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MAY 2024

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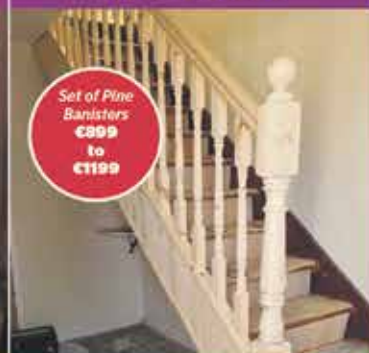
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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the May Editon of Little Village.
Time flies and we are approaching summer months already this year.

Our May edition has interesting articles on subjects such as Artificial Intelligence in Medicine and the origins of May Day.

For anyone owning an e-scooter, or thinking of buying one, we explain the law on this matter.

As always, we welcome feedback on our magazine and contributions from local groups and societies

Kind Regards, Little Village

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Tourism and Community Amenity - Planned for Lucan House

Proposed plans for the former Italian Ambassador's Residence in Lucan Village were presented to Councillors of the Lucan and Palmerstown-Fonthill Area Committee at Tuesday's (23rd) meeting. The sale of 'Lucan House' is expected to close in June with a formal handover event to be arranged.



Cllr Derren Ó Brádaigh was speaking following the meeting and said;

"The acquisition of Lucan House and its incredible surrounding grounds by South Dublin County Council was greeted with excitement and welcomed by everyone when we first learned of this last year. Lucan Village as a gateway to the Liffey Valley was designated as a 'destination town' by Fáilte Ireland under its destination development programme, something I wholeheartedly welcomed.

Accompanied by €2m in allocated funding by the Council last year for public realm improvements to the weir, village green and entrance to St Catherine's Desmesne, the potential now to grow and expand the economic potential, whilst promoting the cultural and historical richness of Lucan is immense.

Cllr Ó Brádaigh said;

"The closing sale is expected to happen in June and there will be a post-handover assessment of the house and grounds thereafter. However, it is expected that the intended purpose of the wonderful house and space will be to serve as a driver to attract tourism into our beautiful village, whilst developing the house and demesne as a community and wider county amenity. The opportunities are great in my view, and I do hope to see Lucan House now being open to the public and providing locals and visitors with a space that can be enjoyed by families in the near future.

The Councillor also said;

"The appointment of consultants to develop a masterplan are scheduled to take place before the end of August of this year. Naturally this will consider conservation of surrounding nature and the built heritage within the property. The masterplan will investigate the best uses for the mutual benefit of the community and beyond, whilst examining the potential economic, recreational and environment uses.

Ó Brádaigh concluded by saying;

"The property dates to the eighteenth century with the palladian villa style house built in 1772, with additional buildings and structures of note including a bath house, single arch stone bridge, a steelwork bridge, two gate lodges, stable block and more. The history itself dates to 1560. The development of the property going forward will be included as part of the Capital Provision 3 Year programme and the investment is significant. This is a brilliant project, and I am fully supportive in welcoming this progress and commend South Dublin County Council for their vision and investment in Lucan."

Kildare County Council publishes Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Guidelines

Kildare County Council has published its new Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidelines. Kildare County Council is confident that the quality of the built and natural environment will benefit from the implementation of these new guidelines.

SuDS are relatively new to County Kildare so it's important that their role and how to design them learning from best practice are clearly understood. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are a very important part of the toolkit available to help improve flood resilience, climate adaptability, built environment and natural environment. Traditional surface water management involved hard engineered 'grey' solutions such as pipes and attenuation tanks to collect and quickly convey rainwater to the sewer network and ultimately the river network. This contributes to flooding and water pollution.

Sustainable drainage systems are a way of managing rainfall using more nature-based methods by slowing it down so that sites maintain greenfield runoff rates and do not contribute to flooding downstream, whilst making significant improvements to amenity, landscape, biodiversity and placemaking. Examples of SuDS in the public realm include rainwater gardens, swales, and ponds. Other systems, which can be incorporated into developments, include green roofs, permeable paving and rainwater harvesting.

The preparation of the Guidelines was an action of the newly adopted County Development Plan. The document establishes a strong vision for implementing excellent SuDS in County Kildare through the planning process and for the lifelong maintenance of SuDS landscapes. The Guidance Document seeks to assist project developers in ensuring that the SuDS that are incorporated into developments are designed to the highest possible standards. SuDS need to be carefully considered in the design of their developments all the way from concept design stage through to ensuring that the right maintenance is in place.

The new Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidelines are available to view online – KCC Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance Single page.pdf (kildarecoco.ie)

Kildare County Council has already started applying best practice in SuDS design to its own Parks projects and will ensure that best practice in SuDS is integrated into the design of all its projects, including projects that retrofit Kildare's existing urban areas, neighbourhoods, streets and places to improve their flood resilience and amenity value of public space.



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What is going on with the weather this year?

Met Eireann and other leading forecasters have identified an extremely rare weather event brewing up to land in Ireland and northwest Europe in the coming days.

One prominent weather channel highlighted that the same “rare strong” El Niño conditions followed by a similarly strong La Niña have not been seen since 1998 in the region.

Experts have predicted that 2024 may have a short and mixed summer going off this rare combination and the strong correlation with 1998’s conditions.

London and Southeast, a leading atmospheric science group outlined the bad news: “Looking like duller April in 26 years in London. What ties us with 1998? The 97-98 winter also experienced a rare strong El Niño event, a very mild winter, and similarly there was cold weather in April.

“Also as in 1998, La Niña will develop over the summertime. 1998 is a strong analogue this year and for this upcoming summer. It’s why I’m not particularly convinced of a long hot/dry summer at the moment.”

Meanwhile on the continent, destructive unseasonal frosts have hit once again in France, Germany and Italy damaging crops and vineyards.

A cold blast like this that follows a warmer-than-average winter has meant that many plants and crops have begun to bud early. This is not good news for vineyards with a widespread air frost set to cause catastrophic conditions. Central Europe has been hit with snow and icy weather, many



weeks after the normal freezing window.

Nick Frost of NetWeather tweeted: “Not good news for vineyard & fruit orchard owners over large parts of mainland Europe - with a widespread air frost forecast next few nights. Plants had an early start with budding & flowering this year after mild winter & early April warmth but means vulnerable to late freezes.”

All in all prospects for a hot summer in Ireland in 2024 are not looking good.

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COLM QUINN

Colm grew up and still lives in the Foxborough area running a successful carpentry and flooring business. He has employed many people from the area. Colm is a dedicated husband and father.



