

ISSUE 38
FEB/MAR 2023

Little

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

EDITORIAL

Welcome to our first edition of Little Village in 2023.

The weather gave us a cold start even though the long-range weather forecasts predict warmer weather due to global warming. Weather forecasts can be hit and miss so our cover feature this month looks at how animals and nature might be the best way to predict the weather. This is what our ancestors relied

on. Make of it what you will. We also take a dip into Old Moores Almanac to see what he got right in 2022 and what is in store for 2023. We will keep an eye on these predictions and report back in future issues.

Local news includes the loss of jobs at Argos and the creation of jobs by a US company. There is good news for residents with apartment defects and some interesting historical information about Blanchardstown.

We wish all our readers a happy and safe 2023.



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New International Surrogacy laws will give families legal certainty in Ireland

Parents of babies born through surrogacy will finally have their right to parentage enshrined in Irish law, Dublin Mid West's Fine Gael TD has said.

Deputy Emer Higgins welcomed yesterday's agreement at Cabinet for legislative amendments to be brought to the committee stage of the Assisted Human Reproduction Bill to legislate for international surrogacy.

Deputy Higgins said: "It was an honour to serve as the vice-chair on the Oireachtas Committee on International Surrogacy as we came together to examine the difficulties and challenges that parents through surrogacy face and how we can best protect and acknowledge them and their children.

"The amendments agreed yesterday will make sure that parents who went through surrogacy and who are not currently legally recognised by the State will be able to apply for parental orders so that they can make decisions for their children.

"I know this will be really welcome news for the many parents and advocates we met and engaged with as a committee," said Deputy Higgins.

"Currently parents in this situation can't make decisions for their children on things like school trips, medical care, medication, or having their photos taken.

"And in situations where a relationship may break down second parents have been at the mercy of the child's biological father as to whether get access or custody of their children which can lead to extremely nasty and stressful negotiations for some mothers.

"But now, parents in this situation will be able to go through the court to secure access and custody of their children.

Deputy Higgins continued: I've met a number of local families in Dublin Mid West who have been impacted by our old-fashioned laws but now Ireland will have a very high ethical legislative framework to provide protections for families and surrogates when Irish children are born via surrogacy abroad.

"And I have to commend my colleagues in Fine Gael, especially Senator Mary Seery Kearney for her continued hard work in this area to get us to where we are now.

"I hope now that these legislative amendments will move quickly through Oireachtas and we will see the first applications to the Courts being made next year," concluded Deputy Higgins.



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



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Minister Roderic O’Gorman welcomes record number of families benefitting from increased National Childcare Scheme subsidies

In January 2023, subsidies under the National Childcare Scheme increased to €1.40 per hour of childcare, per child. This is an increase of 90c on the previous rate and means that parents using full-time registered early learning and childcare services will benefit from an average 25% reduction in their childcare costs.



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.

Welcoming the increased subsidies under the National Childcare Scheme, Minister Roderic O’Gorman said:

“Since being appointed Minister for Children, I made clear my intention to make childcare more affordable for parents, and with this increase in the National Childcare Scheme subsidy, due to the additional €121m I secured in Budget 2023, I am delivering on that promise.

This week, I announced that more than 105,000 children, and their families, are benefitting from the National Childcare Scheme – an increase of 95% compared to this time last year. I’m delighted that the increased subsidies have led to a huge growth in demand for the NCS, meaning more parents

than ever are getting more affordable childcare.

I’ve spoken to a number of parents across the constituency who have told me how beneficial these increased savings on childcare are for them and their family. Many parents who felt they had to choose between childcare and returning to work have said that they now feel that they can do both. I want to continue supporting families with children, and will be working within Government on how we can bring even further affordability for parents in future budgets.”



*Roderic O’Gorman
TD and Minister for
Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration,
and Youth*

Blanchardstown Historical Records

The name Blanchardstown comes from the Blanchard family, who were granted their estate sometime between 1250 and 1260.

The name 'Blanchard' is thought to come from the French word blanch, meaning white, and could refer to white or fair hair.

Much of present-day Blanchardstown was once covered by dense forest, which was known as the Great Scaldwood. The forest stretched from the River Tolka to beyond Coolmine. It was home to wolves and wild boar, which were hunted by the local gentry. Following years of war and rebellion during which the number of hunters waned, the wolf population grew to such an extent that it posed a danger to local people and livestock. In 1652, the



authorities ordered a wolf cull. In 1662, the Hearth Money Act was passed by the Irish Parliament. Each house that possessed a fireplace or hearth was obliged to pay a tax of two shillings every year for each one. Official records contain the names of those who were liable for the tax in Blanchardstown. Amongst them was a Richard Dempsey who had to pay four shillings, as he had two fireplaces in his home.

The Parish Register for Blanchardstown goes back to the 1750's. This is a great record of the different families who lived in the area. From these records, we know which surnames were common in Blanchardstown over 250 years ago. Some common names were O'Brien, Mulligan, Corrigan, Sherlock, Powderly, Mahon, Horgan, Bronan, Dixon, Staunton, Halfpenny and Carpenter.

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Dear Resident,

My initiative for 2023 is to get as many ongoing projects completed as soon as possible. I have many innovative ideas that I will be sharing with the community in the coming weeks. I will be focusing on the areas that lack amenities.

Punam

Schools

My initiative for 2023 is to ensure that the site in Hollywoodrath for the primary school must also have a secondary school. The population in Hollystown is fast rising, especially with new houses and apartments being built in this area in Dublin 15. The contracts have been drafted and signed by the developers. The primary school will consist of 24 classrooms extending to 2 storeys with a ground floor area of c.4,232 sq.m. It will also incorporate a 2 classroom special educational needs unit in addition to all ancillary pupil and teacher facilities. There will be external hard and soft areas and 2 ballcourts as well built.

Fingal Enterprising Women's Network

LEO Fingal hosted the fourth in-person Fingal Enterprising Women's networking event of 2022 "Circle of Friendship" on Thursday the 8th of December. This was an opportunity for all women to come together in the world of business.

