

ISSUE 58  
SEPTEMBER 2025

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BLANCHARDSTOWN CENTRE 2.0

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Cllr JK Onwumereh  
Community Update  
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## EDITORIAL

**O**ur long, wonderful summer is drawing to a close and the dark winter evenings are almost upon us. However, do not despair as our many articles on what is happening around us should interest you. We are all fully aware of the dangers of the E-scooter. See our article on "Killer Scooter Crisis" and keep yourselves informed of what is happening down the line which will make things safer for everyone concerned.

Do Supermarket loyalty schemes represent real savings? Short answer: often yes but not always. We have a piece for you to read and then you can make up your own minds. A variety of interesting articles for you to look at and hopefully you will enjoy most if not all of them.

Until next time.

The Little Village Team

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- The Grasshopper Clonee
- Clonsilla Inn
- The Carpenter Inn
- The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown



**Ronan Bright**  
Director / Head of Sales  
bightronan83@gmail.com  
085 199 8321



**Patrick Browne**  
Graphic Design  
hello@patrickbrowndesign.com  
086 831 9322

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# “Killer Scooters” Crisis - Fine Gael Motion Fast-Tracked for Tough New Measures

## Dublin City Council to Debate E-Scooter, E-Moped, and Surron Model Dangers This Week

**D**ublin City Council will formally consider urgent measures to crack down on illegal use of high-powered e-scooters, e-mopeds, and Surron-type models on footpaths and in pedestrian areas.

At last night's meeting of Dublin City Council, the Lord Mayor accepted Fine Gael's emergency motion and fast-tracked it to the Mobility and Public Realm Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for detailed discussion this week.

The SPC will then report its findings back to the October full Council meeting, where formal action is expected.

Cllr Colm O'Rourke, Leader of the Fine Gael Group on Dublin City Council, said:

“This is a positive step forward; our motion has now been fast-tracked for discussion this week. We cannot lose sight of the fact that every day, high-powered e-scooters and Surron-type models are racing down footpaths, putting children, pensioners, and all pedestrians at risk.

The Fine Gael Group on Dublin City Council is determined to see Dublin lead on this issue, with strict enforcement and clear rules to keep our footpaths safe. The public will be watching this debate closely, and we will be pushing for immediate measures to protect pedestrians before more lives are lost or seriously harmed.”

### The Fine Gael motion calls for:

- Full commencement and enforcement of the Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023 to ensure licensing, registration, and insurance for high-powered e-scooters, e-mopeds, and Surron-type models.
- Targeted enforcement blitzes in Dublin in partnership with An Garda Síochána.
- Local bye-laws banning the use of such vehicles on all footpaths and pedestrian zones within the Dublin City Council area.
- Monthly reporting to Dublin City Council on collisions, seizures, and enforcement actions.
- A national public information campaign on safe and legal use of these vehicles.

Here's the Ireland “new e-scooter law” in a nutshell (in force since 20 May 2024):

### What's legal

- Age: 16+ only. No licence, insurance, or tax required.
- Where you can ride: On local/regional/national roads, cycle lanes and bus lanes; not on footpaths or pedestrianised areas; not on motorways.
- Public transport: E-scooters aren't allowed on NTA public transport (since 7 Oct 2024).
- The vehicle must meet all of these (or it's illegal on public roads)
- Max speed: 20 km/h (both design speed and while riding).
- Max power: 400 W continuous rated.
- Max weight: ≤25 kg (unladen). Wheels ≥200 mm diameter.
- Equipment: Two independent brakes (front & rear), front & rear lights (used during lighting-up hours), reflectors, and a bell/horn.
- No seat (standing only), no passengers, no carrying goods, no towing, and no mods to increase speed/power.
- Markings/docs: CE-marked and fitted with a manufacturer's plate; retailers provide a declaration of conformity.

### Penalties & enforcement

- Many breaches (e.g., >20 km/h, on footpaths, missing lights/bell, >400 W, carrying a passenger/goods) are fixed-charge offences of €50.
- Gardaí can seize non-compliant PPTs/e-scooters.
- The legal bits (for reference)
- S.I. 199/2024 – Road Traffic (Electric Scooters) Regulations 2024: defines what an e-scooter is and sets the technical + use rules.
- S.I. 222/2024 – Traffic & Parking (Amendment): slots e-scooters into the road rules (e.g., bus/cycle lanes; footpath ban via traffic regs).
- S.I. 224/2024 – Use of Powered Personal Transporters: bans other PPTs (and non-compliant e-scooters) in public places.
- S.I. 227/2024 – Fixed Charge Offences: sets the €50 fines for e-scooter offences.
- Government/RSA guidance summarises the above in plain English.



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# Chewing gum on pavements – Is it still a problem?

Yes, but it's getting better

## How big is the problem?

•Chewing gum made up 8.6% of all recorded litter in Ireland in 2023—unchanged from 2022. The National Litter Pollution Monitoring System (NLPMS) also notes gum has been the single biggest “food-related” litter item and the second-largest litter component overall for years (after cigarette litter).

•By comparison, cigarette-related litter was 42.6% of the national litter composition in 2023; packaging 19.9%; food-related (incl. gum) 9.9%.

## Trend over time

•Gum litter has fallen dramatically from ~30%+ in the late 2000s to 8.6% today—roughly a 70% reduction since 2007. Multiple official updates and council releases attribute this to the long-running Gum Litter Taskforce (GLT) education campaign.

## Where you still notice it

•The issue is most visible on busy city-centre pavements and older paving, where staining persists even between cleans. IBAL cleanliness audits frequently call out heavy gum residues on certain streets (e.g., Dublin city centre).

## What authorities are doing

•Education & behaviour change: The GLT runs annual roadshows and school/community programmes. Recent surveys reported by local authorities indicate rising correct disposal (e.g., “92% properly dispose of gum,” “1 in 7 still drop gum,” depending on the survey/year).

•Cleaning: Councils contract specialist steam/jet cleaning to remove gum. Dublin City Council has budgeted seven-figure sums for dedicated gum removal (e.g., €1.6m over three years) and continues to procure scheduled gum removal in the city core.

•Enforcement: Dropping gum counts as littering. Typical penalties are an on-the-spot €150 fine, and up to €4,000 on conviction (with additional daily fines for continuing offences).

## Bottom line

•\*\*Yes, it's still a problem—especially as staining on high-footfall pavements—\*\*but it's far smaller than it used to be. The latest national data shows gum at 8.6% of litter (stable year-on-year), against a backdrop of a long-term ~70% decline since 2007 thanks to education, regular cleaning, and enforcement.

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# BLANCHARDSTOWN CENTRE 2.0

## Can Ireland's biggest mall reinvent itself?

**B**y any measure, Blanchardstown Centre is a heavyweight: more than 180 shops and restaurants spread over 1.2 million sq ft, drawing an estimated 17 million visits a year. Now the D15 landmark is gearing up for its next act under new ownership—and the early signals point to food, experiences and better transport at the heart of the reboot.

### New owner, new ambition

In November 2024, US investment firm Strategic Value Partners (SVP) agreed to buy the Centre (reports put the deal around €600m). In the months since, SVP has briefed that it plans to “invest heavily”, starting with an expanded food-and-beverage offer and upgrades to access and parking. For locals, that means more places to eat, better circulation, and a push to make the campus a place to linger—not just a place to shop.

### What's actually changing?

SVP's early outline includes a c.35,000 sq ft dining destination, improvements to the “car parking offer” and—crucially for non-drivers—a new bus transit station with direct links to town. That last piece dovetails with the National Transport Authority's BusConnects programme, which already secured planning approval for the Blanchardstown–city centre core bus corridor in 2024. If the interchange proceeds alongside the corridor works, the Centre could become one of west Dublin's most connected hubs.

### Retail mix: premium beats + practical staples

The post-pandemic refresh is visible on the mall floor. FLANNELS—Frasers Group's luxury multi-brand—opened its first Irish store here, anchoring the fashion pitch with 30–40k sq ft of high-end labels. Elsewhere, Ireland's first Sky Shop landed on Level 1, bringing a branded tech-and-media experience to the line-up. Add steady food-and-coffee openings (The Art of Coffee) and new sit-down options (Kaizen Chinese), and you can see the Centre tilting toward “destination” over “dash-and-grab”.

Of course, not every brand story is linear. Press Up's franchise-run Wagamama closed here in September 2024 amid a wider restructuring, a reminder that Irish retail and F&B are still reshuffling. The gap it left also underlines why SVP's promised food hall matters: it spreads risk across many operators and gives families more choice under one roof.

### Getting there: not just by car

For years, Blanchardstown's scale leaned on 7,000 free parking spaces and the M50/M3. That won't vanish—but the next chapter is about balancing modes. With the bus corridor green-lit and a proposed on-site interchange back on the table, expect more frequent, more reliable bus journeys to and through the Centre, plus safer cycling and walking links along the route. If delivered well, that's good news for staff, teens, and anyone who'd rather not drive for a coffee and a browse.

### What it means for D15

A stronger food and leisure offer keeps spend local—and pulls visitors outward from the city. Better public transport cuts the hassle (and emissions) of weekend trips. And a confident owner with capital tends to mean more refurbishments, more pop-ups, and a higher bar for customer experience—the unflashy upgrades like wayfinding, seating, toilets and family facilities that turn a big mall into a pleasant day out. If SVP follows through, the Centre can double down on its role as D15's civic living room: shopping, yes, but also meeting, eating, watching a film and bringing the kids to Draíocht—all within a short hop.

### By the numbers

- 180+ stores, 3 retail parks, 7,000 free parking spaces.
  - ~17 million annual visits; 1.2m sq ft.
  - Ownership: Strategic Value Partners (deal announced Nov 2024).
  - Transport: Blanchardstown–City Centre bus corridor approved June 2024.
- Recent & notable openings
- FLANNELS (luxury department store) — first Irish location.
  - Sky Shop — Ireland's first, Level 1.
  - The Art of Coffee — independent Dublin roaster/café.
  - Kaizen Chinese — dim sum & HK classics near the main centre.

### The bottom line

Blanchardstown Centre doesn't need a reinvention so much as a tune-up. With fresh investment, a bigger dining scene and a long-overdue public-transport upgrade, “Blanch” has a chance to evolve from Ireland's biggest mall into one of its best places to spend time. For D15, that would be a win you can taste, ride and shop.



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*Dear Resident*

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

*John*

## LAUREL LODGE PLAYGROUND

I recently asked for an update from Fingal Council to clarify when the works will commence on the Playground in Laurel Lodge and when it is likely to be operational. I received the following reply from Parks Superintendent:

**The contractor will commence works on the playground in October. It is expected the playground will be operational in the early New Year following completion of the required safety inspection.**

## GRANARD BRIDGE PROJECT CONFIRMED

It is positive news that Fingal Council has confirmed that the pedestrian and cycling link at Granard Bridge, Castleknock, is a priority: "The Planning & Strategic Infrastructure Department at this stage is bringing forward the most critical section of the Blanchardstown to Phoenix Park link in the form of the pedestrian and cycling Scheme at Granard Bridge Castleknock Road. This Pedestrian and Cycling Section has been given priority as to render this section of the route more accessible for vulnerable road users particularly at Granard Bridge and to ensure it aligns with the sustainable transport hub at Castleknock Train Station and with Dart+West plans."

The scheme design will include a Pedestrian and Cycling link from the new pedestrian and cycling bridge north to the Roselawn Road/Castleknock Road junction and south to the Laurel Lodge Road/Castleknock Road junction, tying into the existing junction's infrastructure and linking also into the Castleknock Train Station.