He likes many types of sports and has been involved with local GAA team Lucan Sarsfields for many years as well as local soccer teams. Colm has an immense passion for the great outdoors and has been involved in starting up and running hill walking groups.

Originally Colm got involved in politics as a young man working on buildings sites in London during the 80's where he canvassed and marched with local groups to establish better working conditions. He believes that the young people of our area need more jobs, housing and infrastructure to keep them in the community and that the cost of living for families in our community is being ignored by our government. Colm believes Aontu have the will and fire in their bellies to action change for the better in this country and he is proud to be a member of the party.

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ILLEGAL DUMPING
PRESERVING UR GREEN SPACES
IMMIGRATION

These are just some of the causes Colm is passionate about addressing and helping to make the necessary changes with compassion and common sense.

VOTE COLM QUINN #1 LUCAN/PALMERSTOWN/FONTHILL

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Disabled Drivers Association launches campaign for Text Alert Scheme countrywide



Fear of physical and verbal abuse and their own safety were among the top reasons for not approaching somebody parked illegally in accessible parking bays, according to a survey carried out by the Disabled Drivers Association of Ireland (DDAI) in April 2024.

Over 2,600 people from across the country responded to the survey, which was carried out to highlight the DDAI's campaign to call on city and county councils nationwide to introduce a Text Alert Scheme to combat the misuse of accessible parking bays in public places. 94% of respondents said they would welcome a mobile phone Text Alert Scheme to notify the local warden when someone was parked illegally.

It is an offence to park a vehicle in an accessible parking bay in a public place without a valid parking permit. Offenders receive a parking fine of €150 which increases to €225 if not paid within 28 days. Despite this, parking bay abuse is still going on, according to Richard Ryder of the Disabled Drivers Association.

Richard Ryder, marketing manager with the Disabled Drivers Association said, "Our survey wasn't confined to our members, we received a huge response from across the community, with many people without disabilities commenting they are annoyed and frustrated with the misuse of accessible parking bays.

It's very clear that people want an opportunity to be able to do something about parking bay abuse but in a safe way. It's why we are calling on city and county councils to begin using a Text Alert Scheme in their areas. It's safe, it's easy and it's a significant deterrent," Ryder continued.

The survey results were highlighted at the DDAI's AGM and Strategy Launch in the Connacht Hotel, Galway on Sat 20th April 2024, at which the charity announced the details of its three-year strategic plan. The plan was launched by Sean Canney TD, a member of the Joint Oireachtas

Committee on Disability Matters. The event was also attended by Mairead Farrell, TD and Noel Grealish TD with special guest Nikki Bradley, an adaptive adventurer and one of Ireland's leading female motivational speakers.

Chairman Seamus Reidy said, "Our mission is to present physical disability in the best possible light and strives to show that most physical disabilities can be overcome, and individuals can go on to achieve their full potential, with the benefit of support and training".

The Text Alert scheme is already in use in Lucan and Rathfarnham Villages in Dublin and Gorey in Wexford. Every publicly accessible parking bay has a sign displaying the bay number and a mobile phone number. If someone is parked in one of those bays without a permit or is misusing the permit, people can text the bay number to alert the traffic warden.

Councillor Vicki Casserly of South Dublin County Council was involved in the piloting of the Text Alert Scheme in Lucan Village and due to its success, it is now extended across South Dublin County Council. She is also a campaigner for inclusion and disability rights with her partner Paul and her son James.

Cllr Casserly said, "I first brought it to South Dublin County Council because I was very keen to tackle the misuse of accessible parking bays in our area and well as supporting An Garda Síochána's Operation Enable. It's been very successful and that's why I believe that the Text Alert scheme should be rolled out nationwide because it does enable proper use of the parking bays and acts as a strong deterrent against misuse. The scheme supports persons with disabilities to be able to navigate their communities for their day-to-day life. It's so important and I'd love to see this happening

across Ireland to support and acknowledge the rights of a person with a disability.”

Disability advocate Nikki Bradley is campaigning to have the Text Alert Scheme introduced into her native Donegal. Nikki said, “As someone living with a physical disability, I have experienced first-hand the negative knock- on effect that occurs when someone unlawfully parks in a disabled bay. I have often found myself left with no option but to park in a “normal” parking space which makes it extremely difficult to get out of my car.

The Text Alert Scheme is an excellent solution to this ongoing issue, and I welcome it wholeheartedly. It will give those living with reduced mobility that feeling of power and control that they have not had prior to now. Parking in an accessible parking bay is not a luxury. It is a necessity.”

The Disabled Drivers Association (DDAI) is Ireland’s leading charity for disabled drivers and passengers on a national level. It promotes independence and equal opportunity through mobility, education and training. www.ddai.ie

SURVEY FINDINGS

2,662 people responded, 68% of the respondents were female and 32% male, 94% of respondents said would welcome a mobile phone Text Alert Scheme to notify the local warden when someone was parked illegally.

When the respondents were asked why they wouldn’t approach anyone parked illegally, 88% came back with the responses along the following lines

- Fear of confrontation
- Fear of being physically or verbally abused
- Didn’t want to cause a scene
- Too shy to do so
- Not worth the abuse
- Too dangerous/fear for own safety
- No point/Waste of time
- Don’t have the power to tell them to move or issue a fine

Sample of Verbatim Responses to this question

• “The type of people who do this are not only entitled and inconsiderate but also rude and sometimes aggressive”

• “Some people just don’t care and can be aggressive if challenged

• “Sometimes there is a few in the car and I could be attacked

• “Because they know they are doing something wrong and will be on the defensive before you even speak to them.”

• “Because it is a waste of time, nothing will be done about it.”

• “Most just ignore you”

• “You cannot get through to stupid”

• “I’m afraid.... and living in a sheltered accommodation so it’s not a public car park etc.... but sometimes I need that space and she is so aggressive that it feels pointless.”

• “It takes a lot of (limited) emotional energy and there’s a perceived risk of escalation to emotional or physical violence. One man that I’d confronted later spotted me sitting and waiting for food in a nearby takeaway. He came in and angrily ask me why I was parked in an accessible spot (my disability is dynamic and not visually obvious when I’m sitting down.) I felt very unsafe and was glad that I wasn’t alone. It has put me off approaching others in future.”

• Aggression, they won’t move anyway. We shouldn’t have to ask people to free up a space they’re not entitled to park in. They know the chances of them being caught/fined are low. We shouldn’t have to police these parking spaces.”

