

ISSUE 49  
AUG/SEP 2024

FREE MAGAZINE

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CLONSILLA  
HARTSTOWN  
HUNTSTOWN  
ASHTOWN  
MULHUDDART  
CLONEE & ONGAR

# Little Village

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**CASTLEKNOCK TIDY TOWNS UPDATE**  
**- SEE P10**



Ongar LEA - Fingal County Council

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**SHEEHAN**

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## EDITORIAL

**W**elcome to the Autumn edition of Little Village. We have an interesting article on spotting fake news and online tools to verify news stories. Where has the Summer gone? As parents prepare for the school return, check out our article on 'Back to School' costs.

If you like wine but never know the right one to choose we have a feature with useful tips.

Articles of local historical interest are also included in this edition.

The Little Village Team

Kind Regards  
Little Village

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- The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown



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# Absolutely Disgraceful that 1,755 Dublin Carers had Carers Allowance Removed from them Last Year

Aontú Cllr for Ongar on Fingal County Council, Gerard Sheehan, has said that it is 'absolutely disgraceful' that over almost 15,000 family carers in Co Dublin have had their allowance payments removed from them over the past decade.



**S**peaking today, Cllr Sheehan said: "Even if we allow for the fact that in some of these cases the payments were stopped because the patient died, I'm aware of many cases where the payment was withdrawn because the patient did a stint in hospital, or because the spouse of the carer received a small pay rise in their employment.

Aontú are working hard in the Dáil to end the means test for the carer's allowance. Most of the carers in this country are women - it's not fair that the State would threaten to take the allowance away from them on the basis that their husband gets a pay increase".

Cllr Sheehan continued: "What the government need to realise is that caring is often a full-time job. Carers often have sleepless nights as they provide round the clock care to their loved ones. They deserve to be paid a wage for the work they're doing".

"In County Dublin last year 1,755 carers had their payments stopped. Without family carers, and the great work that they do out of a place of love, the structures of this country would collapse - nursing homes would run out of space, the homecare providers would not be able to cope with demand and the entire system would collapse.

Aontú will continue to work hard to get rid of the means test and to ensure that carers are treated with the respect and financial supports that they deserve", concluded Sheehan.



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Councillor

# John Walsh

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*Dear Resident*

I am giving updates on a few issues which I have been working on over the summer. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

*John*

## CLONSILLA FRAMEWORK PLAN

The draft urban framework plan for Clonsilla is expected to go out on public consultation in September for a four week period. This plan is a major opportunity to secure public realm improvements, protect local heritage and enhance the village of Clonsilla.

The first stage of the Master Plan for the Old School House will also commence in September with a pre-draft consultation which will allow residents and community groups to have their say on the future of the Old School House lands. Both plans have to be completed before April 2025 in line with a commitment which I secured as part of the Fingal Development Plan.

## DART+ WEST RAILWAY ORDER APPROVED

An Bord Pleanála issued the Railway Order for DART +West on 18th July, authorising Irish Rail to construct the DART extension from Dublin city to Maynooth and the M3 Parkway. While electrification of the Maynooth line is long overdue, there are outstanding issues to be resolved in the detailed design and construction phase.

Several positive changes were included in the Railway Order by Irish Rail following representations which I and other observers made at the oral hearing, including lifts to ensure accessibility at Ashtown, Coolmine and Clonsilla stations and reduction of the footprint, length and visual impact of the new pedestrian bridges at these locations.

I am seeking clarification from Irish Rail on the impact of the works on the road network due to the closure of level crossings. I have also asked Irish Rail to change its plan for the underpass at Ashtown to protect the viability of Ashtown Stables and to adopt an alternative solution to the proposed temporary road into Ashleigh estate.

## ONGAR TAKING IN CHARGE

The taking in charge of Ongar is proceeding and the latest areas to be taken in charge are Willan's estate and the streets in Ongar village itself, including Ongar Square, which are to be advertised for taking in charge in August. The taking in charge will include the car parking spaces in these areas.



*Working with Cllr Mary McCamley*





## **CRISIS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION IN DUBLIN 15**

The special needs education crisis in Dublin 15 has been apparent for six years and despite repeated promises from the Department and NCSE, the same problems of lack of appropriate school places and non-existent support services keep getting worse year after year. While the Department of Education has announced the formation of new special classes in recent weeks, this is not enough, as many students already in mainstream classes in schools need access to these classes and there are currently 20 children in Dublin 15 who do not have school places for the coming year in September 2024.

Children, parents and educators have been abandoned by state agencies for too long and schools have been left to their own devices to provide for vulnerable children while being denied essential services, training and supports.

It is scandalous that parents have to fight every step of the way to get an appropriate school place for their child and that all too frequently, parents don't know whether they have a place until just before the start of the school year. If parents have to rely on home tuition for their children in September, this will be a devastating failure by all the state agencies.