Dunsink

The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS)

is part of a joint bid to have DIAS Dunsink Observatory as a designated UNESCO Site of World Heritage. There are great opportunities to develop the Dunsink Observatory as a community amenity including reinstatement of the historic gardens. Fingal County Council has been working on optimising the use of this site as an amenity and national asset.

Dunsink is an area that allows for sustainable population growth and affordable housing aligned to national strategic objectives. Dunsink has a publicly owned landbank. It contains a potential for transit orientated development including residential

& mixed-use neighbourhood. It also provides integrated transport facilities.

Grants Available

Fingal Artist Support Scheme 2023 - This is for projects or initiatives which will take place between 1st May and 31st December 2023. Closing date for receipt of applications: Friday 24th February 2023 at 4.00pm: www.fingal.ie/artist-support-scheme

Loan Schemes

1. If you would like to apply for business schemes - LEO Fingal provides a loan scheme through its partnership with Microfinance Ireland, with "soft" loans of up to €25,000. This loan scheme offers a substantial way of getting your business started in a more relaxed and efficient way: localenterprise.ie.

2. Trading Online Voucher Scheme: This initiative continues to support small businesses by allowing them to enhance their online offering by providing a grant for €2,500: localenterprise.ie.

EVENTS

I had the privilege to attend the launch of 50 new jobs in Dublin 15 by with An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar by Irish Telecoms provider Viatel Technology Group in Blanchardstown-Dublin 15. I have always been an advocate of creating more jobs in the technology sector. The future is becoming more digital and therefore every industry will have to be geared towards digital transformation.



Lanesborough Park – Meakstown Dublin 11

Part 8 planning permission was previously received for proposed works within the park. The play space construction works are scheduled to commence this year, they will deliver a greatly enhanced play offering for the benefit of the community. This is great news for the residents of Meakstown who are looking forward to some of these projects to be completed. Tree works in Lanesborough Park commenced on the 7th of February 2023 for a duration of three days. The schedule of works has been drawn up by a consulting arborist with the aim of ensuring tree health and vitality to enable the upcoming construction of a play space within the park.



Active Travel Funding

National Aquatic Centre to Ongar Village	€220,000
Damastown to Clonsilla Cycle Route	€100,000
Clonee to Blanchardstown Shopping Centre	€235,000
Castleknock to Dunsink Lane	€185,000
Chapel Road to An Tagasc Building Active Travel	€150,000
Churchfields Link Road	€1,000,000
Castleknock to Dunsink Lane	€185,000
Ladyswell National School	€200,000
St. Luke's NS Tyrrelstown Dublin 15	€200,000

COMMUNITIES INTEGRATION FUND 2023

€500,000 will be made available to local community-based projects nationwide to support the integration of migrants. Grants of up to €5,000 will be allocated to successful organisations to support integration initiatives.

The Communities Integration Fund celebrates the rich cultural diversity within local communities and enables local community-based organisations across Ireland to play a greater role in supporting the integration of migrants. Successful organisations stand to receive grant funding of €1,000 – €5,000 to support local integration initiatives

The closing date for receipt of applications is 12 pm on Wednesday 15th March 2023.

Applicants can access a detailed guidance document and complete an online application form here

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CommunityIntegrationFundApp2023>

Blanchardstown Developments

A greenlight go ahead has been given for 911 new apartments in the Blanchardstown area. This development will cater to a wide range of people including students and the younger generation. This seven-story affordable build will contain within it, car spaces, a place of worship and a community facility as well as bike spaces.

YOU CAN VOTE

If you are over 18 years of age and a resident in Ireland, you can vote in the Local elections and have a say in your local area. Local elections decide which individuals represent your area in the local council. The council makes decisions on public services and facilities in your area. Make sure to have your say. If you wish to be included on the Electoral Register and register to vote you can submit a paper application form or apply online at the following website: www.checktheregister.ie

Microenterprise Loan Fund Scheme

The Fund provides support in the form of loans for up to €25,000, available to start-up, newly established, or growing microenterprises employing less than 10 people, with viable business propositions, that do not meet the conventional risk criteria applied by banks.

To Be Eligible For A Loan Your Business Must:

- Be based in Ireland
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<https://info.microfinanceireland.ie/>

If you have any queries and you think I can help, please let me know via the contact details outlined in this update.



Garda Inspectorate launches its Domestic Abuse Victim Survey

The Garda Inspectorate has today launched an on-line survey to gauge how victims of domestic abuse are dealt with by the Garda Síochána.

This survey is part of an on-going inspection into the effectiveness and efficiency of the Garda Síochána's response to domestic abuse. Deputy Chief Inspector Pauline Shields, who is leading this inspection said, "Hearing from victims and survivors of domestic



abuse is an important part of our inspection. I would encourage anyone who has been a victim of domestic abuse to take this opportunity to tell us about their experience with the Garda Síochána. She continued, "I want to assure people that the survey is completely anonymous and any information supplied to the Garda Inspectorate will be treated in the strictest confidence."

The Inspectorate will refer to the results of the survey in a published report relating to this inspection.

This inspection is examining the Garda Síochána's approach to tackling domestic abuse at both strategic and operational levels, with reference to the best standards of comparable police services.

The survey will run for a period of four weeks from Monday 9 January 2023.

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Dear Resident

I have included some updates below on issues that I have been working on. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

BRIGID'S DAY

It was very positive to see the craft and storytelling workshops to mark Brigid's Day for the first time in Mountview and Fortlawn Youth and Community Centre – well done to the volunteers, community centre staff and the Fingal events team for all their work to celebrate the new public holiday.

I have asked the Council to consider holding a Festival to mark Brigid's Day in Blanchardstown in 2024 as there is a strong cultural and educational association with St Brigid in Blanchardstown and Castleknock, highlighted by the placenames for schools and community centres. A motion which I proposed on this was agreed at the Local Area Committee for Dublin 15 in January.

