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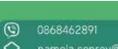


Blanchardstown Village

THE HISTORY OF VALENTINE'S DAY

- SEEPS





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CIIr. PAMELA CONROY



Councillor

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Roderic O'Gorman TD

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth



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EDITORIAL

appy New Year to all of our readers. This issue of Little Village reflects on the historical value and interest that the Strawberry Beds area holds both for our Dublin and Kildare We also have a look at some of the famous celebrities that

This time of year brings us Valentine's day so we have a brief article on the history of Valentine's day and a delicious recipe for the more adventurous of you to try.

We hope you find our other news articles of interest too.

we lost in 2023. Indeed, they will be missed.

Kind Regards Little Village

AVAILABLE

- Educo Gym
- Myos
- De Bruns
- Castleknock Community Centre
- Laurel Lodge Community Centre
- 12th Lock
- Bradys Pub
- Wetherspoons
- Costa Coffee
- Blanchardstown
- **Shopping Centre** Draiocht
- Blanch Library
- Leisure Plex
- Super Valu Blanch
- Tesco Roselawn
- Blakestown Community Centre
- Mountview Community Centre
- Huntstown Community Centre
- Eurospar Hartstown
- Dunnes Ongar • Cu Chulainns Ongar
- Lidl Clonee
- Aldi Clonee
- Lidl Blakestown

- Lidl Tyrrelstown
- Tyrrelstown Community
- Centre Peregrines Gaa Club
- Corduff Sports
- Centre Spar Waterville
- Centra Corduff
- Castleknock Golf Club
- Castleknock
- Hotel • Elmgreen Golf
- Club Hollystown Golf
- Club Westwood Gym
- Westwood Golf
- Club
- Phibblestown Community Centre
 - Costcutter Clonsilla Road
 - Credit Union Clonsilla Road
 - The Greyhound Blanch Village
 - The Grasshopper
 - Clonee • Clonsilla Inn
 - The Carpenter Inn
 - The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown



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VALENTINES DAY – RECIPE IDEA

Chocolate-dipped strawberries



ndulge in chocolate-dipped strawberries for dessert or as part of a romantic picnic. Drizzle over milk and white chocolate for the wow factor

Ingredients

100g dark chocolate, roughly chopped 400g strawberries 30g white and milk chocolate, roughy chopped (optional)

Method STEP 1

Cut a strip of baking parchment and leave to one side. To melt the dark chocolate, fill a small pan with 2cm water and bring to a simmer. Put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl and rest it on top of the pan, ensuring the bowl isn't touching the water. Stir the chocolate to gradually melt it. Or, melt the chocolate in 20 second blasts in the microwave, stirring after each blast until melted. Put the melted chocolate in a small deep bowl.

STEP 2

Gently hold the strawberries by the leafy top and dip into the chocolate. Tap off any excess chocolate and put on the parchment to set. If you have any leftover chocolate, pour it onto another strip of parchment and leave it to set, it can be used again.

STEP 3

If you'd like to decorate the strawberries, melt the white and milk chocolate and drizzle lightly over the fruit.





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Search to Find 2024 Texaco Children's Art Competition Winners launched



Pictured above – 2023 winner of Texaco Children's art competition

he search to find the young artists who will excel in this year's Texaco Children's Art Competition has begun.

Last year 36 students from Co. Dublin won prizes in the Competition, which is now in its 70th year and widely acknowledged as the longest running arts sponsorship

in Ireland.

The closing date for entries is Wednesday, 28th February. Judging will take place in March with winners to be announced in April.

Details are available at www.texacochildrensart.com or at Texaco service stations throughout the county.





Constituency clinic times: Fridays 10am-12 noon

WORDS ARE IMPORTANT

The words in our Constitution are particularly important. They have real meaning. They speak to our values as a country.



ight now, the words of Article 41 do not match our values. Those words mean the exclusion of thousands of families from the recognition and protection of the Constitution, solely because those families are not based on marriage. Those words seek to contain women in a singular role. They fail to recognise that care in a family, be it the care of young children, a sibling with a disability, or an elderly parent, and is a role for everyone, irrespective of their gender.

In the two referendums being held on 8 March, we have the opportunity to change those words. Right now, our Constitution says that a family is based solely on marriage, leaving out thousands of single parents. A Yes vote on March 8 would broaden that to a more inclusive definition, recognising it can be based on marriage but also, other durable relationships.

This provides a historic opportunity to recognise that the State values the different forms that family takes in our country today. By voting Yes to this question we will be telling those children that their families are cherished just as much as any other.

This vote will also offer people to vote to remove the reference to women's duties in the home from the Constitution.

A woman's place is wherever she wants to be, in the workplace, in education, or in the home. The key is that women choose the roles they play in Irish society, and not just take on one assigned to them by voices from the past.

While this updating of our Constitution is essential, it is also important that we don't lose sight of the vital role that care and caring relationships play in knitting together the fabric of our society. It is long past time that we recognise the invaluable contribution that caring – the quiet dedication of so many family members around Ireland - provides to this country.

By voting yes, we will be placing a new article in our Constitutions that puts an obligation on the State to strive – a continuous, progressive commitment – to support that care in the family. Ultimately, this referendum will offer us another opportunity to move on from the Ireland of 1937, to continue that journey towards becoming a kinder, more inclusive society, one that acknowledges and respects the needs of all our citizens.



Roderic O' Gorman, TD

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

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Councillor John Walsh

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Dear Resident

I am giving a brief update on some issues that I have been working on. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or if I can be of any assistance.

(70hn

ST BRIGID'S DAY EVENTS

This time last year I requested Fingal Council to offer a programme of events in Dublin 15 to celebrate St Brigid's Day. There is a strong association with Brigid in terms of placenames, schools, parish churches and historical sites in Dublin 15 and this also provides an opportunity to highlight the work of female role models in art, music and culture.

This year the Council, in conjunction with Blanchardstown Tidy Towns, hosted a very successful concert on the bank holiday Monday in St Brigid's parish church, Blanchardstown, to showcase the work of local female artists, musicians and groups. A workshop featuring a range of activities for children and families was also held in St Brigid's Community Centre, Blanchardstown. I would like to see these events becoming part of an annual Festival to mark St Brigid's day in Dublin 15.

