

ISSUE 61
MARCH/APRIL 2026

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See Page 09

THE CURIOUS LIFE OF THE
EASTER BUNNY - SEE P38



Cllr Gerard Sheehan:
"Suspend Carbon Tax
in this time of need"

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Spring Edition of Little Village. For thousands of people living in Counties Dublin and Kildare, the daily commute is a familiar routine. Choosing the right car for commuting has become more important than ever. Have a look at our article on the Best Cars for Commuting.

Did you know that although the Chinese company SHEIN operates globally, its European Headquarters are based in Dublin. Regulators in Europe have launched a formal investigation into the company and IRELAND is at the centre of it. See our report on why SHEIN is facing investigation in Ireland and Europe.

Finally, as Easter approaches we must remember that once upon a time an Easter Egg was exactly that....an Egg!!!!!!But not in today's world. Enjoy our interesting and amusing article on the "Curious Life of the Easter Bunny" which also enlightens you on the marketing of the Easter Bunny and the Easter Egg.

So, until next time have a lovely Easter.

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All correspondence should be addressed to:
Little Village Magazine, 11 Cherryhill Avenue, Kells, Co. Meath.
Creative Top Publishing Ltd. publishes Little Village Magazine.

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DUBLIN 15 THROUGH THE DECADES

From Village Roots to a Thriving Community

When Baxter first opened on Main Street, Blanchardstown in the early 1970s, Dublin 15 had a very different feel. Established communities such as Blanchardstown, Castleknock, Clonsilla and Mulhuddart were defined by village streets, local shops and a strong sense of familiarity.

Over the decades, the area has transformed dramatically. New neighbourhoods including Ongar, Tyrrelstown, Rathborne and Hansfield have added energy and diversity, while Dublin 15 has evolved into one of the capital's most dynamic residential and commercial districts.

Key developments helped shape this growth — Blanchardstown Town Centre establishing the area as a regional retail hub, the N3 improving connectivity, the National Sports Campus bringing world-class facilities, the continued expansion of Connolly Hospital, and the development of new schools and Technological University Dublin.

From our original Main Street office, we have had a front-row seat to these changes — watching farmland become thriving estates and quiet roads turn into busy thoroughfares.

Today, demand for housing in Dublin 15 remains strong. New developments such as Hollywoodrath, Bellingsmore, Churchfields, Hansfield and Phoenix Park Racecourse have added supply, while established estates from the 1960s–80s are now seeing generational change, with more long-held homes coming to market. Mature gardens, larger plots and strong community ties continue to make these areas highly attractive.

The rental market is also shifting. Recent regulations have accelerated the exit of smaller landlords, reducing rental supply but creating opportunities for first-time buyers purchasing former rental properties. At the same time, institutional investors are increasingly delivering build-to-rent schemes, particularly apartments, limiting



availability for individual purchasers but adding supply to the rental market.

Alongside housing, Dublin 15 benefits from a strong commercial backbone. Blanchardstown Centre, neighbourhood retail hubs, and the Ballycoolin and Damastown industrial areas support significant employment across logistics, technology, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing. This employment base underpins the resilience of the local property market.

Over five decades, we have learned that there is no such thing as a “normal” property market. Booms, downturns, regulatory changes and global events all shape local decisions. Yet one constant remains — people need homes, businesses need premises, and communities continue to grow.

From village roots to thriving suburb, Dublin 15 continues to evolve — and we are proud to have grown alongside it.





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Dream Kitchens and Home Transformations

The Heart of the Modern Irish Home

Across County Dublin and Kildare, homeowners are transforming their kitchens into stylish, multifunctional spaces that serve as the true heart of the home. No longer just a place for cooking, the modern kitchen is where families gather, friends socialise, and much of daily life unfolds.

With property prices remaining strong and many families choosing to upgrade rather than move, kitchen renovations have become one of the most popular home improvement projects in Ireland.

The Rise of the Open-Plan Kitchen

One of the biggest trends in recent years has been the move toward open-plan kitchen and living spaces. Walls that once separated kitchens from dining rooms are being removed to create large, light-filled areas where cooking, dining, and relaxing can happen in one seamless environment.

In suburban homes across Lucan, Maynooth, Naas, and Celbridge, homeowners are extending to the rear of their houses with glass-walled kitchen extensions that connect indoor spaces with gardens and patios. Large sliding or bi-fold doors allow natural light to flood the room while creating an easy flow between indoor and outdoor living.

These spaces are ideal for family life and entertaining, making them one of the most desirable upgrades for modern homeowners.

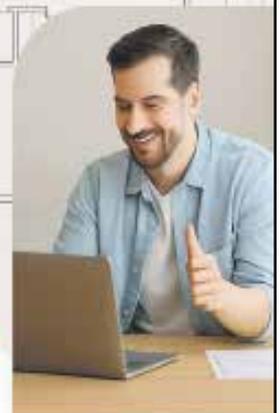
The Kitchen Island Revolution

If there is one feature that defines today's dream kitchen, it is the kitchen island. More than just additional workspace,

Continues P.8

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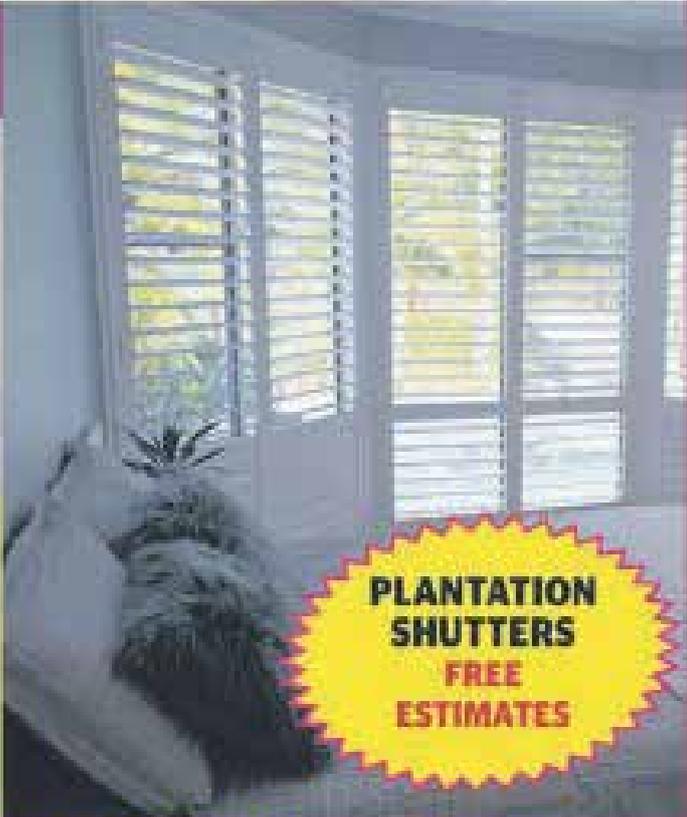
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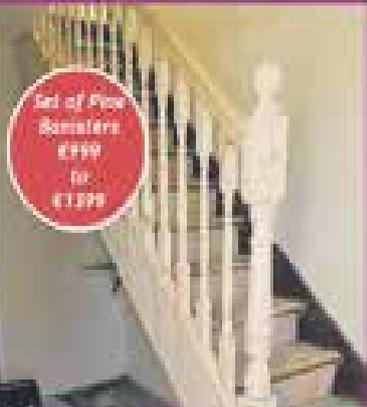
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the island has become a social hub where people gather while meals are prepared.

Modern kitchen islands often include:

- Integrated breakfast bars
- Hidden storage and drawers
- Wine coolers or beverage fridges
- Induction hobs or prep sinks
- Seating for casual dining

For families, the island becomes a place where children do homework, guests chat over coffee, and everyday life naturally centres.

Materials That Combine Style and Durability

Irish homeowners are increasingly choosing materials that offer both beauty and practicality.

Popular choices include:

Quartz worktops, Durable, stain-resistant, and available in a wide range of colours, Natural wood cabinetry, Adds warmth and texture to modern designs.

Stone or porcelain splashbacks, Provide a sleek, easy-to-clean finish. Matte finishes, Handleless cabinets and soft matte colours are replacing glossy surfaces for a more contemporary look.

Neutral tones such as soft greys, warm whites, and earthy colours remain favourites, creating timeless kitchens that will age well.

Smart Kitchens for Modern Living

Technology is also playing a bigger role in kitchen design. Smart appliances, energy-efficient lighting, and hidden charging stations are becoming standard features in many new kitchens.

Homeowners are incorporating:

- Smart ovens and induction hobs
- Integrated coffee machines
- Under-cabinet LED lighting
- Built-in recycling systems
- Wireless charging points for phones and tablets

These innovations make kitchens not only more stylish but also more efficient and easier to use.

Adding Value to Your Home

Estate agents frequently note that a high-quality kitchen renovation can significantly increase a property's appeal. For buyers, the kitchen is often the room that makes the biggest impression during viewings.

A modern, well-designed kitchen suggests that the home has been carefully maintained and upgraded, making it a strong selling point in competitive property markets across Dublin and Kildare.

For many homeowners, investing in a dream kitchen is therefore both a lifestyle upgrade and a long-term investment.

More Than Just a Kitchen

Today's kitchen is no longer a purely practical space. It has become the centre of family life—a place where meals are shared, conversations unfold, and memories are made.

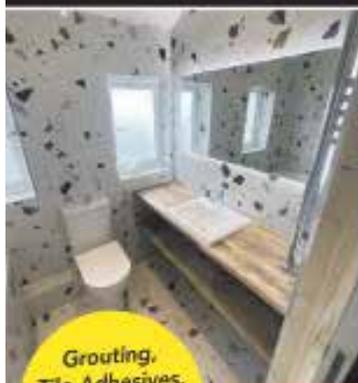
Whether it's a sleek contemporary design or a warm country-style space, a thoughtfully designed kitchen has the power to transform not only a house but the way people live within it.

And in homes across Dublin and Kildare, that transformation is happening every day.



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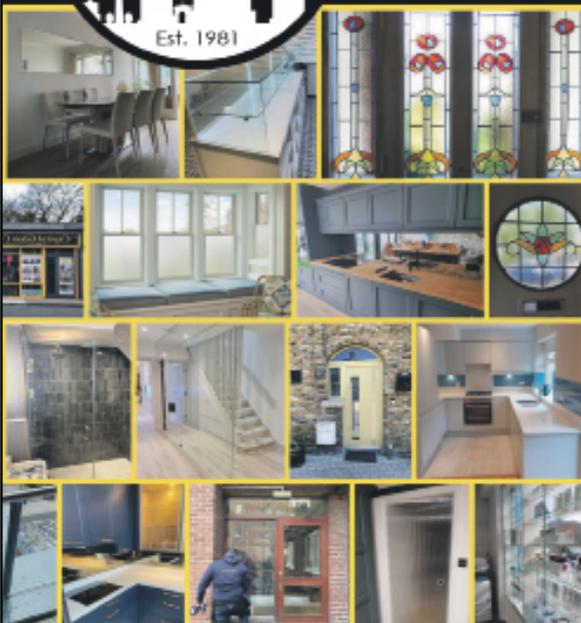
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Roderic O'GORMAN TD

A Chairde,

Below I share some of the latest updates on issues I have been working on in the constituency. Further info and updates are shared on my website and on my social media.

Worsening Road Safety: The RSA is not Fit for Purpose



The Dineachtas Transport Committee has been focusing on road safety in recent weeks, and while road deaths continue to climb, Minister Darragh O'Brien says he still has confidence in the Road Safety Authority. His Department is also stalling on the Camera Enforcement Strategy and has backtracked on previously-agreed reforms of the organisation. Without real action, dangerous driving will continue to go unchecked.



A Collapse in Bus Shelters Being Built

Just 3 bus shelters were built in Dublin in 2025 - that's according to a response from the National Transport Authority I received via a Parliamentary Question recently.