SHACKLETON MILL

I have asked Fingal Council to bring forward plans for the conservation and redevelopment of Shackleton Mill as an industrial museum and local heritage centre.

Motion: Councillor J. Walsh

“That the Chief Executive updates this Committee on the Council's plans for Shackleton Mill and to bring forward proposals for appropriate use of Shackleton Mill as a heritage museum and visitor centre.”

The response indicated that an updated Conservation Plan for Shackleton Mill was drafted by a conservation led team in 2022. A section of the draft conservation plan identifies priority actions to protect both the building fabric and the collections of artifacts which are relevant to the building's historic use. The Fingal Capital Plan 2023-25 has committed a total of €600,000 to support the implementation of the priority actions focused on addressing the priority protection of building fabric and collection issues. While a definitive plan for a heritage museum and visitor centre is not developed at this stage, options for raising public awareness of the building's significance and the development of proposals for the long term future use including a dedicated museum, a digital interpretive centre, physical access for guided heritage tours and consideration of appropriate uses are being examined at the moment.

While conservation of the historic Mill is the first necessary step, I will continue to lobby the Economics and Heritage departments to bring forward plans for redevelopment of the Mill as a museum and cultural centre.



GUINNESS BRIDGE

It is welcome news that conservation works are starting on the Guinness (Silver) Bridge over the Liffey. Conservation works on the Guinness Bridge commence on Monday 13th February and are expected to take five months to complete. Fingal Council have appointed Jons Civil Engineering Co Ltd to carry out the essential conservation works on the metal bridge structure and stone abutments. A major overhaul of the structure is required to preserve the bridge and abutments as they currently stand. The project, which will cost almost €1.5m, is included in the Fingal Capital Plan. Scaffolding and wrapping of the bridge is required for protection during repair works and temporary traffic restrictions will be necessary on Lower Road for five months.

There is a great opportunity to re-open the Guinness Bridge as a pedestrian and cycle link over the Liffey and this should be prioritised by Fingal Council. A relatively modest investment in re-opening the bridge would make a dramatic difference to active travel within the Liffey Valley.

SCHOOLS

- It is very disappointing that no progress at all has been made by the Department of Education to plan for an Extension for **Castleknock Community College**, despite public commitments given by the Minister for Education in 2021 when CCC agreed to take an extra class of 30 students for five years.
- The additional accommodation is also crucial to allow CCC to offer new special classes to provide for children with additional educational needs in the area. Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB have an obligation to make the case for the Extension and the inaction by public bodies on providing essential educational accommodation for the school is disgraceful.
- A radical upgrading of services for children with additional educational needs is urgently required in Dublin 15 to ensure that special classes are offered in all schools and that the state meets its obligations to children with additional educational needs under the EPSEN Act..
- The current location for **Danu Community Special School** is inappropriate and unsafe for children in the school and planning for the first phase failed to take account of the legitimate concerns of parents and the school community. The Department of Education should provide a permanent, purpose built building for Danu at the Institute of Horology, Blanchardstown.

I will continue to campaign for the Extension for CCC and for essential facilities and services for children with additional educational needs across Dublin 15.

Locals living with apartment defects to get redress

Government approves establishment of defects scheme for apartments and duplexes.



Deputy Emer Higgins, TD for Dublin Mid West, has welcomed the government approval of a provisional scheme to provide redress to people living in apartments with fire safety, structural safety and water ingress defects.

The legislation will provide a statutory basis for the establishment of a remediation scheme aimed at protecting the safety and welfare of those living in apartments or duplexes with such defects that occurred during construction between 1991 and 2013.

Deputy Higgins said: "Unfortunately, there are quite a few apartments in the local area that are plagued by construction defects, through no fault of the owner or the renter.

"I have been engaging closely with impacted residents in the area as well as the construction defects alliance and I really welcome that we now have a plan for providing redress to those living in defective apartments.

"The proposed measures will ensure people who have already paid or are paying towards remediation costs will be included and buildings posing the highest risk will be prioritised for remediation first.

"A whole building approach will be taken, ensuring common areas and shared spaces are also remediated where required to the relevant standard," deputy Higgins continued.

"There are some significant legacy issues in the area and apartment residents are facing huge financial burdens and massive bills to fix these issues which were never their fault to begin with.

"I know from engaging with local people who have been affected that this has caused a massive amount of stress and anxiety and I'm glad that we now have a plan to provide them with the redress they deserve.

"It will also be important that we continue to strengthen our building control system so that similar issues don't arise in the future," concluded Deputy Higgins.



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Argos to close all Ireland Stores

Argos will shut all of its stores in the Republic of Ireland in June this year, the company said on Thursday, following a "period of careful consideration". This includes Argos stores in Blanchardstown and Liffey valley.

The move is expected to result in 580 employees losing their jobs and the closure of 34 sites across the country. The company, which sells electronics, gadgets, and toys, said it would propose an enhanced redundancy package for the affected workers during negotiations with Mandate, the trade union that represents retail workers in Ireland.

Argos said the package would go "well beyond its statutory obligations".

Following a review, the company said it had concluded that the "investment required to develop and modernise the Irish part of its business was not viable and that the money would be better invested in other parts of its business".

The company operates in the Republic of Ireland with a "significantly different" business model to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, according to Argos, meaning the closures would not affect any of the company's other branches.

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Andy McClelland, Argos Ireland Operations Manager, said: "We understand this is difficult news for our customers and colleagues.

"As with any major change to our business, we have not made this decision lightly and we are doing everything we can to support those impacted."

Argos stores will remain open to customers in the Republic of Ireland until 24 June 2023.

Before that date, the company will begin winding down its operations - it will stop taking orders from customers via the Argos website or its home delivery service after 22 March 2023.

The aftersales, returns, refunds and exchanges policy will continue to apply until Argos stores close.

