

ISSUE 43
NOV/DEC 2023

Little Village

FREE MAGAZINE

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**COUNCIL SEEKS RESIDENTS INPUT ON SPORTS AND
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Roderic O'Gorman TD

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability,
Integration and Youth



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Councillor **JK ONWUMEREH**

Your **Fianna Fáil** Councillor for Mulhuddart, Corduff, Waterville,
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(Blanchardstown - Mulhuddart LEA)

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Councillor

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the November edition of Little Village

We have local features and articles of general interest. Including how soon you should start Christmas and winter changes.

As always, we welcome contributions from individuals and organisations in the D15 area. Send them to littlevillagenewsdesk@gmail.com

Kind Regards
Little Village

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- Mountview Community Centre
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- Aldi Clonee
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- Centra Corduff
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- Castleknock Hotel
- Elmgreen Golf Club
- Hollystown Golf Club
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- Westwood Golf Club
- Phibblestown Community Centre
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- Credit Union Clonsilla Road
- The Greyhound Blanch Village
- The Grasshopper Clonee
- Clonsilla Inn
- The Carpenter Inn
- The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown



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LITTLE VILLAGE MAGAZINE

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

Company registration No. 534480

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Butlers Chocolate increases footprint in Blanchardstown Centre

Butlers Chocolate Cafe, the premier family-owned chocolate-makers, have opened a brand-new store and cafe at Blanchardstown Shopping Centre on the Red Mall. Disabilities Sunflower



The new store and café provides more seating space and an enhanced customer experience, located on Level One of the Centre, right next to Brown Thomas and Marks & Spencer.

Butlers Chocolates began life in Dublin's Lad Lane in 1932, founded by a pioneering woman called Marion Butler. The company is one of the few remaining family-owned chocolate producers in the market.

Blanchardstown Centre is Dublin's largest retail and leisure destination, spanning over 1.1 million sq. ft. The centre acts as a key community focal point and attracts high visitor numbers from Dublin and surrounding counties, with an annual footfall of over 16 million.

Today's announcement reflects the centre's ongoing appeal for top-quality brands. It follows several other recent signings – including ZARA, FLANNELS, Nike Unite and Bershka.

Sharon Walsh, Leasing Director at Falcon AM, asset managers for Blanchardstown Centre, commented:

"It's great news that Butlers have decided to expand their store with us at Blanchardstown Centre and we know that customers will be delighted with the new and improved café.

"Our food and beverage offer is central to visitor experience – and a key footfall driver – so we always work hard to keep it fresh and compelling. Butlers is loved by all and exactly the type of name we want here at the centre."



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RICS

Blanchardstown Centre is now a Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Member

Blanchardstown Centre is an official member of the globally recognised Hidden Disabilities Sunflower



The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower encourages inclusivity, acceptance and understanding.

It is a simple tool for you to share that you have a hidden disability voluntarily. Simply by wearing the Sunflower, you're just letting everyone know that you might need extra help, understanding, or just more time.

All Management, including Customer Care, Customer Service,

Housekeeping and Security teams at the Centre have all completed training provided by Hidden Disabilities to increase awareness of the barriers that customers and staff with hidden disabilities can face.

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyards are available at the Centre Customer Service Desk which will give customers an opportunity to discreetly indicate to staff that they may need assistance or support.

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RODERIC O'GORMAN TD

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Constituency clinic times: Fridays 10am-12 noon

Some updates on my recent presentations

Councillor JK ONWUMEREH

Your Fianna Fáil Councillor for Tyrrelstown, Hollywoodrath, Hollystown, Corduff, Waterville, Mulhuddart, Meakstown, Lanesborough, Liscappagh, Heathfield, Dunsoghlin Communities. (Blanchardstown – Mulhuddart LEA)



Dear Resident,

Here are a few updates on my recent representation. I intend to intensify effort to ensure that infrastructure, amenities, and services are delivered to residents. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Tyrrelstown Boulevard Road Renovation

Glad that my representation resulted in the rehabilitation of some damaged roundabouts along the Boulevard in Tyrrelstown. Thanks to the operation team of the Fingal County Council for the effecting the important repairs.



Mount Eustace and Cruise Park

Fingal County Council have taken the bond for both Mount Eustace and Cruise Park and have tendered for a contractor who will hopefully be starting work in November in both estates. Kerbing and footpath works are required to bring the estates up to standard. Once the works are complete, the council will be able to take both of estates in charge.

Bellingsmore, Baymeadows, Hollywoodrath & Brandon Square

It is hoped that with recent works done, Bay Meadows will be advertised shortly and will be taken in charge in January. Bellingsmore is quite close with a few works to be done. The developer of Hollywoodrath still has some works to do to bring the state up to full standard. Brandon Square is also in consideration.

I am happy to give further updates if residents require specific information.

TAKING IN CHARGE UPDATES

Heathfield Estate

For the purposes of taking in charge, the following enhancements have been made. I am delighted that roadworks upgrade, footpath repairs, manhole clean-up as well as the removal of the rotten and broken wooden fencing along the perimeter fencing of the estate now gives a welcome face-lift and further prepare the estate for taking-in-charge. More work are expected on the playground and the boarded area at the main entrance.



Addressing Blocked drainages & Litter concern in Meakstown and environ.

Following representations raised the operations team effected the clearance of drainages to remedy flooding risks in Lanesborough and Charlestown. These areas have remained cleared since.





The operations team also carried out clean-up in the Meakstown, Lanesborough, Melville, Charlestown and environ where there had been high cases of litter. These areas were thereafter included in the litter picking schedule. The areas are now kept monitored and litter picked as required. It is important to note however that the area outside McDonalds and the Jamestown Road is not under the remit of Fingal County Council. This area is in the administrative area of Dublin City Council. Clean-up equipment for the Meakstown Community Council.

Solar Compactor Bins in Meakstown

There are 8 solar compactor bins distributed in the Fingal County Council area of Meakstown and these include:

There are currently 8 solar bins assigned to the Meakstown area, with 7 in operation at present. The locations are: Ikea Bus Stop; Circle K Ballymun Road Bus Stop; Charlestown Shopping Centre Bus Stop; Spar Meakstown Centre; Melville Road Bus Stop at UPS; Ballymun Road Bus Stop; Melville Road/North Road Bus Stop; Melville Road South Bus Stop.



Cost of Living Lump sum payments announced in Budget 2024

Below are some of the Lump sum payments announced in Budget 2024:

On the week commencing November 20th

For some's purposes, Christmas enhancements

- €400 lump sum Working Family Payment will be paid to 46,000 families.

- €300 Fuel Allowance Lump Sum Payment will be paid to 409,000 families.