We need radical change to fix the system, not ad hoc or fragmented actions year after year. Ministers have to insist that addressing the neglect of children with additional educational needs is put at the top of the political agenda. We need:

- Long-term planning on a multi-year basis to ensure that every child with additional needs has an appropriate place in school.
- Prioritise a new building for Danu Community Special School and deliver essential modular accommodation urgently for both new and existing students.
- Create two new Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNTs) in Dublin 15 to ensure timely support and early intervention for children with additional needs.
- Implement the School Inclusion Model which offers a holistic range of supports to schools and teachers as a regional pilot project across County Dublin.
- Restore the special education teaching hours which are being reduced in 2024-25 for 68% of schools in Dublin 15.



# Castleknock TidyTowns

## - Latest news

It's been a busy year for Castleknock TidyTowns (CTT) so far with lots happening around the village. This is the sixth year CTT volunteers have worked each and every Saturday (April through October) to keep Castleknock village looking so well.



**C**TT recently operated a Poster-Free Zone (PFZ) for the referendums held in March followed by the Local and European elections held in June. We had been working on this project for the previous twelve months and communicated extensively with all the candidates and parties. We received excellent support, and the initiative was a resounding success.

CTT's main purpose is to protect the historic heritage Castleknock Village so the PFZ is confined to a short stretch through the village plus limited sections of the approach roads.

**Our three main objectives for putting the PFZ in place are:**

- To address climate change and sustainability
- To prevent littering and obstruction of public infrastructure
- The safety of pedestrians and cyclists

Feedback from local residents was overwhelmingly in favour of the initiative. We intend to continue with the

PFZ initiative for the upcoming General Election due to be held by March 2025 and indeed for all future elections and referendums.

Very importantly we are putting forward a novel suggestion to Fingal County Council (FCC) to use Castleknock to test a pilot project for the next General Election whereby, in return for candidates adhering to the PFZ, FCC would erect a large poster board (perhaps even an electronic one) in a central prominent location close to the village where every candidate could display one poster with their details/ policies. This practice is very common in many European countries and if the pilot project was successful in Castleknock it could be rolled out throughout the country. We look forward to the cooperation of FCC in trialling this novel pilot project which would eliminate the need for hundreds of posters and cable ties.

CTT has gone Electric! with great support from FCC Active Travel Department. We now have an E-Cargo Bike. Our volunteers are putting this bike to great use, transporting plants, tools and watering buckets as well as



green waste, leaves and loam to our composting bays. This initiative reduces the green waste collected by FCC, lowers our carbon footprint, and enriches our local soil.

'Rediscovering Cycling in Castleknock' was another focal point of our Active Travel efforts. Local residents participated in a 6-week course, rekindling their love for cycling and enjoyed some lovely evening cycles through the beautiful Phoenix Park.

Additionally, the children at Castleknock Educate Together National School (CETNS) have embraced Active Travel with 'Fresh Air Fridays' initiative, where they walk or cycle to school.

We continue to make strides towards making a positive difference to our environment.

### CTT Coffee Morning raised over €5,000

Sincerest thanks to everyone who attended and supported the CTT fundraising coffee morning recently. TRAD 15, the talented group of local musicians played at the event and proved to be extremely popular. Many thanks to TRAD 15 and the CTT volunteers for helping to create this upbeat community event.

### More benches secured

CTT has worked closely with FCC to provide benches on green spaces within residential estates. 14 new benches have been provided by Fingal Operations across Castleknock between 2022 and 2023. A further four benches have already been provided this year, in

Park Drive, College Grove and Castleknock Park and another four are due to be installed later this summer, in the Georgian Village, Woodview,

### Deerpark and College Road.

This project, which was initiated by CTT, has delivered new public infrastructure that is functional, sustainable, and visually attractive: this promotes universal accessibility for green spaces and allows for greater enjoyment of local amenities by residents of all ages.

### Poly tunnel purchased

After a long quest for a location, Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club very kindly agreed to allow CTT to locate a poly tunnel within their grounds. Brady's of Castleknock agreed to provide a water supply. Some funding was provided by FCC, and more was raised through a GoFundMe page to help purchase and equip the poly tunnel. The greenhouse will be used to propagate pollinator-friendly annual and perennial plants from seeds and cuttings. The ground around the poly tunnel will also be used to grow immature trees in pots, prior to planting them out in Castleknock in a few years' time. Thanks to everyone who has supported this project to date. We are most grateful! This poly tunnel will be a sustainability and environmental win for our area. CTT is committed to being a self-sustaining entity and this poly tunnel will be a significant step along that journey.

For further details on all of these initiatives, check out [www.castleknocktidytowns.com](http://www.castleknocktidytowns.com)



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# Castleknock Defibrillator Accessible 24/7, Year-Round

Castleknock TidyTowns has installed the only defibrillator in the area that is accessible 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Y**ou can find it centrally located in the heart of the village on the front wall of Myo's Castleknock. A dedicated team of volunteers, known as the Defibrillator Guardians, regularly checks this life-saving device to ensure it is always in good working order. While we hope it will never be needed, it is reassuring to know it's always available, with simple instructions provided inside the casing.