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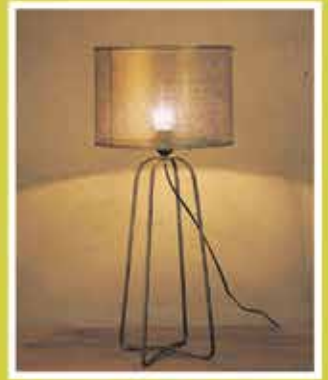
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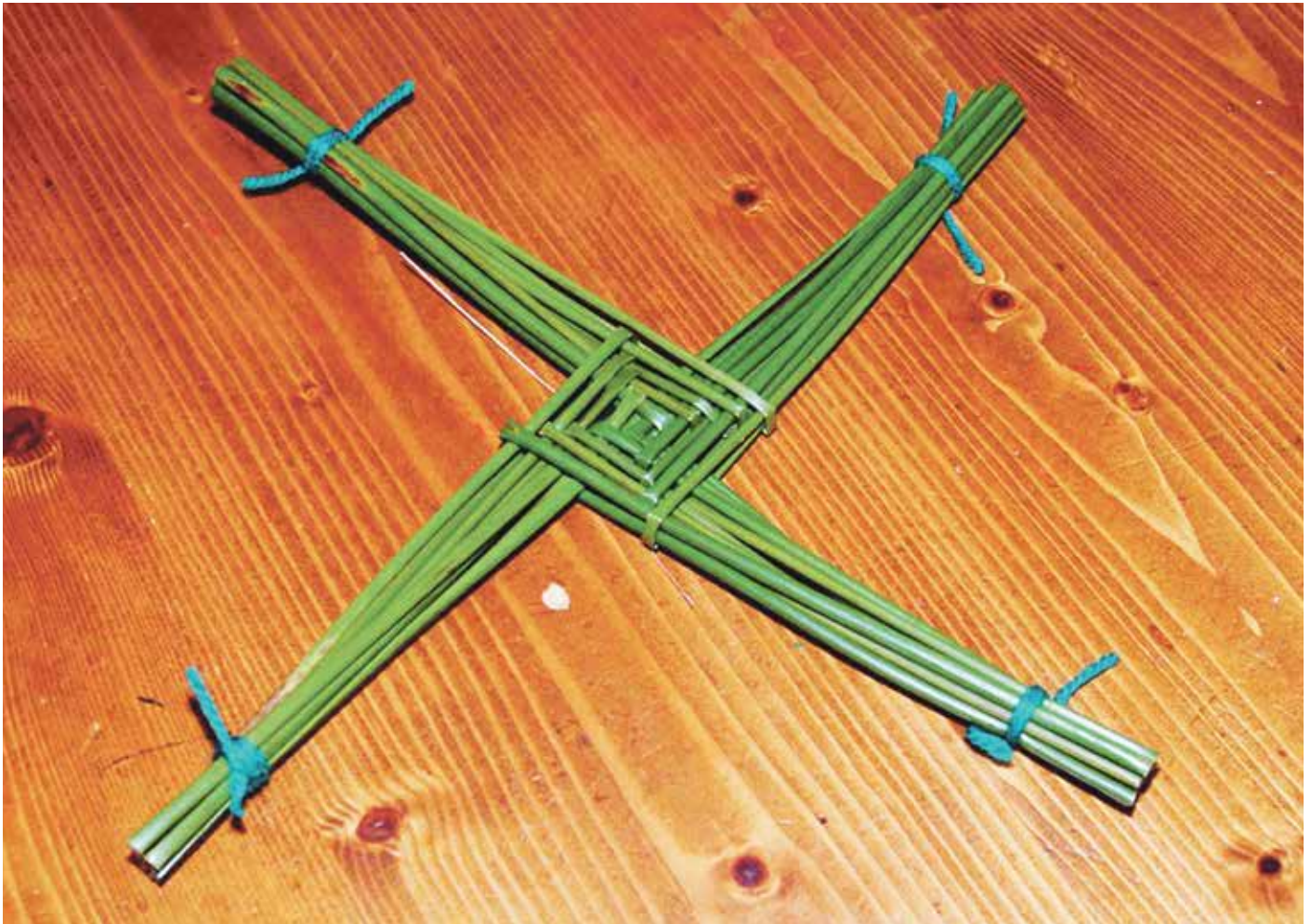
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St Brigid's Day & The Weaving of Rushes

We are at the end of what always seems like a very long January and where Spring officially begins!!!!



February is now upon us and one of our favourite days from school was spent, "Trying" to make a St. Brigid's Cross! Saint Brigid's Day is a feast day that celebrates the iconic Irish Saint and marks the beginning of Spring. The day itself is believed to have its origins within a Pagan festival called "Imbolc", which was then adopted by Christianity.

Imbolc referred to the coming birth of the spring lambs and observed in Gaelic Ireland during the Middle Ages. Now we celebrate it as the feast day of St Brigid who has been called the "Pearl of Ireland" and forms the Trinity of the country's Patron Saints along with St Patrick and St Columcille.

Who Was St. Brigid?

Born in Dundalk in 450 AD, St. Brigid is regarded as one of the earliest Christian nuns. She founded many monasteries, most notably the settlement at Kildare which she founded around 480. She is said to have created the first unique cross which now bears her name.

St. Brigid died on 1 February 525 and this date is still

celebrated as St. Brigid's Day. She was buried in a tomb in the Monastery she founded in Kildare. Her remains were later moved to Downpatrick. There, she was laid to rest with Ireland's other Patron Saints, St. Patrick, and St. Columcille.

St. Brigid's Day

The custom on this day is for a St Brigid's Cross to be made; a four-armed cross woven from rushes grown in local fields. When completed, these crosses are traditionally located over windows & doorways in an Irish home to keep all inhabitants safe from harm for the year ahead. It is thought to keep evil fire and hunger from the home in which it is displayed.

The St. Brigid's Cross has taken its place alongside the Harp, Shamrock and Celtic Cross as one of Ireland's most recognizable symbols. Its intricate and woven design make it a classic piece of Ireland, which celebrates St. Brigid to this day.