Well done to the Fingal Events team, St Brigid's Community Centre, St Brigid's Parish and Blanchardstown Tidy Towns for their work to make these events successful.

PROGRAMME OF WORKS 2024

The Programme of Works for 2024 was approved by the local Area Committee in December 2023 and involves significant investment in local amenities for Dublin 15, including parks, open spaces, public lighting and traffic calming. Some of the major elements of the programme are included, but please let me know if you would like to get more detail of works for your area.

Traffic calming/new pedestrian crossings (Dublin 15)

- New 4-arm raised Zebra Crossing at Coolmine roundabout on Carpenterstown Park/ Luttrell Park Road and decommissioning of old pedestrian crossing.
- New signalised pedestrian crossing on Roselawn Road close to junction with Clonsilla Road.
- · Footpath buildouts at Castleknock Elms/Laurel Lodge Road.
- · 5 traffic calming ramps, Damastown Road.
- · 2 Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS), Ongar Distributor Road.

Parks & Open Spaces - Planting and new Benches Blanchardstown

- New benches on Summerfield Green (1), Springlawn (1) and open space between Glenville Green and Delwood Road (1).
- Extension wall and pollinator bed at traffic lights approaching Blanchardstown village from Clonsilla.
- Landscaping works and tree pits construction on Blanchardstown Road North and South.



Castleknock and Carpenterstown

- New pollinator bed on Park Drive Roundabout.
- New pollinator bed at Church Court/ College Grove.
- Sensory Garden, Auburn Avenue/Church Open Space.
- Pollinator bed and signage, College Road (close to Castleknock College).
- Pollinator bed at Riverwood Dene/Square Roundabout.
- Pollinator bed and 4 new trees, on open space close to Cherry Drive and Sycamore Avenue.
- General works to refurbish railings and boundary treatment at Chesterfield.
- New park bench on Castleknock Green/ Deerpark.
- Seven benches at various locations across
 Castleknock, to be installed following consultation with Castleknock Tidy Towns and residents' associations.

Clonsilla

- New 50m path and pedestrian entrance, Castlefields Court.
- · New benches for Castlefield Woods (2) and St. Mochta's estate (1 or 2).
- Pollinator bed at Clonsilla Link Road/Lidl.
- Pollinator planting on Clonsilla Road/St. Mochta's pillars.
- Landscaping project, Portersgate estate.
- Barrier Hedge planting of 75m along wall at Charnwood Park/Castlefield Hall.
- Barrier Hedge planting of 10m along wall, Limelawn Glade.

Public Lighting (Dublin 15)

- · New lighting column at end of cul-de-sac for St. Patrick's Park, Blanchardstown.
- New lighting poles (7) for Laurel Lodge Green.
- Completion of 4 lighting columns for Porterstown Road.
- 16 lighting columns for Hartstown Park.
- New lighting column at end of cul de sac in Huntstown Green.
- Extra lighting on walkway between Manorfields View and Rusheeney View.



Beyond the Pale – Westport, Co.Mayo



The expression 'beyond the pale' was first used in Ireland way back in the 13th century, to describe people who lived outside the parts of Ireland controlled by the British.

alled the Pale, it originally consisted of parts of counties Meath, Louth, Kildare and Dublin in the east of Ireland. Once you passed "the Pale," you were outside the authority and safety of English law, and subject to all the savageries of rural Ireland. "Beyond the pale" then became a colloquial phrase meaning "outside the limits of acceptable behavior or judgment."

Dubliners are renowned for not venturing 'beyond the pale' so perhaps the word that the rest of Ireland is no longer a place of danger has not reached everyone yet! In coming editions we will highlight some of the places in Ireland you should visit, if you have not already done so. We start with Westport in Co Mayo.

Westport, located in County Mayo on the west coast of Ireland, is a charming town known for its picturesque surroundings, vibrant atmosphere, and a plethora of activities for visitors to enjoy. Whether you're a nature enthusiast, a history buff, or someone seeking a relaxing getaway, Westport has something to offer. Here are some suggestions for things to do in Westport:

Climb Croagh Patrick:

Embark on a pilgrimage or simply enjoy the stunning views by climbing Croagh Patrick, the holy mountain located just outside Westport. The hike is challenging but rewarding, and the panoramic views from the summit are breathtaking.

Explore Westport House and Gardens:

Discover the rich history of Westport House, a stately home with beautiful gardens. The house offers guided tours, and the grounds provide a peaceful setting for a leisurely stroll.

Take a Bike Ride along the Great Western Greenway:

Rent a bike and explore the Great Western Greenway, a scenic cycling route that stretches from Westport to Achill Island. This off-road trail takes you through picturesque landscapes, offering a unique way to experience the beauty of County Mayo.

Experience Westport's Nightlife:

Westport has a lively nightlife scene with traditional Irish pubs, live music, and a friendly atmosphere. Matt Molloy's, a renowned pub in the heart of the town, is particularly famous for its traditional Irish music sessions.

Participate in Water Activities:

Take advantage of Westport's coastal location by engaging in water activities. Kayaking, sailing, and paddleboarding are popular options, allowing you to experience the beauty of Clew Bay up close.



Councillor Natalie
TREACY



Tel: 0851285493 Email: Natalie.treacy@cllrs.fingal.ie



Discover the Pirate Adventure Park:

If you're traveling with family, the Pirate Adventure Park at Westport House offers a fun-filled day for children with rides, slides, and themed attractions.

Visit Clew Bay:

Explore the stunning Clew Bay, known for its numerous islands. You can take a boat tour to experience the bay from the water, or enjoy a leisurely drive along the coastal roads for picturesque views.

Visit the National Famine Memorial:

A short drive from Westport, the National Famine Memorial in Murrisk pays tribute to those who suffered during the Irish Famine. The poignant sculpture overlooks Clew Bay and provides a somber but important historical perspective.

Sample Local Cuisine:

Westport boasts a variety of restaurants and cafes offering delicious Irish cuisine. Try fresh seafood, traditional Irish stews, and other locally sourced dishes to get a taste of the region.

Attend Festivals and Events:

Check the local events calendar, as Westport hosts various festivals and events throughout the year. From music and arts festivals to food and cultural celebrations, there's often something exciting happening in town.