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# Aontú selects Cllr Troy to contest Dublin West constituency

Aontú's Cllr Ellen Troy has been selected to represent her party in the Dublin West constituency in the upcoming General Election.

**C**llr Troy, was one of two Aontú Cllrs who have been elected in Dublin West in the recent local elections. Last night Ellen was selected unanimously at a packed selection convention in Castleknock.

Speaking following her selection, Cllr Troy said she was honoured to be the Aontú candidate and is looking forward to being back out on the doors gauging the needs of her constituents in Dublin West.

"I am proud and honoured to have been selected by my party colleagues and I look forward to being back out on the doors once again. We spoke to thousands of people during the local elections and their needs are so diverse and so pressing. Aontú is arguably the only coherent and well organised opposition in the country. We stand up for what we believe in and are a constant and unwavering support for the people of this country who are living through real difficulties at a time when we are told the country is awash with money. People feel abandoned by the big political parties and more worryingly, by the majority of the opposition. This is not good for the electorate, and it is not good for democracy. People want politicians of integrity and real backbone, and they are more attuned now to cynical populist proclamations from those who will change their minds the minute they're elected. People know that Aontú stands for something, we have a membership of over 2,000 people and this is due to the hard work we do, the principles we stand for and our desire for a fair and just society for all".

Party Leader Deputy Peadar Toibin said Aontu is privileged to have a candidate of Cllr Troy's stature, describing her as an "incredibly hard working, genuine, committed and strong candidate who possesses a true sense of social justice".

"Dublin West is a target constituency for Aontú. We won two council seats in this constituency in the locals, narrowly missing out on a third. The people of Dublin west have responded to the fact that Aontú is the only party listening to the people. Ellen has real calibre, she is literally a Trojan worker and is deeply embedded in her community. She has an ear for all and deeply cares for those who are on the margins in any way, and she showed this during the local elections when she organised a raft of fundraising events for groups like Sonas Women's Refuge in



D 15 and Paint For Palestine, for the besieged people of Gaza. She is a tireless and long-standing fundraiser for community groups, and I truly believe the people of Dublin West have a golden opportunity to vote for somebody who has the qualities she possesses"

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# COOLMINE U20S READY FOR THE NEW SEASON

Under 20's Update



**C**oolmine U20s are delighted to announce we are ready to go for the new season. Following last season's success where we reached the semi-final of the Harry Gale Cup and finished mid table in the league, we are going to take it a step further.

Our squad will be provided with a physio, S&C support and a brand-new gym with a top-class instructor in Darragh Henry and the latest club kit.

Our U20s programme is very much player led as we really want to provide what the players want and need. The team will be supported by a very strong coaching team. Continuing from last year Conor Mahon (ex Coolmine) is our Head Coach and will be supported by our hugely experienced former Clontarf U20s Premier League winning coach, Brendan Fanning adding a wealth of experience. Louis McDonough (ex Coolmine) is our backs coach and is Captain of DUFC RFC (Trinity) and an All-Ireland U20s winner. Ben Griffen (ex Coolmine) an AIL 1A Winner and Stephen Callinan U20s Prem 1 winner will look after our forwards.

The team will be managed by Gary Clarke and

Philip McEvitt, who as managers, have between them won Premier leagues at various age groups throughout the years at youth level.

We have as a group (players, coaches and management) set out goals for the season as follows:

1. Play competitive Rugby
2. Keep fit and active
3. Maintain and grow friendships
4. Make a difference to a local charity with a big event during the season
5. Tour as a group (Likely Toulouse or La Rochelle)

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# BLANCH-A- THON FAMILY FUNDRAISER RAISED €15,000 IN AID OF LOCAL CHARITY HOME- START RESPITE CRECHE, BLANCHARDSTOWN



We are thrilled to see the incredible results from our Blanchathon fundraiser last year in aid of Home-Start respite creche in Dublin 15.

**O**ver €15,000 was raised last August and the funds have since provided a brand-new outdoor classroom that will ultimately become a calm sensory space, a brand new outdoor climbing frame and a host of new balance bikes, trikes, scooters and more for the children at Home-Start.

We would like to thank all of our customers for your donations, everyone who volunteered, Blanchardstown Staff, Home-Start Teachers, Counsellors, Carers, Parents and in particular Ann, the main woman herself, Manager of Home-Start.

This event was a heartwarming celebration of our local community and the wonderful work

of the staff, volunteers, parents and children at Home-Start respite creche in Blakestown, utilised by hundreds of families across the Dublin 15 area” said Ciara Curtis, Marketing Manager at Blanchardstown Centre.

Blanchardstown Centre hosted a family fun event last August in aid of local charity Home-Start. Home-Start is a respite creche located only minutes away from the Centre in Blakestown. Home-Start has been supporting local families in the Dublin 15 area for over 30 years.