Happy St. Brigid's Day to you all and good luck making your own crosses!

Slán go fóill!

Thousands of families to benefit from substantial reductions in early learning and childcare costs.

- New subsidy rates under the National Childcare Scheme effective from 2 January.
- Record numbers of children now benefitting from supports under the Scheme.
- All families encouraged to ensure they are availing of their entitlements under the Scheme.

Roderic O’Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth today welcomed the introduction of new subsidy rates under the National Childcare Scheme, which is set to substantially reduce out of pocket costs for early learning and childcare for thousands of families across the country.

From 2 January, the minimum hourly subsidy under the National Childcare Scheme for all children under 15 will be €1.40 – an increase of €0.90 per hour from last year.

For families using Tusla-registered early learning and childcare, this subsidy increase represents further cost reductions of €2,106 (or a reduction of €3,326 in total) off the annual cost of early learning and childcare for each child.

The change to the National Childcare Scheme is being backed by €121 million secured in Budget 2023 by Minister O’Gorman, bringing total funding for the Scheme to €358 million this year.

Record numbers of children are now accessing supports under the Scheme. More than 98,000 children are currently in receipt of support, representing an 82% increase in the number of children for the same period last year.

Welcoming today’s changes to the National Childcare Scheme, the Minister said:

“This Government is delivering on its promise to make high-quality early learning and childcare more affordable for families and accessible to all children.

Families can now benefit from significant increases in the National Childcare Scheme, helping to ease the financial pressure associated with early learning and childcare in Ireland.

Increasing the subsidy that families can avail of under the National Childcare Scheme is the best way to ensure all families with children in Tusla-registered early learning and childcare can benefit from the Government’s €1 billion investment in early learning and childcare for 2023.

More families than ever before are already availing of the National Childcare Scheme, offsetting their early learning and childcare costs, and I am confident that with this additional investment starting today, we can bring further benefits to these families and thousands more like them.

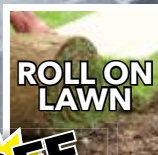
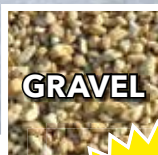
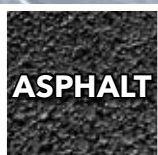
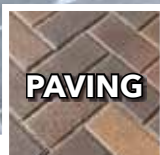
I encourage all eligible families to avail of these supports on offer, by visiting www.ncs.gov.ie, calling the Parent Support Centre on 01 906 8530 or talking to their early learning and childcare provider”

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Why your cat might be a better weather forecaster than Met Éireann



Irish people certainly talk about the weather a lot. This is not surprising as we have such a changeable climate; it has been often said that in Ireland one can experience the four seasons in one day.

Whilst we talk about it, how good are we at predicting it?

There is a lot of folklore about predicting weather and it turns out, some of it is true or partly true. Here are some examples of weather folklore and why animals know more than we do.

A year of snow, crops will grow.

Fact: A several-inch layer of snow contains more air than ice. Trapped between the interlocking snowflakes, the air serves to insulate the plants beneath it. When the snow melts, the water helps to keep the ground moist.

If there is thunder in winter, it will snow 7 days later.

Partly True: According to a meteorologist in Washington, D.C., this is true about 70 percent of the time, especially from the East Coast to the Plains. Thunder in winter is an anomaly often caused by a big dip and a big rise in the jet stream. When the next weather system arrives several—if not exactly 7—days later, temperatures may still be cold enough to cause the moisture in the system to fall as snow.

A ring around the Moon means rain will come real soon.

True: A ring, or halo, around the Moon is caused when the light of the Moon refracts through ice crystals present in high-level clouds. Although these clouds do not produce precipitation, they often occur in advance of an approaching low-pressure system,

which often brings precipitation in the form of rain or snow.

Here are a few clues to making your own predictions:

Pay attention to winds and clouds.

These are the big predictors of changes in barometric pressure and resulting weather. For instance, the adage “No weather is ill, if the wind be still” indicates a high-pressure system, a broad area of descending air characterized by calm winds and little cloud formation.

Observe sheep, cats, and cows.

Their bodies are affected by changes in air pressure. When rain is on the way, old sheep turn their backs to the wind, cats sneeze, and cows lie down. They become restless when stormy weather approaches and may lie down in a dry spot. (Of course, cows also lie down for several other reasons!) Also, Animals graze with their tail toward the wind so that if a predator sneaks up behind them, the wind will help catch the scent of the predator and prevent an attack.

When Cats Sneeze, Rain's on Its Way

We all know that our feline friends seem to have extra-sensory abilities (at least, the cats think so). But is there any truth to this? A book commissioned by the American War Department, “Weather Proverbs,” in 1883 stated that cats had many ways to predict weather.

Sheep

One proverb states, “When sheep turn into the wind, expect rain.”



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Another says, "If sheep ascend hills and scatter, expect clear weather."

Conversely, if sheep huddle up in a tight group, expect rain or snow. Frankly, if you had warm and woolly friends, wouldn't you huddle up, too?

Watch birds in flight.

Air pressure affects many birds. For example, swallows have sensitive ears; when the barometric pressure drops, they fly as close to the ground as possible, where air density is greatest. Generally, low-flying birds are signs of rain; highflyers indicate fair weather.

Many animals are affected by changes in air pressure—including us humans! Here are some more proverbs to ponder:

- Expect rain when dogs eat grass, oxen sniff the air, and swine are restless.
- If the bull leads the cows to pasture, expect rain; if the cows precede the bull, the weather will be uncertain.
- When hungry bites the thirsty flea, rain and clouds you sure

shall see.

- When horses and cattle stretch out their necks and sniff the air, it will rain.

Frogs Croak Loudly When It's About to Rain

Ever heard that "frogs croak loudly when it's about to rain"? It's true! Why? Frogs croak loudly to mate, and they are more successful following a good rain. This is because the eggs are laid in bodies of water (fresh water). The male frogs will start croaking with more gusto before a rain.