Westport's diverse offerings make it an ideal destination for a well-rounded and enjoyable vacation, catering to a wide range of interests and preferences.





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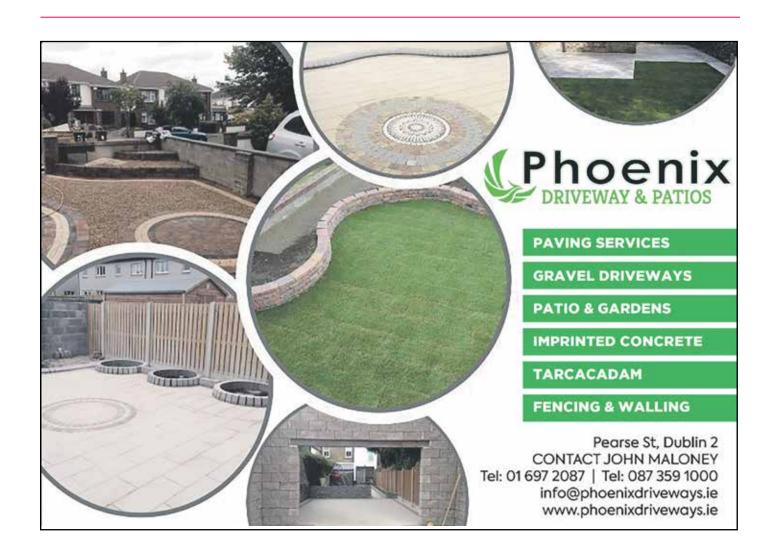




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Councillor Conroy Welcomes Deposit Return Scheme

Councillor Pamela Conroy welcomes the deposit return scheme for bottles and cans which was launched at the start of February. This scheme will reduce litter in Dubiln 15 and boost Ireland's recycling rates.



he Green Party has launched the most ambitions recycling campaign in twenty years as return points across the country will begin accepting bottles and cans that have a deposit paid on them.

The Deposit Return Scheme launched by Minister Ossian Smyth today, is a key step in reaching Ireland's goal of recycling 90% of drinks containers by 2029. The scheme will take litter off our streets, reduce waste and move Ireland closer to a circular economy.

Speaking about the importance of the scheme, Councillor Pamela Conroy said,

"We need to replace our throwaway culture with a circular economy that recycles and reuses material. It is awful to see beautiful places like The Royal Canal and Millennium Park ruined by litter and while we have many volunteers in Tidy Towns and community groups across Dublin 15picking up these containers, it would be better if they didn't become litter in the first place. By giving these containers a financial value, people will be incentivised to return them which will boost recycling rates, greatly reduce litter and improve the environment. Only 23% of plastic bottles are recycled in Ireland and we want to take this to 90%."

"The reverse vending machines couldn't be easier to

use. You just go to your local store like Lidl, Aldi, Dunnes and drop off your plastic bottles and cans. There's no sign up required, it's simple and convenient. Similar schemes have had great success in Europe, so now is our chance to get rubbish off our roads and into the reverse vending machines."

The scheme is funded by a deposit of 15c on plastic bottles and cans of 500ml or less and 25c on containers larger than 500ml. This deposit is claimed by returning the containers to any participating store, even if they were bought in a different store. Consumers can choose between receiving the deposit as a store voucher or as cash. During the first weeks of the scheme, people will notice that some bottles and cans have the Re-turn logo on them (which is how you will know a deposit has been paid) while older stock will have no deposit and logo.

It is estimated that 1.9 billion plastic bottles and cans are bought every year in Ireland. Over 4,000 retailers have signed up to participate in the scheme and 3,500 reverse vending machines are being installed across the country. Some stores that do not have machines will accept returned bottles and cans over the counter.

More information on the Deposit Return Scheme, including an FAQ and a list of locations participating in the scheme, can be found on the Re-turn website at www.re-turn.ie.

Minister Roderic O'Gorman Welcomes **New Councillor**

Minister Roderic O'Gorman is delighted to welcome Michelle Griffin to the position of Green Party Councillor for the Ongar Local **Electoral Area.**

ouncillor Griffin was co-opted at the January meeting of Fingal County Council. She will replace Daniel Whooley who was elected in 2020. Speaking at her co-option, Councillor Griffin acknowledged former Councillor Whooley's work and the fact that when elected he was the youngest Councillor in Fingal and represented the needs of young people, which is something she intends to continue.

Councillor Griffin also said also said I have resided in the heart of Ongar Village for twenty years, and I'm aware of many of the challenges we have faced for some time. As a councillor for Ongar, I'm prepared to engage with local people, voluntary groups, communities and stakeholders, and work constructively and together with a view to social equity and liveability. I'm driven by the sentiments of our communities and upholding the importance of public input and I look forward to starting immediately.

Living in Ongar since 2005, Councillor Griffin has been involved



in Ongar Tidy Towns and the Ongar Community Garden. She is a founding member of Blanchardstown Gardening Group and worked to improve the local environment through community engagement and gardening projects. She works in adult education and teaches courses in community centres across Dublin 15. She knows the importance of strong community organisations and is keen to work with them to improve services for young people, tackle climate change and protect nature across the Ongar local electoral area.

Speaking about the co-option minister O'Gorman said,

I am delighted to welcome Michelle Griffin to her new role as Councillor. Having lived in Ongar for nearly 20 years, Councillor Griffin has a deep understanding of the issues Ongar is facing and I look forward to working with her to improve the area.

At the Fingal Council Meeting, Councillor Griffin was made a member of the Housing Strategic Policy Committee on Fingal County Council, the Blanchardstown Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force, and Comhairle na nÓg.



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.