Blanchardstown Centre partnered with Home-Start to raise money to improve their facilities on-site with new outdoor play areas, a sensory room and more.





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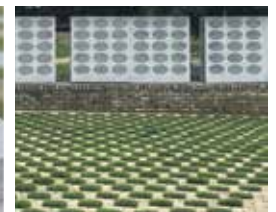
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# LORD CHESTERFIELD AND IRELAND

By Mike Power

Have you ever wondered about the tall monument you meet when driving out or in the Castleknock gate...? This dates from 1745-46 and was erected to the memory of an English viceroy to Ireland, Lord Chesterfield in 1745.

**T**his was erected by public subscription to thank him for opening up the park to the public.

Formerly, this whole area had been private to the military e.g. the Magazine Fort (1736) and the Royal Hibernian Military School, to educate the children of officers serving abroad. The office of the Irish Ordinance Survey was also located there in 1825. There were also many houses of Irish grandees living on the demesne.

## The Monument.

The monument, which is of Portland stone over Corinthian columns and surmounted by a phoenix, contributes to the name the name of the park itself. Originally this monument was located in the very centre of the park but was moved in the 1830s to its present position of prominence.

But what of the man who erected it? Well, Chesterfield was an English politician and diplomat who was English Viceroy in Ireland for 1745-46. Chesterfield had already a political and ambassadorial (Holland 1728) career behind him before setting foot on our shores.

He entered the House of Lords in 1715 as Lord Stanhope of Shelford.

Unfortunately, he was recognised as not being of age to serve, was fined £500 (about EU:40,000 now) and had to flee to the continent to escape from his debtors!

He was awarded the Order of the Garter (1730 see pic) as a reward for services to the State.


He came to Ireland in the year in which another great advocate for Ireland died, Jonathan Swift.

Chesterfield was a great admirer of the French language and culture and corresponded regularly with leading intellectuals of the day

such as Voltaire, Montesquieu and Condorcet.

Chesterfield was a witty, erudite and totally practical person, well-used to the tricky ways of the world. In his younger days, he was an inveterate gambler and married a rich German heiress in 1733 to improve his perilous financial position. On arriving in Ireland some wag asked Chesterfield why he had such a small staff accompanying him.?

*'Why', he retorted 'it's because I intend to do all the work myself...!'*



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And so he DID!

Chesterfield was an anomaly among British statesmen of that day, he actually liked Ireland and Irish people, and he was determined to improve the lot of both during his time as Viceroy. He immediately identified the twin evils of the Penal Laws and oppressive control from Dublin castle as requiring reform. During his short stay in Ireland, Chesterfield founded schools, actively promoted better industries and farm-practices here, and contributed to the setting up of the many charitable institutions.

### Improving the Park

Chesterfield had a great impact on the history of the Phoenix Park. It was typical of him that he wanted to bequeath an open air and pleasant recreation ground to all his Irish subjects. He also encouraged many landscape works there, including tree-planting along the avenue named for him (Chesterfield Ave.) This completed, he then formally opened up the park to everyone. (and much to the annoyance of the resident grandees!).

### Chesterfield's Letters to his son

One of the things Chesterfield is best known for now, are his famous Letters to His Son (1745-'73). He wanted his son to quickly learn the 'ways of the world' so he could advance in his career, and wrote him many letters containing the gist of his hard-won, and distilled wisdom about life and living. He dealt with every trial of life and how to curry favour and survive through it with graceful manners. Unfortunately, Chesterfield's son was congenitally indolent and benefitted little from this advice..Letters to his Godson were aimed at a more receptive target...

Chesterfield died in 1773, aged 79 yrs.He will always be remembered as a friend of Ireland – an enlightened ruler who only wanted the best for his people. Think kindly of the old statesman, painfully tottering out his gouty final days, courageous to the end, when you next drive pass his monument....

# BACK TO SCHOOL COSTS A FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR 62% OF PARENTS



The Irish League of Credit Unions (ILCU) has published the 2024 results of its annual Back to School survey which tracks the costs and impacts of children returning to school as well as broader cost of living factors.

**T**he 2024 research has found that 62% of parents say that covering the cost of back to school is a financial burden.

Commenting on the 2024 findings, David Malone, CEO, Irish League of Credit Unions said; "This year's back to school survey findings are very insightful as they show that Government initiatives such as the Free School Books scheme do seem to have eased the financial burden for some families. However, there is still an onerous cost burden on parents with increasing levels of associated debt linked to schooling and the cost of living.

"The 2024 research shows that 28%, more than 1 in 4, of parents are taking on debt to cover back to school costs, with the average debt amount at €368, which is an increase of €62 on the same figure last year. The issue of debt is significant, and it should be noted that 32% of parents in debt have debts of over €500 to cover these costs."