In a time where we should be ramping up our investment and ambition for public transport, this is extremely disappointing. Improving the passenger experience - and giving people a sheltered, dry space to wait for the bus - is the bare minimum. I'll continue working on this issue to ensure we have faster delivery of infrastructure going forward.



I recently joined Muslim Women Together in Dublin 15 for their 20th Annual Food Fair, raising money for Multiple Sclerosis Ireland.

Abolishing Parking Charges for Cancer Patients

As Chair of the Dineachtas Cross-Party Group on Cancer, I am working with the Irish Cancer Society to reduce the impact of car parking charges for cancer patients and their families. Over half a million euro was collected from these fees at Connolly Hospital in 2025 - a 13% increase from the previous year.



Please don't hesitate to get
in touch on any issue

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WEEKEND ESCAPES WITHIN 1 HOUR

Living in or near Dublin has many advantages—culture, restaurants, and a vibrant social scene—but sometimes the best remedy for a busy week is a quick escape from the city.

Fortunately, residents of Dublin and neighbouring County Kildare are perfectly positioned to reach some of Ireland's most beautiful destinations in under an hour.

From coastal villages to mountain valleys and historic estates, a short drive can feel like a complete change of pace.

Coastal Charm in Howth

Just a short journey from the city centre lies the picturesque fishing village of Howth. Famous for its working harbour, cliff walks, and seafood restaurants, Howth has become one of Dublin's favourite weekend destinations.

Visitors can stroll along the pier watching fishing boats return with their catch, enjoy fish and chips overlooking the harbour, or explore the spectacular Howth Cliff Walk, where the views stretch across Dublin Bay.

The village also hosts a lively weekend market, making it an ideal spot for browsing artisan foods, crafts, and local produce.

Seaside Strolls in Bray

Heading south along the coast brings you to Bray, one of Ireland's most beloved seaside towns. Its long Victorian promenade is perfect for relaxed walks beside the sea, while cafés and restaurants provide plenty of places to pause for coffee or lunch.

For those feeling energetic, the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk offers one of the most scenic coastal trails in the country, with breathtaking views across the Irish Sea.

Bray's mix of natural beauty and traditional seaside charm makes it a perfect destination for a spontaneous day trip.

Nature and History at Glendalough

For a deeper immersion in nature, the valley of Glendalough is hard to beat. Located in the Wicklow Mountains, this historic monastic site was founded in the 6th century by St. Kevin and remains one of Ireland's most atmospheric heritage locations.

Visitors can explore the ancient round tower, walk around the peaceful Upper and Lower Lakes, or hike the surrounding mountain trails.

Despite its sense of remote wilderness, Glendalough is only about an hour from Dublin, making it an ideal destination for a refreshing escape into nature.

Elegant Gardens at Powerscourt

Another gem just south of the capital is Powerscourt Estate. Frequently ranked among the most beautiful gardens in the world, Powerscourt offers sweeping terraces, ornamental lakes, and stunning views of the Great Sugar Loaf mountain.

Visitors can wander through Italian-style gardens, explore hidden pathways, or relax with afternoon tea in the estate café.

Nearby, Powerscourt Waterfall—Ireland's tallest waterfall—adds another spectacular attraction to the area.

Shopping and Style in Kildare

Not every escape has to involve hiking boots. For those seeking retail therapy, Kildare Village offers a completely different kind of weekend outing.

The open-air shopping village features boutiques from international fashion brands alongside cafés and restaurants, creating a relaxed environment for browsing and dining.

Located just off the M7, it's easily accessible from Dublin and has become a popular destination for stylish day trips.

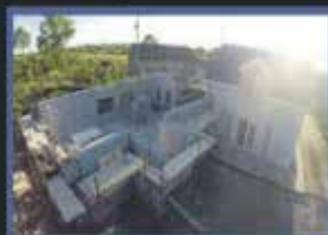
The Perfect Short Break

One of the great advantages of living near Dublin is the variety of landscapes and experiences within easy reach. In less than an hour, you can move from busy city streets to mountain lakes, coastal paths, historic estates, or peaceful countryside.

For residents of Dublin and Kildare, these nearby destinations offer the perfect way to recharge—proving that sometimes the best escapes are the ones closest to home.

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Dear Resident

I hope you are keeping well. I have included below an update on some issues which I have been working on. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if I can be of any assistance.

All the best,

John

PUBLISH TASK FORCE REPORT ON SPECIAL EDUCATION NOW!

The report of the Task Force on special education in Dublin 15 was completed in June 2025 but has still not been published by the Department of Education. This foot dragging by the Department is particularly unacceptable while parents still have to fight for appropriate school places for their children. There is an ongoing crisis in services and supports for children with additional needs and availability of special school places in Dublin 15. The Taoiseach recently admitted that there is a likely shortfall of 800-1,000 special school places nationally. The Dublin 15 Autism Class Application Trial is a valuable advance, but data from the eCAT system indicates that 185 applications were received for 24 autism class places within the trial in 2024-25.

Councillors at our Area Committee recently agreed a motion which I put forward calling for the report to be published immediately so that all its recommendations can be implemented:

Motion:

Councillor J. Walsh "That the Chief Executive write to the Minister for Education and Youth and requests her to immediately publish the report of the Dublin 15 Task Force on Special Education and commit to the full implementation of all its recommendations."

UPDATE ON NEW PEDESTRIAN-CYCLE LINK FOR GRANARD BRIDGE

Fingal Council are proposing a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Royal Canal and rail line beside Granard Bridge, Castleknock - this follows adoption of a Local Objective which I proposed in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-29.

Following a non-statutory consultation and feedback from the public, improvement works to the Roselawn Road junction with Castleknock Road will now be included in the plan which is currently at preliminary design stage.



John at the first meeting of the new Local Community Safety Partnership for Dublin West



VARIATION TO FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Fingal Council recently brought forward a variation to the Fingal Development Plan to zone more land for housing. The proposed rezonings impacting on Dublin 15 are:

- Dunsink - bringing forward housing development for the Dunsink lands (435 hectares) based on a statutory plan,
- Clonsilla - Rezoning of Open Space land between St. Joseph's, Clonsilla and the Royal Canal.
- Barnhill - Rezoning of Greenbelt land near Barnhill.

A key issue in making these decisions is that we must create sustainable communities in which new housing is provided in conjunction with essential infrastructure, including public transport networks, schools and community facilities. It is a scandal that a recent Council report revealed 56 inactive sites across Fingal where 8933 homes have never been built despite full planning permission.

- I will not be supporting any rezoning affecting high amenity land or impacting on the Royal Canal or Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area.
- Any development at Dunsink must be infrastructure led and provide high quality amenities for new residents.

If you have any questions or want to express your view about the proposed rezonings, please let me know on john.walsh@cldm.fingal.ie or complete a short online survey here:



SCRAMBLER BIKES

The misuse of scrambler bikes is extremely dangerous and unfortunately has had a terrible impact with the tragic death of Grace Lynch. While the proposed banning of scrambler bikes in public spaces is welcome and should be brought forward by Government as soon as possible, that by itself is not enough – we need more powers and resources for the Garda to enforce the law and control the scourge of scramblers.

We need the law to be changed to require that all off road scrambler and quad bikes are legally registered at a national level and display a visible licence plate. I raised this concern about scramblers at the first meeting of the newly created Local Community Safety Partnership in Dublin West. The Partnership agreed to write to the Minister for Transport, seeking the introduction of a national system of registration and identification for all scrambler bikes. I will work with the Blanchardstown Local Drug Task Force and Councilors on a cross-party basis to get this initiative implemented.

The Sporting Heart of Dublin 15

On any given evening in Dublin 15, the floodlights come on across pitches and playing fields as hundreds of young athletes take to the grass.

From Gaelic football and hurling to soccer, rugby and athletics, sport is woven deeply into the life of the community.

For many residents, the area's sports clubs are more than places to play games—they are the social backbone of the community, bringing families together week after week.

Where Communities Gather

At the centre of Dublin 15's sporting culture are the local GAA clubs. These organisations are not just about competition; they are hubs of community life where generations of families gather.

Clubs such as Castleknock GAA and St Peregrine's GAA field teams at every age level, from under-6s learning the basics to adult teams competing in Dublin championships.

Weekend mornings often begin with a familiar sight: parents lining the sidelines with coffee in hand, children in oversized jerseys chasing footballs across the pitch, and volunteer coaches organising drills and encouragement in equal measure.

For many families, these clubs quickly become part of their weekly routine—and their social circle.

More Than Just the Game

While competition is an important part of sport, the real impact of these clubs goes far beyond the scoreboard.

Young players develop confidence, teamwork and resilience. They learn the value of discipline and commitment, showing up for training in rain, wind or sunshine.

For teenagers especially, sport provides a positive environment and strong friendships during formative years. Coaches often become mentors, guiding players both on and off the field.

And for parents, sports clubs often serve as meeting points where neighbours get to know each other and lifelong friendships begin.

Football, Soccer and More

While Gaelic games dominate much of the sporting landscape, Dublin 15 also boasts a wide range of other sporting opportunities.

Clubs such as St Mochta's FC have long traditions in local football, providing pathways for young players who dream of playing at higher levels.

Soccer leagues, athletics clubs, martial arts schools, dance academies and rugby teams all contribute to the area's vibrant sporting ecosystem. For children growing up here, there is rarely a shortage of activities to choose from.

The Volunteers Behind the Scenes

One of the most remarkable aspects of Dublin 15's sporting culture is that much of it is powered by volunteers.

Parents, former players and community members dedicate countless hours to coaching, organising fixtures, maintaining facilities and running club committees.

Without these volunteers, youth sport simply would not exist at the scale it does today.

Their contribution often goes unnoticed, but it is essential to keeping local sport alive and thriving.



A Lifelong Connection

For many residents, their connection to local sport lasts far beyond childhood.

Former players often return as coaches or committee members. Parents who once stood on the sidelines cheering their children eventually become the volunteers helping the next generation.

In this way, sport creates a cycle that strengthens the community year after year.

The Spirit of Dublin 15

The fields and pitches of Dublin 15 tell a powerful story about the area's identity. They show a community that values participation, teamwork and local pride.

From the roar of encouragement on a Sunday morning to the quiet dedication of volunteers setting up training cones after work, the sporting culture of the area reflects something deeper than competition.

It reflects a community that plays, supports and grows together.

And that is why, for so many families, sport remains the beating heart of Dublin 15.



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Cllr Gerard Sheehan: “We are calling for the Carbon Tax to be suspended in this time of need”

Dublin 15, March 2026

Aontú leader Peadar Tóibín TD has today called for an immediate emergency suspension of the Carbon Tax, citing the “drastic and sudden” threat to Irish energy security following a sharp escalation of conflict in the Middle East over the last 24 hours.

“**Taoiseach, we were told that the purpose of Carbon tax was to change behaviour. It was to move people away from fossil fuels. The aim, is to push the price of fuel to a level that would push people towards sustainable alternatives. But if the market is already pushing the price beyond that level, then there is no need for Carbon Tax**”

And what about if a family has no alternative to the car to get to work or to home heating oil to heat the house, they cant change behaviour. For those families Carbon Tax is just inflicting economic pain. Will you scrap Carbon Tax if the cost of petrol and diesel increases beyond current levels.