• “I felt intimidated when I was on my own as they hurled abuse at me and said I would have to sit in my car until they returned to move their car from the parking bay. The person was able bodied and was well known by me.”

58% of respondents said they had confronted someone parking illegally in an accessible parking bay at one point and the main reactions and responses they received with were:

- I’ll only be a minute
- None of your business
- f.... off (and mind your own business)

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- Will move if someone needs it
- No other spaces available
- Didn't realise it was a disabled spot
- Have kids with me so must park here
- Delivering a pizza
- Said they paid road tax and could park where they liked
- Left permit at home
- Permit's in the glove compartment
- Thought disabled people didn't go out at night

Sample of verbatim responses to this question

- "They were only going to be there for a minute, or they were dashing into a shop. I could go on and on."
 - "They did not reply to my pointing out that they were parking in a disabled bay. They just shrugged and walked away"
 - "Said they were driving their granny.who wasn't there"
 - "The lady parked her car in a walkway beside the disabled parking space and it prevented me gaining access to load my wheelchair into my car. She told me she was suffering from morning sickness."
 - "Just told to mind my own business even though I have a permit and clearly struggling on crutches"
 - "Wanted the wider spot as they didn't want their paintwork damaged."
 - "They didn't bother to even have an excuse"
 - "No excuse given. Was told to f### off"
 - "They didn't care. They had a couple of kids and a lot of shopping to do"
 - "Anxious mum pulled across 3 bays so she could get her kids names down for summer camps"
 - "I'll only be a minute. It's raining. You don't REALLY need it."
 - "Questioned what disability I had because I didn't look disabled!!"
 - "Someone using a Blue Card belonging to a relative says: But I have the person's permission to use it!!!!"

When asked the reasons why they would welcome such a scheme, 89% of respondents said

- It's anonymous and safe, eliminates the fear of verbal abuse and harassment by the offenders
- It would make people think twice about parking there and risking a fine
- Makes it easier and quicker to report illegal parking
- A good deterrent that would free up the disabled parking spaces for people who really need them
- Helpful to the traffic wardens and a better chance of catching and fining those parking illegally

Sample of Verbatim Responses

- "Because I could report it without confrontation"
- "Because I could report them without being afraid"
- "Stops people getting verbally abused"
- "To free up the space and to let people know they won't get away with it"
- "If warden was giving out tickets people would stop parking."
- "Because of the frequency of my being denied a space by people who are not disabled".
 - "I would hope that the wardens might respond often promptly and impose a charge. That would be far more effective than a disabled person challenging on the spot. I would also hope that other citizens would report illegal parking"
- There are so few spaces we need them. They're very important to us.
- "Because they deserve to be fined"
- "They keep getting away with their "one minute". Most people without a card wouldn't dream of doing it."
- It would be safer and more convenient
- It would facilitate accurate data collection on abuse of accessible parking bays, and also eliminate risk of verbal/physical assault
 - "People who park in disability parking places are usually habitual abusers and have no qualms about doing so regularly so if they are reported to a proper authority, they might actually get some kind of penalty or fine."
 - To make people realise how important these parking spots are and how disrespectful they are being by using them
 - "If I don't get a disabled spot, I have to go home."

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31st
MAY

Spotlight: Exhibition by artist Keita Prokopcenko

Venue: Slip Hall, Celbridge

Time: May 31st - June 2nd, 6.30pm with reception

Entry: Open entry

31st
MAY

'Highly Strung' Quartet

Venue: Slip Hall, Celbridge

Time: 7.30pm - 9pm

Tickets: 5 euro (waged adults)

Concession (free) for students, unwaged and low waged.

1st
JUNE

Celebration of Jonathan Swift's Achievement for Ireland with the Drapier's Letters

Venue: Kate Walsh House, The Mill, Celbridge

Date & Time: 2pm - 4pm followed by reception.

Entry: Open entry. Registration required.

1st
JUNE

Office for Joint Administrative Intelligence, Artist Talk

Venue: Slip Hall, Celbridge

Time: 7pm - 8pm

Entry: Open entry, registration is required.

Short Film based on 'A Modest Proposal' by Sam Frazier Jnr.

Venue: Slip Hall, Celbridge

Time: 11am - 12pm

Entry: Open entry, booking is required.

1st
JUNE

Community event: Family Fun Day!

Venue: The Slip, Celbridge

Time: 2pm - 6pm - Free Entry

2nd
JUNE

Swift's Secrets Play

Venue: Kildrought Gardens, Main Street Celbridge

Time: 2pm - 4pm Entry: 5 euro

3rd
JUNE

'Tea in the Sluttery' & Dramatisation of letters, Pickering Forest

Venue: Pickering Forest, Celbridge

Time: 2pm - 4.30pm Entry: Tickets €15

3rd
JUNE

Jazz music and dance evening, Pickering Forest

Venue: Pickering Forest, Celbridge

Time: 4.30pm - 6.30pm

Entry: Open Entry. Places limited so booking is essential.

3rd
JUNE

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Perfect Irish scones

Plain scones

Serves: 8

Course: Dessert

Cooking Time: 0 hr 30 mins

Ingredients

- 350g strong white flour (or plain flour)
- 1tbs baking powder
- Generous pinch salt
- 60g cold butter, diced small
- 200ml milk
- 1 egg (plus an extra yolk for glazing)

1. Preheat oven to 220 degrees (fan). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper (or dust well with flour).
2. In a large mixing bowl, sieve together the dry ingredients (flour, baking powder and salt).
3. Rub the butter in by hand until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs (I prefer to use a food processor for this step).
4. Mix together the egg and milk.
5. Make a well in the centre of the dry mixture, then pour in three-quarters of the liquid, lightly stirring in both directions to combine. Add the remaining liquid, using it to draw in any excess flour from the sides of the bowl (avoid over-mixing).
6. Flour your hands and tip the soft, raggy dough on to a very well-floured work surface. Shape and gently pat the dough to an even 2cm



7. Use a 7cm round scone cutter to stamp out scones. Transfer them to the lined baking sheet and brush the tops with egg yolk to glaze.
8. Bake on the middle shelf of the preheated oven, first at 220 degrees for eight to 10 minutes (for large scones) until they rise upwards, without burning, then immediately reduce the heat to 160 degrees for another 10 minutes to bake fully.
9. Once baked, remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool.



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Beyond the Pale – Kinsale

This edition we venture to Co Cork and picturesque Kinsale.



