

ISSUE 33

APR/MAY 2022

Little Village

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**NEWGRANGE:
OLDER THAN GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZA SEE INSIDE P36**

Senator

Emer CURRIE

FINE GAEL ★

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- The Carpenter Inn
- The Carlton Hotel Tyrrelstown

EDITORIAL

Summer is just around the corner thank God and this year people will finally be able to holiday abroad in sunnier climes without too much hassle.

As we draw nearer to our six year anniversary we look at the good, the bad and the ugly of news in Dublin 15.

One issue which can only be described as a saga at this stage has been going on even longer than we

have been in print; namely residents of Tyrrelstown being at loggerheads with management companies in the area. This reached fever pitch recently with a huge protest demonstration by the unhappy residents.

In other news, Angela Donnelly of Sinn Fein has been co-opted to Fingal County Council to replace Cllr Aaron O'Rourke who resigned from his elected position due to time pressure.

Considerable parts of Porterstown Park will be inaccessible to the public for a number of months while necessary Works are carried out.

All of this and more in the latest Little Village.



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Increased funding to improve homes of older people & people with a disability in Fingal County Council

Fingal County Council is set to receive increased funding to continue its work in supporting older people and people with a disability to live independently, Fine Gael Senator Emer Currie has said.

The Housing Adaptation Grant is 80% exchequer funded through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, with 20% funding from the relevant local authority. Fingal County Council will receive a total of €3,480,028.

Emer Currie said, "This is both good news for people who need and deserve the support to live in their own homes for as long as possible and is also positive in terms of reducing dependency on our health service.

"Fine Gael is working to build stronger safer communities and it is important we support people to live in their own homes for as long as they possibly can. These grants have a really positive impact on the quality of life of the people who benefit from them and they play an important role in helping people with a disability and people who are reaching an age in life when they are less mobile, to continue to live independently in their own homes.

"Grants of up to €30,000 are available to assist people with a disability in carrying out necessary works to make a house more suitable for their needs, up to €8,000 to assist older

people to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out and up to €6,000 for mobility aids.

"Another positive aspect of the Housing Adaptation Grant is that it helps to create employment for local contractors."

Minister of State for Local Government and Planning, Peter Burke TD added, "I am pleased that funding for our local authorities to administer this scheme has been increasing year on year since 2014. This shows the importance that is attached to the scheme and the Government's commitment to older people and those with a disability.

"These grants have a huge impact on the quality of life of the many beneficiaries and play a vitally important role in helping people with a disability and people who are reaching an age in life when they are less mobile, to continue to live independently in their own homes.

"As Minister of State with responsibility for housing for older people and people with a disability, I am fully committed to assisting individuals to stay in their own homes and within their own communities for as long as possible and these allocations today will facilitate this goal for many," he concluded.



Works Commence In Porterstown Park

Extensive work began at Porterstown Park on Monday the 4th of April as part of the council's efforts to upgrade facilities in the area. As a result, significant portions of the park will be closed for a number of months.

Along with a new running track and an all-weather pitch suitable for a range of sporting codes, there will be work undertaken to build connecting paths, as well as blue badge and bicycle parking spaces. The project is anticipated to be completed by Q1 2023.

To facilitate the works and for the safety of park users, significant portions of the park will be closed. As a result, there will be inevitable disruption in the day-to-day use of the park during construction. The Council says it will do everything possible to ensure that this disruption is kept to a minimum over the coming months.

In order to maintain a level of connectivity throughout the park, a new section of footpath of over 200 metres is to be installed at the southern section over the coming days. Another mitigating factor is to close off sections of the construction site on a phased basis, including the area allocated for blue badge and bicycle parking. The capacity of parking provision will also be reduced during the construction phase and the Council would like to encourage those who can travel to the park by other means such as walking and cycling to please do so if possible.

A spokesperson for the council said;

"The Council would like to apologise for the inconvenience this will cause while the works are ongoing and thank park users for their patience during this time.



THERE IS A SOLUTION GROUP

Alcoholics Anonymous Corduff D15

Our Group meets every Saturday morning at 11am in the Corduff Community Resource Centre on Blackcourt Road and simultaneously online on:

Zoom Meeting ID: 898 5548 6555
Passcode: recovery

Our meeting is OPEN to anyone interested in learning about AA and how we help others affected by alcoholism. Alcoholics Anonymous is an international Fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem.

It is Non-Professional, Self-Supporting, Multiracial, Apolitical and available almost everywhere.

There are no Age or Educational requirements, membership is to ANYONE who wants to do something about their drinking problem.

WE CAN BE CONTACTED AT THE FOLLOWING:

085 814 1164 tiasgcorduff@gmail.com
www.thereisasolutiongroup.wordpress.com

All enquiries will be treated in the STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

Legacies of Conflict Project aims to capture the Fingal stories of the era 1914-1945

Fingal County Council Heritage Office in partnership with Archaeology and Built Heritage are working on an important Legacies of Conflict project and would love your help. There are many stories relating to the era of conflict in Fingal between 1914 and 1945. Some are widely known and commemorated, other stories may just be known within families or communities. Legacies of Conflict Fingal 1914-1945 is a project that endeavours to capture and share those stories.

Fingal Heritage Office has been working with members of the Fingal Heritage Network to identify themes, places, events, artefacts and memorials from World War I, the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence, the Civil War and World War II or the Emergency in Fingal. Those members of the Network which include historical societies and heritage groups across the County have been investigating their archives for documents, photos and memorabilia relating to events in their areas.

The project will focus on recording conflict remains in the landscape, from the concrete defences installed near the airport during World War II, to the ambush sites during the revolutionary period. Many of these sites leave little trace so it is important for them to be mapped for future generations. Another important focus is the production of a memory map where stories, films, photos and knowledge of the conflicts in Fingal can be shared.

'There has been amazing work undertaken by Fingal's

historical societies and heritage groups to date, but there are many more stories out there. I am particularly interested in capturing the social effects of these conflicts' said Fingal Heritage Officer, Christine Baker 'What were the experiences of those who stayed behind? What are the women's stories? It is important to give a voice to those often overlooked when we record these events'.

Franc Myles, project director for Archaeology and Built Heritage adds 'The principal outcome of the Legacies of Conflict project will be an innovative memory map which will visually represent this crucial period in the history of the state and enable researchers and interested members of the public to appreciate and locate what survives in the historical environment around them.'

If you have photos, stories, artefacts or memories relating to the 1914-1945 or know of sites or remains that should be recorded please contact us at legaciesofconflict@abh.ie

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Taking Charge in Hollywoodrath

I have asked the Fingal County Council Chief Executive to provide a timeline for the commencement of taking Hollywoodrath in charge. The Building Control Section of Fingal County Council is currently engaging with the developer of Hollywoodrath Estate as part of the Taking in Charge process. Fingal County Council is reviewing documentation submitted by the developer and as part of this review requiring the developer to bring the estate up to Fingal County Council's taken in charge standard. Fingal County Council is engaging with the developer to ensure a further advancement in the taken in charge process.



Spring 2022 Newsletter

2022 is a fresh start for us all, with the easing of restrictions making it easier to go back to our regular lives. We can now really start to focus on the social aspects that were taken away from us. This means more community projects that benefit us socially and mentally. Let's say goodbye to restrictions and hello to helping our communities develop and improve.

Wishing you all A Very Happy Easter!

Punam

SCHOOLS

I have been working with the council and the Department of Education and I am delighted to let you know that there is now zoning that has been put in place for primary and secondary schools which are needed to address the growing population of the area.

Hollystown Golf Club

The closing down of Hollystown Golf Course and various proposed developments have caused a lot of distress to many residents. Therefore, I have put forward a development plan to, 'Provide a recreational facility for the Dublin G.A.A. County Board, through the provision by them of a 2.5ha playing pitch and local recreational community facility including a clubhouse, related ancillary facilities and car and cycle parking'.

I have also been highlighting the issues into the safety of the current site and the necessity of having it securely fenced off to prevent children accessing it.



Keeping Our Area Safe

This area has had a substantial rise in household break-ins over the last few years which is a growing concern for households. As Councillor, it is my objective to make sure to reduce this as much as possible. I am putting forward a motion for Hollystown, Mulhuddart, Tyrrelstown and Hollywoodrath for 2022 stating that Garda patrolling in these areas needs to be an ongoing priority.