## SCHOOL SECRETARIES AND CARETAKERS ACTION WITHDRAWN

The strike action by school secretaries and caretakers was withdrawn after agreement at the Workplace Relations Commission on:

- Commitment to negotiate comparable pension entitlement.
- Discussions on caretakers' pay framework.
- Access to bereavement, sick & acute illness protocols.

Well done to all the FORSA school secretaries and caretakers who secured a commitment from the Government to agree to a process to ensure pension rights and leave entitlements for them all. I supported the strike along with my Labour colleagues, as pension parity is a basic issue of fairness and equality, and it should not have taken a strike for this Government to recognise that excluding essential school staff from the public service pensions scheme was wrong. The great public support reflected the immense value of the work of school secretaries and caretakers.



*John supporting School Secretaries and Caretakers*





## BLANCHARDSTOWN TO PHOENIX PARK CYCLE PATH DELAYED

Fingal Council indicated in response to a motion which I presented on 4th September that the proposed cycle path from Blanchardstown to the Phoenix Park has been delayed indefinitely, with the exception of the Granard Bridge project. There is no funding from the National Transport Authority for this cycle route. This is deeply disappointing, as the Blanchardstown to Phoenix Park link is a proposed route in the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan. Currently cycling infrastructure on Castleknock Road is very poor and as indicated in recent RTE reports, the Castleknock Road junction at Myos is extremely dangerous, especially to cyclists.

## UNACCEPTABLE DELAY FOR DANU COMMUNITY SPECIAL SCHOOL

Danu Community Special School faces a further delay in opening new modular accommodation for 2025-26, so 12 new students with additional educational needs who were due to start in Danu this month cannot do so. Work on the new modular building will not be completed until 22nd September, mainly due to late delivery of the lift and so the new accommodation will not be available until October. Even worse is that essential therapeutic support for the 12 new students with additional educational needs has not been delivered, as the HSE has not given a commitment to this support despite a business case being submitted by the school and patron. This is grossly unfair to these students and their families who are entitled to a full, inclusive educational experience. I have written to the Department of Education and HSE to support the right of students in Danu to a full, equal education.



*Working with  
Cllr Mary  
McCamley*

*John with Cllr. Mary McCamley*





# Pat McDonnell Paints

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## Paint Like a Pro: How to Choose Bedroom Colours

By Mick Gilbride | Dublin Area Manager, Pat McDonnell Paints

*Discover our Colour Consultants' top tips on how to put together a beautiful colour palette that you will be happy to wake up to everyday!*

**W**hen designing a bedroom colour scheme, start by asking yourself what relaxation looks like to you. As Regina Burke, a Colour Consultant in our Commons Road store advises, "When choosing a paint colour for your bedroom, consider what atmosphere you are trying to create. Do you want a fresh and airy space, a dark moody sanctuary or something in-between?"

### Work With the Room

Think about the aspect of the room and the amount of light it receives throughout the day. Jade Daly from our Blanchardstown store advises, "For a north-facing room, consider warm colours such as creamy whites, soft greys, or pale yellows to add warmth and brightness to the room. For south-facing rooms, cool colours like blues, greens, or greys can create a soothing and refreshing atmosphere." Also, consider any furniture and fittings that you won't change such as the flooring, headboard, wardrobe, curtains etc. These can provide a useful base for you to create a cohesive palette made up of colours that contrast, complement or harmonise with these elements.

### Create a Cosy Cocoon

Dark colours can transform your room into a cocoon-like space far removed from the stress of the outside world. We like earthy greens and browns that evoke nature such as Wooded Walk by Dulux Heritage and Treron by Farrow & Ball. For added effect, try out the 'Colour Drenching'

technique in which you paint the walls, ceiling, and trim all in the same colour.

### Go for Soothing Blues

Research from the National Sleep Foundation found that painting your bedroom walls in blue can improve sleep quality. Your brain links blue with feelings of calmness, and this helps to lower your blood pressure and heart rate. When choosing a boudoir blue, you can't go wrong with Salome by Ralston, Elfin by Colourtrend, or Dix Blue by Farrow & Ball.

***"Choosing a soft green or blue tone (e.g. Green Oxide by Dulux Heritage or Icehouse by Colourtrend) can promote a feeling of relaxation."*** Arunima Dutta, Blanchardstown

### Introduce A Bold Accent Colour

With bedrooms, you may opt to keep things simple by applying an all-over colour or you can introduce a bolder colour through the addition of an accent wall. There are several options to choose from including painting a wall in a bold accent colour, installing painted wall panelling, or hanging a beautiful wallpaper.

***"A popular option is to place the accent wall behind the headboard to allow for the use of vibrant colours without affecting sleep quality."*** - Fiona Finnegan, Colour Consultant, Centre Park Road



### Consult an Expert

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# The Nature Next Door

## - Walks and Wild Places in D15



**Y**ou don't need a car—or even a whole afternoon—to feel properly outdoors in Dublin 15. Between the Royal Canal, Tolka Valley, Phoenix Park edges and a web of parks and pocket greens, wildness shows up in small doses: a kingfisher flash under a bridge, wind through willows, a blackberry bramble that ambushes the school run. This feature is your field guide to local nature—where to go, what to notice, and how to care for the places that care for us.

### Five signature D15 outings (with easy tweaks)

#### 1) Royal Canal “Locks & Larks” Loop (3.8–6 km, flat)

Start at Castleknock Station or the Castleknock Gate side path, follow the towpath towards Clonsilla, turn back at Lock 12. Expect wagtails on the masonry, moorhens in the reeds, and larks overhead on still mornings. Extend to Clonsilla Station if you're feeling fresh, and train back.

#### 2) Phoenix Park EdgeRamble (4–7 km, gentle)

Enter via Castleknock Gate, wander the treelined avenues, then duck onto quieter side paths. Best at first light or the golden hour. Watch the fallow deer from a distance (no feeding, ever); in late spring keep extra space for fawns.

#### 3) Tolka Valley Meander (3–5 km, mixed surfaces)

Pick up the path near Ashtown and follow the river bends. Kingfisher sightings are a genuine possibility; listen for the high, sharp whistle. After rain the riverside can be mucky—waterproof shoes help in winter.

#### 4) Millennium Park BigSky Stroll (2–4 km, easy)

A sweep of pitches, hedgerows and wetter corners alive with damselflies in summer. Great for prams and scooters. Use the loop paths to build up steps and finish with a kickabout.

#### 5) PocketGreen Safari (as long as you like)

Choose your own chain of small greens between estate streets. Bring a bin bag and gloves to leave each stop a little tidier. You'll notice seasonal shifts—first crocuses, last leaves, who walks which dog at what time.

### What to look for, season by season

Late winter (Feb–Mar): Catkins on willow and hazel; rooks tune up noisy nest colonies. Watch for frosty spider webs on towpath railings.

Spring (Apr–May): Blackthorn blossom froths along hedges; chiffchaffs announce themselves with their name. Early bat flights at dusk over calm canal stretches.

Early summer (Jun): Damselflies and dragonflies over wetland edges; foxgloves on rough ground. Swifts scythe the evening sky—blink and you'll miss them.

High summer (Jul–Aug): Blackberries start; herons stalk the shallows; swallows skim low over water.

Autumn (Sep–Oct): Deer rut in Phoenix Park (observe from afar); leaves turn bronze along the canal; fungi appear on damp verges (admire, don't pick unless you know exactly what you're doing).

Winter (Nov–Jan): Bare branches reveal nests; robins get territorial; canal mornings are glassy and good for reflection walks.

### Familyfriendly microadventures

- Sound scavenger hunt: List five sounds to “collect” (wind in leaves, bike bell, crow, running water, footsteps on gravel).

- Texture bingo: Bark, brick, moss, puddle, feather—kids love ticking the boxes.

- Miniranger kit: Zipbag with a pencil, small notebook and a piece of chalk for temporary pavement sketches.

- Stargazing lite: On clear winter evenings, step onto the canal path for 10 minutes to spot Orion or the Moon's craters.

### Accessibility notes

Most canal sections are level; some ramps to bridges are steeper and can be windy. Tolka Valley has mixed surfaces—check the weather and choose drier days if using wheels. Millennium Park's main loops are broadly pramfriendly. If a kerb, bollard or recurring puddle blocks your route, note the exact spot and share it with the council—small fixes unlock whole walks.

### Foraging, dogs and good etiquette

- Foraging: Blackberries are the friendly gateway—pick above dogheight, away from busy roads, and wash at home. Avoid private property and nature-sensitive areas; if in doubt, leave it.

- Dogs: Leads near wildlife and during nesting/fawn seasons. Bag it, bin it—always.

- Shared paths: Walk singlefile when it's busy; cyclists, ring early and pass wide; everyone slows for small legs.

### Weatherwise routes

- Windy day: Canal towpath is more exposed—opt for Tolka Valley's shelter under trees.

- Rainy day: Use villagecentre arcades and treelined streets to build a drier loop; Phoenix Park side paths hold up well.

- After storms: Expect twigs and slick leaves; go slower, enjoy the smell of wet earth (there's a word for it—petrichor).

### Nature + climate: quiet infrastructure

Those raingardens in new estates? They're not decoration—they slow and soak stormwater. Hedgerows are wildlife motorways. Big, healthy street trees throw shade in heat and sip up winter rain. When you see a longer grass regime or wildflower strip, that's pollinator habitat, not neglect. If an area is signed for seasonal protection, stick to paths so nests and





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#### **Kit list for effortless local nature**

- Light layers, a pocket rain shell, and shoes you don't mind getting muddy.
- Reusable bottle or small flask.
- Lights or reflectors for dusk.
- A small litter bag and gloves—leave it nicer than you found it.
- Optional: compact binoculars; a phone macro lens makes closeups of leaves and bugs magic.

#### **Community: how to lend a hand**

Join (or start) a monthly cleanup; share sightings (kingfisher! bats! first snowdrops!) on local pages; water young street trees during dry spells; ask your school about a minimeadow or pollinator patch. Small rituals add up to stewardship.

#### **Three easy loops to pin on the fridge**

- LocktoLock (4 km)**: Castleknock Station → Lock 12 → back, flat and pramfriendly.
- ParkEdge Figure8 (5–6 km)**: Castleknock Gate → side paths → tree avenues → back via canal for variety.
- River Calm (3.5 km)**: Ashtown start → Tolka bends → bridge crossing → return on the opposite bank where paths allow.

#### **The invitation**

Make nature the default filler between things: 20 minutes before dinner? Canal loop. Call with a friend? Stroll the Tolka. Saturday morning energy? Phoenix Park at first light. The more often we show up, the more the ordinary wild becomes part of our week—and the easier it is to protect.



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# The Many Flavours of D15

## Food, Festivals and Everyday Hospitality

**D**ublin 15—stretching from Castleknock to Mulhuddart, Clonsilla to Ongar—has long been one of the capital's most quietly dynamic corners. It's where the Royal Canal glints beside commuter rails, where the Sport Ireland Campus buzzes with weekend matches, and where you can pick up spices from three continents on a single block. The real story of D15 is simple and generous: people making room at the table, then filling that table with food, music and everyday kindness.

### A plate for every passport

If you want a snapshot of D15, start with its grocery aisles. Polish and Lithuanian bakeries sit near South Asian spice shops; African food stores stock egusi, plantain and palm oil alongside Irish potatoes and rashers. Halal butchers share streets with old-school Irish delis. The diversity isn't curated—it's lived. You see it in lunch queues: construction crews ordering sizzling stir-fries; schoolkids splitting trays of chips and shawarma; nurses grabbing biryani in scrubs.