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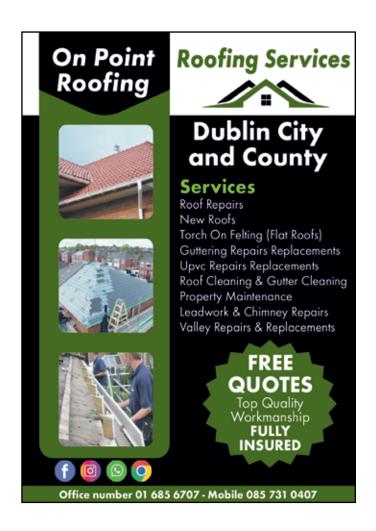
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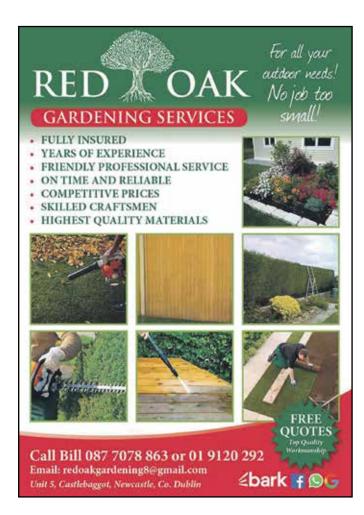


Working with Minister Roderic O'Gorman TD











GARDA VISIBILITY IN DUBLIN 15

- Increase in Community Gardai for D15 and Cabra
- My call to prioritise Local Community Safety Partnerships in Dublin West and
- The Need for a sustained Main Street Garda presence in our Suburban Villages

Lapplaud the Gardai for their effective Safety and decisive work over Christmas and the New Year in protecting our community, when events in Blanchardstown Village shocked and horrified the Dublin 15 community. The K district is one of the busiest and most demanding in the country. As a Senator and government representative I am bringing the challenges and demands of the wider Blanchardstown area, a population of c130,000 to the Minister for Justice.

Increasing Garda resources is my top priority. In January I called for the new model of Local Community

Partnerships to be prioritised in Dublin West and appealed

for a sustained Garda presence in our villages and neighbourhoods by introducing Garda Hubs on our Main Streets. Like other parts of Dublin, the wider Blanchardstown area is suffering from persistent anti-social behaviour not to mentioned car robberies, theft, and drug-dealing; and the presence of this crime is fuelling frustration and unease.



Community Safety

Local Community Safety Partnerships

New Local Community Safety Partnerships, due to be rolled

out in 2024, are based on approaches piloted in Drogheda,

policing. Strategies are developed for an area, by the area,

bringing together state, state-funded and public services

as well as local voluntary organisations, county councillors

and business groups to provide wraparound supports and

I believe areas that are currently underserved by Garda

and Garda Stations, like Dublin West, should be prioritised.

If Dublin West isn't next on the list for the rollout of Local

Community Safety Partnerships, I think we should be.

collaborate and coordinate on local problems, like anti-

social behaviour.

the North Inner City and Longford and take a wider approach to community safety issues that goes beyond

As part of the new model, I am proposing a pilot of Local Community Safety Partnership Hubs in retail units on our Main Streets in Dublin 15, staffed and led by a Partnership Co-Ordinator, with a consistent Community Garda presence. Gardai, youth workers, Tusla, HSE, Juvenile Liaison Officers, Drug Prevention Officers should be seen to be brought together working on a daily basis from a Local Safety Partnership Hub in places

like Ongar, Tyrrelstown and Pelletstown.

This would be a visual representation of the work the Government is doing to go far beyond the traditional policing model and that we are taking meaningful action in areas currently under pressure with Garda resources. But it would also provide a presence in local areas for the reporting of crime and access to Gardai.

For comments and questions email me at emer.currie@oir.ie



Increase in Community Gardai

I am pleased to say the K district benefitted from additional Gardal in December and since then two members have been added to the ranks of our Community Gardai in Blanchardstown, two in Finglas and one in Cabra. In February this will increase again with the addition of a further member in both Castleknock and Cabra.

Dublin 15's Community Gardai will then stand at 1 Inspector, 1 Sergeant and 10 Gardai, with the expectation that the K will benefit again in March following the next attestation of Gardai from Templemore College.















Gone but not forgotten - The stars we lost in 2023

Sadly, 2023 saw the loss of many well-known celebrities. Here we remember some of them.



Michael Gambon

The Irish-English acclaimed actor died 27 September following a bout of pneumonia. Gambon was born in Cabra, Dublin on 19 October 1940.

He is most known for playing Albus Dumbledore in six Harry Potter films starting with Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban released in 2004.

Shane MacGowan

Shane MacGowan died at the age of 65 on November 30. He was best known for being the frontman of 'The Pogues.' After being removed from the band in the early 1990s, he founded 'Shane MacGowan and The Popes'.

His funeral in Tipperary on December 7 was attended by the likes of Johnny Depp and Bono.

Sinéad O'Connor

The iconic singer attended Newtown Secondary School in Waterford during the 1980's.

The singer who is most known for her song "Nothing Compares 2 U" died on 26 July.

Ray Stevenson

One of the most versatile and revered actors of his generation, Ray Stevenson was born in Lisburn in County Antrim, in the North on 25 May 1964.

Fans will know always remember his performances in the Marvel movies Punisher: War Zone as the title character, Thor: The Dark World and Thor: Ragnarök as Volstagg.

Mark Sheehan

Sheehan was born in Dublin and was a member of the boy band Mytown, and in 2001, he co-founded and played guitar for alternative rock band the Script.

Frank Twomey

The Cork born TV presenter died December 11, 2023. The actor was best known as a presenter on the Irish children's afternoon show Bosco in the 1980s.

Christy Dignam

The singer died on 13 June 2023 at the age of 63.

He is best known as the lead singer of the popular Irish rock band Aslan.

Aslan formed in 1982 and became one of the most popular bands on the Irish music scene throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Craig Breen

The Irish race car driver was one of the most active and popular drivers in the world. The Waterford native had 9 podium finishes in races.



Councillor Natalie
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SAVING MONEY

A recent survey suggested that two thirds of us will have not had enough money to last to the end of January.

t's a common problem after the Christmas excesses. Now is the time to get back on track and here are four simple ideas to help.

Spend wisely

Here's four spending tips to make your money go further.

Track your spending

The more aware you are of what you are spending the less likely you are to overspend. Using a digital bank like Revolut can help you set spending goals and reveal flashpoints or bad habits.* There are lots of free budgeting apps for Android or Apple phones if you're not ready to open another current account.

Prioritise purchases

It's so tempting to splash the cash in the sales, or if you have a little windfall, but before you whip out that card, it's best to pay your bills or other essentials first. Remember to check your refund rights so you're never left out of pocket if you have second thoughts about a splurge.



