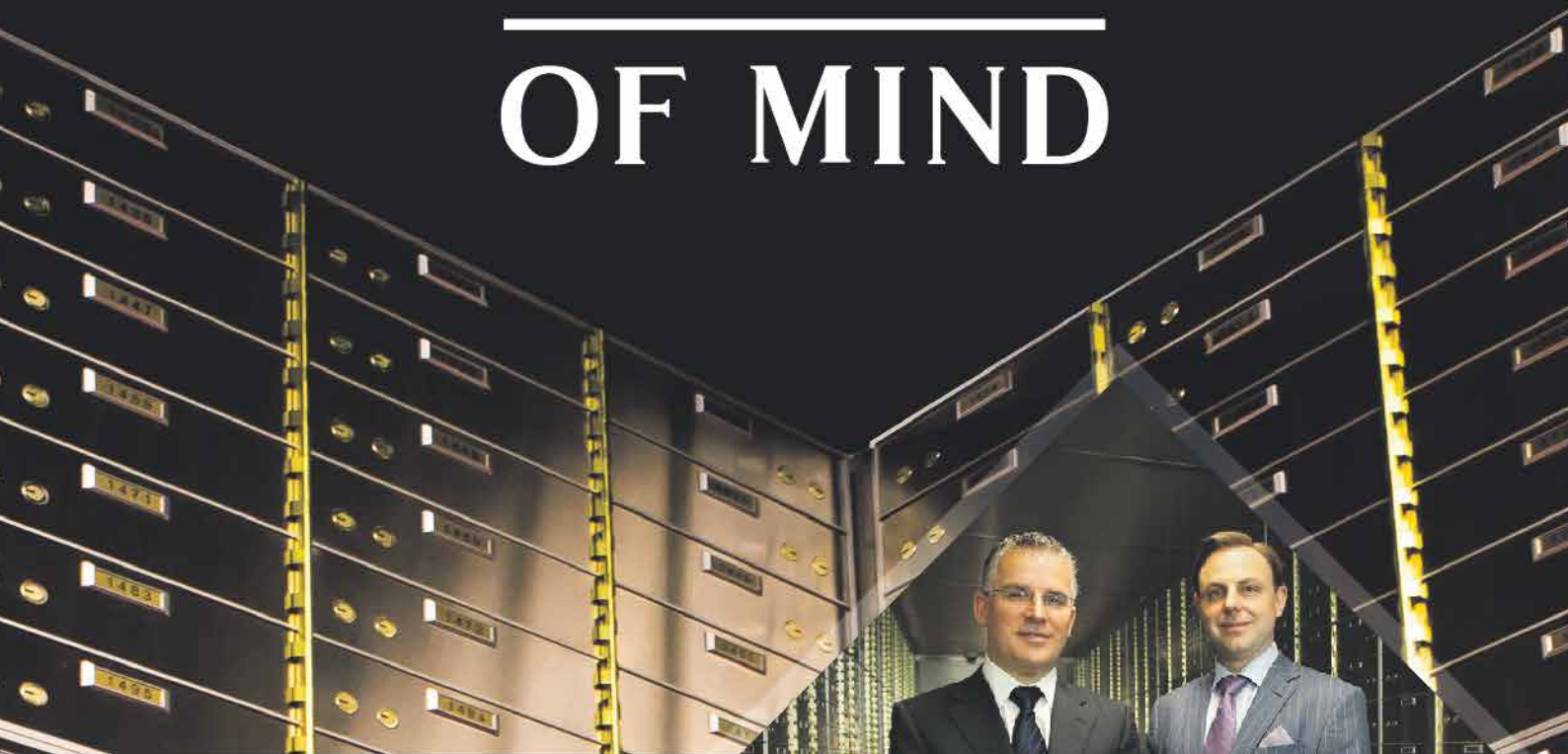




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Think Before You Flush

Friday November 19th marked UN World Toilet Day, a day to celebrate toilets and raise awareness of the 3.6 billion people worldwide living without access to safely managed sanitation.

To mark the day, the Think Before You Flush campaign asked the people of Dublin to value their toilet. Dubliners were asked to look after their toilets and environment by only flushing the 3 P's: pee, poo and paper, and putting everything else in the bin.

To launch the sixth year of the campaign, Clean Coasts and Irish Water invited the public to join the celebration of World Toilet Day on Friday November 19th.