Family cafés keep the mornings honest: strong tea, floury baps, a fry that can cure any cold snap. Later, the choices sprawl—Neapolitan-style pizza, Punjabi curries, Lebanese grills, West African stews, Chinese hand-pulled noodles, Nigerian puff-puff, Turkish baklava, Korean fried chicken, fresh-baked soda bread and carrot cake. Dessert parlours hum on weekend nights, scooping gelato or drizzling thick chocolate over crêpes for post-cinema crowds.

What anchors all that variety is the D15 instinct to feed you properly. Portions lean hearty, prices try to stay sane, and someone will always ask, "Are you sorted for sauces?"

### Markets, makers and the joy of "a bit of everything"

Markets in and around D15 mirror the district's palate. You'll find farm-fresh veg, artisan cheeses and jams, samosas tucked beside chutneys, börek next to soda farls. Stallholders talk you through their stuff: how the honey tastes different when the hives move closer to gorse, which pepper blend will wake up Tuesday's leftovers, which brownie actually travels well for the train to Maynooth.

Home cooks thrive here. WhatsApp groups buzz with recommendations, and community centres host cook-along nights where recipes are swapped like football stickers—an auntie's jollof, a neighbour's keema, a housemate's lentil soup that costs pennies and hugs the ribs.

### Festivals: the calendar of welcome

D15 loves a gathering. Draíocht in Blanchardstown anchors a year-round programme of theatre, dance and family workshops, drawing audiences from every postcode. Farmleigh House—on D15's doorstep—has often hosted big cultural days that flood the lawns with music, food stalls and kids painting their faces in every flag under the sun. School

halls transform for multicultural evenings where you can graze from table to table—Ukrainian dumplings, Filipino lumpia, Ghanaian kelewele, Irish apple tart—while the school band wrestles "Óró, Sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile'" into a reggae liit.

Sports days are festivals in all but name. GAA blitzes, football tournaments and athletics meets at the Sport Ireland Campus pull families together with flasks, foil-wrapped sandwiches and sideline banter. St. Patrick's festivities, Diwali lights, Eid feasts, Christmas markets—each adds another thread to a colourful calendar that says, over and over, "Come along, you're invited."

### Hospitality in the everyday

Ask locals what they love about D15, and they'll rarely start with landmarks. They'll tell you about neighbours who swap ladders and lawnmowers, about the bus driver who waits for a sprinting commuter, about the café that knows your order and still checks if you want to try the seasonal special.

Hospitality shows up in micro-ways: a spare seat offered on packed trains at Castleknock or Coolmine; a parent you only met at pickup stopping to share spare cupcakes from a birthday party; a shopkeeper adding an extra naan because "it's better for sharing." Community groups—Tidy Towns, residents' associations, youth clubs—keep the wheels turning. They organise litter picks, tree plantings, book swaps and toy trades that quietly stitch the place together.

### Walk, cycle, graze

One of the loveliest ways to taste D15 is to move through it. The Royal Canal Greenway serves up an easy, flat amble: start near Castleknock, follow the water past Coolmine and on toward Clonsilla, pausing for coffee, a bakery bun or a late lunch as the mood takes you. Tolka Valley Park offers another green corridor, with picnic-friendly spots and space for kids to run energy clean out of their systems. If you're on wheels, a spin toward Ongar or Hansfield turns into a choose-your-own-adventure of noodle bars, bakeries and bubble-tea counters.

### A day in D15: a tasty loop

#### Morning

Kick off with a café breakfast—eggs, brown bread, a pot of tea—or a flaky pastry and flat white. If the weather smiles, stroll the canal or Tolka Valley to earn your lunch.

#### Lunch

Dive global: a thali with dal and naan; a shawarma plate with crisp salad and garlicky aioli; a plate of suya with jollof and plantain; or a classic carvery that still knows its way around gravy.

#### Afternoon

Check what's on at Draíocht, the local libraries or the Sport Ireland



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Campus. If there's a market, wander. Buy jam you don't need. Ask too many questions about olives. No one minds.

### Evening

Take it easy—wood-fired pizza and a crisp lemonade, or a homely curry. If there's room, hunt down a dessert parlour or a bakery open late. Split something sweet and argue about whose side has more sauce.

Small rituals that make a place feel like home

•The reliable "Howya." In shops, on paths, at the bus stop. It's hello and "I see you," rolled into one syllable.

•Shared sidelines. Kids' sport is a parent-powered social club, with coffee thermoses and emergency spare gloves.

•Recipe relay. A neighbour tastes your stew, suggests a spice, and suddenly you're swapping notes over the fence like pen pals.

•Seasonal generosity. Winter coat drives, Ramadan food collections, Christmas hampers—giving is a habit, not a headline.

### Why it matters

Cities rise or fall on how they treat strangers. D15's secret is that "stranger" is a temporary status. A few conversations at a market stall, a friendly nudge into a community group, a seat at a school concert—and you're folded in. Food speeds that up. A shared plate lowers shoulders. A recipe traded becomes a story carried.

In a world that can feel brittle, D15's flavours—literal and cultural—are a reminder that places are made every day by ordinary welcomes. Not the grand gesture, but the steady offer: "Will you have a bit?" It's hard to refuse. It's harder still not to pass it on.

**Planning a visit?** Come hungry. Walk if you can. Ask shopkeepers what's good today. Say thanks. And wherever you end up—over a fry, a bowl of noodles, a slice of tart—leave with one thing: the sense that in Dublin 15, céad míle fáilte isn't a slogan. It's the menu.



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## Do cafes and restaurants pass on the deposit fee on cans and plastic bottles and can customers retain them?

**T**he answer depends on whether you're dining in or taking away.

- Eat-in (on-premises): Cafés, restaurants and bars don't have to charge the deposit for in-scope cans/bottles. If they don't charge it, they're supposed to keep the empties and reclaim the deposit themselves (you wouldn't be due a refund because you didn't pay one).

- Takeaway / off-site: If you're taking the drink away, the business must charge the deposit (15c for 150–500 ml; 25c for >500 ml–3 L). In that case the container is yours to keep, and you can redeem the deposit at any participating return point. The deposit must be shown as a separate line on your receipt.

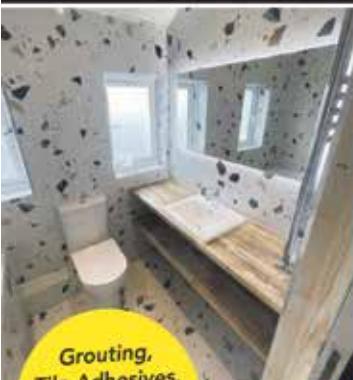
If a venue charges you the deposit but refuses to hand over the can/bottle, that's not okay—Re-turn has said customers who paid a deposit are entitled to the container; report issues to them.

Tip: look for the Re-turn logo on the container; only those are in the scheme and refundable.



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# 10 Years Later - Will the Rotunda Ever Move to Connolly?



In 2015, the then Minister for Health Leo Varadkar announced that the Rotunda National Maternity Hospital was to relocate from the city centre to the Connolly Hospital Campus.

It was seen as needed to recognise the growing population of west Dublin, north Kildare and east Meath, and because the existing Rotunda buildings were so old.

It's now almost exactly 10 years since that announcement in June 2015, and what's happened?

Well, not a whole lot. I have been asking the Minister for Health and the HSE where this proposal is at.

I've discovered that just over €800,000 has been spent so far on the relocation project - mainly in 2017-18.

However when I most recently asked the Minister for Health about the project (in late June) she told me, "Timelines for relocation of the [...] Rotunda are therefore not yet established".

**Ten years later, and  
no timeline established!**

The relocation was mentioned in the 2020 Programme for Government, but it is not referred to in the new Programme for Government agreed this January.

Since 2015, there has been investment in the existing city centre Rotunda site, and that's great. It was badly needed.

But the Government needs to be straight with Dublin West, and clarify if there is still a proposal to move the Rotunda to Connolly, or are they just trying to avoid delivering bad news.

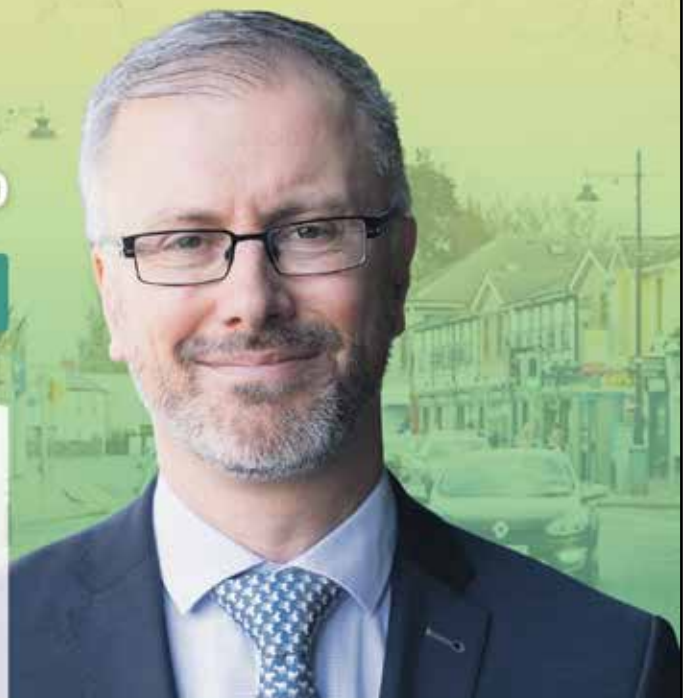
I'll keep questioning the Minister for Health about this in the new Dail term.

## Roderic O'GORMAN TD

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# Does paying motor tax by instalments cost more?

**Short answer (Ireland): yes**—paying motor tax in instalments costs more per year than paying for 12 months at once.

## How much more?

6-month disc: 55.5% of the annual rate each time → two discs ≈ 111% of the annual cost.

3-month disc: 28.25% of the annual rate each time → four discs ≈ 112–113% of the annual cost (rounding rules apply).

## Why is it higher?

The Department says there's a surcharge for non-annual discs; arrears are also charged at one-tenth of the annual rate per month if you let tax lapse. Government has kept this surcharge, noting that making instalment rates equal to the annual rate would cost about €35m per year in lost revenue.

## Extras to know:

Motor tax discs are issued only for 3, 6 or 12 months (there's no true monthly payment option—the “10% per month” figure refers to arrears, not an instalment plan). Vehicles with an annual tax of €119 or less can only be taxed for 12 months.

If you'll keep the car on the road all year, the 12-month disc is cheapest overall.

## Scrap the Motor Tax Instalment Penalty

Labour's Transport Spokesperson Ciarán Ahern TD has today called on the Minister for Transport to abolish the penalty imposed on motorists who pay their motor tax in instalments. Labour is demanding that Budget 2026 include a commitment to remove the higher charges applied to quarterly and half-yearly motor tax payments, and to phase out similar penalties across the public sector.

## Deputy Ahern said:

“Motorists who pay their tax in instalments are being unfairly penalised simply because they cannot afford to pay the full amount upfront. In the midst of a cost of living crisis, this is indefensible. Labour is calling for the Minister for Transport to act in Budget 2026 and scrap these outdated and unjust charges.

“We know that drivers who opted for quarterly or half-yearly payments have paid over €106 million more than those who could afford to pay annually. These are not luxury payments – they are mandatory charges for a public service.