Spread spending costs

If you've made a large purchase or your cash flow is taking a hit, consider a 0% purchase card to spread the cost interest-free. Remember, whether you're making a bigticket purchase or a small treat, always shop around, price match and take time to ferret out the best deal.

Try the 50/30/20 budget

Aim to spend 50% of your pay on basic needs - such as bills, food, housing, and travel to work, then set aside 30% for having fun - eating out, drinking with friends, going to the cinema and days out. Put the final 20% towards savings, investing and your credit balances.





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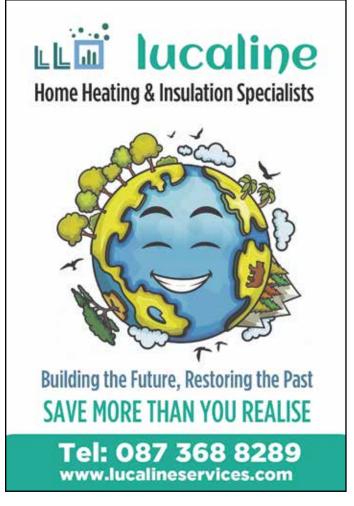
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RACE IS ON FOR DUBLIN SCHOOLS

A reminder has been sent to Dublin schools by three of Ireland's best-known athletes



orld Para Rowing champion, Katie O'Brien and Olympians, sprinters Phil Healy and David Gillick advising teachers and pupils alike that the search to find 'Ireland's fittest school 2024' has now gone live. Running until the end of March, the top four schools in Ireland, north and south, will progress to a live 'grand final' at which

the prize package will include €8,000 worth of sports equipment.

Working with Fyffes, their aim is to find a school whose focus on fitness will replicate the success of previous 'Ireland's Fittest School' winners - Scoil Na Croise Naofa, Dunfanaghy (2022) and Gilson National School, Oldcastle (2023). Schools can register at www. fyffesfitsquad.ie



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THE ART OF CLEANING IN 2024

Unravelling the Layers Beyond Spotless Homes. By Mike Power



n the pursuit of the 'perfect' home, the cleaning industry has evolved into a massive business, orchestrating multimillion-euro advertising campaigns that tap into our psychological vulnerabilities. Our homes, now reflections of our identities, are subject to the ever-changing trends propagated by influencers on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Celebrities, with their flawlessly organized spaces, endorse products that promise perfection, inadvertently reinforcing stereotypes and insensitivity toward the real heroes behind household maintenance — predominantly women.

Times have changed, challenging traditional gender roles, and redistributing household responsibilities. Househusbands, foregoing their careers for domestic pursuits, have become increasingly common. However, despite societal progress, certain stereotypes persist. Men, as surveys indicate, are more inclined toward using mechanical cleaning devices, while women are often left managing the repetitive daily chores and child-related tasks that demand patience and skill.

Guilt plays a pivotal role in the cleaning industry's marketing strategies, capitalizing on societal expectations that have been slow to evolve. Women, historically burdened with household responsibilities, are the primary targets of guilt-inducing ads, reinforcing the idea that they are responsible for maintaining a flawless home.

The allure of cleaning products goes beyond their practical use. It taps into deep-seated psychological motivations and vulnerabilities, as a spotless home is often equated with personal virtue. The emotional conditioning exploited by advertisers thrives on the societal pressure to be perceived as the epitome of a responsible and clean individual.

Looking back at the history of cleaning, humankind has waged a ceaseless battle against dirt, contamination, and disease. While soap and water have been the go-to cleaning tools since ancient times, the invention of the washing machine in the 1940s significantly reduced women's household chores.

The evolution of materials like plastic, vinyl, stainless steel, and ceramics brought about a revolution in cleaning, making it easier for housekeepers to maintain cleanliness.

Even our homes' hidden worlds, revealed through the contents of vacuum cleaner bags, tell stories of our daily lives – skin flakes, shoe dirt, air pollutants, carpet fibres, and more. The idea of cleaning extends beyond the physical removal of dirt; it is an emotional and psychological pursuit, influenced by societal expectations and individual insecurities.

So, the next time you embark on a cleaning spree, consider the layers beyond the surface cleanliness. Our homes, reflections of ourselves, are more than just visually appealing spaces. They encapsulate the evolving dynamics of our society, the persistent stereotypes we challenge, and the emotional conditioning we navigate in the pursuit of the elusive spotless home in 2024.







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HIGHWAY ROBBERY – LITERALLY

'More taxes on people who 'get up early'



described as 'Highway Robbery' by a local public representative for Castleknock.

Aontu's Ellen Troy has rounded on the Government for the latest cost increases calling them "An insidious way of taking more money out of people's

he introduction of price hikes on the M50 has been

Ellen says.

pockets."

"I am absolutely furious about this as it is impacting a whole swathe of people, 160,000 thousand hard pressed commuters are being forced to pay for these punitive tolls, notably those who get up early to go to work and who are already paying through the nose for everything".

"Car journeys are increasing by 20 Cents per trip with heavy goods vehicles jumping by 30 to 50 cents. A fiver a day for car users is a very considerable charge for people who are already grappling with spiralling costs and it's one they simply can't avoid as they have to use the M50 to get to and from work".

"In my LEA of Castleknock, proximity to the M50 is used as a selling point by Estate Agents as it's a main arterial route and the busiest one in the country".

"I use it myself to get to and back from work; If I had to leave Castleknock to go to Sandyford where I work without using the M50 it would take me hours. Using it takes me twenty minutes and this is what angers me the most on behalf of the people in my area; the government knows people have to use it, they are sitting ducks for these price increases".

"The Government can't use the excuse of these increases as being 'uncontrollable costs'.

"The M50 is a state-owned infrastructure, and the commuting public has already paid for their use of it. Well paid for it at this stage. It is absolutely mind bending how the Government is continuing to extract money from the commuting public for the 'privilege' of using it."

"The commuting public are cash cows for this Government.

They jacked up excise on petrol and diesel just 7 months ago, they hiked up the tolls just 6 months ago and three months ago they increased the cost of carbon tax. They took in 2.3 billion in fuel tax in 2022".