Think Before You Flush is a public awareness campaign operated by Clean Coasts in partnership with Irish Water. The campaign addresses the issue of flushing unsuitable items down the toilet and highlights the consequences: blockages in our wastewater network and treatment plants; surface water overflows; and sewage related litter on our beaches and in our oceans, damaging our marine environment.

Recent research has found that one in four adults (24%) regularly admit to flushing items down the toilet that are known to cause blockages, causing detrimental effects on the wastewater network and the marine environment. Let's value our toilets and look after our environment by only flushing the 3 P's: pee, poo and paper. To celebrate World Toilet Day, Think Before You Flush are giving away a year's supply of sustainable toilet paper. To enter, pledge to Think Before You

Flush by heading to www.thinkbeforeyouflush.org.

Speaking about the campaign, Sinead McCoy, Coastal Communities Manager, Clean Coasts said:

"There are still so many people across the world that don't have access to proper sanitation, so for UN World Toilet Day we are asking people to re-evaluate their flushing behaviour, respect your toilet and Think Before You Flush. Only flush the 3 P's – pee, paper and poo – down the loo, and pop all other items into the bin. As when other items are flushed they cause issues for our wastewater system and can have a harmful impact on our natural environment."

Talking about the size and scale of the problem associated with flushing the wrong things down the toilet, Tom Cuddy, Irish Water said: "Every day people flush thousands of sanitary items such as wet wipes and cotton buds down the toilet instead of simply putting them in the bin. This causes blockages in our network, pumping stations and wastewater treatment plants. We clear approximately 2,000 blockages from our wastewater network every month."

Tom continued: "We are delighted to continue our partnership with Clean Coasts to deliver this important campaign together. We would like to thank the public for their ongoing support in the 'Think Before You Flush' campaign and together with Clean Coasts shine a light on the importance of World Toilet Day."

CHILDCARE: DELIVERING A BETTER DEAL

Roderic O’Gorman

The cost of childcare was a key concern for families in Dublin 15 during the 2020 General Election campaign.

Many families with small children, described to me that their childcare costs were equivalent to that of a second mortgage on their house. For others, childcare fees meant they couldn’t save anything at all, and it was hindering their chances of ever owning a home.

Uncertainty, rising costs in childcare, and the burden that places on families, is just one of the challenges ahead in delivering long-lasting reform in childcare. Since taking office as Minister for Children, I have been privileged to meet with dozens of dedicated childcare professionals across our constituency, who are passionate about their career, but who are struggling to make ends meet.

There is no disputing that these issues are a direct result of decades of non-investment from the State, and COVID-19 has only shone more light on the severity of that neglect, with families struggling to return to offices due to some of the highest parental fees internationally.

Making childcare more affordable

In Budget 2022, I took initial steps to addressing the

historic underinvestment and prioritised childcare. I secured a package of €716m for the sector (€78m more than last year’s budget), which includes a new funding stream for providers from September 2022, totalling at €200m in a full year.

Significantly, this new funding stream will be linked to a commitment from providers that they will freeze their fees. For the first time ever, the State will have some control over childcare fees – a very important first step towards reducing costs for parents.

To further reduce costs, we are also expanding the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) subsidy, and from September 2022, subsidies will extend to children under 15 years, benefitting up to an additional 40,000 children. We will also stop the practice of deducting hours spent in pre-school or school from the subsidised hours to ensure children from low income families can benefit.

Childminders, who are so important to so many families, also deserve to be brought into the scope of State-funded supports and regulation. This is why we launched the National Action Plan for Childminding 2021-2028, which sets out a phased approach to how we will do just that.



Improving pay and conditions for workers

I've always made it very clear that I do not believe that childcare professionals are paid enough for the work they do. And through our Workforce Development Plan just published, the forthcoming new funding stream and the Joint Labour Committee which I established earlier this year, all working together, I am confident we will see a strengthened and professionalised childcare sector. One where childcare professionals receive the recognition and rewards they deserve, and are not forced to consider alternative careers, or emigration.

The future funding of childcare

The Report of the Expert Group on a New Funding Model for Childcare, published this December, shows the breadth and scale of what needs to be done. It sets the pathway to how we will reduce the costs to parents, support the sustainability of providers so that they can deliver high-quality early learning and childcare, attract and retain a well-qualified workforce, and ensure no child is left behind.