The Deputy stated **“The events of the last few days in the Middle East are shocking. The loss of life and the potential for future killings in the region has stunned the world. It will also have an enormous effect on the global economy and the global energy market. That impact will be felt most acutely at Irish petrol stations and in our utility bills. Brent Crude has surged toward \$80 a barrel, and we are already seeing local diesel prices jump by 10 to 15 cents per litre. This is a direct consequence of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting suspension of shipping insurance, yet our government remains a passive observer.”**

The Deputy concluded

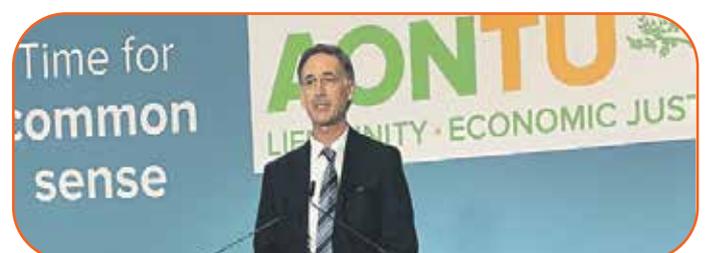
“Aontú is calling for an immediate

reduction of the Carbon Tax. We must cancel the increase scheduled for May 1st and introduce an emergency ‘Carbon Tax Cap’ on the state’s tax take per litre. When the price of a litre of petrol or diesel rises above a certain level the Carbon Tax should fall. Carbon tax is supposed to be, after all, a method to inflate the price of fossil fuels to reduce their consumption. If price rises are so much anyways, that it is already reducing demand, the Carbon Tax is just punitive.

The Government cannot continue to profit from a conflict that is pushing the ‘squeezed middle’ toward a breaking point. We need a ‘circuit breaker’ on fuel taxes now to ensure that Irish workers and families are not the ones paying the highest price for global instability.”

Cllr Sheehan states that **“Its already over e100 to fill a car today and for diesel 60% of this is government TAX and 65% on petrol is Governement TAX. It would only cost €35 if it wasn’t for these so called progressive taxes. It is this sort of thinking that is hurting low and middle-income earners. And for those of us who cannot rely on a public transport system we have little or no choice.**

Once again we are calling for the Carbon Tax to be suspended in this time of need.”



HEALTH AND WELLBEING INFO FOR D15

Here are some of the health and well being booklets available from HSE Health & Wellbeing Floor 1, Unit 4 & 5 | Nexus Building, Block 6A | Blanchardstown Corporate Park | Ballycoolin | Dublin 15 | Eircode: D15 CF9K

HSE Integrated Health Area of Dublin North City & West

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5 locations in Dublin 15:

- Corduff Primary Care Centre
- Roselawn Health Centre
- Blanchardstown Primary Care Centre
- Hartstown Health Centre
- Riverside Medical Clinic, Mulhuddart

In person or phone call appointments
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for over 65's

Information on supports and services available for people over 65 years of age

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Alcoholics Anonymous Corduff D15

Our Group meets every Saturday morning at 11am in the St Patrick's Pastoral Centre, Blackcourt Road, Corduff Eircode: D15VY9P and simultaneously online on:

Zoom Meeting ID: 83297097884
Passcode: 478993

- Our meeting is OPEN to anyone interested in learning about AA and how we help others affected by alcoholism.
- Alcoholics Anonymous is an international Fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem.
- It is Non-Professional, Self-Supporting, Multiracial, Apolitical and available almost everywhere.
- There are no Age or Educational requirements, membership is OPEN to ANYONE who wants to do something about their drinking problem!

WE CAN BE CONTACTED HERE:
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www.thereisasolution.group



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Physiotherapy can help someone in physical pain by addressing both the symptoms and the underlying causes of that pain. Here are the main ways it works:

1. Reducing Pain Directly

Manual therapy: Hands-on techniques like joint mobilization, soft-tissue massage, and stretching reduce muscle tension and improve movement.

Modalities: Heat, ice, ultrasound, TENS, and electrical stimulation can calm irritated tissues and reduce pain signals.

2. Restoring Movement and Function

Targeted exercises: Strengthening weak muscles and stretching tight ones helps correct imbalances that often cause pain.

Mobility training: Improves joint range of motion, making everyday tasks easier and less painful.

3. Addressing the Root Cause

Pain often comes from issues like poor posture, overuse, muscle weakness, or limited joint movement. Physiotherapists:

- Assess how you move
- Identify contributing factors
- Create a personalized treatment plan

4. Preventing Future Pain or Injury

Physiotherapy teaches:

- Proper body mechanics
- Injury-prevention exercises
- Lifestyle changes (ergonomics, posture habits, activity pacing)

5. Supporting Recovery After Injury or Surgery

If the pain is due to trauma or surgery, physiotherapy helps:

- Reduce swelling
- Restore strength
- Improve stability
- Speed up safe return to daily activities or sport

6. Improving Overall Quality of Life

Better movement and less pain often mean:

- Improved sleep
- Reduced need for medications
- More confidence performing daily tasks

Highly Qualified Staff

- Their physiotherapists are chartered physiotherapists, meaning they have strong, university-level training.
- They also have postgraduate training in manual therapy and exercise therapy.

Evidence-Based, Tailored Treatment

- PhysioCare doesn't do "one-size-fits-all": they assess you, figure out exactly what's causing your pain, and tailor a treatment plan that could include manual therapy, acupuncture or dry needling, exercise therapy, etc.
- Their goal isn't just to make you feel better now, but to prevent chronic or recurring problems ("fix, manage or refer" philosophy).

Good Facilities

- They have five clinics in Dublin. Another location set to open soon in North Dublin!!
- Their clinics are private, spacious, and well-equipped with modern physiotherapy tools (e.g. shockwave therapy, ultrasound).
- Some clinics have an in-house "PhysioGym" for more active/rehab-type work.

Flexible and Accessible

- They run appointments from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays, and on Saturdays too in some clinics.
- Home visits are available when needed.
- No GP referral is necessary to see their chartered physiotherapists.

Patient-Centered Philosophy

- They emphasize working with you: giving home exercises, reassessing progress every time, and educating you so you can prevent future pain.
- Their "fix, manage or refer" principle suggests that they will explore realistic options: they'll aim to fix what can be fixed, manage what needs managing, or refer you for further care if required.

Insurance & Cost Considerations

- In many cases, you can reclaim some or all of the cost through health insurance (depending on your cover).
- They also note you can claim via tax (in Ireland) on physiotherapy costs.



Fast Fashion Under the Microscope

Why SHEIN Is Facing Investigation in Ireland and Europe

In just a few years, SHEIN has transformed the global fashion landscape. With ultra-cheap prices, constant new styles and a social-media-fuelled shopping experience, the Chinese-founded online retailer has become hugely popular with younger shoppers across Ireland and Europe. But the brand's meteoric rise has also triggered growing scrutiny. In 2026, regulators in Europe launched a formal investigation into the company — and Ireland is at the centre of it.

Why Ireland Is Involved

Although SHEIN operates globally, its European headquarters are based in Dublin. That means Irish authorities have an important role in overseeing the company's compliance with EU digital and consumer laws.

Ireland's media and online regulator, Coimisiún na Meán, is assisting the European Commission in a major investigation under the Digital Services Act (DSA) — the EU's sweeping law designed to regulate large online platforms.

The probe will examine whether the platform has adequately prevented illegal products from appearing on its marketplace and whether its systems meet transparency requirements for large digital services.

Concerns About Illegal Products

One of the most serious allegations relates to the sale of illegal or inappropriate products through the platform. Regulators say they are investigating listings that may breach EU law, including reports that items resembling child-like sex dolls appeared for sale on the site.

Under EU rules, online marketplaces must actively prevent the sale of illegal goods and remove them quickly when detected. The investigation will examine whether SHEIN's internal systems are robust enough to do this.

The "Addictive Design" Question

Another focus of the investigation is the design of the shopping platform itself. Regulators are examining whether the app and website use "gamification" techniques that encourage compulsive spending.

Features under scrutiny include:

- Points systems and rewards for frequent purchases
- Flash sales and countdown timers
- Highly personalised recommendation algorithms

Authorities believe such systems may push consumers — particularly younger users — to shop impulsively or spend

more than intended.

Consumer Protection Complaints

Beyond the current investigation, consumer groups have already raised concerns about SHEIN's sales tactics. European regulators previously flagged issues such as:

- Fake or exaggerated discounts
- Pressure-selling techniques such as "limited stock" warnings
- Unclear refund or returns policies

These practices may breach EU consumer protection rules designed to prevent misleading marketing and manipulative online selling.

Environmental and Ethical Concerns

For many critics, the controversy goes beyond legal questions. SHEIN has become a symbol of ultra-fast fashion, where thousands of new items appear online each week at extremely low prices.

Campaigners argue that this model encourages over-consumption and creates enormous textile waste. In recent years the company has also faced criticism over greenwashing claims, with regulators in Italy previously fining the brand for misleading sustainability messaging.

There are also ongoing debates about labour conditions in global garment supply chains — a long-standing issue across the fast fashion industry.

What Happens Next?

The EU investigation could take months to complete. If regulators conclude that the company breached the Digital Services Act, significant fines or corrective measures could follow.

For Irish shoppers, the outcome could also influence how online fashion platforms operate in the future — from clearer pricing and advertising rules to stronger safeguards for younger users.

A Turning Point for Fast Fashion?

For many consumers, SHEIN represents convenience and affordability. But the investigation highlights a growing question facing the entire industry: how fast fashion fits into a world of stronger consumer protections, environmental awareness and digital regulation.

As online retail continues to evolve, Ireland — home to many global tech and e-commerce operations — is increasingly at the heart of that debate.

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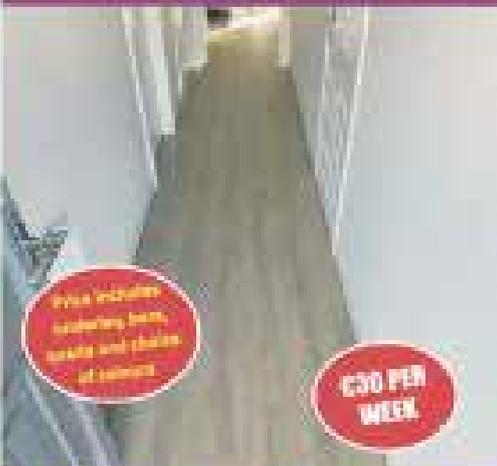
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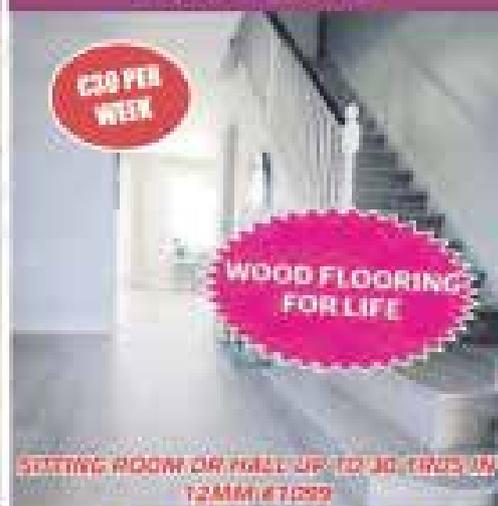
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Cllr. Ted LEDDY

March Update



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Working with Emer Currie TD, Siobhan Shawlin and Regina Doherty MEP

My Recent Motions

View below my recent motions submitted to Fingal Council meetings. If you wish to know the outcome please get in touch.

That the Chief Executive install uncontrolled zebra crossings at the Deerpark/Hawthorn roundabout in Castleknock.

That the Chief Executive refer the upcoming Dunsink Local Area Plan to the Naming and Commemorative Committee with the view to suitably renaming it.

That the Chief Executive commission the community department to paint a mural on the wall between Fortlawn Crescent and Sheepmoor Green.

That the Chief Executive meet with residents in Hamilton Park with the view to installing an all-weather five-a-side football pitch?"

That the Chief Executive commits to delivering a sensory playground in Fortlawn in 2026.

I am very please that the 5th Castleknock Village Festival will be taking place on June 14th. Once again it will be operating alongside the Castleknock 5k race. As always we are looking for local talent to take part in the entertainment, and local businesses and community groups to take stalls on the main street. If you wish to get involved please contact me or other members of the committee at castleknockvillagefestival@gmail.com

Development Plan Variations.

Given the housing shortage that the country is facing, the government recently instructed all local authorities to issue a "variation" to their county development plan in order to rezone more land for housing.