Mr Malone continued, "These costs and

increasing levels of debt have a knock-on effect as our 2024 research shows that 46%, almost half, of parents of school children who've been affected by the Cost of Living since the start of 2024 say they've cancelled or reduced non-essential service or activities to cover rising costs, and 23% are trying to earn additional income. Added to this, our research found that 86% of parents with schoolchildren say their income or household costs have been affected by rising costs of living, with 91% of those affected experiencing additional grocery costs and 89% seeing additional costs to utility bills.

"Overall, we want parents of both primary and secondary students to know, credit unions are here to help plan out and manage these expenses. As not-for-profit organisations, established in communities all across Ireland, we understand the impact of these important costs on households, and we would encourage anyone who has concerns to talk to their local credit union."



# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT WINE



Choosing the right wine can enhance your dining experience and elevate any occasion. Here's a guide to help you select the perfect bottle:

## 1. Consider the Occasion

Casual Gatherings: Opt for versatile, easy-drinking wines like Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, or Merlot.

Formal Dinners: Choose more sophisticated wines such as Bordeaux, Burgundy, or a fine Riesling.

Celebrations: Sparkling wines like Champagne, Prosecco, or Cava add a festive touch.

## 2. Match Wine with Food

Red Meat: Pair with robust reds like Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, or Malbec.

Poultry and Pork: Go for lighter reds such as Pinot Noir or medium-bodied whites like Chardonnay.

Seafood: Crisp whites like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, or Champagne complement seafood dishes.

Spicy Foods: Off-dry whites like Riesling or Gewürztraminer balance the heat.

Vegetarian Dishes: Versatile wines like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, or Rosé work well.

## 3. Understand Wine Varieties

Red Wines: Typically, full-bodied with flavours ranging from fruity to earthy. Common varieties include Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, and Zinfandel.

White Wines: Generally lighter and more acidic. Popular choices are Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, and Pinot Grigio.

Rosé Wines: Made from red grapes with minimal skin contact, offering a balance of red and white wine characteristics.

Sparkling Wines: Includes Champagne, Prosecco, and Cava,

known for their bubbles and celebratory feel.

Dessert Wines: Sweet wines like Port, Sauternes, and Moscato are perfect for dessert pairings.

## 4. Pay Attention to Labels

Region: Certain regions are renowned for specific wines (e.g., Bordeaux for Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley for Chardonnay).

Vintage: The year the wine was made can affect its taste, especially for certain wines that age well.

Alcohol Content: Higher alcohol content usually means a fuller body.

## 5. Experiment and Explore

Attend Tastings: Wine tastings are a great way to explore different wines and find what you like.

Try Different Regions and Varietals: Don't hesitate to explore wines from various regions and lesser-known grape varieties.

Read Reviews and Recommendations: Wine magazines, websites, and apps can provide helpful insights and ratings.

## 6. Personal Preference

Taste Over Price: An expensive wine isn't always the best. Choose what tastes good to you.

Consider Sweetness Levels: Whether you prefer dry, semi-dry, or sweet wines can significantly influence your choice.

## 7. Ask for Help

Consult Wine Experts: Sommeliers, wine shop staff, and knowledgeable friends can offer valuable advice tailored to your preferences and needs.

# ASHTOWN By Mike Power



How old do you guess the Dublin 15 suburb of Ashtown is...? Ancient, middle-aged, or modern...? Well in fact, this particular area only appears on old maps of some 100 years ago!

**A**shstown, bounded to the North by the Phoenix Park and to the south and west by Castleknock and Cabra, is largely a modern creation of two of the most important developments of the Victorian age, i.e. the railways and the Royal Canal. However, both of these technological innovations suffered very contrasting fortunes as we'll later see.

In the past, this sparsely populated area has been a home to the mansions of wealthier Co Dublin citizens, revelling in the largely agricultural rolling countryside and in the unspoilt (but then closed off!) Phoenix Park. Ashtown House, built 1830 in the fashionable Italianate style of that day, is one of these mansions remaining.



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Today's Ashtown is a vibrant, attractive, and cosmopolitan suburb with lots to attract both residents and visitors alike. And population growth figures attest to this area's undoubted popularity. In 2006 some 7,715 lived here. By 2022, this had risen to 12,012, almost doubling the number of inhabitants. This growth has been driven by tasteful building schemes such as Rathbone, Royal Canal Park, Ashington and Pellettstown, among others. Efficient communications, a pleasant living environment, proximity to the Phoenix Park, and escalating house-equity have all contributed to Ashtown's popularity today



The Royal Canal Ashtown

### Technological Developments.

Ashtown is located on the Dublin-Sligo railway and the original local station here was opened in 1902.



Pellettstown Station.

With the opening of Dublin's newest railway station, Pellettstown, in Sept 2021, and with 94 trains scheduled on weekdays, local commuters found themselves within a convenient 12-minute journey time to the city centre.