Through the new funding model, through the joint labour committee, through the childminding action plan, through the workforce development plan and through additional investment, we will deliver a better deal for parents, providers, childcare professionals and most importantly, for children.

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CASTLEKNOCK TIDY TOWNS AWARDED AGAIN

Fingal County Council Congratulates Tidy Towns Committees on 2021 success



Fingal County Council is delighted to congratulate all Tidy Towns committees Castleknock included on their continued success following the announcement of the results of this year's awards on Friday, 12 November. The SuperValu Tidy Towns competition was presented at a scaled-back event held in the RDS and Ennis, Co Clare was the overall winner from a total of 847 entries to the competition this year. Rush committee were the National winner of the EPA Circular Economy Award, and were awarded a €1,000 prize to help continue the good work. Malahide again received a gold medal with 335 points in the G category (populations between 15000 and 25000). Skerries also received a gold medal in Category F (population between 10,001 and 15,000). Swords was awarded a silver medal in its Category H with 329 points and Lusk received a Bronze medal with 316 points in Category E (population between 5,001 and 10000). All the dedicated committees across Fingal were rewarded for their efforts by gaining more points than in 2019.

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh commended the Tidy Towns committees saying "It is wonderful to see the hard work of the Tidy Towns committees in Fingal being recognised with these awards. During my time as Mayor, I have seen their hard work and commitment in enhancing the appearance of their areas. Tidy Towns committees

have a hugely positive effect on the environment and fostering community spirit" Fingal County Council Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly said: "The work of the Tidy Towns Committees across the County make Fingal a better place to live, work and visit. Their efforts are hugely valued. Fingal's Operations Department are delighted with their positive engagement with these groups as they work together in keeping our communities litter free, improving the natural landscape and through their pollinator friendly planting improving biodiversity and contributing to climate action." Fingal County Council's Director of Operations Mary T Daly added: "I would like to thank all of the volunteers throughout the County who put their community first and continued to make their areas better places to live and work and to visit, all the while, adhering to social distancing and public health guidelines. It is fantastic to once again see their hard work has been acknowledged."

Millennium Park among Green Flag Winners

Fingal County Council has welcomed the news that as well as maintaining the much-coveted Green Flag Award at six locations across Fingal, the hard work undertaken at Santry Community Garden has also been recognised after picking up a Community Award. Green Flag Awards are the benchmark international standard for publicly accessible parks and green



spaces around the world. This year, around 2,300 public sites in 16 countries achieved Green Flag or Green Flag Community Award status.

Those Fingal sites to retain Green Flag status in 2021 are: Ardgillan Demesne, Malahide Demesne, Millennium Park in Blanchardstown, Newbridge House and Farm, Santry Demesne and St Catherine's Park.

In addition to Santry Community Garden, The Rock Garden in Swords also received a Community Award, the second year in a row it has managed to achieve the accolade. These Awards are acknowledgment of the efforts made by local community groups to improve a community green space.

Raising a Green Flag at Malahide Castle, Minister of State for Community Development and Charities Joe O'Brien thanked park staff and community volunteers for their hard work in securing the awards.

"Since 2018 the Department of Rural and Community Development has supported An Taisce with the expansion of the Green Flag into our community run spaces. By doing this we have been able to leverage the Green Flag Award values and standards for the benefit of our communities and their voluntary work."

Praising the achievements, Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh said: "I'm absolutely delighted that Fingal has received increased recognition for the number of locations that manage to exceed tough environmental standards in green space management, and excellence of visitor attractions.

"To now have eight sites is a really great reflection on our communities and all the work that is going on between Council and volunteer groups who are such a key part of ensuring these green spaces are accessible to all and that they can continue to provide the great benefit that comes with spending time in quality outdoor environments."

Kevin Halpenny, Senior Parks Superintendent at Fingal County Council said: "I would like to congratulate all our Green Flag recipients. Being able to meet the high standards demanded by the scheme is a real achievement and is testament to the hard work of our staff and volunteers to create outdoor spaces for people to enjoy."

Every year, the Green Flag Awards are judged by a peer

jury of green space experts, who volunteer their time to visit applicant sites and assess them against eight strict criteria, including horticultural standards, cleanliness, sustainability and community involvement. Public town parks, country parks, gardens, cemeteries, nature parks and green spaces are all eligible for the award.