- €400 Disability Support Lump Sum Payment will be paid to people with disabilities.

On the week commencing November 27th

- €400 Carer's Support Grant will be provided to the country's carers (a person who qualifies for both the Disability and the Carers Support Grant will receive one bonus payment of €400).

- €200 lump sum payment to the 237,000 people in receipt of the Living Alone Allowance.

- €100 cost of living lump sum payment per child for people receiving an increase for a Qualified Child on their social welfare payment.

On the week commencing December 4th

- Christmas Bonus Double Payment will be paid to over 1.3 million people.

- On the 5th of December a Doubling of Child Benefit which will support 650,000 families in respect of 1.2 million children will be paid.

On the week commencing 29th January 2024

- A January Double Payment will be paid to over 1.3 million people.

Register to Vote

Do you know that you can now register to be on the Voter Register when you are 16 years old. When you turn 18 years you will be issued a voter card to participate in the next local or general election. To register:

- *Go to [Checktheregister.ie](https://checktheregister.ie),

- *Click on the dropdown,

- *Select Fingal County Council and

- *Click 'Next'.

- *Then type in your address and postcode

- *Then type in your names to search or make a fresh application.

Clinics:

Please feel free to contact me by phone (0899642783) or email (jk.onwumereh@cllr.fingal.ie) if you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss any matter of interest. Councillor JK Onwumereh works with Minister Jack Chambers TD and Councillors Howard Mahoney and Tom Kitt and Lorna Nolan.

Christmas greetings to Little Village Readers



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Council seeks residents input on sports and recreation facilities in Fingal

Fingal County Council is asking for people across the county to share their thoughts on sports and recreation facilities across Fingal.



Healthy minds and bodies create healthy communities, and the Council is preparing a sports and recreation facilities audit for the County.

This exercise will be vital for planning what facilities our communities will need into the future, and where they should go. Your input is vital for enhancing our community resources.

To have your say on the future of sport and recreation in your community go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/fingalsportsaudit>. The survey will take no more than 5 minutes to complete and will close on Monday, November 13.

If you complete the survey and provide your contact details, you could be in with a chance to win a One4All voucher worth €250.

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Councillor

John Walsh

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Dear Resident

I am circulating some brief updates on issues that I am currently working on. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

All the best,

John

SNUGBOROUGH INTERCHANGE UPDATE

I recently asked about the completion of the Snugborough Interchange and received the following update from the project team:

Question: Councillor J. Walsh

"To ask the Chief Executive to provide an update on the time-scale and programme for completion of the Snugborough interchange and to clarify when it will be opened?"

Reply:

The Snugborough Interchange is currently programmed to be completed above road level in early December. This will facilitate traffic across the new bridge including cars, bicycles and pedestrians. The work on completing the underpasses will be the last element of the works and will be completed during Q1 next year, as we have included additional elements in the scheme such as repairs to the access to Waterville Park and a new artwork in the underpass. Some traffic management will be required over the coming weeks and resurfacing of the N3 off ramp will be carried out overnight.

At a recent site meeting the project team also clarified that:

- The Tolka Valley park path is due to reopen in November.
- Blacktop road surfacing works are expected to be completed in early December.
- New traffic signals switch on early in 2024.
- Works at underpass pathway level are expected to be completed in first quarter of 2024

WORKS ON CLONSILLA ROAD

It is very positive that Fingal Council has undertaken repair work on the surface of the Clonsilla Road close to the junction with Main St, Blanchardstown Village. Following representations from residents and Blanchardstown Tidy Towns, I had submitted a request for this work to be undertaken as the road surface was badly damaged and dangerous.

ILLEGAL DUMPING

The scale of illegal dumping of litter and domestic rubbish is a scourge for communities across Dublin 15, which has intensified during and after Covid. Until recently it has been impossible to use CCTV to monitor and prosecute illegal dumping. My Labour Party colleague, Senator Mark Wall, brought forward private members' legislation in 2021 to give a legal basis for use of CCTV to prosecute cases involving illegal dumping and this proposal was included by the Government in the Circular Economy legislation. The Local Government Management Agency has been preparing a code of practice to allow this to come into effect since mid 2022 - this work is long overdue and should be completed and signed off by the Minister for the Environment as soon as possible.



PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN-CYCLE LINK CLOSE TO GRANARD BRIDGE

I recently asked the Planning department of Fingal Council to confirm the timeline and process for a pedestrian-cycle link across the rail line and Royal Canal adjacent to Granard Bridge. The bridge is currently unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility difficulties and a new pedestrian-cycle bridge is badly needed. This is all the more crucial as the current plans for extension of the DART to Maynooth proposes an increase of up to 40% in traffic along Castleknock Road.

The response from the Chief Executive gives a commitment that a new bridge will be put in place and a tender process is being initiated as part of an overall framework for new pedestrian and cycling projects in Dublin 15.

Reply from Chief Executive:

...The initial project on this framework to be progressed will be the Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge at Granard Bridge, Castleknock Road, Castleknock. This new Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge will cross over both the Royal Canal and the Dublin-Maynooth Railway Line. This will form part of the Castleknock to Blanchardstown Pedestrian and Cycling Route. The timeline for appointment of an Engineering Consultant for this project is envisaged for Q1 2024.

When is the right time to put up your Christmas tree and decorations?

Every year, the expectation of Christmas appears to begin somewhat prior yet there are a wide range of customs and convictions with regards to the best opportunity to begin enriching your home to visit the family.



Quite a long time ago...

During the Victorian period, Christmas trees were customarily set up a lot later in December, frequently on the evening of Christmas Eve.

Straight after Halloween

For some's purposes, Christmas enhancements go up when Halloween closes on 31st October, thus Christmas sweethearts embrace first November as the beginning of the bubbly season and start adorning their home as of now.

As per shopping experiences...

Information from one of the UK's greatest retailers uncovers that looking for Christmas keeps on start sooner than expected.

John Lewis' web-based Christmas shop sent off in August for enthusiastic clients, and the interest has taken off despite an uncommon pre-winter heatwave. Deals of Christmas adornments are up 25% contrasted with this time last year, the retailer uncovers.

Appearance

A significant date in the Christian schedule, Coming is the period before Christmas which praises the introduction of Jesus and is a time of readiness. The event can be set apart with an Approach flame and Coming wreath. Custom directs that Christmas trees ought to be set up toward the start of Approach, which starts on the fourth Sunday before

Christmas. This year, Approach starts on Sunday third December 2023.

1st December

The start of December is a famous decision, with numerous families improving their home to visit the family toward the beginning of the merriest month to stamp the authority commencement.