Dublin Airport Authority

On the 18th of December 2021, an application was submitted to the Fingal County Council planning department in relation to aircraft noise levels. After multiple submissions by both residents and businesses, these submissions are now being investigated by the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority individually. These submissions highlighted a need for a new north parallel runway and changes to permitted night-time aircraft movements across the entire airport. A motion will be submitted asking for the likes of double-glazed windows to areas affected by this noise pollution as a resolution.

TRANSPORT, FOOTPATHS AND ROAD DEVELOPMENTS

Many residents around the Hollystown area have expressed their concerns regarding the surrounding roads which has been an ongoing issue. After submitting a motion under the grounds that these roads are severely dangerous, I am delighted that these roads have now been repaired. A motion was submitted for 2023-2029 for the development of the Hollystown Area that remains significantly underdeveloped. As part of the NTA roll out of Bus Connects in this community, the new Fingal development plan must ensure the appropriate transport infrastructure is in place to accommodate any extension to bus routes into Hollystown. I am working to ensure that Hollystown is the quickest to receive any changes to be made as many residents are unable to access public transport at darker hours due to the danger of travelling along these paths with low visibility to cars. A submission is being made for the installation of a ramp when entering Hollywoodrath estate for the safety of residents.

Other Issues

- Gardai have been patrolling the area due to some anti-social behaviour that has been taking place around the N3 petrol station.
- I have submitted a motion for more amenities within the area. The Fingal development plan for 2023 to 2029 should include a community centre specifically for the residents. This area has been lacking many facilities for the last number of years and the last development plan fell short including amenities such as sports facilities, schools, parks, and playgrounds.
- Fingal County Council has commenced public consultation on the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and is urging the public to review the document which is now published. The public consultation will run until May 12 and during that time the document is available for download from the fingal.ie/developmentplan website and can be inspected at Fingal County Council's offices in Swords and Blanchardstown or any Fingal Libraries branch.

Skate Park

Skate parks sustain healthy communities, have positive economic impacts while providing a safe environment for skateboarding. They help with physical and mental health. A skatepark for the Tyrrelstown and Hollystown area is a new initiative that was created for the growing young population to encourage all the above. Facilities such as skate parks are generally designed with the need of users in mind. In speaking with the caretakers, mothers, and fathers of the community, many have stated that since Covid 19, children and teenagers have been struggling with their mental health a lot more than previously. A request has been made to the Chief Executive of Fingal County Council to consider the proposal made for a new skate park which is now awaiting funding.



Enterprise Centres

The BASE Centre in Mullhuddart has received confirmation of over €80,000 in facilities upgrades from Enterprise Ireland. BEAT received €250k of the total budget provided under the Dublin Rural LEADER programme with go towards renovation works – this will allow BEAT to empower remote working hub space and flexible start-up workspace. When completed, the renovations will allow Beat to expand its offering in the areas of remote working hub space and flexible start-up workspace.

Register to Vote

It is our job to make sure that your voice is heard. If you do not register, you cannot vote and it's as simple as that. Remember that your vote is your voice in issues affecting the community, housing, education, and employment. To register to vote go to www.vote.ie or to check if you are on the current register go to www.checktheregister.ie



#TeamPUNAM

Be a part of our team so we can hear your ideas. Know where you stand in our community, we would love to know your opinions. Remember that your vote is your voice in issues affecting the community, housing, education, and employment. Please contact me to let me know if you would like to become involved.



Currie Leads Campaign to Scrap Airport Set-Down Charges & Address Spiralling Parking Charges

Fingal County Council recently approved an application by the Dublin Airport Authority (DAA)

to install a tolling system for a new paid drop-off zone. As soon as I became aware of the plans I spoke out in the Seanad and called for this toll to be scrapped.

An Independent Swords Councillor and I are leading an appeal into this decision on the basis that the measure claims to be part of a sustainability agenda and would encourage the use of public transport. But unfortunately no such direct links exist for Dublin West.

I have been calling for a direct bus route to the airport from Dublin 15 but under

Busconnects it won't be delivered until 2024. The planning process for MetroLink is only starting this year.

DAA has also hiked up their parking charges and the cost of taxis are set to rise by 12.5%. This is not the time to pile on charges.

If the tolling infrastructure does go ahead I have asked a condition is included which states that, no charges are introduced until such a time as Dublin Airport is serviced by adequate public transport links. And I have called on the Oireachtas Transport Committee to take the increase in parking charges up with Dublin Airport Authority immediately.

Dublin Airport 'money grabbing' pick-up toll facing fresh challenge

Fingal County Council is opposing a proposed toll for new taxis to be introduced at Dublin Airport. It's a move to scrap the toll.

BY DAVID O'BRIEN
17th April 2023



© Senator Emer Currie



Local Ukrainian Crisis Supports

Meeting the superb team at Blanchardstown Adult Education Service

Dublin West, your kindness and generosity to the people of the Ukraine has been overwhelming and inspiring. To the Dublin West families who opened their homes and their hearts to Ukrainian families, the schools, the many community groups and sports clubs who have organised collections, fundraisers and

held events, thank you. It is fantastic to see the community response by Empower Fingal who have established a support centre in Coolmine Dublin 15 for the Ukrainian people. They are providing support for children and families on employment and welfare rights who are staying in our community. Blanchardstown Adult Education Services on Main Street Blanchardstown (D15T3KT) through the DDLETB have available education and language supports. The service provides translated information sessions to Ukrainian learners who wish to access English language tuition and free English classes as the need emerges.

For information:

01 8200952

betimarinescu@ddletbaes.ie

thiagomlaker@ddletbaes.ie



St Patricks Day Parade in Blanchardstown

Thank you to Fingal Events for organising the Blanchardstown St Patrick's Day parade. It was great to see so many community and voluntary groups out together again enjoying the dry weather after a two year hiatus due to COVID-19. I was honoured to walk with Castleknock Tidy Towns at the parade who do outstanding work for the community.



€3.5 million in Housing Adaptation Grants for Fingal County Council

The Housing Adaptation Grant is 80% exchequer funded through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, with 20% funding from the relevant local authority. Fingal County Council will receive a total of nearly €3.5 million for residents who need and deserve the support to live in their own homes for as long as possible.

Grants of up to €30,000 are also available to assist people with a disability in carrying out necessary works to make a house more suitable for their needs, up to €8,000 to assist older people to have necessary repairs or improvements carried out and up to €6,000 for mobility aids.



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Martin Savage Park - Have Your Say

I was delighted to visit St. Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh GAA Club with An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD recently and meet the Club community)

Dublin City Council recently opened a non-statutory public consultation about their plans for Martin Savage Park. Submissions can be made to parks@dublincity.ie

Currently the Park is a collection of playing pitches and is the home of both St. Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh GAA Club and the Phoenix FC. Proposals include:

- Shared All Weather and multi-sport area
- Floodlights on main GAA pitch & improvements to surface and drainage of grass pitches
- Hurling wall
- Pathway lighting
- Playground
- Paths for walking and cycling
- Tree and wildflower planting.

Please get in touch with me with your views on the changes.



Post Primary Special Classes

Recently in the Seanad I raised the lack of post-primary special classes in Dublin 15 for the forthcoming school year September 2022/2023.

This is a very difficult situation, particularly for children with additional needs whose families and teachers want to plan their transition to secondary school.

The Minister advised me that the NCSE, who are responsible for coordinating and advising on special education provision, "is currently engaged with four post-primary schools in D15 with a view to opening special classes asap." I join others in saying how disappointing it is that the NCSE has not sufficiently catered for the number of children who need special classes or special school places. I remain committed to doing what I can to securing school places in Dublin 15 for children that need them.



More Phoenix Park Chaos

Before Easter in the Seanad I raised peoples frustrations about the Phoenix Park particularly in terms of a lack of parking and the new 30kph. I think it's important to remember that the changes all relate to actions that were launched by the OPW last summer, some of which have been progressed, like the temporary cycle lanes, upgraded walkways, the pilot of a one-way-system on North Road, the pilot of a cul-de-sac on Upper Glen Road and new speed limit. But other, really important commitments, from the Study have not, like a parking strategy which was due by the end of the year to deal with the loss of 1,200 car parking spaces on Chesterfield Ave and the bus pilot. I have repeatedly flagged the need to address parking now that Zoo numbers and Park visitors have increased.