Crickets Predict the Temperature

We all know the evening sound of a cricket. Did you know the number of cricket chirps report the temperature? No kidding! Just count the number of times a cricket chirps in 14 seconds and add 40 to that number. The total is the temperature in Fahrenheit. Take a few measurements and then use the average to determine the temperature.

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Spring Update

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Holiday Plans?

This is the time of year that you and your family may be making a plan to take a holiday abroad later this year.... Before you do, here are a couple of reminders before you book! Take out your passport and **check its expiry date!!**

If it is out of date or coming near the end of its life you need to apply for a new one- apply online otherwise you could be waiting a couple of months!

<https://passportonline.dfa.ie/Apply/Passport>

If it is out of date and you need an emergency passport contact

<https://www.dfa.ie/passports/urgentappointment/>

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If you are travelling to the USA you will need an "ESTA" (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation) - which is an approved travel authorisation.

Your ESTA authorization is generally valid for multiple trips over a period of two years (starting the date that you are approved) or until your passport expires, whichever comes first. -This means that as long as you received an ESTA authorization to travel, you do not have to reapply during the validity period. Information regarding esta for travel to the USA <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/>

EHIC - European Health Insurance Card

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) lets you get healthcare when abroad for free, or at a reduced cost.

You can use the card in any European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA) country, or Switzerland.

It covers you if you're on holiday, or on a short-term stay of no more than 3 months. If you're studying abroad, you'll be covered for the academic year.

Each family member needs their own EHIC. The card is free and there's no charge to apply.

There are different ways to apply depending on if you:

- live in Ireland
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- live in another EU/EEA member state, or Switzerland

You can also apply for a temporary card, if you need an EHIC urgently. Apply in person at your local health office, or online at <https://www2.hse.ie/services/schemes-allowances/ehic/apply/>



Fingal Programme of Works

The 2023 Fingal program of works is currently being compiled. The Program of Works consists of public repair and maintenance works of roads, footpaths and open spaces. This will be the first major program of works since Covid and an opportunity to fix legacy problems that may have arisen. If

there are any repairs or improvements you want to see added to the list please contact me with details and I will try to get it included for 2023.



Guinness Bridge

I'm really pleased that the major repair and refurbishment works (€1.5M) on the Guinness Bridge in the Strawberry Beds has begun. I've been campaigning on this for years along with my colleagues Cllr Siobhan Shovlin & Senator Emer Currie and others so it is very satisfying to see this progress. The next campaign will be to open it up as part of a Liffey Valley walking trail.



Guinness Bridge in the Strawberry Beds

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Vital E-Scooter Legislation is passed ahead of roll out of Electric Charging Strategy

NCBI, Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind and Irish Wheelchair Association are urging Minister for Transport Eamon Ryan to take action with e-scooter legislation in order to protect pedestrians with access needs before it is too late.



vital but the legislation and regulations around use of e-scooters is essential to protect the safety of pedestrians with access needs. We know from our own research that 77% of respondents have already reported they had an incident with an e-scooter on a footpath. The Bill bans the use of e-scooters on motorways and busways yet not on footpaths that people with access needs rely on for independent travel. There is clear evidence from at home and abroad that e-scooters have caused harm to people when involved in accidents, yet the Minister has not moved to mitigate against these risks within the legislation."

Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind Advocacy Manager, Léan Kennedy, said; "Blind and vision impaired people have no way of pre-empting a collision with an e-scooter in their travel space. Often, encroaching e-scooters can startle a guide dog forcing it to stop and thereby disorientating its owner. We know that 90% of our clients are concerned for their safety in relation to e-scooters, with 53% having had a negative experience or near collision with an e-scooter. It should be easy to understand the need to prohibit e-scooter use on footpaths and in pedestrianised shared use areas. Despite Ireland having ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the needs of Guide Dog and Assistance Dog owners are being neglected by the Minister in the development of this bill and it would take minimal effort for the recommendations in our position paper to be incorporated into the primary legislation. We strongly encourage the Minister to meet with us before the confidence and freedom that people with mobility and vision impairments currently enjoy comes to significant harm."

John Fulham, Irish Wheelchair Association Public Engagement Manager said; "The concerns and lived experience of people with disabilities and limited mobility in relation to the use of e-scooters has been clearly communicated by us to the Minister. Regrettably, this has not been deemed important enough by the Minister and his department to be adequately addressed within the proposed legislation. The safety and security of those with disabilities and limited mobility is being compromised. Should the legislation remain in its current form, it places those with disabilities and limited mobility in a very vulnerable position. We urge Minister Ryan to reconsider his approach and address the issues previously raised in the legislation."

All three organisations have again expressed their concerns that the Minister has not been available to meet with them to hear directly about the issues this legislation will have for people with access needs across the country and again reiterate their openness and availability to meet with the Minister at his earliest opportunity.

The Minister recently unveiled his strategy for electric charging vehicle infrastructure which will include the development of new mobility hubs in cities, where people can charge electric cars, bikes and scooters and avail of shared-use electric vehicles. However, despite their increased usage there is still no clear legislation or a regulatory framework around the use of e-scooters. The three organisations are calling on the Minister to bring forward late-stage amendments to ban the use of e-scooters on footpaths, mandate designated parking bays, reduce the maximum speed limit, and to ensure age restrictions and insurance requirements apply.

Recent research conducted by Dublin City Council demonstrates that 73% of respondents identified "Danger to other road users" as a negative aspect of e-scooters and 59% indicated a preference for designated parking for e-scooters.

Lorna Fitzpatrick, Advocacy and Engagement Manager said; "Having the infrastructure to support this use of electric vehicles is



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Cybersecurity company ThreatLocker to create 120 roles at new Dublin office

The US company will open its new office in Blanchardstown in the coming months



US cybersecurity company ThreatLocker has announced plans to create 120 jobs at its new Dublin office in Blanchardstown later this year.