It relies upon in the event that you purchase a genuine tree...

In the event that you're purchasing a genuine Christmas tree, the English Christmas Tree Producers Affiliation generally prompt that trees ought not be bought sooner than first December. Why? The tree ought to make do for no less than about a month, however appropriately focusing on the tree (it ought to be dealt with like any plant being brought into a warm, dry environment) could assist it with enduring longer.

As per a few retailers, the second Saturday in December has generally seen a flood of customers purchasing genuine Christmas trees, an occasion formally called 'Bring Your Christmas Tree Home Day'. Research shows deals on the second Saturday of December had multiplied, significantly increased and some of the time even quadrupled contrasted with other shopping days.

12 days prior...

Others might decide to put their designs up 12 days before Christmas, and that implies you'll transform your home into a happy habitation from thirteenth December....You pick!

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Why do trees lose their leaves?

It's that time of year when we are endlessly picking up leaves in our gardens. Why does this happen?

In Autumn, loads of plants (particularly trees) discard their leaves. These are perfect for hopping in, however for what reason do plants do this? It appears to be a waste. However, by dropping their leaves they are saving their supplements for the following summer. For plants to develop, they need daylight, supplements, and water. The supplements and water come from the dirt. The daylight is caught by the leaves.

To catch the daylight, the leaves utilize a compound called chlorophyll, which makes leaves green. Chlorophyll transforms daylight into food, which the trees need to develop, through a cycle called photosynthesis. In summer, plants do loads of photosynthesis, since they get bunches of light and on the ground that it is warm.

The food they make is sugar, which they use to develop new leaves, blossoms, and seeds.

In winter, things are less agreeable. The days get more limited, it gets colder and there is less daylight. As far as you might be concerned, this isn't an issue - on the off chance that you are cold, you can put a coat on. Be that as it may, plants can't do this. Furthermore, when it gets truly cold, and freezes, their leaves can be harmed.

To see how freezing treats various leaves, there is an examination you can attempt at home. Take a few distinct leaves and put them in your cooler, or the refrigerator in your ice chest. Pass on them for a day to get truly cool, then take them out once more. Put them on a plate so you don't make a wreck, then, at that point, simply hang tight for them to heat up (this will take some time).



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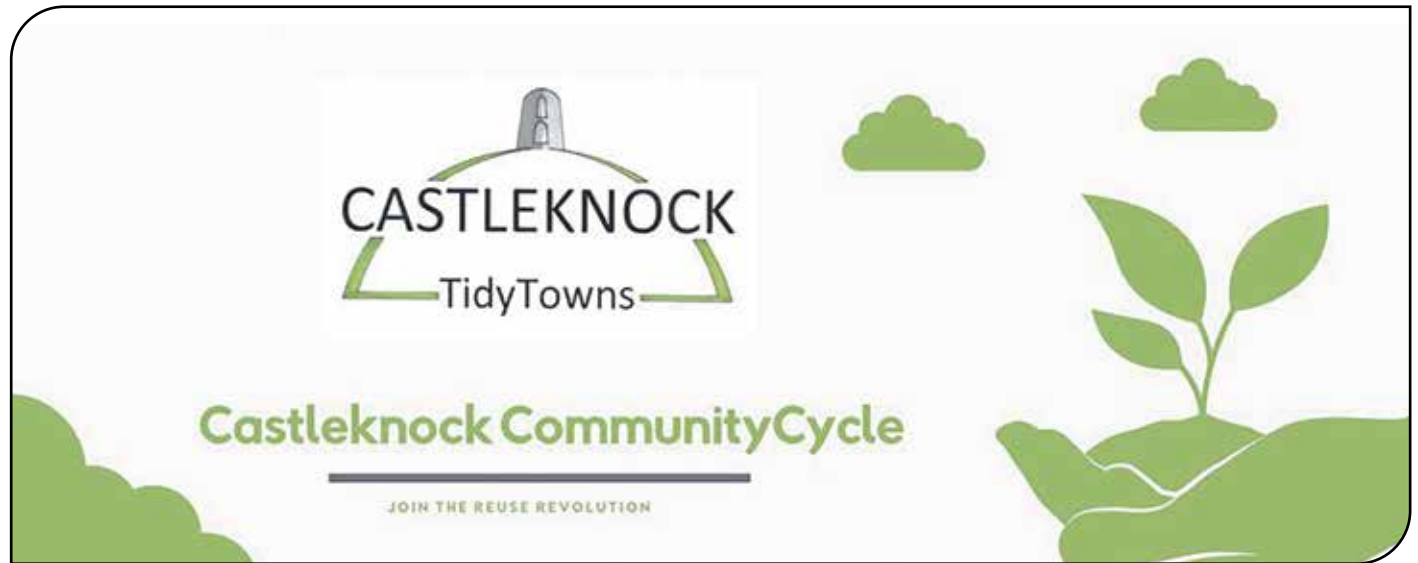
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CommunityCycle

Part of a global movement, now a year old



Castleknock CommunityCycle initiated by Castleknock Tidy Towns (CTT) is now a year old. Since October 2022 Castleknock CommunityCycle has almost 3,000 members, who give stuff away to others for free and/or avail of accepting free stuff themselves.

CommunityCycle now exists right across many Dublin areas and across Ireland. People have given the most amazing things on the Castleknock site alone, everything from pianos, garden furniture, household furniture, books, children's toys, and Halloween costumes. The spirit of giving and receiving is fully alive and generating a great community feel. Members of CommunityCycle are contributing to the global goal to Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle and Reduce landfill. Residents are doing their bit and helping Castleknock to become more sustainable.

As we do more with less, we are supporting Ireland and the planet to become more sustainable, while reducing the depletion of the world's limited resources. If you can make one small change, it does make a difference.

If you have stuff (perhaps toys, books, furniture, china, costume jewellery etc.) which you no longer need which is taking up space, consider giving these items away to someone who will give them a second life. Or if you would like to browse what is being offered freely at no cost, then Castleknock CommunityCycle is for you.

If you live in Castleknock or the surrounding areas and would like to support a sustainable community and reuse, repurpose, recycle, and reduce buying new, then join the Refuse Revolution... it costs nothing to join, costs nothing to give and costs nothing to receive.

Become a member on Facebook. Page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2054478061415706>

Feel good giving and receiving while reusing items and reducing landfill.


Happy CommunityCycling!