I support the appropriate rezoning or additional residential land in Dublin 15 and will vote accordingly in the upcoming development plan variations. I am especially pleased that the variation includes changing Dunsink from a "Long Term Strategic Reserve" to a more actionable "Local Area Plan".





Pedestrian & Cycling Scheme at Granard Bridge Castleknock Road

See update from Chief Executive of Fingal co Council

The first contract as part of a Single Party Framework for Engineering Consultancy Services for Pedestrian and Cycling Route Projects in the Dublin 15 Area, is to undertake phases 2 to 4 for a new Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge at Granard Bridge Castleknock Road which will cross the Dublin Maynooth railway and Royal Canal, parallel to the existing road bridges over the canal and railway, with access for pedestrians and cyclists only. This will form an integral part of the walking and cycling route for Blanchardstown to Phoenix Park which is a proposed route in the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan. This will also improve pedestrian and cycle safety at Granard Bridge and further promote the use of more sustainable travel patterns, in line with Government Policy and the cycle network plan for the greater Dublin area.

Regular meetings continue to be held with Irish Rail / Dart+ West team and Waterways Ireland to discuss the projects and ensure that the design and planning proposals are well-integrated. Roselawn Junction was also included in the scheme aiming to improve even more accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

For more information and keep updated on the project, please see a recent set-up web page for the new Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge at Grange Bridge Castleknock Road.

Pedestrian & Cycling Scheme at Granard Bridge, Castleknock Road, Dublin 15 | Fingal County Council
Royal Canal Urban Greenway

Fingal's project team from the Planning & Strategic Infrastructure Department is continuing to finalise the preliminary design in consultation with all the key stakeholders, the National Transport Authority, Irish Rail and Waterways Ireland along the route of the greenway to ensure a coordinated, high quality final design is achieved at interfaces between existing facilities and the proposed scheme.

The project team from the Planning & Strategic

Infrastructure Department is continuing to finalise the preliminary design in consultation with all the key stakeholders, the National Transport Authority, Irish Rail and Waterways Ireland along the route of the greenway to ensure a coordinated, high quality final design is achieved at interfaces between existing facilities and the proposed scheme. In November 2024 Fingal County Council requested consent from Waterways Ireland and Irish Rail to make a planning application for the Royal Canal Urban Greenway on their Lands to An Coimisiún Pleanála. Fingal County Council received consent from Irish Rail in July 2025 to proceed with making an application on their Lands to An Coimisiún Pleanála. Waterways Ireland informed Fingal County Council in September 2025 that they will issue a letter of support for Fingal County Council to make an application to An Coimisiún Pleanála for the project on their lands. Alterations to the preliminary design from Hansfields to KCC Boundary on widths was agreed following further discussion with Waterways Ireland in September

The project is currently at preliminary design stage and following further discussion with Waterways Ireland throughout 2025 which took place with the project team reaching agreement with Waterways Ireland on the design for the Greenway widths and level in the area between the Kildare border and Collins Bridge in September 2025. This now requires a body of work to be undertaken to update the EIAR, RSA & EAA, Prelim Business Case, photomontages and do more up to date habitat and ecology surveys which is now been undertaken. Current Landowner checks and land referencing are being maintained and kept up to date for the project. Following completion of the preliminary design, all the required documents which includes the Environmental Impact Assessment Report will be prepared prior to making the planning application to An Coimisiún Pleanála. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report has been reviewed by internal departments, feedback is currently being incorporated into the final report prior to undergoing a legal review in advance of a formal application to An Coimisiún Pleanála



Sea Swimming Nation

Ireland's Love Affair with the Cold Atlantic

Across Ireland's coastline, from the rugged Atlantic shores of the west to the calmer waters of Dublin Bay, a quiet revolution has taken place. What was once the pastime of hardy enthusiasts has become a national movement. Sea swimming is no longer niche—it's a lifestyle.

Every morning, regardless of the season, thousands of swimmers gather at beaches, coves, and harbours across the country to take the plunge into the Atlantic.

A Tradition with Deep Roots

Ireland's connection with sea swimming goes back generations. One of the most famous locations is the historic bathing spot at Forty Foot, where locals have been swimming in the Irish Sea for more than 250 years.

What began as a male-only bathing place eventually became a beloved public swimming location. Today, swimmers of all ages gather there daily, forming a community bonded by the simple ritual of entering the cold water.

The tradition spread along the coast, from quiet Atlantic beaches in the west to sheltered harbours along the east coast.

The Pandemic Effect

While sea swimming had been growing steadily for years, its popularity surged during the COVID-19 pandemic. With gyms closed and travel restricted, many people rediscovered the outdoors.

Ireland's coastline—long, dramatic, and easily accessible—became the perfect place for exercise and escape. People who had never considered sea swimming before suddenly found themselves embracing the invigorating shock of cold water.

What began as a temporary activity quickly became a habit.

The Science Behind the Plunge

Advocates of sea swimming often talk about the powerful sense of wellbeing it brings. Cold water immersion triggers a rush of endorphins and adrenaline, which can lead to improved mood and reduced stress.

Many swimmers report that regular sea swimming helps with:

- Mental wellbeing
- Improved circulation
- Better sleep
- Reduced anxiety

While the scientific research is still developing, there is growing evidence that controlled cold water exposure may provide genuine health benefits.

A Social Experience

One of the most striking aspects of Ireland's sea swimming culture is the strong sense of community. Early morning swim groups have formed along the entire coastline.

Friends meet at dawn, share a quick dip in the water, and often finish with a warm coffee on the beach. For many, the social element is just as important as the swim itself.

The ritual is simple: arrive, swim, laugh at the cold, and leave energised for the day ahead.

Safety in the Water

Despite its benefits, sea swimming does require care and preparation. The Atlantic can be unpredictable, and conditions change quickly.

Experienced swimmers advise newcomers to:

- Start slowly and limit time in cold water
- Swim with others rather than alone
- Check tides and weather conditions
- Wear bright swim caps for visibility

Many swimmers also use neoprene gloves, boots, and wetsuits during colder months.

Ireland's Natural Advantage

Ireland's geography makes it ideal for sea swimming. With more than 7,500 kilometres of coastline, there are endless places to enter the water—from sandy beaches to rocky coves and sheltered harbours.

Whether it's a sunrise dip on the east coast or a wild Atlantic swim on the west, the experience is both exhilarating and deeply connected to nature.

More Than a Trend

Sea swimming in Ireland has evolved into something bigger than a fitness trend. For many people, it has become a daily ritual—one that provides clarity, calm, and a sense of belonging.

In a fast-moving modern world, the simple act of stepping into the sea offers a moment of stillness. The water is cold, the air is fresh, and the reward is a feeling of vitality that lasts long after the swim is over.

And along Ireland's shores, every morning, the swimmers return.

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The Future of Dublin 15

A Community Shaping Its Next Chapter

Over the past thirty years, Dublin 15 has transformed from a largely rural landscape into one of the most vibrant suburban regions in Ireland. Areas such as Castleknock, Blanchardstown, Clonsilla and Ongar have experienced rapid growth, bringing new homes, schools, businesses and communities.

But the story of Dublin 15 is far from finished. As the population continues to grow and the city expands, the area now faces an exciting challenge: how to shape its future while preserving the qualities that make it such a great place to live.

A Growing Population

Dublin's northwest suburbs have been among the fastest-growing parts of the capital in recent decades. Large residential developments have brought thousands of new residents to the area, attracted by relatively affordable housing, access to green spaces and proximity to the city centre.

New housing estates continue to emerge across Dublin 15, reflecting the demand for family homes close to employment hubs and transport routes.

While growth brings energy and opportunity, it also requires careful planning to ensure infrastructure, schools and services keep pace with population increases.

Transport and Connectivity

Transport will play a major role in shaping the future of the area.

Commuter rail services already connect Dublin 15 to the city centre through stations such as Clonsilla Railway Station and Coolmine Railway Station. These links provide vital access for thousands of commuters travelling into Dublin each day.

Major road routes also connect the area with the wider city and national motorway network.

Future transport improvements, including expanded public transport and cycling infrastructure, are expected to play a key role in managing the continued growth of the community.

Local Business and Economic Development

Another important part of Dublin 15's future will be its growing economic base.

Retail and leisure destinations such as Blanchardstown Centre have already helped establish the area as a regional commercial hub.

At the same time, nearby business parks and technology companies provide employment opportunities that allow many residents to work closer to home.

As remote and hybrid working become more common, suburban areas like Dublin 15 may increasingly attract professionals who want the convenience of city access without living in the city centre itself.

Green Spaces and Quality of Life

One of Dublin 15's greatest strengths is its balance between urban development and access to nature.

Landmarks such as Phoenix Park and the nearby Royal Canal Greenway provide residents with extensive outdoor recreation opportunities.

Maintaining and expanding green spaces will remain essential as the area grows. Parks, walking routes and recreational facilities not only enhance quality of life but also strengthen the community's connection to its surroundings.

A Strong Community Spirit

Perhaps the most important factor shaping the future of Dublin 15 is the strength of its community.

Local sports clubs, residents' groups, schools and volunteer organisations continue to create a sense of belonging for both long-time residents and newcomers.

As new developments appear and populations increase, these community networks will play a crucial role in maintaining the area's identity.

Looking Ahead

The next decade will bring both opportunities and challenges for Dublin 15. Housing demand, infrastructure development and economic growth will all shape how the area evolves.

Yet if the past thirty years have shown anything, it is that Dublin 15 has an extraordinary ability to adapt and grow while maintaining its community spirit. With thoughtful planning and continued local involvement, the area is well positioned to remain one of Dublin's most attractive and dynamic places to live.

The future of Dublin 15 is already being built — and the community itself will help decide what it looks like.

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Designing a Space That Works

In recent years, working from home has evolved from a temporary solution into a permanent feature of modern life. Across County Dublin and Kildare, thousands of professionals now split their week between the office and home, creating a demand for home workspaces that are not only functional but also stylish and comfortable.

Whether you live in a suburban semi-detached house in Lucan, a modern apartment in Dublin, or a family home in Maynooth or Naas, the home office has become one of the most important rooms in the house. The challenge is creating a space that supports productivity without feeling like a sterile corporate cubicle.

From Spare Room to Productivity Hub

Early in the remote working era, many people simply opened a laptop at the kitchen table. But as hybrid work became the norm, homeowners began investing in proper workspaces.

Interior designers now emphasise three key elements when planning a home office:

- Ergonomic comfort
- Good lighting
- A visually calm environment

A well-designed workspace can improve concentration and reduce fatigue, particularly for people spending six to eight hours a day at their desk.

A dedicated room is ideal, but it isn't always necessary. Clever layouts mean that even a corner of a living room or a converted attic space can become a highly effective work area.

The Rise of the "Built-In" Office

One of the biggest trends in Dublin and Kildare homes is custom built-in office furniture. Bespoke joinery allows homeowners to create shelving, storage cabinets, and desks that fit perfectly within existing spaces.

Built-in units are particularly popular in newer housing developments where homeowners want to maximise space without adding bulky furniture.

Typical features include:

- Integrated shelving for books and décor
- Hidden cable management
- Soft LED strip lighting under shelves
- Matching cabinetry to complement the rest of the home

The result is a workspace that blends seamlessly into the interior design rather than looking like a temporary setup.

Lighting Makes the Difference

Lighting is one of the most overlooked aspects of a home office, yet it has a huge impact on comfort and productivity.

Interior experts recommend combining three types of lighting:

Natural light: Positioning a desk near a window helps reduce

eye strain and improves mood throughout the day.

Task lighting: Adjustable desk lamps provide focused illumination for reading and detailed work.

Ambient lighting: Soft background lighting—often from wall lights or LED shelving strips—creates a warm and professional atmosphere, particularly useful during video calls.