"These are impositions that the Government is directly in charge of. We are living through an horrendous cost of living crisis and while the Government is using weasel words of fake sympathy for people, its actions are directly in contravention of this."

"We are going to fight this tooth and nail, enough is enough."







Councillor TED LEDDY

📵 087 327 6630 🔱 tedleddy2014@gmail.com 🍘 🧐 😭 www.tedleddy.ie



The Program of Works for 2024 is being compiled early this year. If there are works in your area, such as footpath repairs, open space maintenance, road safety or resurfacing that you believe require attention please let me know and I will attempt to include them in the 2024 program.



Coolmine Recycling Centre

Coolmine Recycling Centre will be extending its opening hours from 9am to 8pm, Monday to Saturday beginning in 2024 (exact date to be determined). It was announced at the Fingal Budget 2024 meeting that additional staff and funding will be made available to enable this. This is very welcome news and something that I and others have been calling for a long time



I am very pleased to support the Castleknock GAA Clubs draw for £250,000. For details see: https://win250grand.com/

Oral Hearing

In September I attended the An Bord Pleanala Oral Hearing into the Dart West program along with a number of my Fine Gael colleagues. My presentation focused on the proposed closure of the level crossings, and the traffic diversions that would come with them. In my presentation I made clear that much more detail is required of how traffic junctions will be upgraded.



BUDGET 2024









Snugborough Interchange project

The Snugborough Interchange project is scheduled to be complete in March/ April 2024. From the 1st of December the number of lanes approaching the 5-arm junction from the N3 off ramp has been increased from 2 to 3. Also, some timing changes to signals were made at this time to alleviate queuing. The timings will be monitored and altered as required over the coming weeks. During mid-December all traffic will be rerouted to the new bridge over the N3. Around this time an additional lane from the Ballycoolin direction to the N3 on ramp will be opened. These changes will bring improvements to traffic flow. From



December the old bridge over N3 will be resurfaced including the application of new waterproofing and installation of a new mechanical joint. During January/ February the refurbishment works on the old bridge will continue along with the installation of new traffic signals for the interchange. The diversion for pedestrians to the west of the N3 bridge will continue until March when the new traffic signals are in operation on the refurbished older bridge, It is intended that the walkway westbound to the Tolka Valley upper section from Snugborough bridge will be opened in mid-December. The completed works will have and art feature/ mural in one of the cycle friendly underpasses. The completed works will also contain permeability into the Waterville park which will provide for a future Tolka Valley Greenway. The web site www.snugbroughinterchange.ie is being updated to reflect the programme for the coming weeks/ months. – **Fingal Co Council**



Local Development

Permission has been granted for 971 apartments in the Blanchardstown Centre. I feel very strongly that residents affected by this development should have a say in how the over €10M in Development Levies for infrastructure and open space are spent. I have submitted the motion below to Fingal Co Council and will continue to lobby for community involvement in the decision making process.

"That the Council introduces a public consultation for the residents of Blakestown and Mountview, specifically Whitestown, Fortlawn, Sheepmoor and Whitechapel to get their views on how the development levies for the Blanchardstown Centre High Rise Development should be spent".



I am really pleased that €1m has been allocated to provide for 7 new special education classrooms for Scoil Mhuire Senior in Blakestown. I am working very closely with An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar to ensure that additional new school buildings are delivered for Schol Mhuire Senior and Junior.



Boards and Committees I Serve On

- Economic Strategic Policy Committee (SPC)
- Fingal Joint Policing Committee
- Bianchardstown Local Drugs and Alcohol Task Force
- Tolka River Project
- Homestart Blakestown
- Club Conai
 Advisory Board



Councillor Ted Leddy

Castleknock, Dublin 10 087 327 6630 tedleddy 2014@gmail.com 10 www.tedleddy.ie Working in your area with An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, Sen Emer Currie, Clir Siobhan Shovlin and Frances Fitzgerald MEP.

Exploring the Rich History of The Strawberry Beds in Dublin

Introduction:

Nestled along the banks of the River Liffey in Dublin, The Strawberry Beds is a picturesque stretch of land with a history as vibrant and varied as the lush landscapes that define it. This idyllic area, known for its scenic beauty, has witnessed centuries of change, development, and cultural evolution. Let's take a journey through time to unravel the fascinating history of The Strawberry Beds in Dublin.

Early Settlements:

The Strawberry Beds region has a history dating back to ancient times. Archaeological evidence suggests that the area was inhabited as early as the Neolithic period, with various artifacts and remnants indicating the presence of early settlers. Over the centuries, different communities have left their mark on the landscape, contributing to the rich tapestry of The Strawberry Beds' history.

Agricultural Heritage:

The name "Strawberry Beds" itself has agricultural origins, harking back to the cultivation of strawberries in the area. The fertile soil along the riverbanks made it an ideal location for farming, and strawberries became a prominent crop. The practice of cultivating strawberries persisted for many years, shaping the local economy and lending a unique character to the landscape.

19th Century Transformation:

During the 19th century, The Strawberry Beds underwent significant transformations, reflecting the broader changes occurring in Ireland. The expansion of transportation networks, particularly the construction of the Royal Canal, brought increased accessibility to the region. This accessibility, coupled with the agricultural productivity of the area, attracted new residents and fostered economic growth.

The Strawberry Beds became a popular destination for Dubliners seeking a rural escape from the bustling city life. Country houses and estates dotted the landscape, serving as retreats for the wealthy elite. The juxtaposition of the rural and the urban in The Strawberry Beds made it a unique and sought-after locale.

The Troubles and Changing Dynamics:

The 20th century brought its own set of challenges to The Strawberry Beds, as Ireland experienced the turbulent period known as "The Troubles." The region, like many others, felt the impact of political and social unrest. However, despite the challenges, the resilience of the local community shone through, and The Strawberry Beds remained a community with a strong sense of identity.

Modern Revival:

In recent decades, The Strawberry Beds has experienced a revival as interest in preserving historical landscapes and promoting sustainable living has grown. Efforts to protect the natural beauty



of the area, coupled with initiatives to celebrate its heritage, have contributed to a renewed appreciation for The Strawberry Beds.