The picturesque yachting harbour of Kinsale (Cionn tSáile) is one of many colourful gems strung along the coastline of County Cork. Narrow, winding streets lined with galleries and gift shops, lively bars and superb restaurants, and a handsome natural harbour filled with yachts and guarded by a huge 17th-century fortress make it an engrossing place to spend a day or two.

Charles Fort

One of Europe's best-preserved star-shaped artillery forts, this vast 17th-century fortification would be worth a visit for its spectacular views alone. But there's much more here: the 18th- and 19th-century ruins inside the walls make for some fascinating wandering. It's 3km southeast of Kinsale along the minor road through Scilly; if you have time, hike there along the lovely coastal Scilly Walk.

Desmond Castle

Kinsale's roots in the wine trade are on display at this early-16th-century fortified house that was occupied by the Spanish in 1601. Since then it has

served as a customs house, a prison for French and American captives, and a workhouse during the Famine. There are lively exhibits detailing its history, and a small wine museum that tells the story of the Irish wine-trading families, including names such as Hennessy (of brandy fame), who fled to France because of British rule.

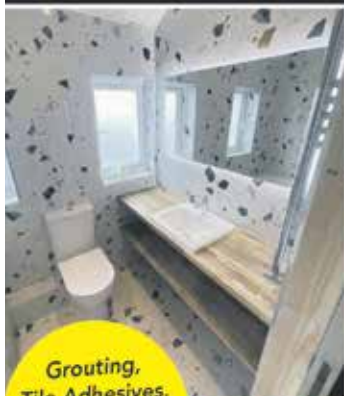
Old Head Signal Tower & Lusitania Museum

This 200-year-old signal tower houses a museum dedicated to the RMS Lusitania, which was torpedoed by a German U-boat in 1915 with the loss of 1200 lives. You can walk to the nearby clifftops for impressive views south towards the Old Head, the nearest point of land to the disaster; a privately



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owned golf club prevents you from reaching the lighthouse at the tip of the headland. The tower is 13km south of town via the R604.

St Multose Church

This is one of the country's oldest Church of Ireland churches, built around 1190 by the Normans on the site of a 6th-century church. Not much of the interior is original, but the exterior is beautifully preserved. Inside, a flat stone carved with a round-handed figure was traditionally rubbed by fishermen's wives to bring their husbands home safe from the sea. Several victims of the Lusitania sinking are buried in the graveyard.

Courthouse & Regional Museum

Based in the 17th-century courthouse that was used for the inquest into the sinking of the Lusitania, this eclectic museum contains local curiosities as diverse as Michael Collins' hurley (hurling stick), and shoes belonging to the 8ft-tall Kinsale Giant, Patrick Cotter O'Brien (1760–1806).

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What is the Law on Electric Scooters?



In 2023, the Government approved legislation so electric scooters could be regulated and used publicly. Electric scooters are still technically illegal to use in public places as the regulations haven't been enacted.

In this article you'll find out why electric scooters are technically still illegal for use in public, what legislation has been approved and what's scooter regulations are incoming.

In 2023, the Government approved legislation so electric scooters could be regulated and used publicly. Electric scooters are still technically illegal to use in public places as the regulations haven't been enacted.

You might ask why it is technically illegal to drive these green, traffic-easing two-wheeled machines, which have similar speeds and serve a similar purpose as bicycles on public roads. The answer lies in The Road and Traffic Act 1961 and how an electric scooter falls under a mechanically propelled vehicle classification.

The Road Traffic Act 1961 outlines Ireland's legal definitions and requirements for mechanically propelled vehicles. The Act defines mechanically propelled vehicles as "vehicles which are able to sustain propulsion mechanically". Under the legislation, mechanically propelled vehicles must be taxed and insured, and their operator must have the requisite driver's license. These definitions were introduced decades before electric scooters existed. With the technological enhancement of push scooters into electric scooters using electrical and mechanical components such as batteries, motors and throttles, they fall under the definition of mechanically propelled vehicles.

As there are no regulations in place to provide for the use of electric scooters on public roads, insurers have not yet made available an insurance package specific to electric scooters. While the Revenue Commissioners do not currently allow for the registration of an e-scooter as a privately owned vehicle, obtaining tax for an electric scooter is impossible. As you have probably noticed, a vicious cycle exists in which e-scooters cannot be used in public because you need tax and insurance. You cannot obtain tax or insurance due to the failure of the Government to regulate them. The approved legislation created a new category of transport called Personal Powered Transporters so scooters can be legalised.

THE ROAD TRAFFIC AND ROADS ACT 2023

On the 27th of June 2023, President Michael D. Higgins signed the Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023 into law. This allowed the Government to propose regulations to the European Commission and get electric scooters onto our roads!

This new Act creates a brand-new vehicle category - Powered Personal Transporters (PPT), which will welcome e-scooters onto our public roads, given that they tick all the right boxes. The definition of PPT is broad, so outdated legislation won't

block future technological changes in PPTs like scooters did previously.

PPTs do not require vehicle registration, motor tax, insurance or a driving licence. Once your e-scooter meets the standards set out in the regulations, you're free to ride on our roads without the fear of having your scooter confiscated.

PPTs should adhere to these three main conditions:

- It can't exceed a maximum continuous rated power output of 400 Watts. In the context of a e-scooter, Watts measures the power a motor can generate.
- It has a maximum net weight (battery included) of 25 kg. The Government likely set this limit to minimise the harm caused in accidents due to a scooter's weight.
- It has a maximum design speed of up to 25 km/hr. That's plenty to get you where you need to go, all while keeping safety in mind. To compare, a cyclist may be travelling between 15-25 km/hr on a push bike.
- It's important to note that if an electric scooter does not meet these specifications, it is not deemed a PPT and will remain illegal on the roads. The Government has said there are no plans to legislate for scooters above these conditions.

With these definitions in hand, the Government proposed them to the European Council in 2023, who asked the Irish Government to use the RSA to regulate them. The Road Safety Authority is a state agency formed by the Irish Government to promote road safety within Ireland.

RSA REGULATIONS:

The latest news on the regulations from the Road Safety Authority is the following: Among other criteria, a maximum speed limit of 20km/h will apply, with a maximum power output of 400 Watts and a maximum weight - including batteries - of 25kg. Other technical requirements, including lighting and construction, will also be introduced. An age limit of 16 will apply, and e-scooters with seats will not be permitted. E-scooters will not be allowed to carry more than one person nor to be used for the carriage of goods. Although the use of helmets and other personal protective equipment, including hi-vis, on e-scooters will not be required by law, it is strongly recommended by the Road Safety Authority.