Technology Meets Design

Modern home offices increasingly incorporate smart technology. Wireless charging pads built into desks, concealed power sockets, and high-speed mesh Wi-Fi systems are becoming standard features.

Soundproofing is also gaining popularity, particularly for professionals who regularly attend online meetings. Acoustic wall panels and soft furnishings can dramatically reduce echo and background noise.

Large monitors, docking stations, and ergonomic chairs have also become essential investments for those working long hours at home.

Adding Personality

While functionality is critical, the best home offices also reflect the personality of the homeowner.

Designers suggest incorporating elements such as:

- Artwork or framed photography
- Indoor plants for a calming atmosphere
- Decorative shelving with books and personal items
- Neutral colours paired with warm wood finishes

These touches transform the workspace from a purely practical area into a room that people genuinely enjoy spending time in.

A Space That Adds Value

Interestingly, estate agents across Dublin and Kildare report that a well-designed home office can increase the appeal of a property. As hybrid working continues, buyers are actively looking for houses that already include dedicated workspace.

In many cases, a stylish home office can become a key selling feature—especially in commuter towns where residents often split their working week between home and the city.

The Future of Work at Home

Remote work is no longer a temporary trend; it is a fundamental shift in how many people live and work. As a result, the home office is evolving from a spare corner into an integral part of modern home design. For homeowners across Dublin and Kildare, investing in a stylish and functional workspace is not just about productivity—it's about creating a better balance between professional life and home life.

And when done well, the home office becomes something more than a desk and chair. It becomes a space where ideas grow, careers develop, and work fits seamlessly into everyday living.



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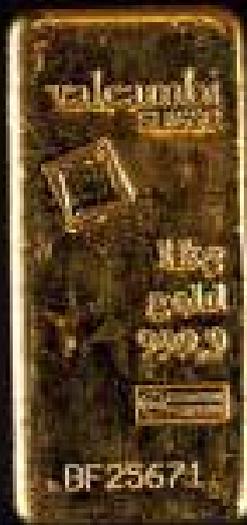
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The Magic of Frog and Tadpole Season

Every spring across Ireland, something quietly magical happens in ponds, garden water features, roadside ditches and wetlands. Beneath the surface of still water, clusters of jelly-like frogspawn begin to appear—an unmistakable sign that frog and tadpole season has arrived.

For many people, spotting frogspawn is a nostalgic moment. It recalls childhood afternoons spent exploring streams and ponds, peering into jars to watch tiny wriggling tadpoles slowly grow. Yet beyond the nostalgia, this seasonal event is also a fascinating window into Ireland's natural biodiversity.

Ireland's Only Native Frog

Ireland has just one native frog species — the Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*). After spending winter hidden in frost-free places such as compost heaps, leaf piles, stone walls or pond mud, frogs emerge as temperatures rise in late winter.

One of their first priorities is finding a suitable pond to breed.

Between February and March, female frogs lay clusters of eggs known as frogspawn. Each clump may contain thousands of tiny eggs suspended in clear jelly, usually floating near the surface in shallow water warmed by spring sunshine.

Within a few weeks the eggs hatch into tadpoles—small, black aquatic larvae that resemble tiny fish with tails. Over the following months they undergo one of nature's most remarkable transformations: growing back legs, then front legs, absorbing their tail and eventually emerging as miniature froglets ready for life on land.

A Sign of a Healthy Environment

Frogs play a crucial role in the ecosystem and are often considered environmental indicators. Because they have permeable skin and spend part of their lives in water and part on land, they are particularly sensitive to pollution and habitat changes.

Healthy frog populations usually indicate:

- Clean water
- Good insect populations

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They also provide a natural form of pest control, feeding on insects, worms, slugs and other small invertebrates.

A Seasonal Wildlife Spectacle

During frog season ponds can suddenly burst into life. On mild evenings the sound of croaking frogs may echo across fields or gardens as males compete for mates.

For a few weeks the water may appear almost alive, with clouds of tadpoles darting beneath the surface. Birds, dragonflies and other wildlife are drawn to the pond too, creating a miniature ecosystem.

For families and children, watching the stages of development—from frogspawn to tadpole to froglet—can be one of the most accessible wildlife experiences in Ireland.

Creating a Frog-Friendly Garden

The good news is that frogs don't need large lakes or rivers. Even a small wildlife pond can become a breeding site if conditions are right.

Gardeners who want to encourage frogs can:

- Avoid pesticides near ponds or garden water

features

- Include gently sloping pond edges so frogs can enter and leave easily
- Plant native aquatic plants for shelter
- Leave small wild areas with logs, stones or long grass

Once frogs discover a suitable breeding site, they often return to the same pond year after year.

A Quiet Sign That Spring Has Arrived

In Ireland, the changing seasons are often marked by simple signs: daffodils pushing through the soil, lambs appearing in fields, or brighter evenings after a long winter.

But in quiet corners of the countryside—and increasingly in suburban gardens too—another seasonal signal is unfolding.

Clusters of frogspawn floating on still water may seem modest at first glance, yet they mark the beginning of an extraordinary transformation that will unfold over the coming months.

For those who pause to look, frog and tadpole season is one of the small but magical moments that remind us just how alive Ireland's landscapes really are.

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Happy Easter

Major Investment Boost for D15

Cllr. JK Onwumereh Welcomes 2026 Programme of Works for Local Areas

Dear Resident,



I am delighted to confirm that Fingal County Council will be implementing the following works in the Mulhuddart-Blanchardstown LEA as part of the 2026 Programme of Works. This investment spans our entire operational area, from Castleknock to Ongar, ensuring every community benefits from targeted improvements.

As your Local Councillor, I have consistently advocated for investment in our infrastructure and amenities. The 2026 Programme responds directly to issues raised by residents across specific estates and localities.

Surface Restoration and Footpath Improvements

A significant portion of the works will be dedicated to restoring our road surfaces and footpath networks. In Castleknock, residents in Park Drive and surrounding estates will see essential restoration work. This is part of a broader programme that includes improvements along key routes in Blanchardstown Village and residential roads in Ongar.

A comprehensive programme of footpath improvements is also scheduled. These works will target locations where trip hazards have been reported, including footpaths approaching St. Brigid's National School in Castleknock and routes connecting Ladyswell Road to local amenities. Further improvements are planned for pathways in Tyrrelstown and Littlepace, ensuring safe passage for families, older residents, and children walking to school.

Traffic Management and Road Safety

Safety on our roads remains a top priority. We will see upgrades to traffic signal infrastructure at key junctions, including the busy intersection at Castleknock Road and Porterstown Road, where improved pedestrian crossing facilities will benefit all users.

The programme also delivers on traffic calming measures. This includes replacing existing infrastructure at locations such as Carpenterstown Road. New traffic calming installations are planned for Shelerin Road in Blanchardstown and approaches to Hansfield Educate Together National School in Ongar, where residents have consistently raised concerns about speeding vehicles. These measures will create safer streets for our children and families.

Investing in Our Parks and Open Spaces

Our parks are the green lungs of Dublin 15. In the

Blanchardstown area, enhancements are planned for Millennium Park, including upgrades to pathways and seating areas. Tolka Valley Park will also see maintenance works to protect its biodiversity while maintaining its recreational value.

For those in Castleknock, the programme includes enhancements to Castleknock Park, focusing on play equipment upkeep and new picnic areas. The popular walking routes around Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club will benefit from improved landscaping.

The communities of Clonsilla, Ongar, and Littlepace will also see investment. Hansfield Park in Ongar is scheduled for walking trail improvements. In Littlepace, open spaces adjacent to Littlepace National School will receive attention, ensuring they remain safe for children playing after school.

In Mulhuddart, Tyrrelstown, and Meakstown, Tyrrelstown Park will benefit from upgraded play facilities and improved landscaping. Open spaces around Cruiserath Road and Ringwood Park are also scheduled for enhancement works, responding directly to resident feedback.

Public Lighting for Safer Communities

Finally, the Programme includes Public Lighting upgrades. Specific locations benefiting include Coolmine Industrial Estate approaches, pathways through Carpenterstown Park, and pedestrian routes connecting Ongar Village to the Hansfield Road. Proper illumination improves safety for pedestrians and motorists after dark while deterring anti-social behaviour.

A Collective Effort

This Programme of Works for 2026 is the result of ongoing dialogue between the community and the council. Many of these projects have been identified based on the feedback you have raised with me over the past year. I am proud to support this plan, which balances essential maintenance with targeted improvements to make our area an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

I will monitor the progress of these works closely and keep you informed as they get underway. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
Cllr. JK Onwumereh



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PAINT LIKE A PRO Choosing Colour with Confidence

By Mick Gilbride | Dublin Area Manager, Pat McDonnell Paints

One of the most common things we hear from Customers at the counter is:

“The colour looked perfect, but completely different once on the wall at home.”

That applies just as much to exteriors as it does to interiors. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone - and you haven't made a mistake. Paint behaves differently in different environments.

Understanding why this happens, and knowing how to test properly, can take the stress out of choosing colour and help you feel confident before you commit.

Light Makes a Big Difference

Light is the biggest influence on how paint appears. Inside the home, natural daylight varies depending on the direction a room faces. North-facing rooms tend to have cooler, greyer light, while south-facing rooms benefit from warmer light that brings out depth and warmth.

On exteriors, this effect is even more noticeable. The same shade can look very different on a front elevation compared to a shaded side wall. Weather conditions, cloud cover and time of day all play a role.

Lighting matters too. LED, warm white and halogen bulbs all affect how paint is seen, which is why a colour can look quite different in the day and the evening.

Surroundings Matter

Paint is never seen in isolation. Indoors, floors, furniture, worktops etc. all influence how it's perceived. Outside, roofs, stonework, neighbouring houses and even planting can affect how it reads.

A neutral that feels warm beside timber flooring inside may appear cooler next to grey paving or stone outside. This is why colour cards are best used as a starting point - they help narrow down options, but can't show how paint will truly behave on your walls.



How to Test

One of the most common mistakes we see is painting a small patch directly onto the wall and making a quick decision. A more helpful approach is to paint a generous sample onto a piece of card or lining paper.

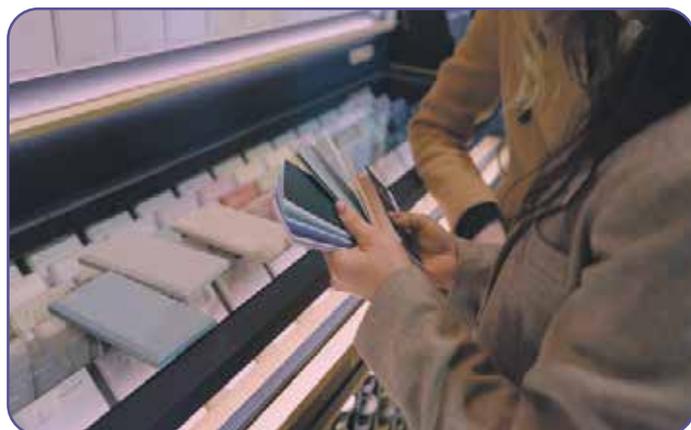
Being able to move the sample allows you to see how it responds to different light conditions. Take your time. Look at it in the morning, afternoon and evening.

It's also worth testing two or three similar shades side by side. Subtle undertones become much easier to spot, making the final decision simpler.

We're Here to Help

Choosing paint should feel exciting, not overwhelming. That's why we offer a complimentary in-store colour consultation service, where you can get practical professional advice - whether you're refreshing a room or updating the outside of your home.

Taking the time to test now can save time, cost and disappointment later. With the right advice and a little patience, choosing paint - inside or out - can be one of the most rewarding parts of any project.



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The Curious Life of the Easter Bunny

Every spring, just as Ireland finally begins to believe the worst of the winter might be over, a mysterious character hops quietly into our lives: the Easter Bunny.