The image is an advertisement for Community Credit Union. It features a blue background with the Community Credit Union logo at the top. Below the logo, it says 'Bank with your Credit Union...'. To the right of this text is a QR code. Below the QR code, it says 'Current Account, provided by Community Credit Union, gives you a real choice for your day-to-day financial needs.' At the bottom, there is an image of a Community Credit Union debit card. The card is white with a colorful abstract design and features the text 'current account', 'debit', '5412 7500 0000 0000', '02/23', 'SINEAD KAVANAGH', and 'COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION'. At the bottom right of the advertisement, there are logos for 'current account' and 'Guaranteed Irish All together better'.



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Reopen Farmleigh Bridge meeting attracts over a hundred

Thank you to all the residents and public representatives who came to my meeting about opening Farmleigh (aka Guinness / Silver) Bridge and moving towards a Liffey Valley Park. A Liffey Valley Park could be created by identifying a walking and cycling route, not just across Farmleigh Bridge, but from St Catherine's Park in Lucan all the way to Memorial Gardens in Islandbridge.

Speaking at the meeting were myself, Dr Paul Corcoran of the Rebuild Silver Bridge Campaign and Mr Joe Byrne of the Liffey Valley Park Alliance.

I sincerely hope people will support this campaign for



what could be a new world-class green amenity, opening up and protecting the Liffey Valley for generations to come. A petition remains open on change.org to 'Reopen Farmleigh Bridge'.

A Bus Service for the Phoenix Park



The new '99' Phoenix Park Bus has been launched. The service is great for people coming from the direction of Dublin City as it will start at Parkgate Street near Heuston Station and stop twice along Chesterfield Avenue including the Zoo before heading on to the Visitor Centre and back. However, it's not so great for the people of Dublin West who also want a local connection to the Park. Hopefully this is the beginning of better transport links that can be expanded on. I will continue to work for better connections between Dublin West.



Well done to everyone who organised a fantastic fundraising event for Danu Community Special School in the Clonsilla Inn. With Cllr Siobhan Shovlin.

Planters outside Lidl - Clonsilla

Following planning enforcement issues since Lidl was opened in relation to landscaping, a resolution has been reached between Lidl Ireland and Fingal County Council. The original planning requirements could not be implemented due to piping and service cables underneath the footpath. Six planters with mature evergreen trees, along with perch seating have been installed to help screen and soften the front façade. Let me know what you think.



With Fine Gael Cllrs Tim Durkan (Maynooth), Ted Leddy (Castleknock), Joe Neville (Leixlip) who also made presentations

Dart West Upgrade - An Bord Pleanála Oral Hearing

Fine Gael had a strong presence at the Oral Hearing for the electrification and upgrade of the Maynooth line. This is a hugely important and needed project for Dublin West and we need to ensure it's developed in the best way for the area. The concerns I raised included:

- Whether safety issues could be addressed to prevent the closure of the level crossings at Ashtown, Coolmine and Clonsilla and what will result in the splitting up of communities.
- I asked if West Dublin is being treated differently from South Dublin - will places like Lansdowne and Sydney Parade face the same mandatory level crossing closures?
- The poor communication that has occurred with Irish Rail and local estates, organisations, and businesses.
- Specific design and accessibility issues with the proposed footbridges. Irish Rail has presented new designs directly to the Inspector.

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Cllr Siobhan
Shovlin

Another successful year for Fingal as the Tidy Towns results announced for 2023

It has been another successful year for Fingal as the Tidy Towns results were announced for 2023.



This year marks the 65th anniversary of the competition and, with nearly 900 community groups involved, it attracted one of its highest level of entries to date.

All the dedicated committees across Fingal were rewarded for their efforts by gaining more points than in 2022, with Skerries being awarded County Second and a Gold Medal, while Malahide were awarded County Third and a Gold Medal. Swords were also awarded a Silver Medal. Abbyelex in Co. Laois were awarded Ireland’s Tidiest Town 2023.

Balbriggan were awarded numerous special awards under categories including Climate Action, Young Persons in Tidy Towns and Local Authority Pollinator. Baldoyle were also awarded under the Climate Action category, while Rush won a special award under Sustainable Development Goals. Skerries were highly commended under the Local Authority Pollinator category as well as the EPA Circular Economy category, where Swords were awarded the National Winner.

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Adrian Henchy said: “This year saw an exceptional level of competition across all categories, with nearly 900 entries. I would like to congratulate every winner in each category. It’s important we recognise the indispensable efforts of Tidy Towns volunteers in Fingal and throughout Ireland. Their year-long commitment ensures our communities remain lively and sustainable for living, working, and visiting. They stand as a shining example and represent the very best in our localities.”

Mary T Daly, Director of Operations in Fingal County Council commented: “The Tidy Towns Awards provide us with an opportunity to celebrate the remarkable efforts of Tidy Towns groups in Fingal and across the nation. I would like to congratulate each and every group in Fingal for surpassing their points in 2022, particularly the Skerries and Malahide groups for winning the County Second and Third awards, respectively.”

The points scored from local dedicated committees are shown below.

Area	2022 points	2023 points
Clonsilla		200
Blanchardstown	253	265
Castleknock	265	282

Area D15 Airport Taxis

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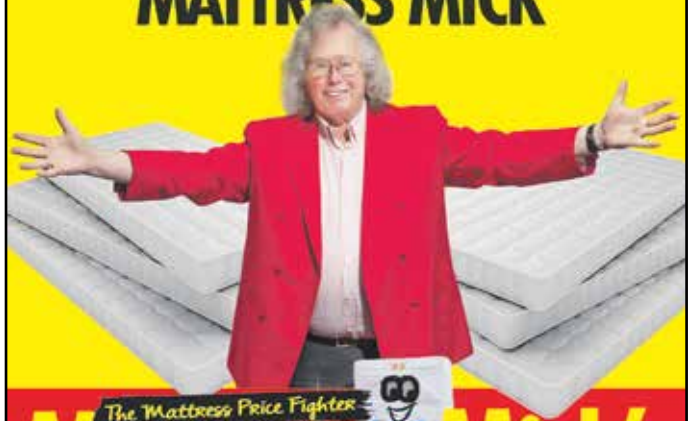
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STAY SAFE THIS WINTER

Shining a light on pedestrian visibility



The clocks have gone back an hour. Pedestrians to be more visible to others while using the road. This time of year, we experience dark mornings and longer dark evenings, which bring additional hazards to road users.

A simple garment such as a high visibility vest or an armband could be a lifesaver when it comes to making yourself visible on the roads. The main purpose of a high-viz vest is to make the wearer stand out from the background so they can be seen more easily, particularly by drivers or other road users. Hi-Viz vests are effective in any light or weather conditions.

Cyclists are also urged to be clearly visible to road users by

wearing high visibility clothing such as Hi-Viz vests and reflective armbands in addition to the front and rear lights on their bike.