The Minister acknowledged to me that parking is a concern and that the OPW has recently appointed consultants to conduct a six-month study to identify parking options and run another public consultation specifically about parking. But in the meantime and as we head the summer we need short-term solutions and more effort by the OPW to make visitors feel welcome.

Remote Worker Gather for Launch of Local Chapter

A full house gathered for the launch of our new Grow Remote Chapter at the Hole in the Wall Pub and hear from a panel of speakers including Hazel Mitchell of eBay, Róisín Ingle of the Irish Times, a representative from remote employer FlipDish and myself. If you missed it come along to the next one – just get in touch.

The Chapter will meet regularly to connect local remote workers and discuss how to change our community for the better.



FINE GAEL 
Working with
THE FINE GAEL TEAM in
Dublin West



Councillor John Walsh

Phone: 087 6486228 Email: john.walsh@cllrs.fingal.ie  @JohnWalshDWest

Dear Resident,

I am giving a brief update on some issues which I have been working on. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or I can be of any assistance.

PROGRAMME OF WORKS

The Programme of Works for Dublin 15 was approved by the Area Committee in February – please find some details on forthcoming Council works here.

Parks and Open Spaces

Blanchardstown		Castleknock	
Blanchardstown Road North/Whitestown	Restoration of railings & landscape works	Hadleigh / Pecks Lane Open Space	Footpath Improvements on the open space
Whitestown Estate	Installation of adult exercise equipment		
Blakestown Road/Drive	Landscape project – tree, bulbs & pollinator planting	Auburn Avenue	Landscape project – Pollinator Planting Scheme
Glenville Lawn	Repairs on the remaining footpaths on the open space		
Blanch Village (Ramor Park railings)	Landscape project – Pollinator Planting Scheme	Chesterfield Estate	Landscape project – Pollinator Planting Scheme
Hazel Lawn/Roselawn Drive open space	Landscape project – Planting scheme along boundary	Castleknock Grange	Footpath Improvements
Corduff Crescent	Landscape project – Pollinator Planting Scheme	Castleknock Park	Additional hedge planting – Pollinator bed
Fortlawn Open Space	Pathway for accessible access for planters		

Traffic Management and Signage

Traffic Cushion replacement

Vehicle Activated Signs

Disabled parking bay

Mulhuddart Road – outside Saddlers Estate.

Littlepace Distributor Road (2 new VAS) and Waterville (2).

Mulhuddart Village - Installation of disabled bay for bus parking.

FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – HAVE YOUR SAY

The public consultation on the draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-29 is in progress. I am hosting an online public meeting to get input on the draft Development Plan on **Thursday 28 April at 8pm** – please email john.walsh@cllr.fingal.ie for the Zoom link.

Submissions or observations may be made before 11:59pm on 12th May 2022 either through:

- **The Consultation Portal**
<https://consult.fingal.ie/en/browse>
The portal enables you to view the Draft Plan and associated documentation and to make your submission online
- **By Post to:** Senior Executive Officer, Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department, Fingal County Council, County Hall, Main Street Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 X8Y2.



MOTION TO SUPPORT DANU COMMUNITY SPECIAL SCHOOL AGREED

Our Area Committee in Dublin 15 recently called on the Department of Education to drop its plan to locate Danu Community Special School within the existing building for Rath Dara Community College, which is unfair to both school communities. I proposed a motion, jointly with Cllr McCamley and Cllr Mahony, to call on the Department of Education and ETB to provide a dedicated, stand-alone school building for Danu on a permanent basis at the Institute of Horology, Blanchardstown village – this was agreed unanimously by the Area Committee on 7th April.

This solution would allow Danu to flourish in a safe, accessible location and enable Rath Dara to serve the local community without losing a large part of its building, facilities and space.

Working with Cllr Mary McCamley



New Connected Hubs open in Community Centres across Fingal

Fingal County Council has opened a number of new Connected Hubs across the county to help the community access facilities to remote work, study or undertake digital skills trainings.

Being able to use high-speed connectivity in easily accessible community locations is a key driver for the council to help improve the options available to people in Fingal and is essential for creating a digitally inclusive society. The Council received €40,000 from the Government's Connected Hubs Scheme and has used the funding to enhance and add capacity to remote working infrastructure in existing Community Centre BCPs: Fingal Liam Rodgers, Applewood, Tyrrelstown and Luttrellstown Community Centres.

Connected Hubs provides a space for remote workers, students, start-ups and SMEs to study or conduct business. Facilities include meeting rooms, coworking and collaborative spaces and hot desks that can be booked for a day, week or a longer-term. Facilities also host online meeting technologies including Smart Screens and high-speed broadband.

Speaking about the announcement, Chief Executive of Fingal AnnMarie Farrelly said: "The Covid-19 pandemic has brought many challenges to communities over the past two years, not least the move to a more remote and hybrid working set-up. That switch has stressed the importance of having access to good quality broadband and remote working

facilities for communities, so the development of these new hubs is a welcome addition to what Fingal is able to provide."

Aishling Hyland, Digital Strategy Manager said: "This initiative forms part of the Council's Digital Strategy which aims to make Fingal the place of choice to live, work, visit and do business in Ireland. Having access high-speed broadband and remote working facilities is a huge asset to local communities. The improvements in connectivity and the addition of smart screens will enable these centres to offer a wide variety of educational classes, hot-desking and much more."

Speaking of the initiative, Linda Ennis Principal Community Officer said: "The development of the Connected Hubs along with enhanced levels of technology in Fingal's facilities adds to the wide range of services offered to the community in a safe and welcoming environment. The Hubs will help us to connect to existing and new community clients, will increase the profile of our community facilities and will generate awareness of what else we can offer from our centres."

More information on remote working facilities, bookings and payments can be found on the Connected Hubs website – <https://connectedhubs.ie>



Women of Fingal Tapestry Launched

The women of Fingal have been captured in tapestry! As part of the Creative Ireland Programme Fingal County Council is delighted to launch the Women of Fingal Tapestry.

The Tapestry, created by artist Agnieszka 'Uisce' Jakubczyk captures aspects of Fingal's women throughout the ages from finds uncovered on the Drumanagh excavations to revolutionary women and was launched in Rush Library by Mayor of Fingal Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh.

The launch on Wednesday in the beautiful library setting was a very moving occasion for those in attendance.

This beautiful work was created to honour the experiences of women, that have so often gone unnoticed and unrecorded through time and to celebrate a memory and a legacy which the women from the Fingal area have been continually passing on through centuries, from prehistoric times to the present day. The project was funded by Creative Ireland and overseen by Christine Baker, Fingal County Council Heritage Officer.

Speaking at the launch Mayor of Fingal Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh said 'Uisce, with her own hands and artistry has woven women back into our history in this tapestry'

Christine Baker Fingal Heritage Officer said 'It is amazing to see heritage, art, archaeology and creativity combined in beautiful motifs, images that tell the story of

the women of Fingal'.

Agnieszka 'Uisce' Jakubczyk, artist praised the contribution of women to society and their values of knowledge, care, compassion, love and building and keeping communities together and continued:

"I have chosen weaving as the main technique for the piece because weaving was considered a feminine craft in Ireland through centuries. For constructing the piece I have selected fibres which would be in women's hands in various times in the history of Ireland: linen, wool, hemp, nettle and goat fibres.

Most motifs featured in the Tapestry are found in the Fingal area, e.g. three weaving tools: a needle, a weaving comb and a loom weight, found during the Drumanagh archaeological digs in 2019. Others are linked to particular women associated with the area e.g. a motif of Molly Weston riding a white horse to the Battle of Tara in 1798. There are also several motifs in the Tapestry of more universal feminine character.

I wanted to create an art piece that every single woman, from Fingal or elsewhere, could relate to in her own way."

Following a period on display in Rush Library the Women of Fingal Tapestry will now be moving to the beautiful setting of Swords Castle where it will be on display shortly.

Calling people in County Dublin to sign up to largest anti-litter initiative in the country

Registrations for the National Spring Clean 2022 are now open and people are invited to register to receive a free clean-up kit.



Registrations are now open for National Spring Clean 2022, calling all communities in county Dublin to register for Ireland's largest and longest anti-litter campaign and make a tangible impact on our environment.