As of the time of writing, there have been no significant developments from the RSA on the regulations, and we are still waiting for a timeline to introduce them.

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The History of May Day in Ireland

May Day, or Lá Bealtaine in Irish, has a rich history in Ireland, deeply rooted in ancient Celtic traditions and later influenced by Christian customs. Here's an overview of the history of May Day in Ireland:

Celtic Origins: In ancient times, the Celts celebrated the festival of Beltane, marking the beginning of summer. Beltane was a fire festival, during which bonfires were lit to honor the sun god Belenus and to ensure the fertility of the land and livestock. People would drive their cattle between the fires as a form of purification and protection.

Christianization: With the spread of Christianity, many pagan festivals were adapted or incorporated into Christian traditions. In Ireland, May Day became associated with the feast of Bealtaine, dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. However, elements of the old Celtic rituals persisted, such as lighting fires and performing rituals for fertility and protection.

Maypole Dancing: Another tradition that became associated with May Day in Ireland is Maypole dancing. This custom, which likely originated in Germanic pagan rituals, involves dancing around a tall pole decorated with ribbons. In Ireland, Maypole dancing was popular in some areas as a way to celebrate the arrival of spring and the renewal of life.

Modern Celebrations: In more recent times, May

Day celebrations in Ireland have evolved. While some rural communities may still observe traditional customs like lighting bonfires, May Day is now often celebrated as a public holiday marked by various festivities, including parades, music, dancing, and sporting events. It's a time for people to come together, enjoy the outdoors, and welcome the warmer months ahead.

Labor Day: In addition to its ancient and Christian roots, May Day has also become associated with the international labor movement. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, workers in many countries, including Ireland, began organizing rallies and demonstrations on May 1st to demand better working conditions, fair wages, and other labor rights. Today, May Day is recognized as International Workers' Day and is celebrated by workers and labor unions around the world, including in Ireland.

Overall, May Day in Ireland is a blend of ancient Celtic traditions, Christian influences, and modern celebrations, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and its connections to both the natural world and the struggles of working people.

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Stories from the Gardens:

the National Botanic Gardens invites visitors to share their memories and experiences for National Heritage Week 2024

The National Botanic Gardens is delighted to announce an exciting initiative for this year's National Heritage Week. Under the theme of 'Connections, Routes and Networks', we are calling on visitors to share their stories and memories of the gardens for an upcoming exhibition, 'Stories from the Gardens' to be held in August.

Maybe you visit the National Botanic Gardens for a walk every day or had your wedding photos taken here? Do you recall a happy memory of the gardens from your childhood? Have you a story about a famous person you met here or to a recent historical event? Maybe the connection is familial, maybe a relative worked here over the years or you are just a big fan of a particular tree or plant and come to see its progress through the growing season? Whatever the story, we want to hear it!

The exhibition will showcase the fascinating social history that has shaped the National Botanic Gardens over the years. By inviting people to submit their stories and memories, we hope to highlight the importance of the gardens locally, regionally, and nationally.

Chairman for the Office of Public Works, John Conlon said: "We are excited to hear the stories and experiences that visitors have had down through the years in the National Botanic Gardens. This historic site means different things to so many people, with over 600,000 people visiting the gardens each year. By documenting these stories, we can create a meaningful exhibition that celebrates the rich history of this iconic site."

Participants can submit their stories using a special questionnaire at the following link - [questionnaire](#) . Alternatively, you can email your story and images to Joseph Lynch at joseph.lynch@opw.ie . Entries must be received by 30 May 2024. Selected stories will be displayed in the exhibition, along with any photos that participants wish to submit.

Do not miss this opportunity to be a part of 'Stories from the Gardens' during National Heritage Week. Join us in celebrating the unique heritage and connections that the National Botanic Gardens hold.



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SECONDARY SCHOOLS UPDATE

Progress on my call to reform chaotic school application and enrolment system

This year my office has been inundated with stories of struggle from parents about securing secondary school places who hoped and expected to get their children into their local secondary school. Instead, they faced a disjointed, chaotic lottery of an application system and a reduction in local school places.

Further to the public meeting organised by parents in Kavanaghs Castleknock, I have been calling for secondary schools to be brought together to explore a common application process across Dublin West, similar to areas of North Dublin and Limerick where it has been tried and tested. It would involve a streamlined procedure with a common application form and singular deadline, allowing families to apply to multiple schools in their area, but also giving the opportunity to list their preference.

A common applications process would simplify post-primary school admissions, alleviating stress for parents, students and schools caused by prolonged uncertainty each year, and provide much needed clarity to the Department of Education on overall shortages of places.



Piece in the Irish Times, the Minister for Education has confirmed that she will now:

- Review the proposals and how they could strengthen the admissions process.
- For 2025 actions are being advanced including engagement with schools and education partners to better align timeframes and data-sharing arrangements.

I have again written to the Minister to ensure Dublin West is a priority.

If I can assist you with any specific queries in relation to secondary schools please get in touch.



The committee structure would give primary and secondary schools the opportunity to collaborate on special classes and places needed for students with additional needs in the transition to secondary school.

Since writing to the Minister in detail about how a common application process would work, raising the matter in the Seanad and securing some media including an Opinion





Artificial Intelligence

What can it do for healthcare

AI holds immense promise for revolutionizing medicine in numerous ways:

Diagnosis and Prognosis: AI algorithms can analyse medical images, such as X-rays, MRIs, and CT scans, to detect abnormalities and diseases more accurately and quickly than humans. They can also assist in predicting disease progression and patient outcomes based on various factors.

Drug Discovery and Development: AI can significantly expedite the drug discovery process by analysing vast amounts of biological data to identify potential drug candidates and predict their efficacy and safety. This can lead to the development of new treatments for diseases more rapidly.

Personalized Medicine: By analysing genetic, clinical, and lifestyle data, AI can help tailor medical treatments to individual patients, ensuring that therapies are more effective and have fewer side effects.

Remote Patient Monitoring: AI-powered wearable devices and sensors can continuously monitor patients' health metrics and detect anomalies in real-time, enabling early intervention and proactive management of chronic conditions.

Virtual Health Assistants: AI chatbots and virtual health assistants can provide patients with personalized medical advice, answer their healthcare-related questions, and assist healthcare providers in managing patient inquiries

and appointments.