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**12 DUBLIN 15 SCHOOLS
29 PIECE POP UP ORCHESTRA
10,000 CHILDREN**



In 2020 and 2021, Draíocht developed the hugely successful project **PLAY - Music in the Schoolyard**, in direct response to schools' Covid-19 restrictions, as we continued to seek meaningful, sustainable, innovative ways of engaging with our local schools. This outdoor schoolyard project saw Draíocht engage with over 4000 primary school children, with an ensemble of 5 musicians, playing a range of music from classical, contemporary to modern, in surprise performances at break times.

Now comes **PLAYGROUND ORCHESTRA** - An incredible schoolyard experience for Dublin 15 schools, presented by Draíocht in partnership with The Mobile Music School with funding from Fingal County Council and the Local Live Performance Programming Scheme from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. **PLAYGROUND ORCHESTRA** creates an unexpected, fun and extravagant 'pop-up' musical engagement experience for children and young people, through the placement of an impressive 29 piece orchestra and conductor, right into the spaces where children play. Into their school's





playground or their crèche play space. This placement allows both children and musicians to play alongside one another.

Over the course of 12 days and in the run up to the Christmas period, this whole-school project will expose approximately 10,000 individual children and young people, ranging in age from 4 to 18 years, along with their teachers, SNAs, support staff, parents, grandparents, and guardians to a wide range of instruments, sounds, genres, tempos and rhythms. All arranged and played by the highest calibre of orchestral musicians in the country. The repertoire, arranged by composer Paul Frost, will feature a range of Christmas favourites, as well as some traditional and classical pieces. This careful selection of music, supports the ability of the children/audience to connect, sing and respond to the music, while also allowing the introduction of new sounds and musical arrangements.

All performances are “pop-up” in design, occurring during the children’s yard/play time, ensuring that the children and young people are not expecting the performances to take place. This element of the project allows the children to engage with a greater autonomy than a traditional auditorium setting may allow - their yard space allowing them the freedom to move, sing and dance in an undirected manner.

Teachers of participating schools will be invited to use specifically designed resource pages that will support them to link the performance with the music element of the curriculum. It will also equip teachers with the vocabulary and knowledge to facilitate classroom discussion/

conversation after the performance.

Placing a live orchestra outside its usual spaces, creates an outreach model that allows, for many young people, a very first experience of an orchestra, an exposure to a wide range of instruments, and an incredible experience of live music. It also creates new spaces for music and musical performance. For schools and the community, it feeds into the development of aural literacy, critical thinking and local creative discourse.

Minister O’Gorman announces second phase of Little Library Initiative providing free book bags for all childcare services

- Launch of the second phase of the First 5 Little Library initiative sees reading materials made available to approximately 200,000 children
- First 5 Little Library book bags will be available to Early Learning and Care and School-Age Childcare services from libraries throughout the country to support children’s early language and literacy development.

Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Age Childcare (SAC) services are being invited to collect a First 5 Little Library book bag from their local libraries.

The First 5 Little Libraries book bags contain books chosen by librarians and materials developed to support storytelling and reading with children. There are two versions of the book bag available, depending on the age of the children participating in the ELC or SAC service.

The project supports ELC and SAC services to further develop little libraries in their settings with quality book titles in English and Irish. The focus of this initiative is to support early language and literacy development among children and build strong links between ELC and SAC services and libraries. ELC and SAC services and libraries are key resources in the community for children and families and this project supports them to work together to support young children’s learning.

Speaking about the project, Minister O’Gorman said:

“I am delighted to announce this next phase of the First 5 Little Libraries initiative, building on what has been a very positive first stage of the project. ELC and SAC services play such a fundamental role in children’s lives and have enormous potential to inspire and encourage learning of all types, and of course reading books opens up all kinds of exciting possibilities for children.

I am particularly happy that this next stage of the project now makes book bags available to School-Age Childcare services and to childminders, as well as providing additional book bags to Early Learning and Care services who also received them in the first round.

ELC and SAC services are at the centre of many children’s lives and it is important that they have high quality resources and materials. Everyone benefits, particularly children, by ELC and SAC services and libraries working together, and these closer links will help to encourage the love of stories and reading for a huge cohort of children”.

The project is a collaboration between the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA). €650,000 has been provided for the project from the three organisations.