Ashtown is also sited on the 10th lock of the Royal Canal. This massive public works began in 1790, the first stretch being built from Phibsborough to Ashtown. The final cost of this 'white elephant' scheme was some 1,421,954 pounds, many Eu 10s of millions in today's money. Not unexpectedly, the company soon went bankrupt and the coming of the railways in the 1840s sealed its final demise.

Today, the canal serves a purpose very different from its original creators, though no less important for that, i.e. that of brightening the lifestyles of its local inhabitants on their walks.

### Sir Rowan Hamilton

If you happen to notice a brass plaque while walking over Broombridge bridge, this commemorates the discovery in 1843 by Sir William Rowan Hamilton of the formula for quaternions while taking his regular evening stroll. Hamilton was an Irish polymath whose work paved the way for quantum mechanics and this monument is still revered by many of today's foreign visiting scientists.

### The Secret of Ashtown Castle.


Another attractive heritage feature for locals close to the park is the Visitor Centre.

For centuries Ashtown Castle was an undiscovered secret, one only brought to light when a surrounding Georgian building was demolished in 1978. To the builder's utter amazement, an undiscovered 1430s tower castle lay revealed within. This is the oldest structure yet found within the Phoenix Park. It was built under an English parliamentary grant of 10 Pounds given to colonial settlers in the crown's attempt to civilise 'this wild and barbarous country.' The present building, beautifully restored by our own Bord of Works, boasts a Victorian kitchen garden and many beautiful walks within Ashtown demense.

The structure had been the official residence of the British Under-Secretary from 1782. This building, then called Ashtown Lodge, was also home to the Papal Nuncio until the 1970s. This castle is now identified as the oldest building within the Phoenix park and has a treasured place in the hearts of all local 'Ashtowners' and visitors alike. A must-see if you're ever in the area.


Yes, blessed with its rich heritage, beautiful walks, and modern infrastructure, Ashtown has certainly come on since its small beginning in the 1900s...





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# McDonald's



## McDonald's Ireland has reopened its Blanchardstown restaurant following a €1.5 million refurbishment project

This significant investment in the newly redesigned restaurant is expected to create 20 additional jobs in the coming months, raising the total number of employees to over 150.

**T**he refurbishment is part of McDonald's latest upgrade program, which is transforming the operations of its stores across the UK and Ireland.

The updated restaurant design has been developed to accommodate various ordering methods and to meet evolving customer expectations.

The upgrades at the Blanchardstown Centre location include a dedicated courier waiting area, a redesigned kitchen with a larger order assembly area, and an additional Drive-Thru booth. These enhancements aim to provide a seamless, faster, and more efficient experience for customers, couriers, and staff. The refurbishment also features a remodeled dining area and updated customer restrooms.

With the increase in delivery orders, the restaurant now includes a separate 'McDelivery only' area, allowing delivery drivers to use a

dedicated entrance and service seating area. This change enables delivery drivers to collect orders more efficiently, reduces congestion in the dining area, and provides more space for walk-in and dine-in customers.

The new kitchen design, with a larger order assembly area, allows the staff to handle more orders and serve customers more quickly. Additionally, the crew member room has been improved to offer a more relaxing and comfortable space for employees. The restaurant now also features solar panels and an enhanced building management system, which will reduce carbon emissions by over 10%.

"We are excited to welcome our customers back to our newly renovated Blanchardstown restaurant after this extensive six-week refurbishment. We look forward to them experiencing the changes firsthand," said owner John Byrne.



# CLONSILLA HERITAGE FESTIVAL - BACK FOR A 2ND YEAR

This September will see the return of the Clonsilla Heritage Festival, with even more events planned! Running over Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September, the festival will be an opportunity to enjoy the best of Clonsilla.

**F**or those who like the water, there will be 2 different ways to enjoy the Royal Canal: one will be the return of the very popular barge trips up and down the canal; the second way will be Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) sessions at Clonsilla.

If you enjoy music, there are a number of different events that will interest you. Once again, we'll be running musical events in Fingal County Council's beautiful Shackleton's Garden, with the Blanchardstown Brass Band performing there on Saturday and local traditional music band Craobh Sli Dhala performing on Sunday. A music concert in the lovely surroundings of St Mary's Church is also planned.

There will be a number of guided tours across the weekend. Paddy will guide a tour through the grounds of Luttrellstown Castle; Michael will bring people behind the scenes at Beechpark Farm, showing the orchards and the produce grown locally; Ciara will give a guided tour of beautiful St Mochta's Church; and Christine will



lead a guided tour from Clonsilla to Porterstown, via the Royal Canal.

And there's more! Clonsilla & Porterstown Heritage Society will have a pop-up museum in Beechpark Farm Shop that weekend, showing different aspects of Clonsilla's heritage. There will also be the chance for local painters to participate in a Plein Air competition, in Shackleton's Garden.

There's something for everyone and lots of ways to enjoy the best that Clonsilla has to offer. Keep an eye on the Clonsilla & Porterstown Heritage Society's Facebook page for updates and information on events!