Unlike Santa Claus — who travels with a noisy entourage of reindeer, elves, and the occasional suspiciously jingling sleigh — the Easter Bunny works alone. No PR department. No workshop. No visible logistics chain. Yet somehow, by Easter morning, gardens and kitchens across the country are filled with chocolate eggs, brightly coloured treats, and the unmistakable scent of melted cocoa and childhood excitement.

For a creature that technically shouldn't even lay eggs, the bunny has built a remarkably successful brand.

A Marketing Genius in Fur

Let's be honest: if a business consultant had pitched the Easter Bunny concept in a boardroom, it probably wouldn't have survived the first slide of the presentation.

"Right," someone would say, "so we have a rabbit... delivering eggs... made of chocolate... once a year."

But sometimes the most improbable ideas are the ones that work best. In fact, the Easter Bunny may be the most underappreciated marketing mastermind of the seasonal calendar. Christmas may dominate the winter, but Easter has quietly built an empire of chocolate aisles,

pastel packaging, and elaborate egg hunts in gardens from Donegal to Dún Laoghaire.

The Egg Hunt Economy

The true genius of the Easter Bunny lies in the egg hunt.

Unlike Christmas morning — where gifts arrive neatly wrapped and ready — Easter requires effort. Children must search under hedges, behind flowerpots, and occasionally inside wellington boots to uncover their sugary treasure.

Parents, meanwhile, become amateur event planners.

There are routes to design. Clues to invent. Chocolate logistics to manage. And all of this usually happens before the first cup of tea has properly kicked in.

Across Ireland, Easter egg hunts have become mini festivals. Parks, hotels, farms and community groups host elaborate hunts, turning what was once a simple backyard game into a springtime ritual.

The bunny, of course, takes all the credit.

Chocolate Inflation

Another sign of the Easter Bunny's influence is the remarkable transformation of the humble egg.

Once upon a time, an Easter egg was exactly that: an egg. Perhaps painted. Perhaps hidden behind the couch.

Today, it is more likely to be:

- A giant chocolate egg
- Containing smaller chocolate eggs
- Paired with a mug
- Or a branded toy
- Or an entire chocolate bar collection the size of a small suitcase

Supermarkets dedicate entire aisles to Easter. Chocolatiers release limited editions. Even the most disciplined among us inevitably end up buying “just one more egg” — usually for someone else, though strangely it often gets eaten before Easter Sunday arrives.

A Quiet Symbol of Spring

Beyond the chocolate and the chaos, the Easter Bunny represents something older and simpler: the arrival of spring.

Rabbits have long been symbols of fertility and new life. Eggs represent rebirth. Together they capture the moment when the year begins to turn again — when days grow longer, gardens wake up, and the first warm sunlight makes us think about barbecues, sea swims, and summer plans.

In Ireland especially, Easter sits at that hopeful intersection between winter and spring. The hedgerows

are greening, lambs are appearing in fields, and suddenly the world feels lighter.

The bunny, it seems, knows exactly when to arrive.

The Most Mysterious Seasonal Worker

And yet the Easter Bunny remains the most mysterious figure in the holiday calendar.

Where does the bunny live the rest of the year?

Who manufactures the chocolate?

How does one rabbit cover every household in a single night?

These are questions best not asked too closely — much like the mechanics of Santa’s chimney navigation system.

Some traditions are better left unexplained.

Until Next Spring

By Easter Monday the evidence of the bunny’s visit has largely disappeared. Foil wrappers remain. Half-eaten eggs sit quietly in the fridge. Children begin negotiating when they can open the next chocolate egg.

The bunny, meanwhile, vanishes as quietly as it arrived.

No fanfare. No farewell.

Just a few muddy footprints in the garden and the lingering suspicion that somewhere, in a field not too far away, a rabbit is already planning next year’s operation.

And judging by the chocolate sales figures, business is hopping along nicely.



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WASTE DISPOSAL AND ILLEGAL DUMPING IN IRELAND

How big is the problem?

Illegal dumping (often called fly-tipping) is a persistent environmental problem in Ireland. It ranges from small-scale dumping of black bags on rural roads to organised criminal dumping of construction waste. The overall picture is mixed: major organised dumping has declined compared with the early 2000s, but smaller-scale illegal dumping remains widespread and costly to tackle.

Scale of Illegal Dumping in Ireland

Thousands of incidents each year

Local authorities deal with large numbers of waste-related complaints and enforcement actions annually. In 2022, roughly 135,000 inspections related to waste and litter enforcement were carried out across Ireland, and 93% of environmental prosecutions were linked to waste offences. This includes illegal dumping (fly-tipping), backyard burning, unauthorised waste collectors, and illegal waste storage sites.

Significant volumes of waste dumped

Environmental clean-up groups show the physical scale of the problem. For example, the PURE Project (working in Dublin/Wicklow uplands) removed 146,580 kg of illegally dumped waste from 890 sites in 2024. The waste included furniture, construction debris, appliances (fridges, TVs,

washing machines), mattresses, and household rubbish. Earlier years were even worse — one year saw 440 tonnes removed in the same region alone.

Illegal dumping occurs nationwide

It is not just an urban problem. Illegal dumping frequently occurs on rural boreens and forestry tracks, boglands and upland areas, lay-bys and quiet roads, industrial estates, and riverbanks and quarries. These locations make enforcement difficult.

Organised Waste Crime

Illegal dumping is sometimes linked to criminal activity. Examples include unlicensed waste collectors (“man-in-a-van” operators), illegal waste transfer stations, and cross-border dumping. At one point tens of thousands of tonnes of waste were illegally transported from the Republic to Northern Ireland and dumped in unlicensed sites. Waste crime can be lucrative because it avoids landfill charges, recycling costs, and transport and regulatory compliance.

Trends Over Time

Improvement in large-scale dumping
Government enforcement has reduced some major dumping operations. The EPA says large-scale illegal dumping is far less common today

than it was in the early 2000s. Measures that helped include waste collection permits, landfill regulation, enforcement networks, and tracking of waste movements.

But smaller dumping remains common

Despite improvements, small-scale dumping is still frequent, especially where households lack proper waste collection. Investigations in Dublin found thousands of homes with no registered waste-collection service, raising concerns about where their rubbish goes.

Why Illegal Dumping Happens

The main drivers are economic and behavioural. Disposal costs lead people to avoid paying for skip hire, recycling centres, or bulky waste charges. Construction waste is particularly expensive to dispose of legally. Illegal collectors offer cheap waste removal but dump it illegally instead of paying disposal fees. Rural isolation and Ireland's geography make enforcement difficult, with thousands of small roads, forests, bogland, and quiet scenic areas. Common household dumped items include mattresses, sofas, DIY rubble, garden waste, and black bags of household rubbish.

Cost to the Public

Illegal dumping costs Irish taxpayers millions every year through clean-up operations, environmental damage, enforcement and prosecutions, and landfill remediation. Local authorities and volunteer groups carry much of this burden.

Overall Assessment

In simple terms, large organised dumping operations are much less common than 20 years ago. However, small-scale fly-tipping remains a significant national problem, with rural areas and uplands particularly affected. The issue is persistent rather than catastrophic.

Counties and Regions with the Worst Illegal Dumping in Ireland

Wicklow is frequently reported as the worst-affected county based on complaints. At least 600 complaints of illegal dumping were recorded through the national environmental complaints line in a multi-year period. Wicklow is heavily affected due to its proximity to Dublin (making it easy to dump waste in rural areas), its mountain roads and forestry tracks, and scenic areas like the Wicklow Mountains which attract dumping of household and construction waste.

Dublin (especially South Dublin) has urban dumping hotspots. South Dublin County Council received over 3,600 complaints in one year alone

relating to illegal dumping and littering. Problem areas often include housing estates, laneways, industrial areas, and mountains near Tallaght and Rathfarnham. Dublin councils spend millions each year cleaning illegal waste.

Kildare frequently appears in dumping reports because it borders Dublin. Rural roads, boglands, and quarries are common dumping locations. Many Dublin-generated wastes are dumped just outside the city in counties like Kildare and Wicklow.

Limerick recorded around 1,876 complaints relating to littering and illegal dumping in one year. Issues include illegal construction waste and rural roadside dumping.

Kerry had nearly 1,000 reported fly-tipping incidents in a year. Dumping often occurs in rural lanes, tourist areas, and coastal roads.

Cork City and county frequently appear in national complaint statistics. One dataset recorded around 220 complaints linked to Cork City Council.

Illegal dumping in Ireland is widespread but mostly small-scale, involving thousands of incidents annually. While enforcement has reduced large criminal dumping operations, illegal disposal of household and construction waste remains a regular environmental problem across both urban and rural areas.

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The Royal Canal Dublin 15's Hidden Waterway with a Remarkable Past



Running quietly through Dublin 15, often unnoticed beside busy roads and housing estates, lies one of Ireland's most historic waterways: the Royal Canal.

Today the canal is a peaceful place for walkers, cyclists and anglers. Families stroll along its banks, joggers follow the towpaths and narrowboats glide slowly through its locks. Yet behind this tranquil scene lies a story that stretches back more than two centuries — a story of ambition, engineering, decline and revival.

Built to Connect Ireland

Construction of the Royal Canal began in 1790 during a period when canals were the cutting-edge transport infrastructure of their day.

The goal was ambitious: to create a waterway linking Dublin with the River Shannon, allowing goods and passengers to travel deep into the Irish midlands without relying on difficult roads.

Building the canal was far from easy. Engineers had to overcome boglands, hills and rivers while constructing dozens of locks, aqueducts and bridges along the route.

After many delays and financial struggles, the canal finally opened fully in 1817, stretching almost 150 kilometres from Dublin to Longford.

For decades it became a vital trade route, carrying coal, grain, timber and passengers across the country.

Life Along the Canal

The canal quickly developed its own unique way of life. Barges drawn by horses moved slowly along the towpaths while lock keepers managed water levels at each lock.

Small communities grew around canal crossings and lock houses. Pubs and shops appeared to serve boatmen

and travellers passing through.

Areas along the canal in what is now Dublin 15 — particularly around Clonsilla and Castleknock — became busy stopping points along the route.

At the time, the canal was one of the most important transport corridors in the region.

The Arrival of the Railways

The canal's golden age was relatively short-lived. In the mid-19th century, a new technology began to change transport across Ireland: the railway.

Ironically, the canal company itself became involved in railway construction. Eventually, much of the route alongside the canal was taken over by rail lines, which could move goods far faster than canal barges.

Trade on the canal gradually declined and by the mid-20th century commercial traffic had largely disappeared.

What had once been a busy transport route became quiet and, in some places, neglected.

A Modern Revival

In recent years the canal has experienced a remarkable revival.

Thanks to restoration efforts and investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, the canal has been transformed into one of Ireland's most popular greenways. The Royal Canal Greenway now stretches for over 130 kilometres, offering one of the longest off-road walking and cycling routes in the country.

For residents of Dublin 15, the canal has become a cherished local amenity. On sunny weekends the towpaths

are filled with walkers, runners, cyclists and families enjoying the peaceful waterside setting.

The canal has evolved from a working transport route into a place for recreation and relaxation.

Nature Along the Water

Beyond its historical importance, the canal has also become an important urban wildlife corridor.

Swans, ducks, herons and kingfishers can often be spotted along the water, while fish species attract anglers throughout the year.

The canal banks support trees, reeds and wildflowers, creating a ribbon of biodiversity that winds through suburban Dublin.

For many locals, it offers a rare opportunity to experience nature within a busy metropolitan area.

A Waterway with Stories to Tell

Every bridge, lock and stretch of towpath along the Royal Canal carries stories of Ireland's past — stories of engineers, boatmen, labourers and travellers who once depended on the waterway for their livelihoods.

Today the canal continues to shape the identity of Dublin 15, not as a commercial route but as a place where people gather, exercise and connect with the landscape.

For those who take the time to walk its quiet banks, the Royal Canal reveals itself as far more than a scenic path.

It is a living reminder of the ingenuity and history that helped shape modern Ireland.