The First 5 Little Library Initiative phase 2 will:

- Distribute a selection of books and resources to all ELC and SAC services, through the national network of libraries;
- Ensure this selected collection of books is also held in



- libraries to be loaned out to children and their families;
- Encourage membership and use of the library network among ELC and SAC services to facilitate integration of local community resources to support children's learning.
- Support the ELC and SAC services and families in use of this resource to encourage stories, reading and the love of books among young children.

Welcoming the Initiative, Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys T.D., said:

"As Minister with responsibility for public libraries, I'm delighted to be able to support the First 5 Little Library Initiative. This initiative aims to develop a consistent link between early learning and care settings and their local libraries to encourage a love of stories and reading among young children. Reading brings lots of benefits to children in terms of literacy and speech skills, logic, concentration and emotional health and reading time together can help to build healthy relationships. The first phase of the initiative which launched in May was a great success and it is fantastic to be able to expand the impact of the initiative by including School Age Childcare settings and childminders in this phase. I would encourage all of these service providers to drop into their local library and pick up their First 5 Little Library book bag so that they can begin to share the joy of reading with children."

Colette Byrne, Kilkenny Chief Executive and Chair of the Libraries Development Committee said:

"Local authority public libraries are proud to support this new phase of First 5 Little Libraries Book Bag initiative. Library staff work hard throughout the year to support children's literacy and reading development through the Right to Read programme, which this initiative forms part of. It is wonderful to see Little Libraries continue to grow and reach more children. Whether in Early Learning and Care, School-Age Childcare or in their local

library, we will continue to support families to discover all the benefits reading brings."

The distribution of the First 5 Little Library is being managed by the Local Government Management Agency, with book bags and resources have been issued to libraries and are ready to be collected.

Originally funding for this Initiative comprised of Dormant Accounts Funding of €100,000 from DCRD and €100,000 from DCEDIY. An additional €450,000 was allocated by DCEDIY on 8 December 2020 from Dormant Accounts Funding bringing the total funding for this initiative to €650,000.

Under the First 5 Little Library Initiative, Early Learning and Care and School Age Childcare services, including childminders, will be offered an opportunity to connect with their local library and receive a book bag. This happened in May and this is the second phase of the initiative. The network of 330 public libraries will also have copies of books selected for the book bags, which will be available to loan to parents and/or to remain in the library for story times and reading corners. First 5 Little Libraries book bags will be available in the Irish and English language.

First 5

First 5 (published in 2018) is a ten-year Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families. First 5 in its implementation plan includes over 150 actions and commits to major initiatives on family leave, children's health services, parenting supports, child-friendly communities and Early Learning and Care settings. The Strategy will enhance early childhood and make a significant contribution to the lives of young children, their families and society over the short, medium and longer term. For more information see: www.first5.gov.ie

Photographs of the event will be distributed by Maxwell Photography.



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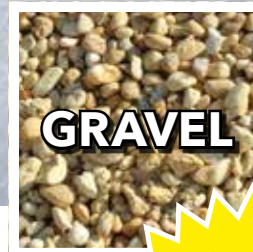
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Castleknock TidyTowns has launched a Virtual Heritage Tour of Castleknock

This novel look at Castleknock will appeal to everyone, young and old, whether a history or heritage buff or not.

The 15-minute video tour is particularly aimed at attracting the attention of first timers such as school children, young adults and the general public. Its goal is to make people aware of the rich heritage of Castleknock in a light and informative way and to whet their appetite to find out more.

By making history and heritage interesting and colourful and by using modern technology to deliver it, it is hoped to excite larger audiences into viewing it. As some of the sites of the tour are not usually open to the public the community will benefit from this project by being able to virtually access and engage with historical and heritage information about Castleknock, its buildings, folklore and stories. It will be educational to virtually see inside and around buildings which locals pass everyday and know little or nothing about.

Castleknock TidyTowns is one of the first in Ireland to produce such an online heritage tour of this type and hopefully it will encourage others to follow the lead.

Castleknock TidyTowns received a letter of support for the heritage tour project from President Michael D. Higgins in which he sent his best wishes for "this most impressive online heritage tour of Castleknock" and he continued "this virtual tour brings us into the heart of that great heritage, while reminding us of all that can be achieved when we combine the richest incentives from our past with the wonderful

possibilities offered by the present moment".