A big thank you to all our supporters and sponsors, particularly Fingal County Council. Clonsilla used to be a rural village and events like these really demonstrate our community spirit. All are welcome to attend, and tickets will be available on Eventbrite in early August, under Clonsilla Heritage Festival. For any queries, please email [cpheritagesoc@outlook.com](mailto:cpheritagesoc@outlook.com)."

# DART CELEBRATES 40 YEARS IN 2024



Dublin's renowned DART service celebrated its 40th anniversary this July. Since its launch on July 23, 1984, the DART has facilitated nearly 670 million passenger journeys. To commemorate this milestone, Irish Rail revealed a special livery at Grand Canal Station.

**T**he uniquely wrapped DART train features a vibrant timeline of significant moments and events from Dublin and Irish life over the past 40 years. Curated by the Little Museum of Dublin, the special collection of images adorning the exterior and interior of the carriages includes references to iconic elements such as Bosco, Brexit, the Millennium milk bottle, and Marriage Equality.

Renowned author Roddy Doyle contributed to the celebrations with an exclusive short film that follows his beloved "Two Pints" characters on a whimsical "DART" journey to the southside. Created for the 40th anniversary, the film reflects Doyle's strong connection to the DART, with scenes from the adaptation of his first novel, *The Commitments*, filmed at Kilbarrack DART station in the early '90s.

The festivities at Grand Canal Dock were kicked off by 80's icon Bosco, with Transport Minister Eamon Ryan also in attendance. Minister Ryan remarked on the DART's longevity, stating, "It's hard to believe that the DART is 40 years old, and yet it seems as if it has been here forever."

He continued, "Spanning our majestic Dublin Bay, originally from Howth to Bray and now extending from Malahide to Greystones, the DART has been integral to the lives of many Dubliners. It has been a backdrop for numerous celebrated books, films, music

videos, and stories of Dublin life, both fictional and real."

Minister Ryan recalled that the DART was initially criticized as a "Rolls Royce" solution, deemed too extravagant for the city's needs. However, the decision to proceed proved wise. Initially serving about 25,000 passengers daily, the DART now accommodates close to 90,000, with plans for expansion north to Drogheda, west to Maynooth, and south to Wicklow Town. Ryan expressed excitement about the DART's future, emphasizing its role in Dubliners' lives.

Ciaran O'Brien from Drumcondra, who worked on the DART for over 20 years, shared his fond memories, saying, "There was great teamwork. The people of Dublin embraced the DART, and the workers truly enjoyed being part of it. It's now a crucial part of Dublin's infrastructure, and I'm hopeful for its continued expansion and the shift towards clean, electrified transport."

Jim Meade, Chief Executive of Iarnród Éireann, hailed the DART as Ireland's "greatest public transport success story." He highlighted the significance of the DART's launch during the economically challenging 1980s, proving that investment in high-quality public transport garners community support. Meade looks forward to the DART's ongoing success and growth, ensuring that rail remains the backbone of Ireland's sustainable transport network for the future.



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# Government approval for legislation allowing delay to maternity leave in cases of serious illness



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

In October last year, I announced plans to introduce legislation allowing women undergoing treatment for cancer or other serious illnesses to postpone their maternity leave. I am pleased to have received Cabinet approval for this important legislation. This follows a campaign by the Irish Cancer Society and will ensure that these women can fully enjoy their maternity leave once their medical treatment has concluded.

Maternity leave is a crucial time for mothers and their babies to bond, and no one should be forced to use that time for medical treatment. The legislation approved today will enable mothers to postpone their maternity leave if needed, allowing them to focus on their treatment and retain that precious time with

their baby.

This legislation includes other significant changes, including ensuring that female TDs and Senators are entitled to take maternity leave. If we are serious about promoting female participation in politics, it is essential that female TDs and Senators have the same rights as women in other parts of the workforce.

These changes reflect our commitment to supporting women and families, ensuring that all mothers, regardless of their profession or health circumstances, have the opportunity to fully experience the critical bonding period with their newborns. By addressing these issues, we are taking a meaningful step towards a more inclusive and supportive society.





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# EASY VEGETARIAN LASAGNE



## INGREDIENTS

3 red peppers, cut into large chunks  
2 aubergines, cut into ½ cm thick slices  
8 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for the dish  
300g lasagne sheets  
125g mozzarella  
handful cherry tomatoes, halved  
For the tomato sauce  
1 tbsp olive oil  
2 onions, finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, sliced  
1 carrot, roughly chopped  
2 tbsp tomato purée  
200ml white wine  
3 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes  
1 bunch of basil, leaves picked  
For the white sauce  
85g butter  
85g plain flour  
750ml milk

## METHOD

### STEP 1

To make the tomato sauce, heat the olive oil in a saucepan. Add the onions, garlic and carrot. Cook for 5-7 mins over a medium heat until softened. Turn up the heat a little and stir in the tomato purée. Cook for 1 min, pour in the white wine, then cook for 5 mins until this has reduced by two-thirds. Pour over the chopped tomatoes and add the basil leaves. Bring to the boil then simmer

for 20 mins. Leave to cool then whizz in a food processor. Will keep, cooled, in the fridge for up to three days or frozen for three months.