Analysis released from the RSA reports that 43 pedestrians were killed on Irish Roads in 2022. Of the 43 pedestrians killed, 15 occurred between 4pm and 8pm, and 8 between midnight and 4am. Last year, 10 pedestrian fatalities occurred in the month of November.

Initial figures from An Garda Síochána show there have been 38 pedestrian deaths on Irish roads so far this year. The highest in 15 years.

As the winter months bring harsher weather conditions and less daylight, road users are urged to be safe and to be seen.

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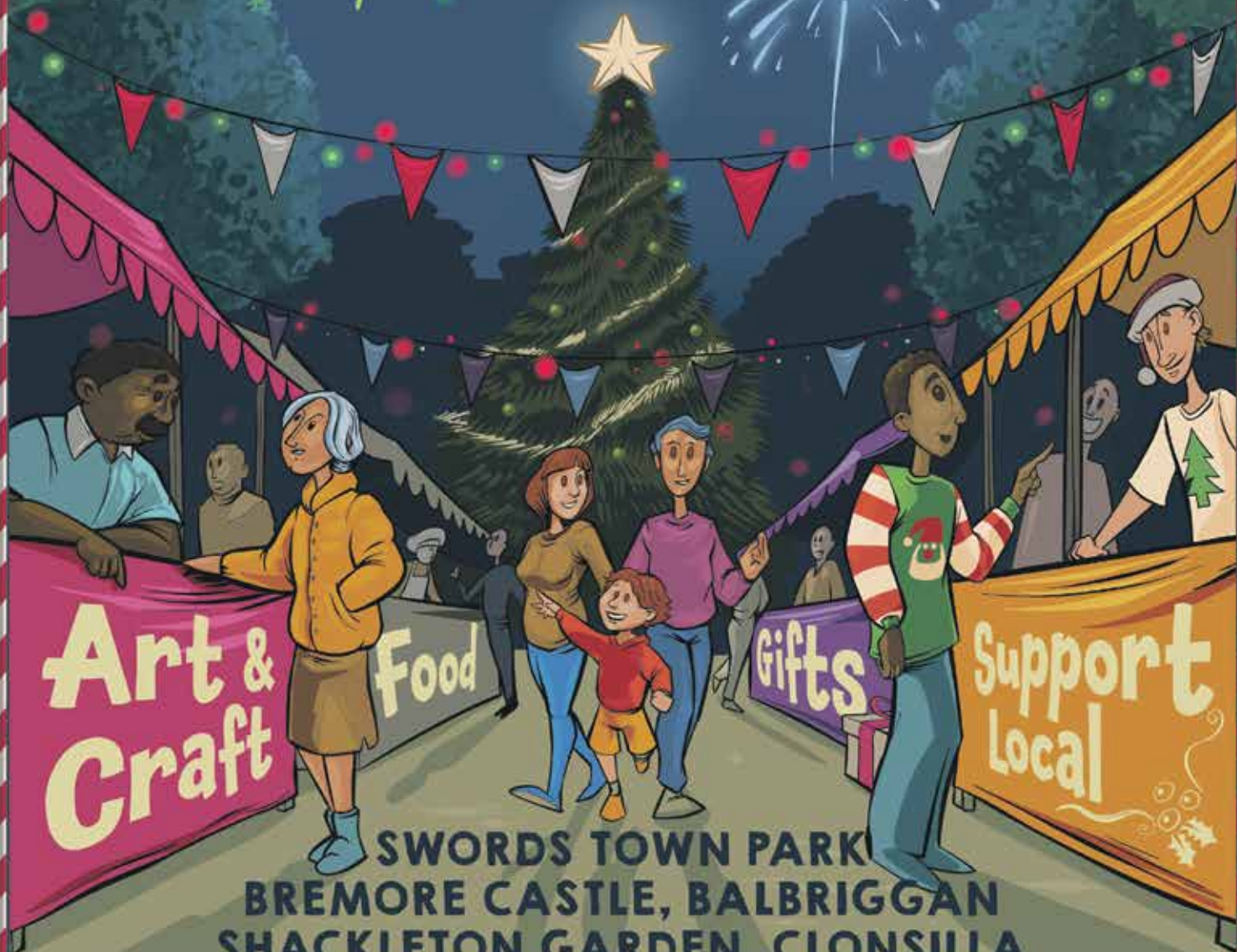
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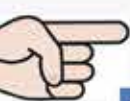
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CHILDREN'S FITNESS VISITS RETURN TO IRISH SCHOOLS

An open invitation to Dublin schools interested in participating in the forthcoming series of 'Fit Squad' interactive children's fitness visits has been issued.



Supported by banana distributor Fyffes and backed by World Para Rowing champion, Katie O'Brien and Irish Olympians, Cork sprinter Phil Healy and Dublin athlete, David Gillick, each Fit Squad school visit of approximately 45 minutes duration is delivered by Irish health and fitness expert, Sharon Flanagan.

Carried out under the eye of teachers present, participants will be invited to take part in an active age-appropriate workout designed to

improve their general fitness and receive advice on the importance of healthy eating.

Running until next March, the upcoming series will see some 10,000 pupils participate from schools throughout Ireland, north and south, increasing to almost 40,000 the number that will have taken part in the programme since it was introduced in 2018.

Schools can register their interest at www.fyffesfitsquad.ie/register



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Continued Investment Reduces Childcare Costs by Minister Roderic O’Gorman

Since becoming Minister for Children, I have been focused on cutting the cost of childcare for parents, increasing the level of investment in early years services to support providers and improving pay levels for childcare professionals, to recognise the real value of the work that they do.



The changes I’ve led represent the most far-reaching reform program for childcare ever undertaken in this country. Yearly investment has grown by 70% - from €638m when I took office in 2020 to €1.1 billion in 2024.

Two years ago, I set out an ambition to halve childcare costs, recognising the huge expense they represent for so many parents. In Budget 2023 last year, I took the first step towards this, increasing the National Childcare Scheme subsidy to reduce parents fees by 25%.

Through new measures announced in Budget 2024 a few weeks ago, by September of next year, the ambition will be a reality. This Government will have cut childcare fees in half, benefiting tens of thousands of families across the country.

While advancing universal policies like this, the measures I have taken have equality at their core, because affordable childcare will count for little if our most vulnerable citizens don’t have access to it.

That is why I have provided an additional €14 million to support children with a disability accessing early learning and care through the AIMs programme. This will allow children with a disability to access early years beyond ECCE hours and out of term time.

It is also why I was proud to announce a brand new initiative– the Equal Participation Model – a DEIS inspired model for childcare. This will target investment

and supports for childcare services who cater for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority groups.