“The Minister may argue that the extra charge is to cover administrative costs, but in this digital age, that simply doesn't hold water. Surely most of these systems are automated. Penalising people for using instalment options is not only unfair, it's outdated.

“There are many reasons why someone might not be able to pay their motor tax in one go – from unexpected bills to irregular income. These people should not be punished for their financial circumstances. Public services should be accessible and fair, not structured to penalise those who need flexibility.

“Labour is calling on the Minister for Transport to abolish the higher charges on motor tax instalments in Budget 2026 and to conduct a full review of similar penalties across the public sector. It's time to modernise how we treat people who need to pay in instalments – with fairness, not financial punishment.”



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## Your Community Update

I hope this newsletter finds you well. It's been a busy and productive few weeks, filled with positive steps forward for our community. I wanted to share some of these important updates with you directly.



### Brewing Support for: Bewley's Big Coffee Morning

I was absolutely delighted to join An Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Minister Jack Chambers TD, the incredible Irish Olympic sailor Eve McMahon, and my Fianna Fáil colleagues Cllr. Tom Kitt and Cllr. Eimear Carbone-Mangan to support the launch of the St. Francis Hospice's #BewleysBigCoffeeMorning.

This wonderful event takes place this year on Thursday, September 25th. The hospice provides truly incredible care to the most vulnerable in our communities, and this is a fantastic way to show our support. I'm encouraging everyone to consider organising a coffee morning in your local area. It's a simple, fun, and effective way to make a real difference.

### Addressing Community Safety on RTÉ News

The safety and well-being of our community is always my top priority. I recently granted an interview to RTÉ News to highlight the growing concerns of Dublin 15 residents over the misuse of scramblers and e-scooters.

We are seeing a worrying rise in accidents and antisocial behaviour linked to these vehicles, and it's crucial that

these issues are brought to national attention. I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure our public spaces are safe and peaceful for everyone.



### Sanctuary status for Blanchardstown Library

Honoured to pay tributes to the wonderful services of the Blanchardstown Library recently at the presentation of the Library of Sanctuary award.

Over the years, the Blanchardstown library has provided a welcoming space for learning, expression, interaction and inclusion to the diverse groups that live in Dublin 15 and beyond. Happy to see the centre being recognised for her inclusive service to everyone who walks through their doors.

Many thanks to Dr Veronica Crosbie and the Places of Sanctuary Ireland for the recognition. Congratulations!!

### Hartstown Community Centre: The Keys Are In!

Great news! The eagerly awaited re-opening of the Hartstown Community Centre is now one major step closer. The official handover of the facility to Fingal County Council took place last Friday!

After a major €2 million refurbishment, the keys were handed over by John Healy and Aidan O'Connell of Vision Contracting. Fingal County Council's Community Development team will now provide ongoing support, working closely with all of us in the local community to ensure the centre's continued success.

This is a huge win for Hartstown, and I cannot wait to see it bustling with activity once again.

As always, please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can be of any assistance.



Best wishes,

**Cllr John-Kingsley Onwumereh**

✉ [jk.onwumereh@cllr.fingal.ie](mailto:jk.onwumereh@cllr.fingal.ie)

☎ 0899642783



# Cllr Gerard Sheehan: “Extend the Luas to Ongar and the Airport Immediately.”

Dublin 15, 22 August 2025

**C**ouncillor Gerard Sheehan is today declaring that the infrastructure crisis facing Ireland — like the cost-of-living crisis — is now a national emergency. And at the heart of this paralysis is one blindingly obvious solution that’s still being ignored:

***“Extend the Luas from Broombridge to Dublin 15 and the Airport — immediately.”***

At a time when families are stuck in traffic, workers are missing flights, and commuters are forced into daily costly commute chaos, this Government’s response has been a mix of PR stunts and self-congratulation — not action. The Finglas Luas extension which will run from Broombridge, must be immediately extended to Dublin Airport, delivering a fast, clean, and direct option for the public.

***“While the Government is busy patting itself on the back about billions being blown on white elephants such as the children’s hospital and the metro which leaves the hard working citizens in Dublin 15 forgotten, it’s clear; the general public are being punished for going to work and trying to choose green options for their transport by this government. And just like the cost-of-living crisis, this is a full-blown national emergency. They need to extend the Luas to the Airport — immediately.”***

Luas Must Link the City, Airport, and Dart on the Southside. Cllr Sheehan is also calling for a joined-up national strategy, not a piecemeal patchwork of self congratulatory press releases. The Luas must: Be extended from Finglas to Dublin Airport, and finish the line from Cherrywood across to Woodbrook Dart Station on the Southside — giving Dart users access to the airport and easing congestion on the coastal rail, And furthermore - be brought west to Ongar via Blanchardstown to meet the needs of Dublin 15, one of the most underserved urban areas in Ireland with over

120,000 residents and no Luas line.

***“If we are truly Europeans, then we must be offering the travelling public as many public transport options — instead of action that makes a real difference in people’s lives, we offer them press releases, delays, frustration and hollow promises. It’s just not good enough!”***

Dunboyne to Derry — Rail Unity for a 32-County Ireland Cllr Sheehan also slammed the ongoing delay in completing the Navan Rail Line — let alone extending it to Cavan and Derry.

***“Our politicians will talk about unity, but we don’t even have a direct train line to Derry. The Dunboyne–Navan line must be completed and extended north — this is about fairness, balance, and vision for the entire island, and ultimately reconnected reunification.”***

Cllr Sheehan’s Infrastructure Emergency Priorities: Extend the Finglas Luas line to Dublin Airport immediately. And Complete the Cherrywood Luas to Woodbrook Dart Station — integrating north–south movement. Fund the Luas to Ongar via Blanchardstown. Complete the Navan Rail Line, and extend it to Cavan and Derry.

***“So as to be clear: Action speaks louder than words. We need to extend the Luas to the Airport — immediately. Not next year. Not in a buried report, and not in another pathetic press release. Do it. Now.”***





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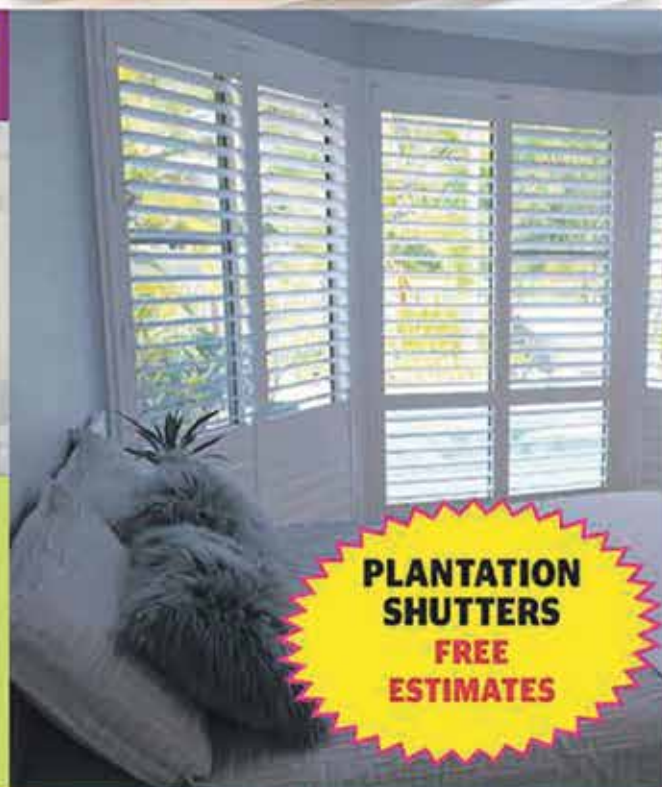
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## Abbotstown's new National Velodrome & Badminton Centre: a €100m catalyst for sport in D15

If all goes to plan, Dublin 15 will soon host Ireland's first indoor velodrome.

**O**n the third of September 2025 the Minister for Communications, Culture and Sport moved to seek Cabinet approval for almost €100m to build the National Velodrome & Badminton Centre at the Sport Ireland Campus in Abbotstown—putting shovels in the ground within months if funding is signed off.

### What's being built

The project combines a 250-metre banked cycling track wrapped around up to 12 badminton courts, with about 1,000 permanent seats and space for events. Support facilities—changing rooms, strength & conditioning, offices, café and bike stores—sit under the track at ground level. In short: a purpose-built high-performance arena that can also host community programmes and national competitions.

### Why D15 benefits

•**Year-round access:** The roofed track ends the need for riders to train abroad and gives clubs across west Dublin an all-weather base. Badminton gains a championship-standard hall capable of staging national finals and multi-court festivals.

•**Events & visitors:** With seating, broadcast-friendly sightlines and adjacent hotels on the N3/M50, the campus can pitch for international meets—bringing footfall for local cafés, restaurants and taxis. (Ireland is also progressing a second, smaller indoor velodrome with TUS in Limerick, spreading the calendar of events nationwide.)

•**Pathways for schools:** Being on the Sport Ireland Campus means built-in links to participation programmes; the infield courts and classrooms make it easy to slot in PE days and club taster sessions. (The campus has flagged the velodrome/badminton hub as its next major build in the masterplan.) Where the project stands

•**Planning:** Fingal County Council granted permission in January 2023; the scheme then advanced towards tender.

•**Funding decision:** As of early September 2025, ministers are seeking Cabinet approval for ~€100m to construct the venue

•**Timeline:** Government and campus statements have consistently pointed to construction beginning in 2025 and completion in 2027, though the start date depends on the funding sign-off.

### Local angles to watch

1. **Access & traffic:** Expect a campus construction site for ~18–24 months. The build sits beside the National Indoor Arena; contractors will phase works to keep public access open for most campus users. (Check campus advisories for temporary diversions.)

2. **Clubs & community use:** Cycling Ireland and Badminton Ireland are expected to lead on programming, with community hours alongside high-performance slots—key for making the venue feel like a D15 asset, not just an elite facility.

3. **Events pipeline:** With a comparable infield-plus-track model seen across Europe, the arena can host track cycling, badminton championships, and mixed-use indoor festivals—especially in winter when outdoor sport dips. (Architects' plans emphasise flexible concourses and sub-track spaces to make that possible.)

### By the numbers

•**Cost:** ~€100 million (Cabinet approval sought, Sept 2025). RTE

•**Specs:** 250 m track + up to 12 badminton courts; ~1,000 permanent seats.

•**Status:** Planning approved Jan 2023; tendering/funding phase 2025.

•**Target opening:** 2027 (subject to funding and construction programme).

### The bottom line

Abbotstown's velodrome-plus-badminton hub would anchor a fresh wave of indoor sport on our doorstep—giving local clubs certainty, attracting visitors in the shoulder season, and cementing the Sport Ireland Campus as the beating heart of Irish high-performance sport. If Cabinet signs off the money, 2025 should be the year the hard hats arrive—and 2027 the year D15 hosts its first laps on home boards.





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## Standing Together for Community Safety

Following the senseless attacks on members of our immigrant community, I hosted a meeting with Minister for Integration Colm Brophy TD to listen to fears and concerns and to chart a way forward together.

Through the Critical Skills List we invite non-EEA (European Economic Area) professionals to work in specific roles that are in short supply and deemed essential. Just like Irish people all over the world, they contribute to our economy and society, making Ireland a better place for us all to live. I stand with our immigrant community in Dublin West and for Irish values such as warmth, generosity, social equality, and compassion for others.