The National Spring Clean campaign Ireland is largest and longest running anti-litter campaign. It is operated by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce and sponsored by the Mars Wrigley Company. It is supported by Local Authorities who help co-ordinate clean-up activities for communities within their counties and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. Local authorities also provide for the disposal of all rubbish and waste materials collected.

Over the past 23 years, through the National Spring Clean:

- Over 85,000 clean-ups have been organised
- 42,000 tonnes of litter have been removed
- 12 million hours of work have been put in by volunteers

What we can do outside the month of April

While the National Spring Clean usually runs through the month of April, please remember that personal actions throughout the year are very important too. Here are some choices we can make daily to

make a positive change:

- When you are out for a walk, visiting a park or a beach, do a quick #2minutestreetclean or a #2minutebeachclean.
- Avoid single-use plastic when possible, by choosing more sustainable alternatives, such as reusable bottles and coffee cups, cotton bags, metal straws, etc...
- Don't litter and if a bin is overflowing, keep your waste until you find a waste to dispose of it properly.
- If you can't reduce or reuse, recycle; know where and how to recycle all types of waste.
- Recent statistics show that, in Ireland, discarded cigarette butts make up for 60% of litter on the streets. Always bin your butt!
- Make sure to bin your chewing gum when you're done to avoid a €150 gum littering fine and keep our streets clean!

National Spring Clean is operated by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce in partnership with Local Authorities and supported by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and Mars Wrigley Ireland.

The National Spring Clean traditionally takes part in the month of April. For the past 23 years 85,000 clean-ups have been organised



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with volunteers dedicating a total of 12 million hours to remove around 42,000 tonnes of litter across the country. National Spring Clean 2021 was the biggest and the longest campaign so far, taking place between March and August, and despite the current situation and restrictions at the start of the year, 5,543 groups registered to carry out clean-ups throughout the country and collected an estimated 3,000 tonnes of litter around Ireland.

In 2021 over 6,500 Dublin volunteers participated in organised clean-ups to show their support to the National Spring Clean.

This year, building on the success of previous years, the hope is to make the National Spring Clean campaign the biggest yet.

The National Spring Clean is also an opportunity for volunteers to take local actions to make a change at a global scale. As a matter of fact, over the last couple of years, the National Spring Clean has also been trying to raise awareness about another crucial issue: the link between litter and climate change – the biggest environmental challenge of our time – and highlight how combined local actions can have a global effect. Our consumption patterns and how we dispose and treat our waste has a substantial impact on the levels of emissions of several greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change.

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD, said:

“An Taisce’s National Spring Clean is a real testament to the work of volunteers all over the country. These volunteers continue to organise local clean-ups every year. The past two years have proven difficult because of the necessary Covid restrictions, but this year represents a real opportunity for people to get together and help clean up our countryside. I would urge people to get involved and I would like to acknowledge the key role played by An Taisce in overseeing the campaign. My Department will continue to provide

support to the campaign and I look forward to the many events that will be held countrywide.”

National Spring Clean, Chairperson, Michael John O’Mahony, commented:

“We have all been through some unprecedented times over the last two years. We all became more aware than ever before of our local areas. Participants continued to undertake great work for National Spring Clean in family bubbles or as individuals during these times. However, we can now look forward to working together again as larger groups and communities and celebrate the success together.”

Mars Wrigley Ireland Corporate Affairs Manager, Nicola Forde stated:

“Mars Wrigley Ireland are delighted to once again support National Spring Clean 2022. We have been working on litter reduction in Ireland for over fifteen years and while great progress has been made in that time there is a need for constant vigilance to ensure old habits don’t return. National Spring Clean is a great way to raise awareness and reinforce positive behaviours.”

The National Spring Clean programme is inviting people to visit the website at www.nationalspringclean.org to request a free clean-up kit.

While waiting for the National Spring Clean to officially kick off, the programme is also inviting communities around Ireland to join other initiatives. For example, volunteers are invited to take part in the #2minutestreetclean campaign and join the conversation on social media (details in the editor’s note). Furthermore, to celebrate Women’s Day, the National Spring Clean programme will be sharing on social media stories of women who have made a positive impact on our environment and is calling people in county Dublin to share their own stories about women volunteers.



Exhibiting the Power of Printed Photographs

James Crombie, current Press Photographer of the Year, delighted in the printed images as he launched St Brigid's Photography Group's Annual Exhibition at Blanchardstown Library recently. Members exhibited over 75 images that portray life to the full, from Landscape, to Nature, Wildlife, Portrait, Macro and much more.

James Crombie on launching the exhibition explained that 'it is very important that Photographs are printed, images come alive when they are printed. They can be on a phone or social media, and they are fine, but when they are printed and presented in a large format, it truly shows the power of an image.'

The exhibition runs at the library until 18th April 2022, and everyone welcome to attend and view the variety of images from Beginners to Experienced members. St Brigid's Photo Group are very grateful to Blanchardstown Library for hosting the exhibition for the Group.

About the Photo Group

St Brigid's Photo Group has been in existence for over 21 years. The Group meet every Tuesday evening at 8pm in the Parish Centre at Blanchardstown Church after two years of Virtual meetings because of Covid. Currently, there is a hybrid of Virtual and Physical meetings to accommodate members who are still anxious about meeting people personally.

The Group is a volunteer group with a passion of 'capturing life in all its forms' in photography. The experienced photographers in the Group are wonderful in guiding, supporting and encouraging those who really want to develop

the skill of photography to capture their best shot. The membership come from a broad area, spanning many local communities and across Fingal County area and are looking to increase their membership at this time too.

This vibrant and active club is always on the go with activities, that include exhibitions, monthly photo competitions, workshops, studio sessions, monthly outings and a number of social events during the year. Some of their recent trips include shoots in Clare, Waterford, Hook Peninsula, Copper Coast and Lough Derg, the Wild Atlantic Way in Mayo, Saltee Islands and trips abroad include recently Lisbon, Bologna, Krakow, Madrid, Barcelona, London, Venice, Prague and are planning trips to anywhere in the world with opportunities to photograph the world and its inhabitants.

If you are interested in St Brigid's Photography Group please contact the group by visiting:

www.stbrigidsphotogroup.ie

Email: St Brigid's Photo Group at **saintbrigidsphotogroup@gmail.com**

Join our Open Facebook page at: **www.facebook.com/St-Brigids-Photo-Group**

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€500, 000 Community Integration Funding

The Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, has recently approved €500,000 in funding under the Communities Integration Fund 2022.

The Migrant Integration Strategy sets out the Government’s commitment to the promotion of migrant integration as a key part of Ireland’s renewal and as an underpinning principle of Irish society. The Strategy provides a framework for a range of actions to support migrants to participate fully in Irish life.

The Communities Integration Fund arises from Action 51 of the Migrant Integration Strategy, which calls for funding to be made available to local communities throughout Ireland to promote the integration of migrants and refugees. Since its inception in 2017, the Communities Integration Fund has supported over 490 projects with grant funding totalling €2.76m.

Purpose of projects/activities

This call is open to local community based groups and centres around 10 key themes to support migrant integration:

- Intercultural Awareness
- Combating Racism and Xenophobia
- Sport & Community Games
- Arts
- Food/Cuisine
- Community Events
- Capacity Building
- Employment
- Education
- Integration Research

Projects supporting the following objectives will be given special priority this year and will attract additional marking during the selection process:

- Initiatives that support the integration of migrant women;
- Initiatives aimed at supporting migrant children and youth;
- Initiatives that support migrants to meaningfully participate in the labour market;
- Initiatives that promote community volunteering.

As this Fund is intended to support the integration of migrant and host communities, all applications must demonstrate the ability to involve both migrant and host communities in the activities proposed. The maximum grant amount that can be applied for is €5,000 and the minimum grant is €1,000.

Now in its sixth year, the Communities Integration Fund celebrates the rich cultural diversity within local communities and enables local community-based organisations across Ireland to play a greater role in supporting the integration of migrants. Successful organisations stand to receive grant funding of €1,000 – €5,000 to support local integration initiatives.

Welcoming the announcement, Minister O’Gorman said:

“I am delighted to announce the launch of the Communities Integration Fund 2022. Irish society has been enriched by increased cultural diversity and we must ensure that migrants are supported to actively participate in Irish society while maintaining their own cultural identity. This funding will bolster the great work being done by local communities to welcome new cultures.”