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Raising a Family in Dublin 15

Why So Many Families Are Choosing to Call It Home

Over the past two decades, Dublin 15 has quietly become one of the most popular places in Ireland to raise a family. Stretching from the leafy streets of Castleknock to the newer neighbourhoods of Ongar and Clonsilla, the area offers something that many young parents are searching for: space, community and opportunity within easy reach of Dublin city.

For many families, the decision to settle in Dublin 15 isn't just about housing—it's about lifestyle.

Space to Grow

One of the biggest attractions of Dublin 15 is the balance it strikes between city living and suburban space. Compared with more central areas of Dublin, families often find they can secure larger homes with gardens and access to green areas.

Neighbourhoods such as Castleknock, Clonsilla, Ongar and Tyrrelstown have developed rapidly in recent years, creating communities designed with families in mind. Tree-lined estates, local playgrounds and nearby parks mean children have plenty of space to play and explore.

Just minutes away lies one of Europe's great urban

parks, Phoenix Park. For many families it serves as a giant backyard—perfect for weekend picnics, cycling trips and deer spotting with younger children.

Schools at the Heart of the Community

Access to good schools is one of the most important factors for families choosing where to live, and Dublin 15 offers a wide range of options.

The area has numerous primary and secondary schools serving the growing population, including well-established institutions such as Castleknock Community College and Hartstown Community School.

Many schools in the area have strong reputations for academic performance and extracurricular activities. Parents also benefit from a mix of traditional schools, newer facilities and schools offering Irish-language education.

Sport, Clubs and Community Spirit

If there is one thing that truly defines Dublin 15, it is the strength of its community clubs. For children growing up in the area, joining a local sports club is almost a rite of passage.

Clubs such as Castleknock GAA and St Peregrine's GAA

are central to community life. Weekend matches, training sessions and summer camps bring together hundreds of families and create friendships that often last a lifetime.

Football, rugby, athletics, dance and martial arts clubs are also widely available, ensuring that children of all interests can find an activity they enjoy.

For parents, these clubs often become social hubs as well, creating connections that help turn neighbours into friends.

Parks, Walks and Outdoor Adventures

For families who enjoy spending time outdoors, Dublin 15 offers a surprising amount of green space.

The nearby Royal Canal Greenway has become one of the most popular walking and cycling routes in the area. Families regularly use the canal path for weekend strolls, bike rides or simply feeding the ducks.

Local parks and playgrounds across the district provide safe places for children to burn off energy, while organised community events and festivals throughout the year add to the area's lively atmosphere.

Convenience for Modern Family Life

While Dublin 15 offers suburban space, it also provides many of the conveniences of city living.

The area is home to Blanchardstown Centre, one of

Ireland's largest retail and leisure destinations. With shops, restaurants, cinemas and family entertainment venues, it has become a major hub for residents across the northwest of Dublin.

Transport links also make commuting manageable. Train services from nearby stations and major road routes allow many residents to travel into the city centre while still enjoying suburban living.

A Place That Feels Like Home

Perhaps the most compelling reason families choose Dublin 15 is something less tangible than schools, parks or housing.

It's the sense of community.

Across the area, residents' groups, sports clubs, volunteer organisations and local events bring people together. Newcomers quickly find opportunities to get involved, meet neighbours and become part of the local fabric.

In a rapidly growing city where community can sometimes feel fragmented, Dublin 15 has managed to retain something special—a feeling that people look out for one another.

For thousands of families, that sense of belonging is what truly makes Dublin 15 feel like home.

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Cholesterol



Research shows more people know their pet's birthday than their cholesterol levels, despite being aware of the importance of regular health checks

- Importance of Regular Health Checks widely recognised, but proactivity varies by age
- People aged 35-55 are the least proactive about their health and are less likely to track their key health indicators
- People more likely to know their car registration or Netflix PIN rather than their cholesterol or BMI
- Irish Life Health launch Essential Health Check to enable people to take control of their health and understand the most important numbers in their lives

Despite the majority of the population acknowledging the importance of regularly tracking health metrics, people are more aware of details like their pet's birthdays (58%) and Netflix PINs (58%) than knowing their cholesterol (47%), blood sugar (40%) or resting heart rate (38%), according to new research commissioned by Irish Life Health. These findings come as Irish Life Health continues to record a steady increase in cardiovascular related claims, including amongst younger members. Health screening is the foundation of good health and is critical to supporting early detection and prevention.

The research indicates that people can recite certain numerical details from memory yet often draw a blank when it comes to their own health indicators. The majority of people can seamlessly recall everyday items like their mobile number (96%) and ATM pin code (95%). However, strikingly, people were shown to be more aware of their car registration (72%), Netflix PIN (58%), and even their pet's birthday (58%) than their key health numbers, such as cholesterol (47%) or blood sugar levels (40%).

The research is released in conjunction with the launch of Irish Life Health's Essential Health Check, an at-home blood test kit that makes it easy for people to measure key health markers in a convenient, timely, and affordable way. A clinician reviews both the blood test results and a lifestyle assessment, and customers receive personalised insights and recommendations through an interactive dashboard, along with expert support to help them build a

tailored health action plan.

The research findings highlight how disconnected people can be from the information that matters most for their long-term wellbeing; blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI, blood sugar - which are the foundation of good health and wellbeing. This reinforces the need to make health awareness and routine screening as familiar and accessible as the details relied upon every day.

While the vast majority of people know the importance of health screening, less than half of those surveyed had had a health check-up in the last 12 months. Those under 35 are most engaged (74%) as they tend to take a self-directed approach, focusing on key health markers such as calories and step counts to optimise overall health, fitness and performance. People over 55 closely follow (72%), with 1 in 5 tracking their health in tandem with healthcare professionals. However, 35-54-year-olds emerged as the least proactive with their health (62%), prefer simpler health routines and are less likely to regularly track their health.

GP and Chief Medical Officer at Inuvi, Dr. Nisa Aslam, who has collaborated with Irish Life Health to deliver the Essential Health Check said: "Rates of heart disease and related metabolic conditions are rising fast, including among younger people. The challenge is that in the early stages these conditions are silent, so people are often unaware of their risk and don't take action until it's too late. Irish Life Health's Essential Health Check makes health screening more accessible, convenient and reliable, allowing people to take preventative steps and take full control of their health - particularly from mid-life onwards, when proactive screening becomes increasingly important."

Behaviour Change Specialist, Dr. Heather McKee said: "As a nation, we are pretty proactive when it comes to monitoring things like steps and sleep on our wearables, and tracking your health numbers can create awareness, but awareness alone doesn't change behaviour. What makes this new Essential Health Check service different

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is that it bridges the gap between ‘knowing’ and ‘doing’: it highlights what matters most for you, reduces overwhelm, and provides clear, tailored guidance on where to start. That clarity removes one of the biggest barriers to action - uncertainty - and helps people build healthier habits they can sustain.”

Cost remains the biggest barrier to seeking routine health checks (34%), followed by a widespread perception among many people that they feel healthy and therefore don't need to be tested (22%). Access also continues to be a challenge, with difficulty securing appointments and long waiting times preventing 19% of respondents from attending health checks, while a similar number cite busy schedules as a deterrent. Worryingly, the fear of receiving potentially worrying results plays a significant role in up to 15% of people delaying preventative action.

Ann Marie Nestor, Managing Director of Irish Life Health, said: “We know two of the biggest barriers preventing people from carrying out routine health checks is cost and access. Many people struggle to get GP appointments or are constrained by work, caring responsibilities or time. Our new Essential Health Check seeks to remove these barriers, enabling people to conduct a convenient and affordable at home blood test to proactively monitor key health indicators and, ultimately, take control of their health.”

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THE NEW IRISH RURAL REVIVAL



For decades, the story of modern Ireland seemed to revolve around cities.

Young people moved to Dublin, Cork, and Galway in search of jobs, while rural towns struggled with declining populations and shuttered shops. But in recent years, something remarkable has begun to happen.

Across Ireland's countryside, a quiet revival is underway.

Small towns and villages—particularly along the Atlantic coast and in scenic rural counties—are attracting new residents who are seeking a different kind of lifestyle: one that offers space, community, and a stronger connection to nature.

Remote Work Changing the Map

One of the biggest forces behind this shift is the rise of remote and hybrid working. As technology allows more professionals to work from home, many people no longer need to live within commuting distance of a city centre.

Instead, they are choosing locations that offer quality of life over proximity to an office.

For families leaving cities like Dublin, rural Ireland offers larger homes, access to nature, and often a stronger sense of community. Places that once seemed too remote for daily commuting are now viable options for people working online several days a week.

Government initiatives supporting broadband expansion have also helped make this shift possible.

A Return to the Coast and Countryside

Scenic areas along Ireland's western seaboard have been among the biggest beneficiaries of this rural revival. Coastal towns, historic villages, and countryside communities are seeing new life as people rediscover the appeal of living close to nature.

The dramatic landscapes along the Wild Atlantic Way have long attracted tourists, but now they are also attracting new residents—people drawn by the beauty of the coastline and the slower pace of life.

Many buyers are renovating traditional cottages or converting older farmhouses into modern homes, blending historic character with contemporary design.

Creativity in the Countryside

Rural Ireland has also become a magnet for creatives and entrepreneurs. Artists, designers, writers, and digital professionals are increasingly choosing countryside locations where inspiration is abundant and living costs can be lower.

Small towns are seeing the opening of new cafés, craft shops, galleries, and independent businesses. These ventures not only bring economic activity but also help create vibrant cultural communities.

Local markets, food festivals, and artisan producers are flourishing as a result.

Stronger Communities

One of the biggest appeals of rural living is something that can be difficult to find in larger cities: a genuine sense of community.

In many towns and villages, neighbours still know each other, local sports clubs are at the centre of social life, and community events bring people together throughout the year.

New residents often find themselves quickly welcomed into these

networks, creating a blend of long-standing traditions and fresh perspectives.

Challenges and Opportunities

Of course, the rural revival also brings challenges. Increased demand for housing can place pressure on small communities, and local services must adapt to growing populations.

Infrastructure—particularly public transport and healthcare access—remains an important issue in some areas.

However, many experts believe the shift toward more balanced regional living could ultimately benefit the entire country, easing pressure on major cities while strengthening rural economies.

A New Chapter for Rural Ireland

Ireland has always had a deep cultural connection to its countryside. For generations, rural communities shaped the nation's traditions, language, and identity.

Today, that connection is being rediscovered in a modern context. Remote work, improved infrastructure, and changing lifestyle priorities are making rural living more attractive than it has been in decades.

What is emerging is not simply a return to the past, but a new chapter—one where Ireland's towns and villages combine tradition with innovation.

The result is a countryside that feels vibrant once again, where old stone cottages sit alongside modern homes, and where the rhythm of rural life continues to evolve in exciting ways.

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From Village to Suburb

The Transformation of Castleknock and Blanchardstown

Today, Dublin 15 is one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing areas in Ireland. Modern housing estates, major shopping centres and thriving sports clubs define much of the landscape. Yet not long ago, places like Castleknock and Blanchardstown were quiet rural villages surrounded by farmland.

The story of their transformation—from medieval settlements to bustling suburban communities—offers a fascinating glimpse into the changing face of Dublin.

Ancient Roots on the Edge of Dublin

Long before modern housing developments appeared, the area around Castleknock was already an important settlement. Perched on a hill overlooking the surrounding countryside are the remains of Castleknock Castle, a Norman fortress believed to date back to the 12th century.

The castle was strategically positioned to guard the western approaches to Dublin and was part of a defensive network of fortifications built following the Norman invasion of Ireland. From this vantage point, its occupants could survey miles of farmland stretching toward the River Liffey and beyond.

Nearby villages gradually formed around these early strongholds, with small farming communities developing over the centuries.

Rural Life for Centuries

Formostofitshistory,theregionremainedoverwhelmingly rural. Small villages such as Blanchardstown Village functioned as local service centres where farmers could attend church, trade goods or visit local pubs and shops.