## Funding for Coolmine Community School Secured



As a new TD I am determined to see more investment in Coolmine Community School, a thriving, modern school that is operating in an old and outdated building. I invited Minister Helen McEntee to visit the school, the first Minister of Education to do so. Roof works have now been approved and I continue to work with the school on applications for other essential upgrades. Ultimately a new school building is required. A formal submission is being prepared by the school and I give it my total support.



## 50yrs of Women's Cricket at Phoenix Cricket Club

It was an honour to perform the coin toss at a challenge match marking 50 years of women's cricket at Phoenix Cricket Club and cut the ribbon on the refurbished Clubhouse, supported by Government Sports Capital funding, making the club and cricket more accessible and inclusive for all.

## Hartstown Community Centre Reopens



Hartstown Community Centre has reopened its doors following a €1.9 million refurbishment across the building, stage, childcare rooms and astro pitch. Thank you to members of the community who campaigned to make this happen, the Council, and former Fine Gael Minister Heather Humphreys and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar who secured funding and worked closely with myself and the community to move ownership to Fingal County Council.



## Breithlá sona duit Scoil Oilibhéir

I attended the Golden Jubilee celebrations for Scoil Oilibhéir, established in 1975 in Blanchardstown Village, and have worked closely with the school to progress plans to develop to a 2-stream school, reflecting the strong demand for education through the medium of Irish in Dublin 15. A timeline has not been set out, but the Department of Education has accepted submissions by the Board of Management to move to the next stage of design and planning.



## Pelletstown Educate Together Sensory Garden

At the official opening of a new sensory garden at Pelletstown ETNS, a project that has been led by a partnership between the Parent's Association and Plunketts GAA Men's Shed.

*Emer is working in Dublin West with...*



Regina Doherty MEP



Cllr Kieran Dennison



Cllr Ted Leddy



Cllr Siobhán Shovlin



Cllr Gayle Ralph



Cllr Colm O'Rourke

# WHAT IS BEHIND RECENT RACIST ATTACKS IN IRELAND?

The pressure points, policy fixes and the road ahead

**T**he recent racist attacks in Ireland aren't coming from one cause—they're the product of a tight housing crunch and visible strain on services, an organized (but small) anti-immigrant fringe that mobilizes online, and an information vacuum that lets rumours and disinformation spread. The immediate spike in July–August has particularly hit the Indian community (prompting an embassy advisory and the postponement of Dublin's India Day).

## What's driving it (in plain English):

- Housing + visibility of migration: Ireland's severe housing shortage collided with record accommodation needs for refugees and asylum seekers, turning proposed sites and visible tent encampments into flashpoints. That mix has been shown to fuel "us vs. them" narratives and local protests.

- Online disinfo + small but organized far-right activism: Researchers document coordinated mis/disinformation and "Ireland is full" messaging that helped turn protests into intimidation or violence; electorally these groups remain marginal, but their online reach is outsized.

- Copycat incidents at accommodation sites: Arson and attacks around buildings earmarked for asylum seekers (and later, street camps) created a contagion effect—footage spread online, feeding anger and fear.

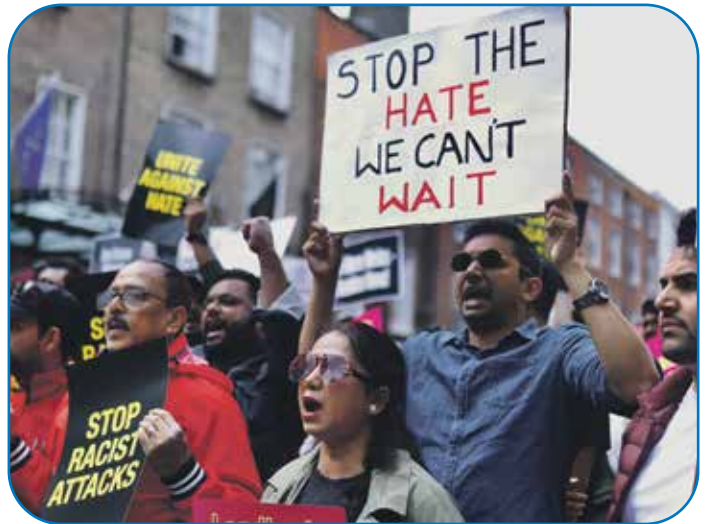
- A specific August surge against Indians: Multiple assaults on people of Indian origin drew national attention; the Indian Embassy issued a caution and India Day at Farmleigh was postponed for safety.

- Law & enforcement context: Ireland's new Hate Offences Act (in force since 31 Dec 2024) lets courts treat racial hatred as an aggravating factor at sentencing, but debates over broader "hate speech" rules and online incitement have been contentious.

## What's been happening in Dublin

- Tallaght (Sat 19 Jul):** An Indian man was violently assaulted at Parkhill Lawns, Kilnamanagh. Gardaí are treating it as racially motivated; the attack sparked a silent vigil at the Dept of Justice on Fri 25 Jul and larger protests that weekend.

- City response:** The Indian Embassy issued a safety advisory on 1 Aug, citing a rise in physical attacks nationwide, including Dublin.



- Fairview (Sun 10 Aug):** Another Indian man reported being attacked by three teenagers in Fairview Park around 5:30pm; he needed stitches.

- India Day (Phoenix Park):** The Ireland-India Council postponed India Day on Sun 11 Aug "out of respect to victims" of recent attacks; Government met community reps the same day.

- Policing line: On 22 Aug, the Garda Commissioner said recent attacks on Indians are driven by racism, criminality, and picking on the vulnerable, with the involvement of juveniles "particularly concerning."

An advertisement for "RICHARD'S TYRES" mobile tyre fitting service. The top part shows a red sports car parked next to a white van with "MOBILE TYRE UNIT" and "RICHARD'S TYRES" written on it. Below this, the text "RICHARD'S TYRES" is written in large, bold, red letters. Underneath that, "MOBILE TYRE FITTING WE COME TO YOU!" is written in bold red letters. Further down, in smaller black text, it says "Professional tyre fitting at your home/work". Below that, in red text, it says "Supply Budget, Mid-range &amp; Premium New Tyres". Then, in black text, it says "Mobile Tyre fitting car, van, SUV". Below that, in black text, it says "Premium New tyres Budget New tyres". Then, in black text, it says "Puncture Repairs Wheel balancing". At the bottom, in a black rounded rectangle, the phone number "089 466 2018" is written in white, and the website "mobiletyreunit.com" is written in orange.



•**Flags row (Sep 1–2):** Dublin City Council moved to meet senior Gardaí over unauthorised tricolours being used by anti-migrant groups on city streets—seen by councillors as intimidation.

**Why Dublin specifically?**

•**High visibility + pinch points:** Dublin concentrates both new arrivals and housing/service strain, so flashpoints (residential estates, parks, public transport) are more visible—and footage spreads fast online. (Context on the Dublin incidents above; national backdrop via The Guardian.)

•**Small but active agitators:** A handful of anti-immigrant activists use local symbols (e.g., the flag campaign) to signal territoriality and mobilise online, amplifying fear beyond their numbers.

•**Youth involvement & copycatting:** Several Dublin cases involved teenagers, with videos/posts fuelling copycat behaviour and anxiety in the Indian community.

**What authorities are (and aren't) doing**

•**Enforcement & messaging:** Gardaí say they're investigating these assaults as hate-motivated where evidence supports it and publicly flagged the racism/criminality dimension. (See Commissioner's Aug 22 comments.)

•**Stats backdrop:** Garda data show 676 hate crimes/incidents in 2024, with race the top motive and almost half occurring in the Dublin region—so Dublin has long been the hotspot.

•**Civic response:** DCC's move on flag intimidation indicates a multi-agency approach (council + Garda) to reduce ambient harassment in public spaces.



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# Do supermarket loyalty card prices represent real savings?

**G**rocery prices in Ireland and the UK have increased by as much as 5-6% over the last year. This pressure on household budgets make loyalty card offers attractive to many consumers but do they offer real savings? Not according to Aontú Councillor Gerard Sheehan who recently accused the Irish Government and major supermarket chains of profiting from the suffering of ordinary families, declaring the cost-of-living crisis a “cost-of-survival emergency”.

Cllr Sheehan directly criticised large supermarket chains for what he described as “manipulative loyalty pricing tactics”, calling for urgent investigation by the CCPC and consumer regulators. “Loyalty cards are being used as camouflage for price gouging. Essentials like milk, bread, butter — they’re advertised at ‘discounted’ prices, but only after inflation and only if you sign up and scan your data,” said Sheehan. “It’s cynical, predatory, and it’s hurting the people who can least afford it. This is corporate profiteering dressed up as value.”

One of readers commented ‘They must think we consumers are extremely gullible if we believe that we are really getting products cheaper with their card. All they’ve done is jack up the non-card prices.’

We have delved into the topic to establish if loyalty card prices represent real saving.

**Short answer: often yes—but not always, and the “saving” can look bigger than it really is.**

•The UK competition regulator analysed 50,000 loyalty-priced grocery items and found 92% did offer a genuine saving vs the usual in-store price, with average discounts of 17–25%—but some items were still cheaper at rival supermarkets, so it pays to compare.

•Consumer group Which? looked at price histories and concluded most member prices were genuine, yet a minority (about 5–16% depending on retailer) had non-member “reference” prices that were higher than typical recent prices—meaning the headline saving could be overstated for those items.

•In Ireland, enforcement has focused on how prices are displayed. For example, on June 24, 2024, Tesco Ireland pleaded guilty for failing to include unit pricing on Clubcard shelf labels—important because unit prices help you check if a “deal” is actually good value.

•Irish rules also require that when a shop announces a price reduction, the prior price shown must be the lowest price in the previous 30 days (with some scope-specific details). That improves transparency around “was/now” claims.

## How to make sure you’re really saving

•Check the unit price (€/kg, €/L). If it’s missing, that’s a red flag—unit price is what makes comparisons fair.

•Compare across stores/brands. Regulators found many loyalty prices are competitive, but not always the lowest vs other supermarkets.

•Watch the anchor. Don’t assume the non-member price is the “normal” price—Which? found cases where recent typical prices were lower.

•Mind promo types. Multi-buys and bundles can beat (or

underperform) single-item loyalty deals; check what you’ll actually use.

## What the big Irish retailers do

•Tesco Clubcard Prices: yellow shelf labels for members; extra points and occasional coupons in the app.

•SuperValu Real Rewards: money-back vouchers, targeted coupons, and “mix & match” promos.

•Dunnes VALUEclub: money-off vouchers (e.g., €10 off €50) and app-only offers that change weekly.

•Lidl Plus: app vouchers, scratch-cards, and rotating discounted “Plus” prices.

•Aldi: no points scheme; relies on everyday low pricing and weekly specials

In summary loyalty card prices usually deliver a real discount at that supermarket, but not always the best deal overall. Check unit prices and shop around on the items that matter to you

## When loyalty prices are a real saving

•The unit price beats the non-member price and generic alternatives.

•You’d buy it anyway (not just to trigger a voucher threshold).

•The deal lines up with your brand/pack size, not a larger pack that looks cheaper but won’t be used.

## When to be cautious

•Anchor price tricks: the “non-member” or “was” price may be higher than what the item typically sells for.

•Multi-buys vs singles: “2 for €X” can be worse than one item at a loyalty price—or vice versa.

•Personalised coupons: a high “% off” can still lose to another store’s everyday or own-brand price.

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# Getting Around D15 Without a Car: Trains, Buses and Two Wheels

Carlight living is not a hairshirt in D15—it's a set of habits.

**B**ecause our district stitches together rail stations, improving bus corridors, greenways and village main streets, you can cover most weekly trips with a little planning and the right kit. This feature is a practical playbook for doing just that.