Healthcare Operations and Management: AI algorithms can optimize hospital and clinic operations, such as scheduling appointments, managing electronic health records, and predicting patient admissions, leading to improved efficiency and resource allocation.

Medical Research: AI can analyse vast amounts of medical literature and clinical trial data to identify patterns, trends, and potential areas for further research, accelerating scientific discovery and innovation in healthcare.

Precision Surgery: AI-powered surgical robots can assist surgeons in performing complex procedures with greater precision and accuracy, reducing the risk of human error and improving patient outcomes.

Healthcare Accessibility: AI-powered telemedicine platforms can expand access to healthcare services, particularly in underserved areas, by enabling remote consultations and diagnostic evaluations.

Overall, AI has the potential to transform virtually every aspect of medicine, from diagnosis and treatment to patient care and healthcare delivery, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes and a more efficient healthcare system.

Up to this point this article was written by Artificial Intelligence. The future is here!

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The newly installed air-to-water heating system, known for its environmental and economic efficiency, uses external air to heat water, thereby reducing the apartment's carbon footprint and operational costs. Additionally, the upgrade includes new, fully insulated windows and doors to better retain heat and reduce energy consumption.

Tenants have expressed overwhelming satisfaction with these improvements, particularly

appreciating the simplicity of the billing system and the enhanced warmth and cost-effectiveness of their living space. These changes have not only improved the quality of life for residents but also increased the property's value, underscoring Conneally Group's commitment to sustainable living and tenant satisfaction.



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For the Gardeners – May in the Garden (What to do)

Heads can start to spin in May in the garden as the weather and growth rates really start to pick up. One walk through the garden can throw up a whole host of things to do. But whatever happens, try and find the time to sit back and enjoy this month because May is a time of abundant bloom and warm weather. One thing for certain is that the May Bank Holiday is a day for the garden. See below for what you can do in the month ahead.

Things to Consider.

There is some confusion regarding when Summer officially begins. Both Calender & weather tend to agree that it is not the 1st of May, but the 1st of June.

May Day (1st of May) does however bring warmer weather with average temperatures for May reaching a dizzying height of 12 degrees

Each year the weather can vary significantly, and this will really determine what work is to be done in the garden. Rainfall levels are the biggest concern in the month, with too much rain putting a halt to our plans and too little rain leading to water drought in plants

Pest, weeds & water levels are the main focus of the month ahead

month, including, Tomatoes, Courgettes, Squash, Pumpkins.

- Keep carrot rows covered with protective fleece to guard against carrot fly
- Weed between rows every week to keep on top of weeds, make life easy & prevent weeds from developing seeds
- Continue to sow fast growing salads every two weeks such as
- Pak choi, lettuce, spinach & rocket
- You can also keep sowing all other vegetable seeds direct outdoors in May
- Thin out rows of seedlings to specific distance
- Earth up around potatoes once they reach a height of around 10cm
- By mid-May listen out for blight warnings & apply Bordeaux mix or proxanil prior to attack
- Start potassium feed on strawberries & tomatoes
- Keep an eye out for slugs attacking seedlings

Things to Do

In the Fruit & Veg Garden

- Harden off indoor grown seedlings before planting out this



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In the Greenhouse

- Water tomatoes daily
- Water seed trays & pots every second day
- Add liquid-based feed to water to boost plant growth
- Ensure seedlings are not out growing their pots & transplant as necessary
- Open greenhouse doors on sunny days to ventilate
- Wet the floor of the greenhouse on warm days to increase humidity
- Stay vigilant for pests especially green fly on tomatoes & slugs on seedlings

- Dead head roses & once foliage has faded on spring bulbs you can cut them down to ground level
- Bring hanging baskets out from the greenhouse

General Maintenance

Stay on top of weeding - weed beds & borders with garden hoe every 2 weeks

Water hanging baskets every 2nd day in May. Increase in drier & windier weather

Get the patio furniture out, light up the chimineas, stick on the BBQs & enjoy the long warm evenings

Plant Care

- Apply the 'Chelsea Chop' technique to low growing herbaceous plants for more compact growth & better flowering, apply to Lavender, Phlox, Sedums, Heleniums, Asters, Campanula, Rudbeckia
- Place plant supports around taller herbaceous plants early
- Continue to treat & prevent against blackspot on roses
- Continue to feed all shrubs & flowering plants
- Dead head roses & once foliage has faded on spring bulbs you can cut them down to ground level

Lawn Care

May is a quieter month for lawn care, however grass growth can peak this month.

- Cut grass every 10 days, extend that to every 2 weeks on family or 'busy' lawns
- Continue application of weed feed & moss killer for ideal manicured lawns
- If not doing above, you can still feed with nitrogen-based fertiliser
- It's not too late to do repairs & patch work on lawns
- Apply lawn weed killer to kill off dandelions
- Pick dandelions flower heads to prevent them from going to seed

In Garden Beds & Borders

- Strim & cut back borders for a neat garden
- Plant out summer bedding between larger plants
- Plant out greenhouse sown perennials for summer colour

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Kildare County Council announces a series of Artist Development workshops for Kildare Creatives in 2024

Kildare County Council's Arts Service has announced a series of artist development workshops as part of a programme of wider supports for professional artists living and working in Kildare.

The first of these, programmed in collaboration with Visual Artists Ireland (VAI) will take place across the coming months. These sessions will provide Kildare artists with the knowledge and insights to analyse and speak about their own practice, bringing awareness to where it sits within the artistic landscape nationally. Two workshops scheduled for autumn 2024 will identify suitable funding streams and deliver a hands-on 'How To' workshop on writing effective funding applications.

Session 1: 'Critiquing your Work' - Led by Laura McCafferty, Public Programmes Curator, CCA Derry ~

Londonderry

Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge, Thursday 9th May
6 - 8.30pm

Visual Artists at all stages of their professional career can expect to gain insights into how to analyse and critique their own work as an effective tool for development.

Registration for this event is via the Visual Artists Ireland website through 'VAI Events'.

Session 2: 'Presenting your Work – Meet the Curator'
Online Speed curating session, Thursday 6th June
One-to-one sessions where Kildare-based visual artists will have the opportunity to present their work and



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discuss their practice with 2 curators. Curators involved are:

Valeria Ceregini, Visual Arts Curator and Historian

Dermot Browne, Artist and Curator

Moran Been Noon, Artist, Curator and Writer

Michele Horrigan, Artist, Founder and Curator of Askeaton Contemporary Arts, Limerick

Registration for this event will be via the Visual Artists Ireland website through 'VAI Events'.