Fields, hedgerows and country roads defined the landscape well into the twentieth century. Even as Dublin

city expanded, the western fringe remained largely agricultural, with dairy farms and grazing land stretching across what are now suburban neighbourhoods.

Many older residents still remember a time when cattle were a common sight along roads that are today busy commuter routes.

The Suburban Expansion

The real transformation began in the latter half of the twentieth century as Dublin's population expanded rapidly. Pressure for housing pushed development beyond the traditional city boundaries, and areas like Castleknock and Blanchardstown became prime locations for new residential communities.

Improved road infrastructure and public transport connections made it possible for people to live further from the city centre while still commuting to work.

Housing estates gradually replaced farmland. Schools, parks and local amenities followed, turning what had once been rural settlements into thriving suburban districts.

The Rise of a Regional Hub

Perhaps the most symbolic moment in the area's transformation came with the development of Blanchardstown Centre in the mid-1990s.

What started as a shopping centre quickly grew into one of the largest retail and leisure destinations in Ireland. Its arrival changed the economic landscape of Dublin 15, attracting businesses, restaurants and entertainment venues.

The centre not only provided local jobs but also turned Blanchardstown into a regional hub for shopping and social life, drawing visitors from across Dublin and beyond.

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Despite decades of rapid growth, both Castleknock and Blanchardstown have managed to retain elements of their original village character.

Historic buildings, traditional pubs and older streets still sit alongside modern developments. Local sports clubs, community groups and schools help preserve a strong sense of identity that ties new residents to the area's past.

Walking through Castleknock village today, it is still possible to see echoes of the old rural settlement that once served the surrounding farms.

Looking Toward the Future

The evolution of Dublin 15 is far from over. Continued population growth, infrastructure projects and new housing developments will shape the next chapter of the area's story.

Yet the transformation from quiet farmland to vibrant suburb remains one of the most remarkable examples of Dublin's urban expansion.

Castleknock and Blanchardstown may now be modern suburban communities, but their long history—from medieval castles to modern shopping centres—continues to give the area a distinctive character that residents proudly call home.

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Cllr. Siobhan SHOVLIN PC

Dear Resident,

I hope you are keeping well. As one of your local councillors I continue to make many representations on your behalf for local enhancements and improvements. I am really pleased to see many of these projects allocated funding as part of Fingal County Council's 2026 Programme of Works. I have detailed them in this leaflet. If you require any further information, please let me know.

Fingal County Council will of course be carrying out additional work to this as well in our community, this is just the Programme of Works Funding. Please note some of these works may require public consultation before proceeding such as traffic calming measures.

If you have any questions on the projects or ideas which you would like considered for future funding allocations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Siobhan Shovlin

☎ 087 398 4778 | ✉ siobhan.shovlin@cllrs.fingal.ie | 📍 Siobhan Shovlin | 📱 @siobhanshovlin

RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT/MAINTENANCE

Castleknock Green / Oursandie Court/Grove	Surface Restoration	€103,984
Hornleigh, Castleknock	Surface Restoration	€103,563
Whitestown Green, Avenue and Gardens	Surface Restoration	€80,670
Coolmine Park, Blanchardstown and Oak Lawn, Castleknock	Concrete Road Repairs	€36,320
Saugborough Road (North of Interchange)	Surface Restoration	€36,000



Public Lighting

Whitestown Park Walkway, Coolmine	New lighting scheme across green linking Whitestown Park to the nearest bus stop on Balesstown Way
Porterstown Overflow Carpark, Porterstown	New lighting scheme to be installed in the new overflow car park
Old River Rd, Blanchardstown	New lanterns to be installed into the existing ESB pole
Castleknock Manor, Castleknock	Relocation of existing lighting column to accommodate new road crossing for Traffic Section
College Road/ Carpenterstown Road Junction at entrance to Castleknock College	New electrical supply for traffic lights at junction of College Road/ Carpenterstown Road

MINOR WORKS/FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS

Rosclaw Road	Footpath Improvement Works (Concrete)	€21,240
Oak Lawn, Castleknock	Footpath Improvement Works (Concrete)	€30,455
Castleknock Park, Castleknock	Footpath Improvement Works (Concrete)	€95,890
Park Drive, Castleknock	Footpath Improvement Works (Concrete)	€68,003
Dublin 15 Accessibility Scheme	Various Locations Dublin 15	€56,750
Dublin 15 Minor Drainage Works	Various Locations Dublin 15	€71,075



Traffic Signals, Traffic Calming, Traffic Calming Replacements etc.



Castleknock Manor	Two colour Type B Crosswalk and Associated Signs
Porters Road, Coolmine Industrial Estate	Signalised Pedestrian Crossing
Dowdelltown Avenue, Carnewinstown	Signalised crosswalks with signalised road crossing

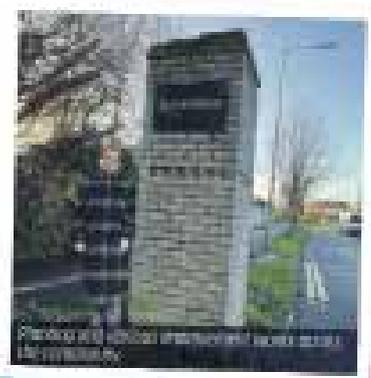
BENCHES

Phoenix Park Race Course Open Space	3 Benches
Telka Valley Entrance / Mill Road	3 Benches
Lanaghan, Lucan	2 Benches
St. Brigid's Park	2 Benches
St. Patrick's Park	1 Bench
Darville Green	1 Bench
Park Manor	1 Bench
Fairhaven	1 Bench
Georgian Village	1 Bench



Pollinator Beds

Castleknock Road/ Duroardle	Pollinator bed and landscaping features
College Road	Bulb and pollinator bed planting
College Grove	Pollinator bed and entrance stone rejuvenation
Broadway Road	Pollinator bed
Park Manor	2 pollinator beds
Lahunda Road	Pollinator bed
Lanaghan, Lucan	Pollinator bed on roundabout



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES



Summerfield Lawn	Tree and hedge planting along wall	€8,000
Main Street, Blanchardstown	Landscape project at hexagonal bed	€7,500
Wexona	Path works	€7,500
Rosebank Road	Rejuvenate/replace planters	€3,000
Glenville Drive	Bulb planting	€6,500
Laurel Court / Oaktree	Footpath concrete construction	€4,000
Castleknock Road	Footpath restoration around trees	€10,000
Ashleigh	Boundary planting works	€3,000
The Beeches	Hedge planting around entrance	€1,000
Riverwood Road	Shrubbery planting	€4,000
Riverwood Court	Tree planting etc	€1,000
Riverwood Entrance	Brickwork repair	€1,500
Old Nassau Road	Hedge planting opposite Auburn apartments	€3,000
Georgian Village	Rejuvenate entrance stone	€500
Castlefield Woods	Landscaping project at entrance	€6,000
Castlefield Park	Landscaping project at entrance	€5,000
Dionisia Park/Close	Planting works	€2,000
Castlefield Court	Bulb planting	€6,000
St. Mochas	New entrance stone	€1,100
Windmill Open Space	Railings and railings	€4,000
Linelane Entrance	Painting railings and kissing gates	
Lanaghan, Lucan	Tree planting x 10 trees	
Dionisia Road	Opposite St. Mochas landscaping project	€20,000
Coolmine Woods	Landscaping works	€20,000
Village Floral Displays	Planting and maintenance	€42,700
Residents Bulb Allocation	Bulb allocation	€15,000
Tree Planting Street Trees	Dublin 15 areas	€25,000
BS Tree works	Specialised tree works	€20,000

Cllr. Siobhan
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Every effort was made to ensure that all content in this bulletin was correct at time of print.





Drive Smart : The Best Cars for Irish Commuters

For thousands of people living in County Dublin and Kildare, the daily commute is a familiar routine.

Whether travelling from Naas to the city centre, Maynooth to the Docklands, or Lucan to Sandyford, Irish commuters spend a significant amount of time on the road each week.

As fuel prices fluctuate, traffic increases, and environmental concerns grow, choosing the right car for commuting has become more important than ever. Today's drivers are looking for vehicles that combine fuel efficiency, comfort, reliability, and modern technology.

What Makes a Good Commuter Car?

Not every car suits the demands of Irish commuting. Drivers need vehicles that can handle motorways like the M4, M7, and M50, while still being practical in tight urban streets and parking spaces.

The key factors many commuters consider include:

Fuel efficiency

With daily travel distances often exceeding 50–80 kilometres, a fuel-efficient vehicle can save thousands of euro each year.

Comfort: Commuters may spend one to two hours in their car each day. Supportive seating, smooth suspension, and low cabin noise make a major difference.

Technology: Features such as Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, adaptive cruise control, and parking cameras make driving easier and safer.

Running costs: Insurance, servicing, and road tax all play a role in the total cost of ownership.

Hybrid and Electric Cars on the Rise

Across Dublin and Kildare, hybrid and electric vehicles are becoming increasingly popular. Government incentives, improved battery technology, and expanding charging infrastructure have made these cars more practical for everyday use.

Hybrid cars offer the advantage of excellent fuel economy without relying entirely on charging, making them a safe choice for longer commuters. Electric vehicles, meanwhile, appeal to drivers who want lower running costs and reduced emissions.

Public charging points have expanded significantly in recent years, and many commuters now install home charging units, allowing them to start each day with a full battery.

SUVs: Comfort Meets Practicality

While smaller hatchbacks remain popular, compact SUVs have seen huge growth in Ireland. These vehicles offer higher driving positions, spacious interiors, and improved safety features.

For families commuting from towns like Celbridge, Clane, or Leixlip, SUVs provide the versatility needed for school runs, shopping trips, and weekend travel.

Modern SUVs also benefit from improved fuel efficiency compared with earlier generations, making them more suitable for regular commuting.

The Importance of Reliability

Irish motorists often keep their cars for many years, so reliability remains a key consideration. Brands known for strong reliability records continue to dominate commuter choices, particularly in the hybrid and family hatchback segments.

Regular servicing, good fuel economy, and long warranties give drivers confidence that their vehicle will handle the demands of everyday travel.

Technology Changing the Driving Experience

Modern commuter vehicles now include advanced technology designed to make driving safer and less stressful.

Many newer cars feature:

- Adaptive cruise control that adjusts speed automatically

in traffic

- Lane-keeping assistance for motorway driving
- Automatic emergency braking
- Parking sensors and 360-degree cameras

For commuters navigating busy routes like the M50 or city-centre traffic, these systems can significantly reduce fatigue.

Planning for the Future

Ireland's transport landscape is changing quickly. With government targets aimed at reducing emissions, the shift toward electric and hybrid vehicles is expected to accelerate over the next decade.

At the same time, improved public transport and remote working options are reshaping commuting patterns. However, for many residents of suburban Dublin and Kildare, the car remains the most practical and flexible way to travel.

Choosing the right commuter car is therefore about more than just getting from A to B. It's about finding a vehicle that delivers efficiency, comfort, and reliability, making the daily journey easier and more enjoyable.

For Irish drivers spending hours each week on the road, the right choice can transform the commute from a chore into a far more pleasant part of the day.



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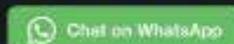


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Blanchardstown



Castaheary,
Clonsilla



Castlegrange Lawn,
Clonsilla



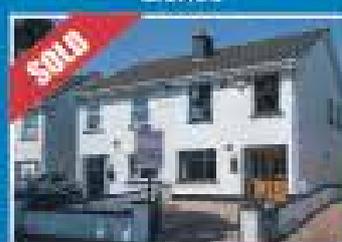
The Rise Hunters Run,
Clonsilla



The Drive Hunters Run,
Clonsilla



Glenely Down,
Clonsilla



Woodvale Crescent,
Clonsilla



Latchford Square,
Clonsilla



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