Anti Litter Anti Graffiti Competition launched

The Anti Litter Anti Graffiti Competition has been launched. The aim is to assist groups to tackle litter and graffiti at a local scale. Any group registered under the Fingal Public Participation Network can apply for the fund. The deadline for applications is Tue May 3rd at 4.30pm. All funded projects must be completed and verified before the end of October.

This year we have added two changes:

1. Maximum funding per group is €1,500 in two payments (€750 + €750).
2. Groups requiring input or permission for projects involving changes on public lands managed by Fingal County Council should contact their local Operations Department contact as listed on the form- in advance of the submission - to get approval for the project. This is to streamline the process and makes it easier to deliver.

Please take some time to read the rules before you decide

on local projects. Applications that score well will link in with groups in the community - youth groups, gardening and Tidy Towns, Residents and estate groups. Native biodiversity is encouraged.

[Please note that Fingal County Council provide Free Recycled Paint to community groups. You can request this from our partners at the Rediscovery Centre by emailing dave@rediscoverycentre.ie giving information on the 1. type of paint (interior or exterior), 2. volume of paint needed (size and type of wall surface, 3. the desired colour(s) and the delivery point (They even deliver it!)]



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Fingal Active Travel Strategy now under Public Consultation

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The document details ambitions to increase the number of people choosing Active Travel for everyday short journeys and sets out a wide array of infrastructure and initiatives designed to support that goal.

Mayor of Fingal, Councillor Seána Ó Rodaigh says "When we talk about Active Travel we are talking about walking and wheeling activities, like cycling or scooting, as the convenient and clear choice for short journeys. A very high proportion of our journeys from home to schools, shops, sports clubs, parks and beaches could be undertaken using Active Travel. Fingal County Council is working

to add the cycle lanes, walking routes, bike rental schemes and so on that can make this change possible, and the preparation of this Strategy is an important step towards this vital shift."

The public are encouraged to read the draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal and share their views with the project team by making a submission online at <https://consult.fingal.ie/en/consultation/draft-active-travel-strategy-fingal>. An online questionnaire will also be released in the coming days for those who prefer to share their views by answering a series of questions, and this will also be made available on the Consult Portal website and at <https://www.fingal.ie/activetravel/strategy>.

At present just 18% of Fingal residents walk or cycle to work or college, while 51% commute by car*.

Director of Environment, Climate Action and Active Travel, David Storey emphasised the importance of public participation in the creation of the Strategy. "Adopting and adapting to Active Travel has the power to transform our towns and villages, with cleaner air, less traffic congestion and safer streets where people of all ages can walk and cycle without worry and enjoy our beautiful county. Ensuring the healthy, sustainable future of our communities will require effort and input from everyone so we really want to hear your reaction to this draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal, because it will touch all our lives when we move to implement it."

With further significant funding from the National Transport Authority recently announced for Active Travel projects across Fingal in 2022, and the publication of the Irish Government's updated Climate Action Plan in 2021, it is clear that we must change the way Fingal moves.

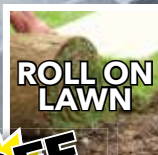
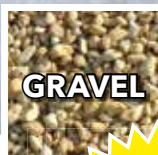
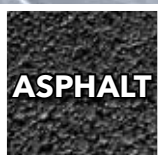
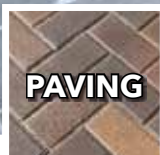
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HOW ONE PLAN SHAPES OUR COUNTY

By Daniel Whooley, Cllr for Ongar and Deputy Mayor of Fingal

On a cold February evening, 30 odd councillors and a dozen council staff members are in a state of relief. Socially Distanced desks keep them at bay from one another in a conference room of the Grand Hotel, Malahide. One final vote was needed and in harmony, councillors shouted in agreement! After 23 days, 70 hours, and 917 motions, a single plan was agreed upon by the council – a genuine demonstration of local government in action. But what document requires this much work in such a short space of time? And how significant is this document to most people?

Development Plans are a set of policies and objectives to guide how and where development will occur in the county; they are the framework for which our local towns and villages grow and interact. They provide an integrated, coherent spatial framework to ensure the local spaces are developed in an inclusive way, improving citizens' quality of life whilst also being a more attractive place to visit and work. It is probably the most consequential documents that councillors will approve.

The Development Plan's objectives and policies are the foundation for assessing all planning applications submitted to the council. The current iteration of the Development Plan, which expires in 2023, has policies like a three-storey height limit in the Clonsilla area, which has stopped several tall apartment blocks from being built. Strong objectives around biodiversity and wildlife have protected the Royal Canal from developments encroaching upon the trail.

This current draft Development Plan focuses on developing established areas (brownfield sites) by reusing and building upon our urban spaces rather than expanding into undeveloped lands (Greenfield sites). But the draft plan also tackles fundamental issues that affect the county. COVID will result in more industrial vacant units as businesses transition



to an online shopfront. An amendment to the Plan would allow the council "to identify vacant commercial units and encourage their transition to potential community infrastructure," encouraging full use of facilities and extending a building's life.

Such a minor amendment, and one of 917 to the Plan, provides an opportunity to create new community places without the need to build! Next time you walk around a Fingal town, count the number of vacant spaces, and imagine if they were filled with youth clubs, places of worship, or a men's shed rather than empty rooms! If curated with a focus on communities and sustainable development, this Plan can reinject life into neighbourhoods that struggled over the past decade of underinvestment.

The second stage draft of the 2023-2029 Fingal Development Plan is out on Public Consultation, and your opinions are needed! Fingal County Council holds loads of public events to engage with people, hear your thoughts, and explain how to make a submission on the consultation portal! The Drop-In events will take place between 4 pm and 8 pm at:

- **March 31** - The Atrium, County Hall, Swords.
- **April 5** - The Lecture Room, Blanchardstown Library, Blanchardstown.
- **April 20** - The Lecture Room, Malahide Library, Malahide.
- **April 21** - Martello Room, The Bracken Court Hotel, Balbriggan.

I look forward to reading all your great thoughts on how we can make the county better and convert your ideas into policy in the next, and final, round of the Development Plan.

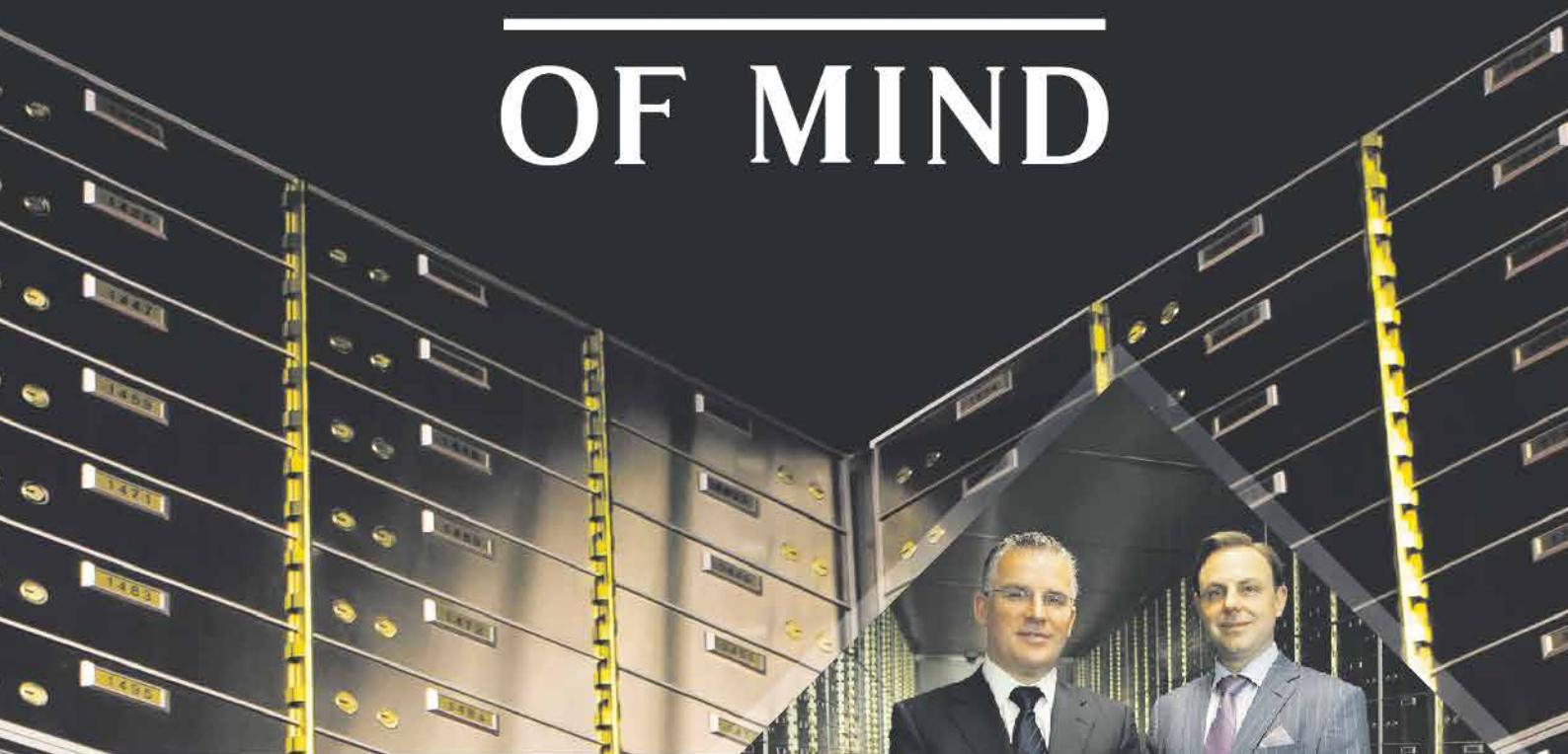
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Fingal County Council, Tyrone Guthrie Centre and Bealtaine Festival Residency Award 2022