Another important achievement in the recent Budget is that parents who use registered childminders will be able to start to benefit from the National Childcare Scheme subsidies from September 2024. I know that childminders provide extra flexibility to many parents, and it is important that we support parents in terms of the particular childcare choices they make for their kids.

In 2022, I introduced a new source of financial support for childcare services – Core Funding – recognising the real pressures that many services face. In Budget 2024, I have been able to secure an additional €44m for Year 3 of Core Funding. This will support services to increase pay for childcare professionals, meet additional cost of living pressures and support growth in capacity. I have also indicated I will use some of this additional money to continue measures I began in last years budget to support smaller services.

A child’s early years are their most formative. Achieving the very best quality of early learning and care for children gives them the best start in life. I’m pleased to be able to continue to invest in childcare services, in the staff who run them and also to support parents access affordable childcare. All of this will benefit child across Ireland – now and into the future.



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FOSL RAISES AWARENESS OF SUPPORT FOR SUICIDE BEREAVED WITH A WALK AND EVENTS

Friends of Suicide Loss are holding a walk from The Spire, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1 to Clontarf Castle on November 18th to honour a day devoted to those impacted by suicide. On this special walk they will be carrying a 'candle of hope'

For the 6th consecutive year Friends of Suicide Loss will have the 'Mourning Has Broken' walk to commemorate the International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (also known as Survivor Day). Proceedings will kick off at 1:30pm, with those taking part asked to meet at The Spire on O'Connell Street, from where, the walkers will make their way to Clontarf Castle where they will hold a commemoration of those that they have lost, followed by special events to support those in bereavement not just from suicide but including any other bereavement.

The International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day began in America in 1999 and was introduced by FOSL into Ireland for the first time 6 years ago with great success.

Please note that following the walk and commemoration at the castle, which are free and includes inspirational talks, readings, lighting of candles and letting off balloons, there is a charge of €100 for the events at the castle which begin at 6 p.m. and includes a candlelight dinner, raffles, draws, spot prizes, music and entertainment all evening. You can register for the evening event via the following link: <https://dublinireland.isosld.afsp.org/register/registration/form>

Tickets can also be purchased for the evening event by emailing foslpst@gmail.com or by ringing 014927576.

Those bereaved in any circumstances are welcome to integrate with us on the day and join in the proceedings.

FosL work to provide support to those who have been greatly impacted by the loss of someone in their immediate family, or a friend, to suicide. Amongst the many services they provide are outreach support, one to one support and support groups, workshops and educational programmes. For more information, visit Friends of Suicide Loss' website www.fosl.ie, Facebook and Twitter @foslireland and Instagram @foslireland



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GETTING TO KNOW IRELAND

Dublin is the capital city, the centre of government and so much more. The city is a draw to Irish people and international visitors. That said, how many Dubliners have explored their own country?



Ireland features regularly in travel guides as one of the best places in the world to visit. Many of the places featured are outside Dublin and many Dubliners have never seen them. In coming issues, we will feature places you really should see if you have not already.

This time we feature Slieve League Cliffs in Co Donegal

Rising almost 2000 ft / 598 m from the Atlantic Ocean, Slieve League is known as one of the highest sea cliffs in Europe. There is no doubt that it is one of the most magnificent views in Ireland.

Slieve League is almost three times the height of its Clare cousins, the Cliffs of Moher and whilst standing at the viewing point on the Cliff an amazing sea vista and landscape opens up before your eyes. From this point you can see across Donegal Bay to neighbouring counties Leitrim, Sligo and Mayo and when looking out to the west the view is of the vast Atlantic Ocean as far as the eye can see. From the Northwest you will be able to see Rathlin O'Byrne Island and Glencolumbkille. At the base of the Cliffs, you need to look out for the 'Giants Desk and Chair' which is a key part of history.

Aswell as these magnificent views, Slieve League and its surrounding areas are enriched with years of local history and heritage. From Slieve League, you can see Benbulbin which has megalithic tombs and

mythical links as far back as Finn McCool. Below Knoch na Rí at Carrowmore is where you can find one of the oldest and largest of the Neolithic cemeteries in Europe which dates back as far as 3200 BC. Between Slieve League and the shoreline in Sligo is where you will find Inishmurry which was home to the early Celtic Christian monks. Moving further along the coast in County Mayo is the little port of Killala which is the location of the French landing in 1798. The French came to help the United Irish men in their rebellion against the British crown at the time. Unfortunately, the French were unable to succeed, and they made peace and sailed back to France.

A little closer to home at Carrigan Head, you can see one of the Signal Towers which was built by the British to watch out for the return of the French. At the top of Slieve League is where you can find one of the early Christian monastic sites where the remains of Ade McBric's chapel can still be seen. Alongside the chapel there are also remains of the monks stone dwellings or 'beehive huts' as they are known.

A walk across 'One Man's Path' is where you will find a trig point which is placed atop an ancient structure which is of unknown origin. Slieve League is known as a sacred mountain which held Christian Pilgrimages for over a thousand years. It is important to remember this fact whilst visiting Slieve League as to not disturb these monuments of Irish cultural heritage.



FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL HAVE UNVEILED A THREE-YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Fingal County Council have recently unveiled a three-year Capital Programme worth €1.35 billion.

The three-year plan, which runs from 2024 to 2026, is a 37% increase on the previous Capital Programme and is four times larger than the programme that was adopted in 2017.

A total of 312 projects are covered under the new Capital Programme of which 67, representing a spend of €215m, are already on site. The remainder are in the concept to project approval cycle. This time last year there were 37 Capital Programme projects worth €117m on site.

These include major projects such as the €150m mixed tenure development at Ballymastone, the €116m mixed tenure development at Church Fields in Mulhuddart, the €44m Swords Cultural Centre, the €16m Ongar to Barnhill Road and the €7.7m pedestrian and cycle route on the Harry Reynolds Road in Balbriggan.

The Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Adrian Henchy, said: "This is the fifth Capital Programme that has been brought before this Council since the last local elections in 2019 and every year we have seen the number and value of projects grow. However, the most pleasing thing is that we have also seen delivery and there has been a tremendous improvement in strategic infrastructure across the county including new housing, new community facilities and new transport links as well the preservation of our heritage. The majority of our funding for these projects has come from Central Government and it is certainly helping us to grow our county in a sustainable way."

Just over €1bn of the funding for the Capital Programme will come from grants with development levies providing a further €120m and €59m being sourced from Fingal's revenue budget. An additional €66m will be generated through loans and other sources. Another €99m worth of projects in the three-year plan are under assessment for possible funding sources.