## The network at a glance

•**Rail backbone:** Four stations—Castleknock, Coolmine, Clonsilla, Hansfield—put the city centre and beyond within predictable reach.

•**Bus capillaries:** Frequent routes link estates to Blanchardstown Centre, Connolly Hospital, TU Dublin Blanchardstown, village centres and the city.

•**Green/blue corridors:** The Royal Canal path runs east–west; the Tolka Valley corridor adds quieter north–south links; the Phoenix Park sits on our doorstep.

•**Everyday anchors:** Libraries, schools, GPs, parks and supermarkets are distributed across Castleknock, Blanchardstown, Mulhuddart, Ongar, Tyrrelstown and Clonsilla—shorttrip territory.

## Rail: predictable, fast, and underrated for short hops

**When to choose it:** If the train gets you within a 10–12 minute walk of where you're going, it usually beats the car in both time and stress, especially at peak hours.

### Tactics:

•Aim for clockface departures (same minutes past the hour) and build your routine around them.

•Cycle or scoot 8–12 minutes to a station; a small investment in a good lock multiplies your range.

•For crosscity trips, combine rail + bus or rail + short walk rather than waiting for a single throughbus.

•Check operator policies for bikes on trains and use quieter offpeak services when rolling on with a fullsize bike.

### Station micromaps (mental notes):

•**Castleknock:** Quick access to the park gate and canal; good for parkandride on two wheels.

•**Coolmine:** Bridge approaches can feel exposed in wind; factor a minute for the crossing.

•**Clonsilla:** Junction of lines; allow a buffer for platform changes.

•**Hansfield:** Newer estates feed in via gridded streets; great candidate for a family cycle to the train.

## Buses: frequency + reliability beat perfection

Think of buses as capillaries, moving people between estates and anchors like Blanchardstown Centre, hospitals and campuses, and into the city.

### Tactics:

•Walk to the frequent corridor rather than waiting on a quieter local stop—5 minutes on foot can save 15 on the clock.

•For reliability, travel off the sharpest peaks when possible.

•Interchange with intent: Don't be afraid to change once at a known hub if that makes the trip predictable.

•Keep a spare Leap card at home for visitors; topup before you need it.

Comfort hacks: Sit near exits if you're hopping off soon; in winter, have a compact umbrella or hood handy so you're not rummaging when the doors open.

## Walking: the last 500 metres decides the mood

Most days, the difference between a good and a bad trip is the last stretch. Pick routes with:

•Continuous footpaths and fewer driveway crossings.

•Desire lines (the paths people actually use) that are lit and visible.

•Tree cover or building edges that give shelter on wet or bright days.

Make one "default" walking route to each regular destination, then a plan B for heavy rain or afterdark trips.

## Two wheels: bikes for range, scooters for convenience

### Bicycles

**Everyday setup:** A practical bike + mudguards + lights + bell + a basic lock will carry you through most trips. Add a rear rack and small pannier or crate and you've unlocked food shops, the library, and a couple of bulky errands a week.

**Family bikes:** For school runs within 2–3 km, a child seat, trailer, or longtail/cargo bike turns the morning into a chat rather than a car queue. Eassist removes hills and headwinds from the excuses list.

### Routes to know:

•**Royal Canal Greenway:** Calm east–west spine; expect mixed use. Ring, slow, pass wide.

•**Tolka Valley links:** Leafier, meandering—lovely but slower; mind the surface in winter.

•**Station feeders:** Stitch short estate streets together to reach Castleknock, Coolmine, Clonsilla or Hansfield in 10 minutes.

### Parking & security:

•Park in busy, welllit spots. Two-lock strategy for valuable bikes: a D-lock on the frame + a cable/second lock on the wheels.

•At home, store bikes indoors or in a secure shed; mark frames and note serial numbers.

•Lobby for parking right at front doors of shops and public buildings—if you can see your bike, you're more likely to ride.

### Escooters

Escooters shine on short, flat urban trips and train or bus feeders. Keep to the carriageway or cycle lanes, not footpaths; ride defensively and light up at night. A bell, steady 20 km/h or less, and eye contact at junctions go a long way. Helmets are strongly recommended.

## Doortodoor playbook (sample trips)

•**Castleknock → City centre (work):** Cycle 7–10 minutes to Castleknock Station, train to the city, walk the last 8–12 minutes. Consistent in all weather.

•**Tyrrelstown → TU Dublin Blanchardstown (study):** Bus to campus; return via a short canal walk to decompress after exams.

•**Ongar → Phoenix Park (leisure):** Bike via Hansfield/Clonsilla to



the Royal Canal, then Castleknock gate. Lock up near the gate and wander.

•**Hartstown/Huntstown** → **Connolly Hospital (shift)**: Cycle to Clonsilla or Coolmine for train/bus combo; pack a lightweight lock and lights for early or late shifts.

•**Blanchardstown Centre** → **City (gig)**: Bus to rail interchange or a direct frequent bus corridor; coming home late, reverse the logic and budget a few extra minutes for a safer, betterlit walk.

#### Rain, wind and winter: routine trumps weather

•Keep a packable rain shell and a small seatpack or pannier with gloves, a spare light, and a reflective band.

•Choose a “dry route” with more overhangs/trees for heavy showers and a “bright route” for dark evenings with better passive surveillance.

•Clean and relube your chain once a fortnight in winter; it makes the bike quieter and safer.

**Accessibility**: trips should work for prams, sticks and wheels

•Prefer continuous, even surfaces and crossings with short wait times.

•Where station access involves steps or long ramps, factor an extra few minutes or choose the nearest level route even if it's slightly longer.

•Share obstacles with councillors or the transport authority; photos and exact locations get quicker fixes.

#### Kids and teens: building independence safely

•Start with a walk/ride audit to school—note the three trickiest points and practise them on a quiet day.

•Consider a bike bus (group ride) one morning a week; consistency builds confidence.

•Agree a curfew and route for evening trips and a quick “home safe” message routine.

#### Errands without a car: make it effortless

•**Groceries**: One medium pannier or crate handles a topup shop; a foldup tote in your pannier covers surprises.

•**Bulky items**: Use a trailer, borrow a cargo bike from a neighbour group, or choose delivery for the heavy lift and do the rest by bike on a quiet evening.

•**Health & admin**: Pair a GP or pharmacy visit with a short park loop; you'll get the steps in and avoid peak queues.

Safety and courtesy

•**Be seen**: working lights front and rear, plus reflective ankle bands.

•**Be predictable**: signal early, take the primary position when needed, make eye contact at side roads.

•**Share space kindly**: slow for pedestrians on shared paths; ring early and pass wide.

#### A realistic wishlist for D15 (small wins, big impact)

•Last100metre fixes to each station and village centre: continuous footpaths, dropped kerbs, raised crossings.

•Bike parking at shopfronts and near building entrances—visible, welllit, covered where possible.

•Lighting on key desire lines linking estates to schools and buses.

•Calmer junctions with tighter corner radii and zebra crossings on side roads.

•Greenway maintenance: regular sweeping and patching after storms; wayfinding at exits.

•Secure residential storage: microgrants or guidance for apartment blocks/estates to add decent bike rooms.

The invitation

Try one experiment this month: pick a trip you normally drive and do it by rail + walk, bus + bike, or scooter + train. Time it, note how it felt, and tweak. Carlight living in D15 doesn't require heroics—just a handful of smart defaults that, once set, quietly make every week easier.



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☎ 087 398 4778 ✉ [siobhan.shovlin@cllr.fingal.ie](mailto:siobhan.shovlin@cllr.fingal.ie)  
📱 Siobhan Shovlin 📧 @siobhanshovlin

## GARDA CLINICS

The Community Gardai have been holding clinics locally which is a good opportunity to raise any issues which you may have.

I will continue to post information about these on my social media pages.

If you would like to be kept updated about them do let me know.



## PROGRAMME OF WORKS

You may have seen works taking place in your area in the form of planting, road repairs, footpath repairs, pedestrian crossings, lighting and other improvement works. I will be submitting more requests over the weeks and months ahead based on feedback from you, the residents. These requests can then be considered for the 2026 Programme of Works. If there is something you would like considered which would enhance your area, please let me know.

## LANDS AT ST. CATHERINE'S PARK

A number of you have been asking about the above lands and what the plan is for these lands. The council has informed me that it is planned to extend the St. Catherine's Regional Park, Lucan to include newly acquired lands at Coldblow and Bleach Green.

## Dear Resident,

I hope you are keeping well. Welcome to my latest newsletter. I am now over one year into the new council term. I continue to make many representations to Fingal County Council on issues which matter to our community. If there is something you would like me to raise on your behalf or if you have an idea for the area, please let me know.

I am available to meet residents and community groups. If I can be of assistance in any way, please find my contact details below and get in touch.

Best Wishes,

Siobhan



## KELLYSTOWN CEMETERY

Many of you have been in touch with me asking about the current status of Kellystown Cemetery.

Works are underway on phase two of a new cemetery at Kellystown. Fingal County Council expects the facility to be operational in early 2026.

This phase will provide approximately 650 grave plots, structures for the storage of ashes including columbarium walls and memorial plots, a small services building and site infrastructure and landscaping.

If you would like to know more about the cemetery or have any questions, please let me know.







## EXTENDED OPENING HOURS AT COOLMINE RECYCLING CENTRE

From June of this year Coolmine Recycling Centre have extended their opening hours to the following:

**MONDAY**  
8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY**  
8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY**  
8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY**  
8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY**  
8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY**  
8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY**  
**Closed**



## AGE ACTION'S GETTING STARTED PROGRAMME

Age Action's Getting Started Programme offers free one-to-one volunteer-led training in digital literacy courses which support older people to get online or use their smart device with confidence.

There are places available in **Blanchardstown Library** on **Fridays** from **11:00-13:00**

If you would like to sign up for the course call the **Getting Started Team** on 0818 911109 or email [gettingstarted@ageaction.ie](mailto:gettingstarted@ageaction.ie)



## PORTERSTOWN PARK ENTRANCE/EXIT

I raised the entrance to Porterstown Park at our local council meeting again as I know many of you have raised this with me. I am really glad that something will be done to improve the entrance/exit.

I have been informed that:

*"The vehicle entrance has been listed to be redeveloped along with the overflow car park. The new entrance will be widened to allow for a comfortable flow of 2-way traffic."*

## LAUREL LODGE PLAYGROUND

I raised the Laurel Lodge Playground again at our July Council meeting and have been told that a contractor has been appointed and works should commence soon.



Big thank you to everyone who supported the Coffee Morning in June for Avista St. Louise's to help purchase a bus. We raised €1,539.57! Pictured with Simona from Castleknock Tennis Club and Larry from the Fundraising Team.



Always nice to get out with Clonsilla Tidy Towns



Work is ongoing in preparing the planning application for the Royal Canal Greenway



## WELL DONE TO THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS FOR THE ANTI-LITTER AND ANTI-GRAFFITI FUNDING

Congratulations to all the successful recipients in Fingal County Council's Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Funding.

Thank you for all you do in our community.

- **BLAKESTOWN DRIVE COMMUNITY GROUP**
- **BLANCHARDSTOWN VILLAGE TIDY TOWNS**
- **CLONSILLA TIDY TOWNS**
- **RIVERWOOD BIODIVERSITY GROUP**
- **WHITESTOWN ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document at time of print.