The new office is expected to oversee the European, Middle Eastern and African markets. It marks a massive expansion for the leading cybersecurity provider in Europe, with Dublin now set to become its new headquarters in the region.

In 2021, the company said the new office will help deliver its zero-trust, data storage and ringfencing tools to businesses through managed service providers in the EMEA region. The move also coincides with the EU's plans to introduce major new legislation, the Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) which will place additional cybersecurity requirements on financial services providers.

ThreatLocker's Chief Executive and Co-Founder Danny Jenkins described the company's launch in Dublin as a "major milestone" as they begin their expansion into the European marketplace. Mr Jenkins said: "Our company has many Irish links and Dublin is the EU headquarters of so many major global companies, so it is the perfect location.

"ThreatLocker has ambitious targets for growth and

we are very excited to push ahead with this new phase in our company's history. We are aiming to strengthen our foothold in the EMEA region and help businesses protect themselves from increasing cyber attacks including ransomware," he added.

Mr Jenkins also noted that cybersecurity is an "increasing problem for many businesses with the number of sophisticated cyberattacks", which is on the rise and costing businesses huge amounts of money. He said: "The introduction of DORA across the EU will also see financial services providers upping their game to protect themselves and their customers from attack."

ThreatLocker was founded in 2017 by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Danny Jenkins, Chief Operating Officer (COO) Sami Jenkins and John Carolan. The company is headquartered in Florida in the United States.

According to an Irish Times report, ThreatLocker is currently recruiting for solutions engineers and account managers, with roles in admin, sales and finance also on offer. Last May, Cyber Ireland released a new report indicating how the cybersecurity sector has the potential to generate up to 17,000 jobs in Ireland.

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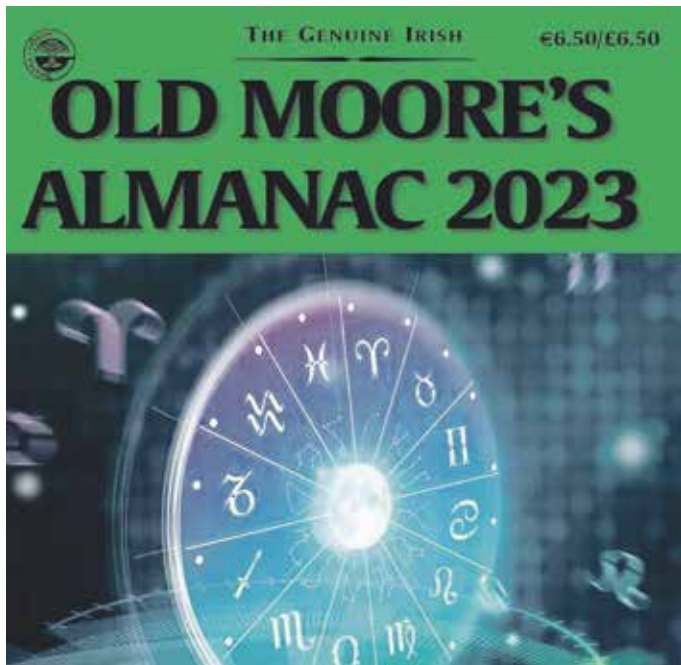
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What is predicted for 2023?

The Old Moore's Almanac is the one with the green cover. It is the first and original, and Irish. Some editions over 200 years old still sit in the Long Room Library in Trinity, next to the Bibles.



Recently, in 2022, he predicted that there would be riots and an uprising in China. It just happened! He also predicted that Putin would have a health crisis and cause a scandal.

So, what are the Predictions for 2023?

- A severe health warning for Trump.
- In Ireland, house price rises will slow but still go up.
- An Atlantic event affects the West Coast of Ireland and the coastline of other countries.
- A "great reset" of the financial system. It has already started.
- Recession but also a reordering.
- Bank run, people trying to take out their funds, the world over. Your cash is not your cash.
- Digital currencies issued by central banks are coming.
- Russia will have a bad winter.
- Big tech companies will merge and fall.
- Asteroid in the news, it's too close for comfort.
- Weather records set and broken again.

- Alien news that intrigues us.
- Submarine drama.
- Team Mars will be chosen.
- Internet outage across the world.
- 2023 is the year of AI, watch as jobs go to the bots.
- Meghan and Harry, marriage and money problems.
- A change of Pope.
- Gaelic Football: Kerry.
- Hurling All Ireland: Limerick.

So, what are the best predictions Old Moore got right in 2022?

In Ireland, Old Moore predicted a scorching summer in 2022, and temperatures hit the 30s in 2022... he also predicted a small tsunami, which there was in Cork after an earthquake, which he also predicted.

Further afield:

The prediction: Putin has a health crisis and a scandal. Terrorism returns to the European region, causing a shift in policy across Europe. Germany will be in the news all year, for something entirely strange. Shortages of items cause panic and hoarding. A boat sinking will cause an international drama.

This paragraph has been one of the most amazing prediction sequences of the year. So, let us break it down.

Putin indeed is ailing, with shaking and being unsteady as part of his symptoms. He also has had a cancer specialist shadowing him. Terrorism returns to the European Union – We can all agree that Ukraine has been at the sharp end of terrorism for months now. As for Germany being in the news, it seems as though they now face an energy and heating crisis thanks to Russia switching off the gas supply. As for the prediction that there would be panic and hoarding after a shortage of items in the EU... this very thing has happened. A boat sinking causing an international drama? Well, here it is.

One of the most famous predictions from 2022 must be that of "a second pandemic, unrelated to the first." Unfortunately, Monkey Pox took hold this year, moving from Africa, right across the world.

The prediction: There will be new competitor to the big social media platforms, offering more freedom of speech.

Welcome, Twitter2.0.

The prediction: Blind people will see again. That happened.

The prediction: Birth rates would fall. Yep, it happened.

The prediction: The economy in China is on the brink. Those Chinese citizens who have invested in property... will find themselves in dire financial straits.