Housing projects account for 63% of the Capital Programme at €859m while another €177m will be spent on Planning and Strategic Infrastructure projects like the Broadmeadow Greenway, the Snugborough Road Interchange, the Ward River Park, and Recreational Hubs in Donabate, Lusk and Rush.

The reinstatement and enhancement of regional roads across the county forms part of €48m Operations capital works programme that also includes infrastructural works to bridges and harbours, new playgrounds, and the public toilets refurbishment

programme. A further €32m has been set aside for Community facilities which includes the completion of the new Community Centre in Meakstown.

The Environment, Climate Action and Active Travel Department will have a budget of €77m for projects such as the provision of protected cycle lanes and safe routes to schools, Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure, climate mitigation measures and landfill projects.

The programme for the Economic Enterprise Tourism and Cultural Development Department totals €139m and includes €37m for industrial development, €18m for heritage properties and €7m for the refurbishment of libraries. There is also a €30m provision for urban and rural regeneration of which €20m is earmarked for projects that are part of the Our Balbriggan regeneration plan.

The Programme projects a capital spend in 2024 of €386m, followed by €522m in 2025 and a further €447m in 2026.

Fingal County Council Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly said: "There is already a considerable amount of work underway with 67 projects already on site which is almost double what was on-site this time last year. We also have strong commitments in place to deliver many of the other projects in the Capital Programme and I look forward to progressing those over the next three years. There are other projects which councillors have asked us to look at, such as swimming pools, which are not yet ready for inclusion in the Capital Plan because we are carrying out audits to assess demand and potential cost. The programme reflects our determination to ensure that, as our population continues to grow, we are also developing the infrastructure required to build sustainable communities."

A copy of the 2024-2026 Capital Programme is available at: <https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2023-10/Capital%20Programme%202024-2026.pdf>

The Capital Programme is a rolling plan which is revised annually as time and other constraints may vary the progress of projects within a given period. The decision of councillors to agree the Capital Programme 2024-2026 does not confer approval on any individual project. This can only be done through the normal statutory processes and compliance with the Public Spending Code. Funding arrangements also need to be clearly identified and secured in advance of committing to any project.



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With my Fine Gael colleagues at the recent An Bord Pleanála Oral Hearing into Dart West where I made a detailed submission on traffic diversions and the closure of Level Crossings.

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 - €750 tax credit a year for renters
- HELP WITH SCHOOL COSTS**
 - Free primary school books extended Junior Cycle.

PUTTING MONEY BACK IN YOUR POCKET

HOW:

- CUTTING INCOME TAX**
keeping more of the money you earn
 - €2,000 increase in Standard Rate Cut-Off for a single person to €42,000
 - €100 increase in tax credits, (Personal, PAYE & Earned Income)
 - Cutting main USC rate
 - = €813 back in the pocket of the average worker
- WELFARE**
 - Double Social Welfare payment to pensioners, carers, people on disability payments and jobseekers. (Christmas & January 2024)
 - A double child benefit payment worth €280 per child
 - €400 lump sum for those on 'Working Family Payment'
 - A €400 lump sum for carers, people with a disability and people on Illness Benefit
 - A one off €200 Living Allowance payment in November
 - €12 WEEKLY INCREASE for pensioners, carers, people on disability payments and jobseekers from January
 - €500 lump sum for households receiving Fuel Allowance
- MINIMUM WAGE**
 - Up €1.40 to €12.70 - 10th increase under Fine Gael

HELPING WITH THE COST OF GOING TO COLLEGE

BY:

- CUTTING STUDENT FEES** by €1,000 again
- STUDENT GRANT INCREASED** by €340
- APPRENTICESHIP FEES** cut by 33%
- STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND** increasing by €8 Million
- UNDERGRADUATE FEES** halved to €1,500 for families earning under €100,000
- POSTGRADUATE MAINTENANCE GRANTS** to be restored
- UNDERGRADUATE FEES** abolished for students earning under €56,000, including part time-students and online study students
- ALL FURTHER EDUCATION PLC fees** will be abolished
- ALL FURTHER EDUCATION PLC fees** will be abolished
- EXTRA €2 MILLION** allocated to assist students with disabilities

Budget 2024

BUILDING STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

HOW:

- 1,000 MORE GARDAI** and 250 new civilian specialist roles to free up more Gardai for frontline policing
- INCREASED** Garda recruitment allowance
- €25 MILLION INCREASE** in the annual overtime budget
- EXPANSION** of Community Safety Partnerships
- ADDITIONAL STAFFING** in Courts Service, Prison, Data Protection Commission, Policing Authority
- NEW AGENCY** to address Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence initiatives
- EXTENSION** of the Youth Justice Diversion Programme



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- Pre-Paramedic Fire and Ambulance (with PHECC EFR)
- Physiotherapy Assistant
- Pre-Occupational Therapy Studies/OT Assistant
- Pre-Speech and Language Therapy Studies
- Pharmacy Assistant

Social Care, Criminology and Psychology

- Social Studies/Social Care
- Youth and Community Work
- Applied Psychology with Criminology
- Criminology, Psychology with Law
- Security Studies and Criminology *NEW*

Education and Childcare

- Early Learning and Care (Childcare)
- Pre-University Arts/Teaching
- Pre-University PE Teaching and Coaching
- Special Needs and Classroom Assistant
Primary and Post Primary

Science

- Pre-University Science
- Pre-University Agricultural Science
- Pre-University Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Science
- Pre-University Forensic Science
- Pre-University Environmental Science
- Pre-University Sports Science
- Pre-University Food Science, Nutrition, Health and Wellbeing
- Pre-University Animal Science
- Pre-University Physiotherapy
- Advanced Animal Science

Law and 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 *NEW*

Animal & Equine

- Animal Care Assistant
- Equine Studies
- Advanced Equine Breeding (with Greencert)
- Advanced Pre-University Animal Science

Engineering

- Pre-University Engineering *NEW*

Business & Accountancy

- Pre-University Business
- Advanced Pre-University Business
- Human Resource Management
- Pre-University Business, Finance and Accounting
- Accounting Technician Apprenticeship *NEW*
- Auctioneering, Valuation and Estate Agency
- Logistics and Distribution *NEW*
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Computing & Technology

- Software Development and Games Design
- Pre-University Computer Network Systems
- Creative Digital Media
- Augmented and Virtual Reality *NEW*

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- Art and Design with Portfolio
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- Higher National Diploma in The Animation Industry
- Graphic Design
- Architectural Technology and Design

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- Music Performance
- Sound Production
- Higher National Diploma in Artist Development for Musicians
- Higher National Diploma in Sound Engineering

Film & Media

- Media and Film Production
- Higher National Diploma in Film Production
- Journalism, Digital Media and Public Relations

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- Tourism and Business with Event Management
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- Advanced Professional Cookery

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- Beauty Therapy
- Pre-Apprenticeship Hairdressing
- Hairdressing Apprenticeship *NEW*
- Advanced Beauty Therapy

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Why we see more spiders and insects inside our homes in autumn

The tell-tale signs that autumn is here are clear to us; the days are getting shorter, and the temperature is decreasing.