The tour features contributions from well-known local personalities including Bernard Brogan, senior Dublin GAA footballer and seven-time All-Ireland winner; Dr.Noëlle Healy, senior Dublin GAA ladies footballer and four-time All-Ireland winner and Sarah Hawkshaw, Ireland womens field hockey international and Irish Olympian.

Professionally made by local experts the high quality video includes drone as well as handheld video and still photos. It is enhanced by specially commissioned music. It features some of the main heritage sites of the area including the historic village of Castleknock; St.Brigid's Church of Ireland and its famed Harry Clarke stained glass window; the old Holy Well and water pump on College Road; Castleknock Castle ruins and tower in the grounds of St.Vincent's Castleknock College; the old post office and adjoining red brick houses c.1900 and Myo's pub – site of the former blacksmith.

The project which was funded by the Heritage Office of Fingal County Council and Castleknock TidyTowns, has no commercial sponsorship and was launched at an event attended by the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seana O'Rodaigh, Minister Jack Chambers, local government representatives and dignitaries.

The virtual heritage tour video is available online at: Castleknocktidytowns.com/heritage



RODERIC

O'GORMAN TD

DUBLIN WEST

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DISABILITY PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS FUND

Minister Rabbitte opens the first funding call for the Disability Participation and Awareness Fund 2021

In this first year of the Fund, €2.5 million will be made available to local authorities to implement opportunities for people with disabilities to partake in activities at local level and to remove barriers to community involvement. Grants of up to €80,000 will be allocated to local authorities to fund their own projects, or to support those of partner community organisations. The deadline for applications by local authorities is 3pm Monday 8th November. The Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Disability, Ms. Anne Rabbitte TD, today announced €2.5 million in funding under the first year of a new annual Disability Participation and Awareness Fund (DPAF). The purpose of DPAF 2021 is to provide

funding for Local Authorities across Ireland to support the participation of people with disabilities in local activities, to help remove barriers to community involvement, and to support the promotion and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in communities. A total of €2.5m will be made available in 2021 to Local Authorities to carry out projects in their local area. Grants under the Fund will be to a maximum of €80,000. This funding can be used for both once-off initiatives and short to medium term projects. Projects and initiatives should promote the rights of people with disabilities by removing barriers to the participation of people with disabilities

in their local communities, raising awareness of the UNCRPD, and increasing accessibility. Local authorities can use this fund directly, or in partnership with local organisations, in order to carry out actions that will:

- Remove barriers to, and improve the accessibility of community life or community activities, for people with disabilities
- Provide funding to networks and clubs at local level to expand the involvement and participation of people with disabilities in their activities Promote awareness, understanding, and implementation of the uncrpd Support disability capacity building within local authorities

Announcing the funding, Minister Rabbitte said: “I am delighted to announce the launch of the first Disability Participation and Awareness Fund and excited to see what initiatives can be progressed in this first year of the Fund. As Ireland continues its journey to full realisation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, action is required at every level of society. This Fund will help us reach people in their communities, improving their opportunities to participate more fully in local and everyday life. I encourage local authorities across

the country to consider what activities, projects and initiatives can be advanced through the Fund and to bring forward proposals and applications. Equally, I would encourage community organisations to explore what can be achieved in partnership with their local authorities. It is my intention that we will build on and learn from this initial year of funding for future calls”

Purpose of projects/activities The Disability Participation and Awareness Fund 2021 is open to local authority applicants around key themes to support the participation and inclusion of disabled people in local communities:

- Participation in community life i.e. sports, the arts, community groups, and so forth;
- Accessible information and shared public places;
- UNCRPD Promotion; and
- Disability Awareness and Capacity Building.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in 2006. Ireland signed the Convention in 2007 and ratified the Convention in 2018. The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

draíocht
 What's On
 2022



Written by Karl Harper / Coolmine Panto Group
Sleeping Beauty Panto
 Thu 06 — Sun 23 Jan 2022
 Main Auditorium €25 / €30 conc



Fulham: The New Play Company
Duck Duck Goose
 Sun 09 — Sun 16 Jan 2022, 8pm
 Online Streaming Event €12



Tommy Seabright Presents
Reeling in the Showband Years
 Wed 26 — Thu 27 Jan 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €32 / €30 conc



Neil Delamere - Liminal
 Fri 28 Jan 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €25 / €23 conc



Draíocht in association with Access Cinema
Dream Horse
 Wed 02 Feb 2022, 7.30pm
 Main Auditorium €7.50 / €5 conc