**Cllr. Siobhan**  
**SHOVLIN** PEACE  
COMMISSIONER



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Siobhan Shovlin | @siobhanshovlin

Working locally with:



Emer  
CURRIE TD



Regina  
DOHERTY MEP



Cllr. Ted  
LEDDY

# DART+

## West is finally moving

What it means for Castleknock, Coolmine & Clonsilla



**A**fter years of process and protest, the upgrade that will turn the Maynooth/M3 Parkway line into full DART territory has cleared its biggest hurdles. An Coimisiún Pleanála approved the DART+ West Railway Order on 18 July 2024; legal challenges were withdrawn on 23 June 2025, unlocking the next phase. For Dublin 15, that means more frequent electric trains—and major changes at our level crossings.

### The promise: more trains, quieter trains

DART+ West will electrify the line from the city to Maynooth and to M3 Parkway, doubling peak capacity from 6 to up to 12 trains per hour per direction (subject to demand). In plain terms, that's a train roughly every five minutes at Castleknock, Coolmine and Clonsilla once the full upgrade is bedded in. Irish Rail's figures also point to an hourly capacity jump from about 5,000 to 13,200 passengers each way.

City-side, a new Spencer Dock station forms part of the approved scheme, improving interchange with the Luas Red Line and increasing options for west Dublin commuters heading to the Docklands.

### The trade-offs: gates down for good

To run DART reliably at that frequency, the old gates have to go. The approved plan closes multiple level crossings on the Maynooth line and provides a mix of diversions and new walking/cycling links. For D15 specifically:

- Coolmine: road crossing to be permanently closed; cars will divert via Castleknock Road and Diswellstown Road. A new pedestrian & cycle footbridge will link across the tracks beside the station.

- Ashtown: the level crossing closes and is replaced by an underpass running under both the rail line and Royal Canal—removing a notorious pinch point.

- Porterstown & Clonsilla: vehicular closures with diversions to Diswellstown Road and a new Barberstown road bridge; each gets a pedestrian/cycle bridge at the station. Barberstown gains the new vehicular bridge over canal and railway. Blakestown closes with no replacement (low usage).

If you remember the early, much-criticised proposal for a major road bridge through Riverwood at Coolmine, that's gone—the option was dropped after consultation; the approved approach is closure plus a lighter footbridge.

### The wrinkle: where will the new DART fleet sleep?

There's one big condition attached to the green light. The board refused permission for a new maintenance & stabling depot on the lands west of Maynooth (near Kilcock) due to flood risk. Irish Rail says the depot is now a separate project ("DART+ Depot") and that an alternative proposal will be brought forward.

In May, the Department confirmed the West order was granted "subject to certain conditions, notably that the proposed depot west of Maynooth not be constructed due to concerns about flood risk."

### Timeline: what happens when?

With the court cases withdrawn, Irish Rail has moved into procurement. Current public statements point to enabling works from 2026, with main construction contracts targeted by late 2026, subject to funding approvals. Reporting this summer suggested services could start around 2031. In the meantime, expect intermittent weekend/night works as designs are finalised and utilities are diverted.

### Day-to-day in D15: the lived experience

- Fewer tailbacks at the gates: Closing Coolmine and Ashtown crossings should end the long morning queues—and the risky last-minute dashes—caused by barriers down for most of the 8–9am hour. (At current frequencies those gates are down for roughly 40 minutes in that peak.)

- Better on foot and bike: New footbridges at Coolmine, Porterstown and Clonsilla aim to make short, direct trips across the line safer key for school runs and station access. [dartplus.ie](http://dartplus.ie)

- Construction disruption: Temporary weekend closures—like the March overnight closure at Coolmine for surfacing—give a flavour of what's ahead. Expect traffic management, localised noise and some timetable changes as works roll out. Fingal Consult

### Why it's worth it

For workers, students and families across Castleknock–Coolmine–Clonsilla, a five-minute-frequency electric train is transformative: faster city trips, fewer missed connections, and a credible alternative to the N3/M50 grind. Pair that with the already-approved DART+ South West and future MetroLink interchanges at Glasnevin/Cabra, and west Dublin's rail network becomes a mesh, not a set of spokes—more ways to get where you're going without a car.

### At a glance

- Planning: DART+ West Railway Order approved 18 Jul 2024. Judicial reviews withdrawn 23 Jun 2025.
- Frequency & capacity: up to 12 trains/hour/direction; capacity to ~13,200/hour each way.
- Level crossings: Coolmine, Ashtown, Porterstown, Clonsilla, Barberstown, Blakestown—closures with a mix of diversions, new bridges and an underpass at Ashtown.
- Depot: Maynooth–Kilcock depot refused; standalone DART+ Depot project in development.
- Next steps: procurement underway; enabling works expected 2026; main works targeted late 2026 (funding dependent).





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A lovely company to deal with couldn't...

A lovely company to deal with couldn't fault anything, they arrived early on the day of installation and got straight to work, explained everything they were going to do. Very polite and friendly. The company ran through everything from the BER cert to the install, filled out all the forms for me to claim my grant back and to set me up to export back to the grid. They were very helpful and knowledgeable. Could not recommend them enough.

Date of experience: July 03, 2024

Jul 4, 2024

★★★★★

I would be very happy to recommend AK...Solar Panel Ins

I would be very happy to recommend AK Solar. The whole process from the initial proposal to the installation. I was very impressed with the kit which took less than six hours. Everyone involved really enjoyed the process. Everything was explained very well by Alan and Frankie. Organisation by Clare and Rose was excellent with the BER and the SEAI grant application made. I literally had to do nothing.

Date of experience: April 22, 2024



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# D15 Now - Housing, Growth, and the Shape of Our Neighbourhoods

Dublin 15 is often described as a “patchwork”



**C**astleknock's mature avenues, Blanchardstown's big anchors, Mulhuddart's village heart, the newer grids of Ongar and Tyrrelstown, and the raitethered growth around Hansfield and Clonsilla. What the patchwork really shows is momentum. People keep choosing D15 because it blends space, greenery and connections with a sense of possibility. The task now is to shape that momentum so that growth feels like care, not strain.

## Why D15 is growing—and what that means

Growth here isn't an accident. The district sits between major employment and learning hubs—Connolly Hospital, TU Dublin Blanchardstown, Blanchardstown Centre, logistics corridors off the N3, and the national sports facilities at Abbotstown—while four rail stations (Castleknock, Coolmine, Clonsilla and Hansfield) and a web of bus corridors stitch it to the wider city. Add the Phoenix Park and Royal Canal on the doorstep and you have the classic ingredients for a district that keeps attracting families, students and new Irish communities.

With that appeal comes pressure: on school places, GP lists, pitches and pool time, footpaths, and the “little things” that are actually big—safer junctions, shady trees, benches, lighting. Managing growth is less about how many homes and more about how those homes meet daily life.

## Where the homes are going—and why that's smart

The new pattern is compact growth: infill near stations and village centres; townhouse and duplex streets in walkable grids; apartments overactive ground floors along main streets. Compact doesn't mean cramped. It means a child can walk to primary school; it means older neighbours can get to the GP without crossing a hostile road; it means a weekly shop without a car is plausible. When homes go where services already exist—or can be added efficiently—everyone wins.

Good compact growth also keeps pressure off the green wedges and waterways that make D15 special. The more we can welcome new neighbours near transport and town centres, the less we need to sprawl into fields that should remain habitat, foodgrowing land, or floodplains doing quiet climate work.

## The street is the living room

We experience growth on the street first: passing a new doorway, locking a bike, waiting at a crossing. That's why design at eyelevel is everything. The checklist below is our district's north star:

- Active ground floors on main streets: cafés, crèches, repair shops and studios—places with lights on and reasons to pause.
- Finegrained entrances: front doors facing the pavement, not blank walls or parking lots.
- Treelined paths with generous canopy and planting that soaks up rain.
- Benches and edges where older neighbours can sit and teens can perch without being moved along.

- Crossings that favour people: tight corners, raised tables, short waits, and visible lines of sight.

- Bike parking that's as normal as car parking—close, welllit, and honestouse.

If new schemes don't dignify the pavement, they miss the point.

Social infrastructure: the heartbeat of growth

**Homes are necessary; social infrastructure makes a neighbourhood sing. For D15 that means:**

- Schools: predictable delivery of classrooms when houses arrive—not years later. Temporary accommodation should be the exception.

- Primary care: GP and community health capacity that expands with population; spaces for allied health and mentalhealth supports.

- Childcare: groundfloor crèches in new schemes and support for existing providers to expand.

- Youth space: rooms with doors that close—music practice, maker space, homework clubs—so young people aren't confined to car parks or bedrooms.

- Sport: allweather pitches, extended lighting hours, and fair allocations that recognise both club strength and social need.

- Libraries and arts: not “nicetohaves” but daily anchors—quiet study, story time, exhibitions, and the social glue of events.

When these pieces arrive together, growth feels like inclusion rather than competition for scarce slots.

## Moving around: the 15minute promise

D15 can be a model for the “15minute” idea—most regular needs within a comfortable walk, wheel or short ride—because the bones already exist.

- Rail is the backbone for longer trips; a 10minute cycle to a station massively expands life options without citycentre driving.

- Buses provide the capillaries, linking estates to village centres, hospitals and campuses; reliability matters as much as raw frequency.

- Walking and wheeling must feel natural for short hops. That means lighting, continuous footpaths, and junctions that are kind to the inattentive nineyearold and the tired twelvehourshift nurse.

- Cycling thrives where streets calm traffic and where the Royal Canal and Tolka corridors are treated as real commuter routes, not only leisure trails.

The promise isn't carfree purity; it's choice. Every household that can drop one routine car trip frees road space and parking for the times a car is the right tool.

## Climate sense: water, shade and energy

Growth has to make us safer and cooler—literally. That means SuDS (raingardens, swales, permeable surfaces) as standard, not as garnish; trees that cast real shade on school routes and play areas; and homes that drink less energy through insulation and good orientation. Retrofitting older estates is as important as designing new ones well. Pocket parks that flood occasionally are not failures—they are quiet climate infrastructure doing the job of holding water that should never



be in a living room.

#### Heritage and identity in a changing place

D15's identity isn't a museum piece. Village greens, canal locks, farm lanes and modern campuses are all part of the story. New buildings should nod to that texture—materials that age well, varied rooflines, brick used with care, and public art that grows from local stories rather than being dropped in from a catalogue. Wayfinding that names bridges, streams and lanes helps newcomers place themselves in the landscape.

#### Affordability and lifestyle fit

A healthy housing mix lets people stay rooted through life—students, new families, sharers, singleperson households, key workers and older neighbours. That means studio and onebed homes near transport, two and threebed homes with front doors onto streets, and downsizerfriendly apartments with lifts near services. Groundfloor homes should balance privacy and sociability with small porches, planter edges and good lighting.

#### How communities shape better outcomes

Great neighbourhoods come from conversations early and often. The most helpful local submissions on planning files don't only oppose or cheer; they add sitespecific wisdom:

- Where puddles form after every squall.
- Which shortcut path is scary after dark and why.
- Where bike parking actually belongs (hint: close to entrances you can see from inside).
- Which shopfronts pull people along a street, and which kill the vibe.

Constructive feedback lands best when residents arrive with a wish list and a tradeoffs list: what must be kept, what could flex, and what would turn "good enough" into "great".

#### A practical checklist for "good growth" in D15

##### For new schemes:

- Within a short walk of a bus corridor or rail station; show doortodoor times for common trips.

- Clear phasing for schools, childcare and GP capacity—not vague promises.

- Streets that slow traffic by design (tight corners, raised crossings) rather than by signage alone.