Session 3: 'Practical Advice for Funding Applications' - with Curator and Art Writer, Marianne O'Kane Boal

Athy Library, Thurs 3rd October, 10am – 1pm

Celbridge Library, Thurs 7th November, 10am – 1pm

Registration for this event will be via the Visual Artists Ireland website through 'VAI Events'.

Learn more about the funding landscape in Ireland, types of funding available and avenues to support your work and practice. This hands-on workshop will also present practical examples to write your pitch, scheduling, presenting a feasible timeline and budget, appropriate supporting material and addressing the assessment criteria. It is hoped that this session will provide participants with a workable toolkit for writing proposals for creative projects. While the focus will be on visual art application forms, this session has limited availability for Kildare-based professional artists practicing across artforms.

In addition to the VAI workshops (May – November), Kildare County Council's Arts Service will develop several development and networking opportunities for Kildare-based artists working in all mediums. Details of these opportunities will be published online and in future Kildare Arts Service monthly e-bulletin editions as they


are confirmed. Other practice development supports already available for professional artists in Kildare include Executive Coaching for Creative Professionals, Research and Thinking Awards, Artist in Residence opportunities.

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Pennyhill in Lucan takes dining to the next Level!

One of Lucan's best loved bars, the Pennyhill has been busy of late creating an exciting and new host of dining experiences in their upstairs lounge. As well as dining and enjoying drinks in the main lounge, customers can now enjoy of selection of new dishes across the weekends in their newly rejuvenated lounge on the first floor.

Located on the historic land of Ballyowen, which dates back to the 16th century, The Pennyhill was opened over 25 years ago, so locals of Lucan and surrounds will already know the bar for it's great food and cocktails, weekly entertainment, sport and of course, a cracking pint of Guinness!

And now, to our delight, they have added a new tantalising menu exclusive to their upstairs lounge on Fridays and Saturdays which includes a selection of mouth-watering dishes.

Hot Stones and Flaming Ovens

A real showstopper, enjoy Steak On The Stone, order your fillet or Sirloin steak with all of the trimmings and cook it to your liking on a hot stone! Fans of Pizza can enjoy the freshest made pizza in Lucan, watch as the Pizza chefs knead and stretch the dough before it goes into a flaming stone oven! So fresh and delicious! Plus choose from a host of favourites from smoked paprika chicken wings, oven baked Lasagne, homemade burgers and Thai inspired Curry! There's something for all of the family! The upstairs lounge is open from 5pm on Fridays and Saturdays! Great for a family night out or if romance is in the air!

The Perfect Sunday Carvery!

As well as a delicious Friday and Saturday evening



offering, the Pennyhill Upstairs lounge is now home to Lucan's perfect Sunday Carvery! Available from 1pm on Sundays, customers can enjoy slow roasted joints, fresh fish of the day, homemade pies plus of course all of the trimmings including the Pennyhill's famous homemade Yorkshire pudding and roasties! You have to try these! And if you have room for after dinner, they serve a beautiful selection of desserts too! So gather all of the family together and make it a perfect Sunday afternoon in the Pennyhill!

To celebrate the new offering, the team in the Pennyhill are giving our readers the chance to win a meal for two! To enter simply scan the QR code! Good Luck!

WIN A MEAL FOR 2

IN THE PENNYHILL'S NEW UPSTAIRS LOUNGE

Enjoy steak on the stone, fresh pizza
and a host of delicious dishes.

Scan QR Code to Enter, Good Luck!



Kildare County Council Publishes Renewal Master Plans for Ardclough & Leixlip

Kildare County Council has recently published Master Plans for two areas in the Celbridge Leixlip Municipal District – the first, a Rural Settlement Renewal Master Plan for Ardclough, along with a Renewal Master Plan for Leixlip Town.

Members of the Celbridge Leixlip Municipal District joined members of the Kildare County Council executive team to launch the plans for the future development of Ardclough and Leixlip Town, both funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the 2019 Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Ardclough Rural Settlement Renewal Master Plan

The Master Plan for Ardclough aims to increase the attractiveness of the area and as a result increase its sustainability as a place in which to live and work. It also aims to enhance the area's environment, amenities and biodiversity in the interests of residents, businesses, and visitors. The plan sets out to promote the potential for tourism and as a centre for culture and local heritage, thus enhancing the sense of identity - physically and socially.

Five key local opportunities are identified in the plan:

- 1.Reconsider Ardclough's green space to establish a stronger identity along the main road, and also to enhance local and pedestrian amenity at its core, including rationalizing vehicular access and parking, higher quality footpaths, provision of street furniture, and landscaping.
- 2.Reduce the size of junction with main road, and introduce legible change in character from main road to settlement core.
- 3.Extend Village Green improvements so as to embrace Ardclough Village Centre facility, and continue to support the community garden.
- 4.Consider pedestrian facilities and safety at and on the approach to Henry Bridge, with connectivity to Grand Canal tow path.
- 5.Create a more legible streetscape, incorporating traffic calming, enhanced pedestrian facilities and safety at school zone area.

Leixlip Town Renewal Master Plan

The Delivery Plan for Leixlip identifies realistic and achievable projects that will enhance existing spaces and assets across Leixlip. Some projects relate to major transformative sites that already have a clear trajectory, but provide additional focus with the aim of accelerating delivery, while others suggest improvements to the town fabric to improve and build upon the existing public realm.

The key delivery projects identified in the plan are:

Main Street & Key Spaces - Creating welcoming entrances to the town through the inclusion of raised tables, addressing the busy nature of the road to highlight pedestrian and cycle priority and in turn help with traffic calming to the length of the main street. Also includes major improvements to key spaces such as; Arthur Guinness Square, Captain's Hill & Ralph Square, Town Thresholds East & West

Wonderful Barn – Adaptive re-use and restoration of the site as an integrated tourism and amenity destination

Heritage Trail & Play Interventions - Reinforcing the existing river-walk with upgrades to lighting and ground finishes. Punctuating the route with river terraces, to align with main street connections and to provide views to key buildings and along the river. The extension of the pedestrian connection from William Roantree Park to the Liffey Bridge and the inclusion of a new play trail along the river walk

Cycle Infrastructure Improvements - Maintaining existing cycling infrastructure and creating new connections and cycle routes around the town, in particular connecting the wonderful barn to Leixlip.