What happened: The latest reports are that China is indeed in over its head. This article says that "China's property slump and suffering economy is leading some to wonder if China could be on the brink of its own Lehman-style crisis."



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Active Travel Scheme Update

by Councillor Pamela Conroy

With the recent announcement that Fingal County Council is to receive €17 million towards Active Travel measures throughout the County, I wanted to give a more detailed update on the progress of some of the projects which received funding in the Castleknock area.



These projects are part of the Fingal County Council Active Travel Programme 2021-2025, which will see the delivery of Active Travel Schemes which will make it a safer, more viable option for those who wish to use active travel measures instead of private vehicles to get around.

[Castleknock-Dunsink Route](#)

As part of the 2023 allocation, this scheme has €185,000 allocated to it this year. A tendering process for a designer had been completed, with contracts signed, for this project at the end of 2022. The next part of the process will see traffic surveys, a feasibility study and an options report

being created.

Minister Roderic O’Gorman and I have asked for a pedestrian crossing at the Old Navan Road end of Auburn Avenue to be included as part of this work. I feel that a crossing is vital at this point to ensure a safe route to school for those walking to Edmund Rice College and Castleknock Educate Together National School. The Active Travel Unit have indicated that this crossing will be provided via the BusConnects scheme.

Castleknock-Farmleigh-Blanchardstown Route

This scheme will link Castleknock village to Farmleigh, via White’s Road, up to Grove Road, via the Carpenterstown Road. At the end of 2022, the Active Travel Team were preparing a tender to appoint a designer for this scheme. The tender documents are currently being finalised by the Council so we will hopefully see the appointment of a designer soon.

At Area Committee Meetings I have highlighted the junction at the Carpenterstown Road going down to The Sandpits. At this location there is currently no pedestrian crossing as part of the traffic light rotation, making it extremely unsafe for pedestrians. I have asked that this scheme makes this junction safe for pedestrians.

Additionally, I have asked that the designers of this route consider including the small strip of road from the

roundabout at Castleknock Community College to the roundabout at St Patrick’s National School as part of the scheme as it would allow many school children to travel safely by bicycle to both the primary and secondary schools.

Phoenix Park to Blanchardstown Route

A consultant will be appointed in 2023 to look at the planning and design proposals for this route. I’m particularly concerned that this route provides a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists at the Granard Bridge beside Castleknock-Blanchardstown Train Station, and I will continue to raise this issue.

Bicycle Parking

Funding has been allocated for the installation of bicycle parking at appropriate locations throughout the County. At a recent Area Committee Meeting, I asked that this bicycle parking accommodate cargo bikes which require more space than regular bicycles. These cargo bikes are now available under the bike to work scheme.

If anything is affecting your ability to get around or live in Dublin 15 that I can help with, please get in touch by emailing pamela.conroy@cllrs.fingal.ie.



Cllr. PAMELA CONROY

My priorities are:

- ➔ Improving accessibility and inclusion in the built environment and public spaces.
- ➔ Improving the provision and safety of local active travel infrastructure so that leaving your car at home is a viable option.
- ➔ Helping to bring communities together and assisting them with improving where they live.
- ➔ Providing clean and safe streets and public spaces.





Working with Minister Roderic O’Gorman TD

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Organisations working with victims of crime to receive additional funding.

More funding for organisations working with victims of crime will ensure that anyone who suffers as a result of crime will receive every assistance available to them, a Fine Gael TD said.



Deputy Emer Higgins was speaking regarding a funding announcement, totalling €5.25m for more than sixty-five organisations to work with victims of crime.

“The work of organisations in Dublin, and across the country that help victims of crime is outstanding. They provide support, information, and advice on the rights of victims, outreach work, court accompaniment and crime victim helplines,” Deputy Higgins said.

The allocations range from €3,000 to €740,000, and they cover:

- National and larger organisations such as Women’s Aid, Ruhama, and One in Four.
- Local organisations working with victims such as Domestic Violence Support, Women’s Refuge and Rape Crisis outlets.
- General victims support organisations including Victim Support at Court; and
- Specialist organisations including Migrant Rights Centre and Dignity 4 Patients.

“There is an increased budget of €5.8m allocated to the Department of Justice specifically for victims of crime in 2023, and the remaining funding will be made available later in the year once further service need assessments have been completed,” Deputy Higgins explained.

“I am particularly pleased that Beacon of Light in Clondalkin is to receive €21,000 which will prove a very welcome boost to delivery of the services available to victims of crime.”

Last October, the Department of Justice invited applications for funding from registered charities, voluntary community groups, and other organisations which provide services – or plan to provide

services – supporting victims in the criminal justice system.

Funding is given to organisations that meet the objectives and that can show they have the required management and compliance policies and procedures in place.

The Department of Justice currently funds a number of NGOs that provide supports for victims of crime on a multi-annual basis. These agreements aim to assist the organisations with their long-term planning and cash flow, and to ensure more effective and efficient use of funding. These organisations will see an increase in funding of 7.9pc in 2023.

“The services provided by these organisations are extremely important, but increased costs and inflation have caused some difficulties – that is why this funding comes at a crucial time. Where organisations sought an increase on last year’s funding, they have been granted a 5pc cost-of-living increase, at a minimum.

“Developing a victim-centred criminal justice system which prioritises the needs and experience of the victim underpins our commitment to building stronger, safer communities and this funding is a significant element of that,” Deputy Higgins concluded.

Justice Minister Simon Harris said, “I know that being the victim of a crime can be very traumatic and difficult, and we are determined to ensure that the necessary range of supports and services to help is available.

“Building stronger, safer communities and prioritising the needs and experience of the victim is central to our ongoing work under ‘Supporting a Victim’s Journey’ and the ‘Zero Tolerance’ strategy.

“The work of so many organisations across the country that help victims of crime is outstanding. They provide support, information, and advice on the rights of victims, outreach work, court accompaniment and crime victim helplines.”



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