Fingal County Council, in association with the Tyrone Guthrie Centre and the Bealtaine Festival, is pleased to announce two inaugural, month-long, residencies at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre during May 2022. These residences aim to celebrate and support older artists at all stages of their careers working in literature and visual arts.

The residencies will offer a professional visual artist and a professional writer the opportunity to research or develop new work in response to the Bealtaine Festival theme of 'Interdependence,' with the potential, if desired, to present work during Bealtaine 2023. The award is open to writers and visual artists working in all disciplines, aged 50+, who were born, studied, or currently reside in the Fingal administrative area. Fingal Arts Office, the Tyrone Guthrie Centre and the Bealtaine Festival welcome and encourage applications from artists from diverse cultural or minority backgrounds.

The residencies aim to address Fingal Arts goals, through its Arts Plan 2020 – 2025, of: connecting people and ideas; enabling excellence and fostering experimentation and risk taking.

These residencies similarly support the Bealtaine Festivals aim of celebrating creative ageing, and representation in the arts of and by older people. This initiative also supports the three organisations aim to foster the professional development of artists in their ongoing practice.

The one-month long residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, located in the beautiful, tranquil setting of County Monaghan will provide an ideal environment for the successful candidates to focus on research or the development of new work.

The Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh commented, "I welcome this new opportunity for older artists to work in this fabulous setting and envision this award will be of great benefit to them allowing them time and resources to research and test out new ideas."

Speaking about the award, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, AnnMarie Farrelly said, "As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to professional artists, we are delighted to partner with the Tyrone Guthrie Centre and the Bealtaine Festival on this new residency initiative which aims to support and celebrate older Fingal artists from all diverse backgrounds."

Director of Services, Emer O' Gorman said, "The Council is committed to encouraging and fostering opportunities for artists and is proud to support this exciting new opportunity."

The residency will take place from 1 May – 31 May 2022.

Commemorative tree planting and walk shines a light for women on International Women's Day

Fingal County Council's Community Office, were delighted to be joined by Cllr Mary McCamley, deputising for Mayor of Fingal and Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly, in Millennium Park Blanchardstown to Celebrate International Women's day on March 8th and Shine a light on Gender Bias and Safety Issues for Women. Also in attendance at the commemorative tree planting and symbolic walk event were local councillors and Director of Housing and Community Robert Burns with participants lighting the way as they walked in solidarity with women.

Speaking at the event Cllr Mary McCamley said "While International Women's day is an opportunity to Celebrate Women it's also an opportunity to highlight challenges and issues that effect their lives." Cllr McCamley spoke of the struggles of all girls and women in Ukraine at the moment and asked that they be remembered during the walk saying the walk was an opportunity to shine a light on issues and challenges women in society face so, "lets shine a light for women going forward".

Chief Executive AnnMarie Farrelly echoed Cllr McCamley's sentiments for the women of Ukraine and said: "I am delighted to be here to mark this day with all of you and it is great to see so many local residents and groups along with so many local councillors which shows their commitment to their local constituents." She went on to say "I also want to acknowledge the work of the community office in developing this exciting event. The community office has supported numerous events and activities across the county today and during this week highlighting International Women's day and celebrating women across the county. These

projects involve the work of many different departments, bringing operations, and the Community and Sports department together in collaboration. It also gives the community office the opportunity to support social inclusion of women across the Dublin 15 area and encourages them to participate and raise awareness of issues that affect their lives."

Linda Ennis, Principal Community Officer said; "It is great to be back out meeting communities and groups again and supporting these community events. The work of the community department in bringing so many exciting events across the county this week in celebrating International Women's day and we feel that this is welcomed and celebrated after such challenging times.

Over 100 people registered for the 'Shine a Light' event and many more people engaged in all of our International Women's day events this week which is great to see. The Community Development team has been working hard on getting back out and engaging with local communities and groups and developing community initiatives. We look forward to opportunities for working with communities in the coming months."

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People NOT Permits!

Tyrrelstown Residents Protest Against Clamping in Deeded Spaces

The members and residents of the T3 OMC area in Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15 are fighting against the introduction of clamping into their residential area. The T3 OMC are trying to foist this measure onto the resident members, who have deeded, designated spaces, as a weapon to force members to comply with company rules, in particular those in arrears who are withholding monies in dispute against unresolved questions and issues in the area.

Back in 2001, an article appeared in the Irish Times lauding the astounding choices and opportunities that Tyrrelstown offered a supply-starved Dublin. Fingal Co Co "pulled out all the stops" to expedite construction of the 200-acre site. Pulling out all the stops meant short-cuts, oversights and the end result of one of the most complicated, convoluted housing developments in the country.

"We were sold the dream..... an array of 70+ designs to choose from, competitive prices, builders with impressive track records, leafy boulevards and cycle & walkways lined with sycamore trees and discreet off-street parking behind them to keep it all fashionable. The reality is though, that this dream has been a nightmare, for many, over the last 20+ years. This T3 OMC has never let us live in peace", says one resident who prefers to remain anonymous for fear of company sanctions against them.

There is a dark core in Tyrrelstown which was left after the MUD Act (2011). A system which allows management companies to overcharge and to try and take funds from home owners to fund the costs of running apartment blocks, paying for non-existent services, not providing services and the exorbitant managing agent fees to the companies they employ to manage the estate for them; nearly one-third of the budget. This was made illegal for new housing developments, but was never retrospectively enacted to assist home owners in historical estates.

Now, the boiling point is being reached again and the rogue OMC's are looking to clamp and restrict parking in order to force home owners to pay iniquitous charges for services which are no longer rendered, since Fingal Co Co have taken the majority of the estate in hand.

Residents are anxious because their designated spaces will

not be protected, as they clampers will only look for a permit. It adds an onerous task to people having to remember to get each visitor a 'visitor permit' who have daily callers for the elderly and disabled, such as home helps, one off visitors, doctors-on-call. Once clamped, the release fee is extortionate at €120, at a time when people are struggling to recover from the repercussions of the pandemic and deal with inflation

The residents have a series of measures and an upcoming protest, tomorrow Tuesday, at the Purple Property Management offices in Swords, to highlight their plight and that of many other prisoners of OMCs Nationwide.

There is an imperative need to update legislation, which Micheál Martin, Joe Higgins and many other TD's have said is urgently needed over the last 15-20 years. It is time to stop this unfair double taxation of home owners in many other towns and villages up and down the country.

The mistakes of the Celtic Tiger need to be rectified to stop them being handed down to another generation of residents, voters and families.