- Mixed sizes and tenures so neighbours aren't sorted by income or life stage.

- Real bicycle and buggy storage at ground level—and visitor stands at the front door.

- Bin, plant and meter areas that are tidy and screened, no dead frontage.

- Energy and water strategies that are visible in the landscape (solar, raingardens, canopy).

##### For existing places:

- Fix the "last 100 metres" to stations and village centres—continuous paths, safe junctions, intuitive crossings.

- Convert oversized junction corners into pocket parks or raingardens.

- Add benches every few hundred metres on long streets; shade is as important as seats.

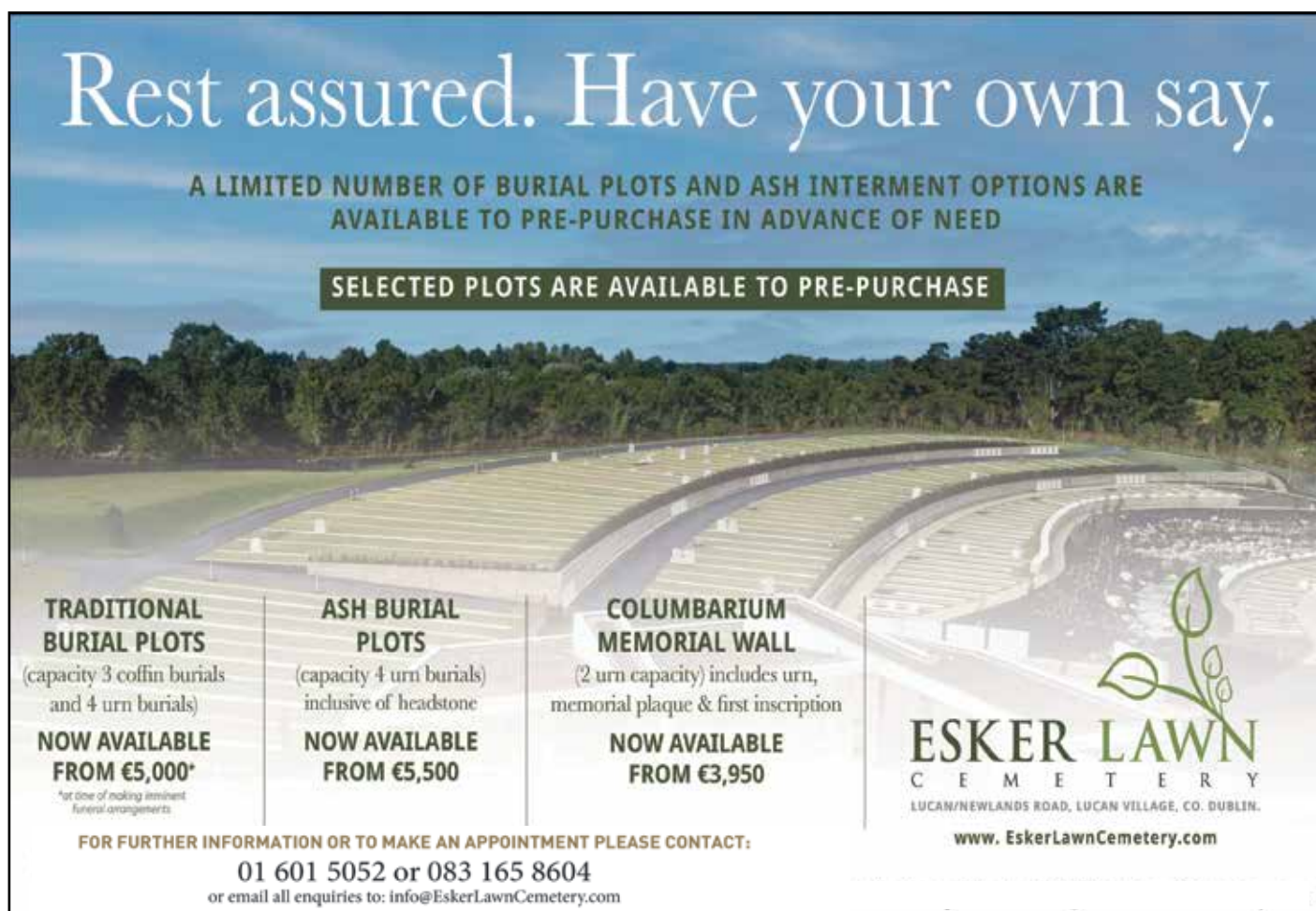
- Light the desire lines people already use.

- Support local businesses to improve frontages and outdoor seating where pavements allow.

##### The invitation

D15 is changing because Ireland is changing—more diverse, younger in parts, older in others, and keen to live well without spending the weekend in traffic. If we set a clear standard for how and where we grow, the district can hold onto what people love—green edges, neighbourly streets, a practical spirit—while welcoming new energy and ideas.

The way to start is simple: walk your nearest main street with fresh eyes, note what already works, and imagine the small, possible upgrades. Then share that list—with your residents' group, with councillors, with the next planning file that lands. Growth is coming either way; the shape it takes is up to us.



# Rest assured. Have your own say.

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Councillor  
**Ellen  
TROY**

Castleknock - Fingal Co.Co.

#aontu

089 267 7330 | [ellen.troy@cllr.fingal.ie](mailto:ellen.troy@cllr.fingal.ie)

**S**ummer may be a time for rest and relaxation, but it was business as usual for Aontú Cllr Ellen Troy as she continued to work and deliver for the people of D15.

As a vocal advocate for people languishing on the ever-lengthening housing waiting lists, she is continuing to press Fingal Co Co on the many boarded up houses that remain idle in the midst of the worst housing crisis in the history of this state. Fingal County Council is receiving over 2,000 new applications annually. The average FCC waiting-list time is 8 years.

She has consistently challenged Fingal County Council regarding the slow turnaround of vacant council properties, highlighting instances in Blanchardstown, Dublin 15 where council houses have remained empty for over a year, despite renovation works, citing concerns about inefficiency and a lack of common sense in public housing management.

Drug dealing and use amongst children as young as 11 in D 15 was another issue she brought to the public realm, highlighting the findings of research from the Blanchardstown Local Drugs and Alcohol Task Force. The report showed that the use of drugs has escalated across the entire area and crossing all socio-economic divides.

The ongoing shortage of school places—post-primary, primary, and special education—in Dublin 15 remains a major issue. Problems such as lack of data sharing and differing admissions policies create complications, especially in high-demand areas. A Common Applications Process (CAP), piloted in Limerick, Ennis, and for Special Education in Dublin 15, could help. Ellen is urging that local post-primary schools be included in the next CAP pilot for 2025/26 to simplify applications. While the special education pilot is a positive step, more challenges remain.

M50 tolls are placing a heavy burden on commuters, with some paying up to €1,200 annually and overall toll revenue reaching €211 million in 2024—totalling nearly €2.2 billion since eFlow's introduction. Many motorists are diverting to avoid tolls, causing congestion in Castleknock, Lucan, Phoenix Park, and on the N3. Aontú urges the government to scrap or reduce these tolls, arguing commuters have long since covered the cost of the infrastructure.

Addressing the issue of sexual harassment and assault in public places, Cllr Troy has written to Fingal Co Co urging it to promote the Ask for Angela initiative, a codeword for victims seeking help.

It has come to Ellen's attention that there are several mistakes in the Irish versions of

Road & Street signs in our locality. There were 4 signs in Castleknock for years, where the name "Castleknock" was inscribed as "Caisleán an Bhuile".

Ellen alerted the Council about these signs, and they have since been removed. However, there are many more signs in Dublin 15 with incorrect Irish versions, and she is continuing to pursue this matter. This carelessness in the use of our native language is not good enough.

Representing an area bordering the Phoenix Park, Ellen regularly praises the OPW for the park's cleanliness and maintenance. However, she highlights complaints from Castleknock's older residents about the removal of parking on Chesterfield Road, noting most park gates have nearby parking. She is currently discussing these concerns with the OPW.

**For assistance on local issues, contact Ellen: Tel 089 267**

**7330 Email [ellen.troy@cllr.fingal.ie](mailto:ellen.troy@cllr.fingal.ie)**

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- Applied Psychology with Criminology
- Criminology, Psychology with Law *NEW*

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- Special Needs and Classroom Assistant Primary and Post Primary

### Science

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- Pre-University Agricultural Science
- Pre-University Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Science
- Pre-University Forensic Science
- Pre-University Environmental and Geographical Science
- Pre-University Science with Sports
- Pre-University Food Science and Nutrition
- Pre-University Physiotherapy Science
- Pre-University Animal Science
- Advanced Animal Science
- Animal Care Assistant

### Law & Politics

- Pre-University Law
- Pre-University Law with Politics
- Pre-University Business Law
- Pre-University Politics, Economics and Social Science

### Arts

- Pre-University Arts
- Pre-University Liberal Arts
- Theatre Studies and Performance

### Animal & Equine

- Equine Studies
- Advanced Equine Studies
- Advanced Animal Science
- Animal Care Assistant

### Engineering & Construction

- Pre-University Engineering *NEW*
- Pre-University Construction/Furniture Studies *NEW*

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## Dunboyne College courses offer the smart route forward

01 Sept 2025: As students across the country weigh up their options after secondary school, many are feeling the pressure of making the “right” choice when it comes to their next step.

**W**ith so many pathways available — university, apprenticeships, employment — deciding on a course can be overwhelming. But for an increasing number, a place in Dunboyne College of Further Education and Training (FET) is proving to be the ideal starting point.



Catherine Fox

Catherine Fox, Principal of Dunboyne College of Further Education and Training (DCFET), is encouraging students and parents to look seriously at the benefits of a Further Education and Training course. “We know how difficult it can be for students to choose their next step, especially with so many options and financial considerations,” said Ms Fox. “An accredited QQI course in Dunboyne offers the perfect balance – it gives students time to develop their academic and personal skills, explore their interests, and either progress to a Level 8 degree or move straight into the workforce. We still have limited places available on some courses and waiting lists on other courses, but we encourage anyone still considering their options to apply immediately.”

One of the main advantages of studying at a FE college is the focus on real-world skills and employability. Courses are designed in partnership with industry, offering students opportunities to gain hands-on work experience and learn from professionals working in their chosen field. Whether it’s business, healthcare, speech

and language therapy, journalism, or the creative arts, every course in Dunboyne College combines academic development with practical, workplace-relevant learning.

At a time when the job market demands more than just a qualification, Dunboyne College, is helping students graduate with both the knowledge and experience employers are looking for according to Ms Fox. She says the college is seeing a steady rise in applications from students who are seeking more flexible, affordable, and job-ready alternatives to university. “Those who have completed the Speech and Language Therapy Assistant or Occupational Therapy Assistant courses are finding employment in the health services. These courses also offer an ideal opportunity for those already working in the healthcare sector to upskill and add to existing qualifications.”

For students considering university in the future, courses in Dunboyne College provide a solid stepping stone. Many courses offer pathways to Level 7 and Level 8 degrees, giving students the chance to build the academic skills and confidence needed for higher education — in smaller class sizes with more personalised support than they might receive in large first year groups at university.

“Half the places on the new BSc in Nursing degree course in Maynooth University are reserved for Further Education and mature, including those who have completed a Pre-Nursing course. This is a major step forward in providing more access for FET students to Nursing degrees,” according to Ms Fox.

For further information on courses see [www.dunboynecollege.ie](http://www.dunboynecollege.ie) Applications for vacant places are still been accepted on a limited number of courses.





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