Metropolitan Workshop and MacCabe Durney Barnes were commissioned by Kildare County Council to prepare an urban design analysis and a town renewal plan for Leixlip. Jonny McKenna of Metropolitan Workshop said; "Metropolitan Workshop were delighted to work with such an ambitious client and the Town Renewal Plan demonstrates Kildare County Council's commitment to delivering a high quality town centre for all. The implementation strategy is based on a series of individual proposals which can be brought forward either together, or separately, with each piece fitting into a larger vision placing pedestrians and cyclists at its heart."

Speaking about the plans for Leixlip and Ardclough, Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive, Kildare County Council said; "The publication of plans for Ardclough and Leixlip is the result of detailed



Image: Back (L-R) - Celina Barrett, Director of Services, Kildare County Council, Ronan Linnane, Area Engineer, Kildare County Council, Cllr Nuala Killeen, Cllr Rupert Heather, Cllr Michael Coleman, John Healy, Project Manager, Kildare County Council, Cllr Joe Neville.

Front (L-R) - Cllr Ide Cussen, Cathaoirleach of the Celbridge/Leixlip MD, Cllr Bernard Caldwell, Cllr Vanessa Liston.

consultation and ongoing collaboration between the local community and Kildare County Council. Plans like these are hugely important to guide the sustainable development of these areas and their attractiveness as places to live and work."

The Ardclough Rural Settlement Master Plan and Leixlip Town Renewal Master Plan are available to view in full on our website, visit

<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Housing/PublicRealm/TownRenewalMasterPlans/>

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Making the Most of Your Summer:

Tips for Landing a Job : By Gerard Luby Assoc CIPD

1. Start Early:

Don't wait until the last minute to begin your job search. Many employers hire for summer positions months in advance, so the earlier you start looking, the better your chances of finding a job. Begin researching potential opportunities, updating your CV, and contacting employers as soon as possible.

2. Polish Your CV:

Your CV is usually the first impression you'll make on a potential employer, so it's essential to make it stand out. Tailor your CV to highlight relevant skills and experiences, such as part-time jobs, volunteer work, or extracurricular activities. Be sure to include any certifications or specialised training that may be relevant to the positions you're applying for.

3. Network:

Utilise your existing network to uncover job opportunities. Let friends, family members, teachers, and mentors know you're seeking summer employment. Attend career fairs,

industry events, and networking mixers to connect with professionals in your desired field. You never know who might have a lead on a job opening.

4. Utilise Online Job Boards:

Websites like Indeed, LinkedIn, and Glassdoor are valuable resources for finding job listings in your area. Create profiles on these platforms, upload your CV, and set up job alerts to receive notifications about new openings that match your criteria. Don't forget to check local classifieds and community bulletin boards as well.

5. Be Proactive:

Don't be afraid to contact employers directly to inquire about job opportunities. Research companies you're interested in working for and send tailored cover letters and CVs expressing your interest in any available positions. Follow up via phone or email to show your enthusiasm and commitment.

6. Prepare for Interviews:

Once you start landing interviews, it's essential to be

prepared. Practice answering common interview questions and be ready to articulate why you're the best candidate for the job. Dress professionally, arrive on time, and bring copies of your CV and any relevant documents. Don't forget to send a thank-you email or note after the interview to express your gratitude and reiterate your interest in the position.

7. Consider Temporary or Seasonal Work:

Many industries experience an increase in demand during the summer months, creating temporary or seasonal employment opportunities. Consider industries like retail, hospitality, tourism, landscaping, or event planning, which often hire extra staff to meet the summer rush.

8. Showcase Your Soft Skills:

Besides technical skills, employers value soft skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. Highlight these skills on your CV and during interviews to demonstrate your ability to excel in a professional environment.

9. Be Flexible:

While it's essential to have preferences regarding the type

of job you're looking for, being flexible can open up more opportunities. Consider parttime, full-time, or remote work options, internships, or volunteer positions that align with your interests and career goals.

10. Stay Positive and Persistent:

Finding a job can be challenging, but don't get discouraged. Stay positive, stay focused, and keep putting yourself out there. Remember that every rejection brings you closer to finding the right opportunity. Securing a job for the summer period requires initiative, persistence, and a proactive approach. By following these actionable tips and staying committed to your job search, you can increase your chances of landing a fulfilling summer job that provides valuable experience and extra income. So, roll up your sleeves, polish that CV, and get ready to make the most of your summer!

Gerard Luby Assoc CIPD is a Dublin-based CV Writer and Job Search Consultant. He has led recruitment campaigns for over 20 years, most notably for the Guinness Storehouse, where he specialised in recruiting early career candidates. As the founder of Iarracht Consulting, he helps job seekers tell their unique stories by crafting compelling CVs, Cover Letters and LinkedIn profiles.

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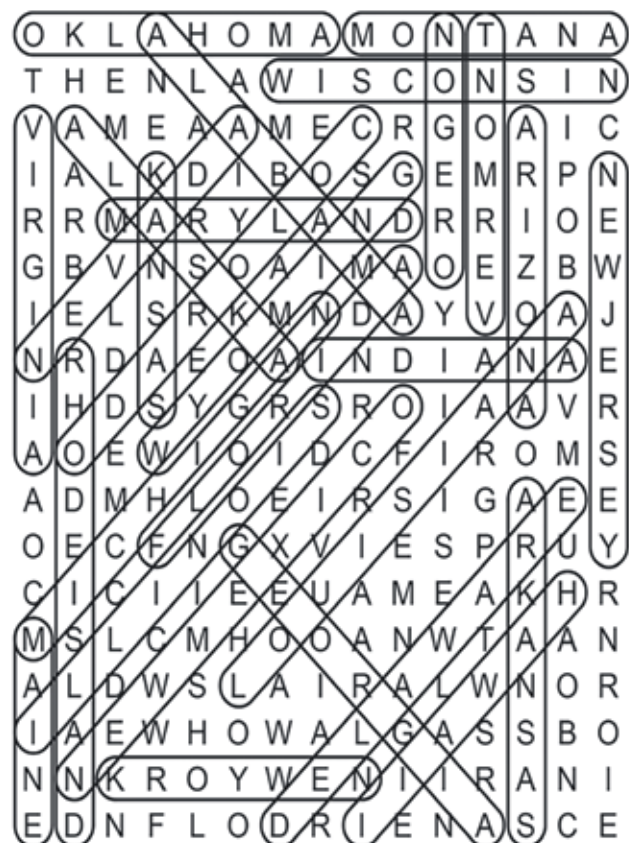
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