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NEWGRANGE: OLDER THAN GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZA

Newgrange is a 5,200 year old passage tomb located in the Boyne Valley in Ireland Ancient East. It was built by Stone Age farmers, the mound is 85m (279ft) in diameter and 13m (43ft) high, an area of about 1 acre.

A passage measuring 19m (62ft) leads into a chamber with 3 alcoves. The passage and chamber are aligned with the rising sun on the mornings around the Winter Solstice.

Newgrange is surrounded by 97 large stones called kerbstones some of which are engraved with megalithic art; the most striking is the entrance stone.

Access to the Newgrange monument is via the Brú na Bóinne Visitors Centre.

Newgrange is a Stone Age (Neolithic) monument in the Boyne Valley, County Meath, it is the jewel in the crown of Ireland's Ancient East. Newgrange was constructed about 5,200 years ago (3,200 B.C.) which makes it older than Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids of Giza. Newgrange is a large circular mound 85m (279ft) in diameter and 13m (43ft) high with a 19m (63ft) stone passageway and chambers inside. The mound is ringed by 97 large kerbstones, some of which are engraved with symbols called megalithic art.

Newgrange was built by a farming community that prospered on the rich lands of the Boyne Valley. Knowth and Dowth are similar mounds that together with Newgrange have been designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Archaeologists classified Newgrange as a passage tomb, however Newgrange is now recognised to be much more than a passage tomb. Ancient Temple is a more fitting classification, a place of astrological, spiritual, religious and ceremonial importance, much as present day cathedrals are places of prestige and worship where dignitaries may be laid to rest.

Newgrange is a large kidney shaped mound covering an area of over one acre, retained at the base by 97 kerbstones, some of which are richly decorated with megalithic art. The 19m long inner passage leads to a cruciform chamber with a corbelled roof. The amount of time and labour invested in construction of Newgrange suggests a well-organized society with specialised groups responsible for different aspects of construction.

Newgrange is part of a complex of monuments built along a bend of the River Boyne known collectively as Brú na Bóinne. The other two principal monuments are Knowth (the largest) and Dowth, but throughout the area there are as many as 35 smaller mounds.

Newgrange is best known for the illumination of its passage and chamber by the winter solstice sun. Above the entrance to the passage at Newgrange there is an opening called a roof-box. This baffling orifice held a great surprise for those who unearthed it. Its purpose is to allow sunlight to penetrate the chamber on the shortest days of the year, around December 21st, the winter solstice. At dawn, from December 19th to 23rd, a narrow beam of light penetrates the roof-box and reaches the floor of the chamber, gradually extending to the rear of the chamber.

As the sun rises higher, the beam widens within the chamber so that the whole room becomes dramatically illuminated. This event lasts for 17 minutes, beginning around 9am. The accuracy of Newgrange as a time-telling device is remarkable when one

considers that it was built 500 years before the Great Pyramids and more than 1,000 years before Stonehenge.

The intent of the Stone Age farmers who build Newgrange was undoubtedly to mark the beginning of the new year. In addition, it may have served as a powerful symbol of the victory of life over death.

Each year the winter solstice event attracts much attention at Newgrange. Many gather at the ancient tomb to wait for dawn, as people did 5,000 years ago. So great is the demand to be one of the few inside the chamber during the solstice that there is a free annual lottery (application forms are available at the Visitor Centre). Unfortunately, as with many Irish events that depend upon sunshine, if the skies are overcast, there is not much to be seen. Yet all agree that it is an extraordinary feeling to wait in the darkness, as people did so long ago, for the longest night of the year to end.

Newgrange is one of the finest examples, not only in Ireland, but in Western Europe, of the type of tomb known as a passage-grave. Its probable date of erection is about 3000 BC. It belongs to a time when stone, not metal, was the everyday material for tools and weapons. No metal has yet been found in a primary context in an Irish passage-grave. The tomb consists, as the name passage-grave implies, of a passage and chamber, the walls and roof of which are built of large slabs without mortar. A large circular mound or cairn of stones covers the tomb and a kerb of massive slabs laid on their long edges, ends touching, surrounds the base of the cairn and was intended to act as a retaining feature. Surrounding the mound but situated from 7 to 17 meters outside it, is a circle of tall, widely spaced standing stones.

The Great Circle

This is the first feature encountered as one walks up the hill towards the monument. Only twelve standing-stones survive out of a possible original thirty-five or thereabouts. The four stones first seen are among the largest of those which remain and stand 2 to 2.5m above original ground level; many of the remaining stones have been broken off near the ground. None of the stones of the Circle is decorated.

The Circle is 103.6m (340 ft) in average diameter and encloses an area of about two acres. For those familiar with Stonehenge, it may be pointed out for comparative purposes that the outer bank of that monument is 320 ft (97.5m) in mean diameter. The two inner circles within the great circle at Avebury are each 340ft in diameter. There is of course no known relationship between these monuments and Newgrange.

The Mound

This is more properly called a cairn as it is made up of medium-sized water-rolled pebbles, 15 to 22cm across. White quartz stones were used as an outside finishing layer, at least in the entrance area. Quantities of these were collected during the excavations which took place between 1962 and 1975 and have now been restored to the outside of the mound. Round boulders of granite, about the size and



shape of a child's football, rugby style, which were found with the quartz, must also have been employed as a finish and they can be seen today interspersed with the quartz in the revetment wall. The theory has frequently been adduced that they were used as mauls to dress the slabs but it is clear that this was not their purpose.

At present the cairn is about 11m (36ft) high, taking its vertical height from original ground level just outside the Entrance Stone. Since the cairn is set on the highest point of a ridge of ground it appears higher than it is, especially when seen from a distance.

A continuous girdle of large slabs surrounds the base of the cairn. With the passage of time, this had collapsed downward over the kerb so that the latter had become hidden. Previous to the excavations only three kerbstones were left fully exposed, the Entrance Stone directly outside the mouth of the passage, Kerbstone 52 diametrically opposite the Entrance Stone on the north side of the mound, and Kerbstone 67 to the east. Twenty-one stones are now fully exposed to the left of the entrance and eighteen to the right, while a further eight can be seen at the back of the mound. This enables one to get a good idea of what the monument must have looked like when newly built. Many of these newly-exposed kerbstones are decorated but the three first-mentioned are by far the most striking. Only the tops of the remainder are uncovered, as one can see if one makes a circuit of the mound.

The kerbstones vary in length, the smallest being about 1.7m long while the largest is 4.5m. Those in the entrance area are between 3 and 4m in length and average about 1.2m in height above original ground level. The diameter of the kerb (and mound) varies between 79m (260ft) NW-SE and 85m (280ft) NE-SW. It encloses an area of just over one acre. To compare with Stonehenge once again, the diameter of the circle of Aubrey Holes inside the great bank already mentioned at that monument is 288ft (87.8m). These comparisons are drawn solely to give a touchstone for size to those familiar with the English monuments.



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INTERCHANGE UPGRADE SCHEME

The Snugborough Road Interchange Upgrade Scheme in Blanchardstown is advancing significantly. The project, co-funded by the National Transport Authority, includes the construction of a second bridge over the N3 national primary route with new bus lanes, footpaths, protected cycle tracks and traffic lanes giving improved accessibility to Blanchardstown Shopping Centre and the Dublin Enterprise Zone. The scheme has been designed to address network congestion issues and deliver significant improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and bus services. Measures to improve the operational efficiency of the two junctions either side of the N3 including bus priority measures that will support the Bus Connects project are included in the project.



ALL WEATHER SOCCER PITCH

I am very pleased that the sod has been turned on the new All Weather soccer pitch and athletics track in Porterstown Park. Both facilities will be up and running early next year. This is a really significant part of the wider upgrade of the park.



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The Visit at Draíocht Blanchardstown

Following its premiere as part of Dublin Theatre Festival 2021, Draíocht Blanchardstown is delighted to present its production of 'The Visit', a play about personal hope by multi-award winning Irish playwright Deirdre Kinahan, directed for stage by Veronica Coburn, and starring Mary O'Driscoll, on a 10 Venue Nationwide Tour this May and June, as part of Draíocht's 21st Birthday Celebrations.



Centered around Rose who is played by actress Mary O'Driscoll [Brooklyn (2015), The Bookshop (2017) and Ordinary Decent Criminal (2000)], this masterpiece of new theatre writing is brought vividly to dramatic life by Ireland's foremost playwright Deirdre Kinahan.