Written and performed by Mikal Mull
The Man In The Woman's Shoes
 Sat 05 Feb 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €18 / €16 conc



The Bee Gees Story Nights on Broadway
 Thu 10 — Fri 11 Feb 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €25 / €23 conc



20th Anniversary Tour
The Celtic Tenors
 Sat 12 Feb 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €30



Geel Connected
Wunderground
 Wed 16 Feb 2022, 12pm & 3pm
 Draíocht Studio €7 adults / €5 children



Draíocht in association with Access Cinema
The French Dispatch
 Wed 16 Feb 2022, 7.30pm
 Main Auditorium €7.50 / €5 conc



David O'Doherty Whoa Is Me
 Sat 26 Feb 2022, 8pm
 Main Auditorium €22



BYRNE
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Ireland submits milestone first report under International Disability Rights Convention

The Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Disability, Ms Anne Rabbitte, T.D., has published Ireland's first report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The report describes what Ireland is doing to protect and enhance the rights of people with disabilities.

Ireland ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2018. Ireland's Initial State Report under Article 35 of the Convention was formally submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by Ireland's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva on the 8th of November 2021. The report gives an article by article account of how the Convention is being implemented in Ireland. Publishing the report, Minister Rabbitte said: "Submission of our first report under the Convention is an important milestone for disability rights in Ireland. I am sincerely grateful to all those, in particular people with disabilities and Disabled People's Organisations, all of whom took part so willingly and constructively in the preparation of our report. "It is encouraging to see the progress that we have made across many areas. Equally, the report provides a useful reminder of where we still have work to do to ensure that people with disabilities in Ireland can enjoy their full rights in the spirit of the Convention. I'm also acutely aware that we need to progress the ratification of the Optional Protocol as soon as possible and I and the Government are committed to this. "The Government is committed to further advances in the protection and promotion of the rights of people with disabilities in the years ahead and I am pleased to be leading this work in cooperation with my colleagues across Government." The report notes work being done

across a range of areas to improve accessibility and to promote the full participation of people with disabilities, including:

- Adoption and implementation of the National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022;
- Enactment of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (ADMC) Act 2015, which provides for a comprehensive reform of the support system for people with capacity difficulties, abolishing wardship and replacing it with a decision support framework that is aligned with the aims of the Convention;
- Work underway to operationalise the provisions of the ADMC Act, including the establishment of the Decision Support Service, which will begin operating in June 2022;
- Enactment of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017, which confers official language status on Irish Sign Language;
- Introduction in early childhood care and education of the Access and Inclusion Model to support the inclusion of very young children with disabilities in mainstream childcare and early childhood education settings;
- Investment in accessible transport under the 'Transport For All' initiative;
- Increased investment in education for people with special educational needs both in mainstream and



in special settings;

- Increases in the numbers of people with disabilities in higher education under the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2021;
- Policy changes to support the participation of people with disabilities in employment following the Make Work Pay Report of 2017;
- The introduction of the EmployAbility model of supported employment services for jobseekers with disabilities;
- Well established, effective and inclusive consultation mechanisms for disability stakeholders on a number of levels, including an independent Disability Stakeholders Group, Departmental Consultative Committees and a newly established Disability Participation and Consultation Network.

The report acknowledges areas where further progress is required in law, policy and practice to give full effect to the Convention in Ireland, and outlines plans in respect of these areas, including:

- Development of an implementation plan for the Convention in Ireland.
- Ratification of the Option Protocol to the Convention.
- Development of legislation on Protection of Liberty Safeguards.

The report will now be considered by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Ireland will be invited to appear before a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the report.

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VEGAN RED CURRY

with fine beans, basil, bamboo shoots, squash & onion. Choose your protein-tofu or vegan chicken pieces. 767/658 cals 13.50

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with tofu & vegetables 1065 cals 13.50

VEGAN PAD PRIK HAENG

spring onion, chilli & cashew stir-fry. Choose your protein- tofu or vegan chicken pieces. 551/505 cals 13.50

VEGAN PAD KING STIR FRY

fresh sliced ginger & Thai mushroom stir-fry. Choose your protein - tofu or vegan chicken pieces. 431 cals 13.50

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fried potatoes, spicy tofu & veg, tossed in a salty, peppery seasoning 623 cals 10.50 (add vegan green curry dip 2.00)

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