We take this as a sign to pull out our winter woollies and think about turning on the radiators. But how do insects know that winter is coming? And what do they do to prepare?

Folklore has suggested over the years that insects and other invertebrates can predict the weather and that, for example, we could start to see bigger spider webs if the weather is going to get colder. The evidence for those bigger webs ahead of bad weather is weak. But there certainly are changes in insect behaviour we can see at this time of year, and it shows they are predicting changes they need to make as the weather changes.

Insects are extremely sensitive to changes in the environment and change in light is the main cue that insects use to signal the change in seasons. Insects, like humans, detect light with their eyes. But unlike humans insects have more than two eyes. In addition to the two big compound eyes that they have on the front of their heads most insects also have three smaller eyes on the top of their heads called ocelli. Light information is passed from their eyes to the brain and interpreted by an internal clock to detect the changing seasons, which may also be important in humans and other primates.

Responding to the changing seasons is really important for insects as they are cold blooded and can't regulate their own body temperature. But insects have different ways of coping with the oncoming cold weather. Some, like the painted lady butterfly, leave the UK in autumn heading to north Africa where they breed. Others produce their own "antifreeze" proteins that allow them to cope with winter temperatures. However, the majority of insects undergo a slowing down process called diapause,

where they essentially sleep for the winter.

At this time of year, these insects, and other arthropods like spiders, are looking for a sheltered place to spend the winter – and this is why we see more spiders in our houses at this time of year. You may also notice groups of insects, like ladybirds, huddled on windowsills and under rocks. These insects will stay protected over the winter and reawaken in spring.

Because of migration, diapause and the natural death of some insects at the end of the summer, you may generally feel there are fewer insects around than just a few weeks ago. But there are some new ones emerging that we didn't see earlier in the summer. In the south you might spot the beautiful ivy bee which is only active when the ivy is in blossom. Autumn also brings the mass emergence of crane flies, which, although they look a bit like mosquitos, are actually harmless.

You also might notice more wasps visiting flowers to drink the sugary nectar - at this time of year they become very hungry for sugar. Wasps don't really care where they get their sugar fix from and are just as likely to try and steal our sugary drinks as we are enjoying the last of the summer in our gardens or enjoying a walk. Their craving for sugar is actually really beneficial as their visits flower-to-flower, trying to satisfy their insatiable craving, lead them to pollinate flowers just like bees.

For me the most striking sign of autumn is the appearance of a lot of very large bumblebees out visiting the last flowers of the season. These large bees are next year's queens. After being born late in the summer season they mate and stock up on energy before finding a place to hibernate for the winter. When we see them again it'll be an indicator that spring is on its way when the queens emerge from their sleep and make new nests.



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ISPCC welcomes Budget proposals for improved mental health services for children and young people but notes there's more to be done

ISPCC welcomes Minister Mary Butler's Budget 2024 announcements for children and young people's mental health, in particular the creation of a new central referral mechanism.



This will allow the HSE to triage referrals to the right service ensuring what the Minister refers to as a 'no wrong door' approach. We know first-hand of the frustrations of children and families when they are trying to access appropriate support and end up being moved around from waiting list to waiting list.

The allocation of funding for a new mental health app is positive and ought to help with signposting users to the services and supports that are available.

We also welcome the Minister's comments on the important role NGOs, such as ISPCC, play in the delivery of mental-health support services in the community. As an organisation dedicated to supporting children and young people, ISPCC recognises the need for systemic change in how we, as a society, address mental-health concerns. Therefore, it is heartening to hear that a new head has been appointed to lead the work on reforming child and youth mental health.

The Budget 2024 investment is a welcome successor to that contained in Budget 2023. Then, funding was allocated for the first ever Clinical Lead for Youth Mental Health and the establishment of a dedicated National Office for Child and Youth Mental Health. These are both key steps in providing leadership and oversight in this area.

ISPCC Head of Policy and Public Affairs Fiona Jennings says that "we recognise the systemic challenges our mental-health sector faces and believe these can only be overcome by a concerted effort among all stakeholders. The announcement of a triage service to help direct children and young people to appropriate services is hugely welcome and will go some way to alleviating waiting lists.

"However, mental health funding remains a long way off from the 10% target of overall health spending by 2025."

The combination of the proposed triage system, the establishment of the child poverty and wellbeing unit in the Department of An Taoiseach and that mental health may be a spotlight issue in the next national policy framework for children and young people mean that these initiatives ought to go some way to realising the pathfinder way of working and we welcome this.

Children with complex needs are a group of children who will require a particular focus and all efforts must be employed to ensure they do not slip through the cracks.

There has never been a more important time than now to prioritise the mental health of young people, as families face financial uncertainty, young people tackle new levels of social media pressure and they are exposed to the reality of wars and the aftermath of a global pandemic.

At Childline, we are dedicated to helping children with difficult situations and empowering them to strengthen their resilience, equipping them to cope with adversity and to come back even stronger after a difficult or stressful experience.

Childline can be reached online at [Childline.ie](https://www.childline.ie) or by calling 1800 66 66 66.

The service is confidential, non-judgemental and non-directive, meaning it doesn't tell children and young people how to solve their problems.

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Since its establishment, the team at Marymount has constantly striven to develop and innovate the care and support they provide to its residents.

This mission was at the heart of its most recent development of a unique and exclusive scheme of supported living homes called 'The Grove'.

'The Grove' encompasses 12 purpose-built bungalows and is specifically designed for those who are seeking a secure, comfortable and convenient setting which actively promotes and supports their independent living.

These generously proportioned 2-bedroom homes are fully equipped with all modern comforts and, for added convenience, are inclusive of all utilities. The Grove also has on site security as well as maintained

landscaped garden spaces to enjoy.

The design concept for these independent living units incorporates technology to support comfort, convenience, and security for each of its residents.

This easy-to-use technology includes automation, environmental control, concierge services, and communication tools intended to positively impact on quality of life and independence.

Importantly, 'The Grove' also seeks to promote resident wellbeing through community living and access to a range of optional on-site services including

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- Newspaper Delivery
- Optician
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For further information visit www.marymountcarecentre.ie/the-grove

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