Conclusion

The Strawberry Beds in Dublin stands as a testament to the enduring nature of history, where ancient settlements, agricultural traditions, and modern developments converge. Its evolution reflects the dynamic story of Ireland itself, with each chapter leaving its imprint on the landscape. As The Strawberry Beds



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St Brigid's Day and the Women of Ireland

The continuing popularity of the post leaving certificate further education sector as a route into higher education degrees is clearly evident in figures released by Dunboyne College of Further Education (DCFE), one of the largest providers of post certificate further education and training (FET) courses in the country.

"If a female had once passed the gate it would be practically impossible to watch what buildings or chambers she had entered or how long she might remain there."

In 1895, the Board of Trinity College Dublin identified this as one of a number of dangers associated with admitting female students to the College.

Less than 10 years later and in the same month as the death of Provost George Salmon, who had famously proclaimed "over my dead body" will women enter the college, the first three female students were admitted to Trinity in January 1904.

In ancient Ireland things were different. The roles and status of women were influenced by the complex social, political, and cultural structures of Celtic society. While it's important to note that information about ancient Ireland can be somewhat limited and interpretations may vary, some general aspects of the role of women in ancient Irish society include:

Legal Status:

Women in ancient Ireland had certain legal rights, including the right to inherit property and the right to seek legal redress in cases of injury or injustice. The Brehon Laws, a legal system in ancient Ireland, recognized the rights of women in various matters, although the extent of these rights could vary.

Marriage and Family:

Marriage was an important institution, and women played crucial roles in the family structure. In some cases, women had the right to choose their husbands, and marriage was often accompanied by dowries. The household was a significant unit in ancient Irish society, and women played key roles in managing the household and raising children.

Economic Contributions:

Women were actively involved in economic activities, both within and outside the household. They participated in agricultural work, textile production, and other tasks essential to the family's livelihood. In some cases, women held positions of economic power, particularly if they inherited land or wealth.

Religious Roles:

In ancient Celtic and pre-Christian Irish society, some women held positions of religious significance. There were female druids and priestesses who played roles in spiritual and ritual practices. With the arrival of Christianity, the roles of women in religious contexts underwent changes, and convents and monastic life became options for some women.

Warrior Women:

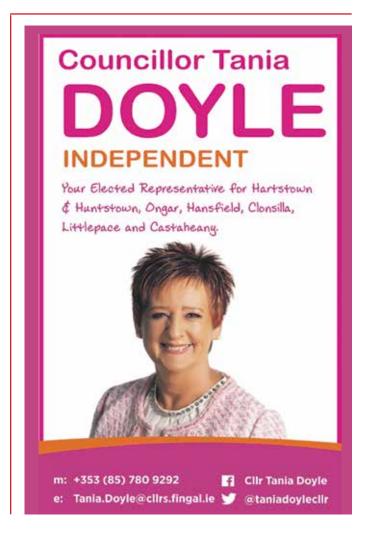
There are historical references and mythological tales of women warriors, such as the legendary figure Queen Medb (Maeve) in the Ulster Cycle of Irish mythology. While the extent to which women participated in warfare is debated among historians, these stories suggest a recognition of women as capable and powerful figures.



Cultural and Artistic Contributions:

Women in ancient Ireland contributed to the cultural and artistic life of their communities. They were involved in storytelling, music, and other forms of artistic expression. Women poets, called banfili, were known for their skills in composing and reciting poetry.

There have been many powerful and influential women in Irelands history. A power lost in more recent times, but a new generation of women are changing all that.





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- Advanced Beauty Therapy

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- Personal Training and Fitness Instruction
- Sports Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy Assistant











E: dunboynecollege@lmetb.ie





The History of St. Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is a time to celebrate romance and love and kissy-face fealty. But the origins of this festival of candy and cupids are dark, bloody — and a bit muddled.



hough no one has pinpointed the exact origin of the holiday, one place to start is ancient Rome.

The Romans' celebrations were violent. The Romans executed two men by that name on Feb. 14 of different years in the third century.

From Feb. 13 to 15, the Romans celebrated the feast of Lupercalia. The men sacrificed a goat and a dog, then whipped women with the hides of the animals they had just slain. The Roman romantics "were drunk. They were naked," Noel Lenski, now a religious studies professor at Yale University, told NPR in 2011. Young women would line up for the men to hit them, Lenski said. They believed this would make them fertile.

VALENTINE'S DAY

The brutal fete included a matchmaking lottery in which young men drew the names of women from a jar. The couple would then be, um, coupled up for the duration of the festival — or longer, if the match was right.

The ancient Romans may also be responsible for the name of our modern day of love. Emperor Claudius II executed two men — both named Valentine — on Feb. 14 of different years in the third century. Their martyrdom was honoured by the Catholic Church with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day.

As the holiday spread, it evolved!!!!!!!

William Shakespeare helped romanticize Valentine's Day in his work, and it gained popularity throughout Britain and the rest of Europe.

The Normans celebrated Galatin's Day. Galatin meant "lover of women." That was likely confused with St. Valentine's Day at some point, in part because they sound alike.

As the years went on, the holiday grew sweeter. Chaucer and Shakespeare romanticized it in their work, and it gained popularity throughout Britain and the rest of Europe. Handmade paper cards became the tokens du jour in the Middle Ages.

Eventually, the tradition made its way to the New World. The Industrial Revolution ushered in factory-made cards in the 19th century. And in 1913, Hallmark Cards of Kansas City, Mo., began mass-producing valentines. February has not been the same since.

How we celebrate now

Today, the holiday is big business. But that commercialization has spoiled the day for many. Helen Fisher, a sociologist at Rutgers University, said we have only ourselves to blame. "This isn't a command performance," she said. "If people didn't want to buy Hallmark cards, they would not be bought, and Hallmark would go out of business."

And so the celebration of Valentine's Day goes on, in varied ways. Many will break the bank buying jewellery and flowers for their beloveds. Some will celebrate in a SAD (that's Singles Awareness Day) way, dining alone and bingeing on self-gifted chocolates — while others will find a way to make peace with singlehood in a society that wants everyone to partner up.