### STEP 2

To make the white sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan, stir in the plain flour, then cook for 2 mins. Slowly whisk in the milk, then bring to the boil, stirring. Turn down the heat, then cook until the sauce starts to thicken and coats the back of a wooden spoon. Will keep, cooled, in the fridge for up to three days or frozen for three months.

### STEP 3

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Lightly oil two large baking trays and add the peppers and aubergines. Toss with the olive oil, season well, then roast for 25 mins until lightly browned.

### STEP 4

Reduce the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Lightly oil a 30 x 20cm ovenproof dish. Arrange a layer of the vegetables on the bottom, then pour over a third of the tomato sauce. Top with a layer of lasagne sheets, then drizzle over a quarter of the white sauce. Repeat until you have three layers of pasta.

### STEP 5

Spoon the remaining white sauce over the pasta, making sure the whole surface is covered, then scatter over the mozzarella and cherry tomatoes. Bake for 45 mins until bubbling and golden.





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# LARGE SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT CLONSILLA



Mc Hugh Properties have applied for permission for an LRD (Largescale Residential Development) within the lands to the rear of the Clonsilla Inn.

**T**he proposed development involves the construction of a residential led mixed use scheme across 7 blocks contained ranging in height from 1 to 5 storeys. This development is comprised of 170 apartment / duplex units consisting of 45no. one-bedroom units, 115 no. two-bedroom units and 10no. three-bedroom units.

Clonsilla as a village has lost its identity. It is no longer recognisable as a linear village due to the sporadic development throughout. The general area and the environs have been over developed and the roads network is already at over capacity.

As a Councillor for the Ongar Ward of Dublin 15, and as a long-standing resident of D15, I have been to the forefront in calling for the provision of not only suitable and affordable housing but suitable supporting infrastructure. This Observation is made not against Development but against this Development as it is presented.

A Clonsilla Development Framework has yet to be formatted and released for public consultation. Much discussion has taken place, but the Framework is years behind. The most recent framework was the 2008 Clonsilla Urban Centre Strategy which quoted “the Development Strategy for Clonsilla is to create an identifiable village core”. A Development Plan is a contract between the Local

Authority and the residents of the Local Electoral Area.

Aldi have been granted for a major residential and commercial development in Clonsilla, only 200m from the McHugh application. Without a Framework in place the McHugh application is premature.

Residents of the area. I include myself within the term “resident of the area” are already aware of the constraint’s roads network at this location.

The Development by reason of scale, layout massing, contraventions to the Fingal Development Plan, design deficiencies in green infrastructure including insufficient open space and inadequate hedgerow and tree protection would result in adverse impacts on biodiversity, the visual amenities of the area, overlooking of existing and future residential units and would fail to provide a satisfactory standard of residential amenity for future residents. The proposed development would adversely RS Zoning Objective for the site in the Development Plan which is to “provide for residential development and to protect and improve residential amenity”, would be contrary to Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines which were issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



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# FORD CAPRI RETURNS AS ELECTRIC SUV



After nearly 40 years, the iconic Capri name is making a comeback to the Ford lineup, now reimagined as an all-electric SUV. Ford heralds this new Capri as “the car the iconic sports coupe was destined to become.”

**B**uilt on Volkswagen Group’s MEB electric vehicle platform, the new Ford Capri offers two powertrain options. The all-wheel drive (AWD) version boasts twin electric motors delivering 340hp, achieving 0-100km/h in 5.3 seconds. It features a 79kWh battery with a WLTP range of up to 592km.

The extended range rear-wheel drive (RWD) model comes with a 286hp electric motor, allowing it to sprint from 0-100km/h in 6.4 seconds. This model’s 77kWh battery provides a WLTP range of up to 627km.

Both models support DC charging, with the RWD charging up to 135kW and the AWD up to 185kW. According to Ford, both can charge from 10-80% capacity in less than 30 minutes.

The interior of the new Capri is described as luxurious, featuring a minimalist digital design with soft-touch materials and sculpted one-piece front seats. Standard high-spec comfort features include keyless entry and start, heated front seats and steering wheel, dual-zone climate control, and a driver’s seat with massage and memory function.

With up to 572 liters of boot space, the Capri also includes



a foldable boot floor, a 17-liter MegaConsole beneath the front armrest, and additional storage behind the sliding 14.6-inch center screen.

Color options include ‘Blue My Mind’ and the exclusive ‘Vivid Yellow,’ with wheel choices of 19 or 20 inches depending on the specification.

Irish pricing for the new Ford Capri will be announced at a later date.



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