Councillor Natalie
TREACY

Sinn Féin

Tel: 0851285493 Email: Natalie.treacy@cllrs.fingal.ie

RECORDING BREAKING SUCCESS FOR DUNBOYNE COLLEGE STUDENTS



The continuing popularity of the post leaving certificate further education sector as a route into higher education degrees is clearly evident in figures released by Dunboyne College of Further Education (DCFE), one of the largest providers of post certificate further education and training (FET) courses in the country.

he data also highlights a growing trend where an increasing number of students are now using the FET route to access courses that consistently demand over 500 Leaving Certificate points.

Denis Leonard, Principal of Dunboyne College of Further Education (DCFE), says that over 90% of eligible DCFE students who applied through the CAO in 2023 received offers based on their QQI results rather than their Leaving Certificate points In 2023 a total of four hundred and eighty two (482) DCFE graduates secured places on Level 8 honours degree courses with two hundred and seventy five (275) receiving Level 7 ordinary degree offers. Many received offers at both levels with a total of four hundred and ninety-eight (498) achieving at least one offer. The figures do not include offers to mature students and students who received offers from Northern Ireland, mainland UK and EU universities.

Mr Leonard has also identified a growing trend of DCFE students securing offers for Level 8 degree courses requiring over 500 points. Offers were made based on QQI results rather than Leaving Certificate points. Among the 2023 offers to DCFE graduates in 2023 were multiple places on both DCU's Athletic Therapy and Training and Sports Science and Health courses, as well as Law and Commerce in UCD.

DCFE students also secured places on Law, BESS and Biological/Biomedical Sciences in Trinity, Sports Science, Health, and Architecture in TUD, as well as both Psychology and Law in

Maynooth University, courses which traditionally demand well over 500 Leaving Certificate points for a Round 1 offer. Students are also using their QQI results to access healthcare degrees availing of free fees at Ulster University in areas such as Physiotherapy, Nursing and Occupational Therapy.

2023 proved to be a particularly strong year for DCFE Pre-Nursing students, with a surge in offers from Irish universities. "The number of places for QQI Pre-Nursing applicants is very low in comparison to other courses but this year we saw some universities offer a significant number of their QQI places to our students. These included10 QQI places in Trinity College, 10 to DCU and 7 QQI places in UCD. In other universities where there were specialised nursing courses there were multiple offers including TUS Athlone, DKIT, Cork, and Limerick. Over 50% of DCFE Pre-Nursing students secured offers in Irish or Northern Irish colleges.

However, Mr. Leonard expressed concern about the trend of Pre-Nursing students receiving and accepting offers to complete their training in UK universities. He called for an increased a focus on retaining students in the country. "We are exporting students to study Nursing when we really should be keeping them here in Ireland. These are students who know what it is like to study Nursing and who have made the commitment to the profession and yet we are denying them a place to continue their studies."

The majority of DCFE graduates tend to apply to and accept offers from universities and colleges within the immediate catchment



Councillor Natalie
TREACY



Tel: 0851285493 Email: Natalie.treacy@cllrs.fingal.ie area of the college with TU Dublin making 267 offers across Level 8 and Level 7 courses to DCFE students and Maynooth University offering 156 places.

Other Dublin based universities attracted applications from Dunboyne with DCU offering 54 places, followed closely by UCD with 36 offers and 2O offers from Trinity College.

While geographical location often influences the majority of offers and acceptances, DCFE's reach extends to universities and colleges across the country, from Carlow to Cork, Letterkenny to Limerick, Sligo to the new South East Technology University in Waterford, and across to Galway.

Standout offer numbers include 39 to Dundalk, 44 to TUS Athlone, 39 to the ATU in Galway 18 to the South East TU, and 6 to the Munster TU. Those interested in continuing their studies in Art and progressed to both IADT and NCAD.

The DCFE Principal says their progression figures clearly support the initiative by Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education to enable students to start their third level experience in further education and complete the remainder in higher education colleges. "The focus on seamless transition aligns with DCFE's success in facilitating progression from Level 5 to Level 8 degrees. We have already been working closely with Irish universities including Maynooth and TU Dublin to enhance and develop these pathways in teaching, nursing, engineering, and other areas to open up opportunities for our students to get to where they want to go. This approach," he contends, "makes economic sense and supports student welfare by allowing them to explore their interests at the further education level before committing to a full 4-year degree."

The DCFE Principal acknowledges that not every student knows their preferred field of study upon completing secondary school. "Nor should we expect them," he says. "Opting for the further education route allows students to explore their options, and SOLAS data indicates that students with under 300 points have a 50% chance of completing a higher education degree, increasing to 75% for those who complete a further education course. On a FE course they learn referencing, research and self-directed learning and focus on one discipline for study as opposed to 7 or 8 Leaving Certificate subjects. This means they are better placed to complete subsequent level 7 or 8 degree," says Leonard.

While statistics show that overall third-level dropout rates for students who complete a Level 5 QQI course are less than 3%, Mr. Leonard concedes that the progression to UK colleges is not as accurately captured.

He highlights that approximately 50% of DCFE graduates complete Pre-Employment programs, entering the workforce successfully in sectors like childcare, healthcare, animal care, airline/ tourism, business/IT, hairdressing, beauty therapy, and professional cookery. Graduates of these courses use their mandatory college work placement to obtain full-time positions. In fact, we cannot meet the employers demand for graduates in some sectors. This diversity underscores that not all students should pursue full-time degree courses, and further education offers a viable option for students to transition successfully into the workforce in a supportive environment.

Dunboyne College will be holding its Open Day on Thursday 29th February 2024.

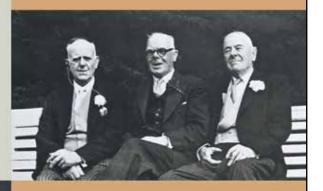
Cunninghams Funeral Directors

has been in business serving greater Dublin since the 1920's. The present company has evolved from the original family business "Cunningham Brothers" set up by three brothers Robert, Andrew and John. The brothers were already trading as Kellystown Sawmills based in Clonsilla Village who, among other things, were coffin manufacturers transporting their products throughout the country on the Royal Canal.

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St. Patrick's Day

BLANCHARDSTOWN PARADE 2024



SUNDAY 17TH MARCH BLANCHARDSTOWN...12PM

FIND OUT MORE INFO & *
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Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall Fingal County Council