Rose's story – of a woman who opens up her front door to find a world of new possibilities, after the death of her dominating and deeply controlling husband – is funny, heart-warming and touching, exploring a hidden social reality we are only beginning to understand. It's adventurous and brave and takes us on a journey with Rose, as she gets back into her community and begins meeting new people.

We meet Rose as she stands on the empty stage, looking out into the auditorium. Imagining what it will be like when it is full. Which it will be. Tonight. When the clown choir performs. She has washed and ironed her cowgirl shirt and skirt. She likes the way the fringe swings when she wears it. It makes her feel glamorous. In the quiet of the theatre, she finds herself thinking back on the events of that morning, the events of last year, even the last twenty years. When did she stop being herself? Rose thinks about her dead husband Stephen, and her sons, and the man who knocked on her door.

"The Visit is a play about resilience. It's a play about reaching back out into the joy of life. It is a one-woman odyssey complete with ukulele, laughter, cowboy hats and cactus that audiences will really enjoy ... but there is a tragic truth at the heart of it which will linger ... giving us

all something to think about."

Deirdre Kinahan, Writer said:

"The Visit is a play about dreams. The dreams we have when we are younger about who we might become. It's about the pain of unfulfilled dreams. And the small events that lead us to think that maybe it's not too late to change."

Veronica Coburn, Director said:

"In The Visit, Deirdre Kinahan has given voice to a beautiful character who has suffered but who is now coming to a moment of awakening and strength."

Background

'The Visit' is based on Deirdre Kinahan's play 'YES' written as part of Draíocht's ground-breaking HOME THEATRE (Ireland) Project in 2018 and delves deeper into Rose's story – a woman who opens up her front door to find a world of new possibilities, after the death of her dominating and deeply controlling husband. 'YES' was inspired by the time Deirdre Kinahan spent with Dublin 15's Maureen Penrose, her HOME THEATRE host in 2018 and who's character Rose in that play tells a very personal story about her life. 'YES' was performed by Mary O'Driscoll in Maureen's home in October 2018, 3 times, to 3 invited audiences, before transferring to Draíocht's Main Stage, as part of Dublin Theatre Festival 2018. 'The Visit' had its premiere on Draíocht's Main Stage as part of Dublin Theatre Festival 2021 and now tours Ireland in 2022, thanks to a Touring Award from the Arts Council, as part of Draíocht's 21st Birthday Celebrations.

The Visit – Touring Venues & Dates 2022

20-21 May	Draíocht, Blanchardstown	www.draiocht.ie	01-885 2622	€18 / €16 conc
24 May	Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny	www.watergatetheatre.com	056-776 1674	€18 / €16 conc
26 May	VISUAL, Carlow	www.visualcarlow.ie	059-917 2400	€18 / €16 conc
27 May	Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray	www.mermaidartscentre.ie	01-272 4030	€18 / €16 conc
31 May	Hawkswell Theatre, Sligo	www.hawkswell.com	071-916 1518	€18 / €16 conc
02 June	Linenhall Arts Centre, Castlebar	www.thelinenhall.com	094-902 3733	€16 / €14 conc
04 June	Town Hall Theatre, Galway	www.tht.ie	091-569777	€18 / €16 conc
07 June	Solstice Arts Centre, Navan	www.solsticeartscentre.ie	046-909 2300	€18 / €16 conc
09 June	Riverbank Arts Centre, Kildare	www.riverbank.ie	045-448327	€16 / €14 conc
11 June	Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda	www.droichead.com	041-983 3946	€18 / €16 conc.



Tackling Climate Change Locally

Fingal publishes latest progress report on its efforts to tackle climate change across the county.

The second Annual Progress Report on Fingal County Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) has been published, setting out how it will cut half of the County's emissions by 2030 and in doing so help Ireland to reach net zero no later than 2050. First published in 2019, the CCAP sets out 130 actions across five themes that the council will take to tackle climate change for each sector of Fingal's economy.

One of the key platforms in the plan is the overall improvement of energy efficiency around the Council, with a 50% reduction by 2030. This is in addition to a 50% absolute reduction in energy-related greenhouse gases in the same timeframe.

In 2021, seven Display Energy Certificates (DECs) were generated for public buildings in the County. To assist on this, Codema, Dublin's Energy Agency, has guided the council through the procurement process for its first Energy Performance Contract related to the Blanchardstown Civic Offices and Swords County Hall.

Welcoming the progress made, Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Seána Ó Rodaigh said: "While climate change is a global problem, it impacts every one of us at a local level. As we can see in the latest action plan, the Council takes its climate action responsibilities very seriously and is committed to delivering local level leadership in the climate emergency. While many challenges remain, we are making great inroads towards a climate-neutral future."

Meanwhile, another substantial gain recognised in the latest CCAP related to the conversion of 86% of public lighting in the county to LEDs; the council believes the remainder of these will be completed in 2022. The transitioning of the Council's vehicle fleet to an electric one was also mentioned – Fingal

says 50 fully electric road vehicles (or 20% of the current fleet) are now in operation.

AnnMarie Farrelly, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, said: "We have made great progress in this second year of our Climate Change Action Plan, nevertheless we have much more to do. We want Fingal to be at the forefront of energy efficiency changes taking place in the County, and in doing so ensure that we are not only improving the natural areas and ecosystems we can enjoy right across the region but that we are helping lower our long-term costs by managing climate-related impacts on key assets such as roads, drainage, water, sewer and community facilities."

Dave Storey, Director of Environment, Climate Action and Active Travel said: "This latest progress report demonstrates the hard work and commitment the Council has shown in delivering against our climate change objectives. It's important that we continue to take the lead in combating climate change and that we are able to increase our capacity to develop the most appropriate climate actions locally."

Consultation for a new draft Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan has begun, which looks to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 as required under the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Under the CCAP, this will see the delivery of a climate change resilient ecological network throughout the county, making urban areas and farmland more biodiversity friendly while also improving water quality. It will also include several wetland restoration projects to make space for flood water and the creation of carbon sinks. Restoration of the marine environment and the potential for blue carbon capture will also be explored.

The CCAP and the latest progress report can be viewed at: <https://www.fingal.ie/climate-change-action-plan>

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Fingal County Council Sports Office welcomes €330K government funding of local community cricket

Fingal County Council Sports Office was delighted to learn of multiple Fingal-based cricket clubs achieving over €330,000 in government grants from the “Sports Capital and Equipment Programme”. This was part of an overall package announced of €150 million in new capital grants allocated to almost 1,900 applications nationwide including substantial funding for the Fingal region.

Fingal-based cricket clubs were comfortably the most successful cricket clubs in Leinster with grants awarded. North County, Rush, Swords, Tyrrelstown and The Hills secured over €180,000 to invest into improving facilities to inspire even greater community use, and in Balbriggan Cricket Club's case, a €148,500 grant towards a much-needed indoor cricket centre to serve the needs of the cricketing community 365 days a year.

Niall McGuirk, Senior Sports Officer with Fingal County Council was delighted to see passionate Fingal community clubs achieving such invaluable grants. “Congratulations from all of the sports development team to the Fingal cricket clubs for achieving such invaluable funding to support your excellent projects to build back stronger than before the pandemic. We look forward to visiting all of our cricket clubs in the summer to see the improvements

and to hear more about your ongoing projects in your local communities”.

Brian O'Rourke, Cricket Development Manager for Fingal, noted that the funding was the next step in building stronger and even more engaging cricket clubs in Fingal. “The funding pays the greatest credit to the volunteers at those clubs who have passionately committed to our goal in Fingal building a stronger community after the pandemic, and who have been recognized by the government, as worthy of the funding they requested”.

Mr. O'Rourke further added, “I hope these grants will encourage even more clubs in Fingal to consider their development plans, to work with the Fingal County Council team, and to submit for grants, as the funding available as you can see is significant from the government”.

For more information on cricket in Fingal please contact Brian O'Rourke at brian.orourke@cricketleinster.ie

1.7m Sports Funding

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and Dublin West TD, Roderic O'Gorman has welcomed funding of €1.7m for Dublin West as part of the Sports Capital & Equipment Programme.

A total of €150 million is being provided for sports clubs around the country as part of the Government's Sports Capital & Equipment Programme.

The Sports Capital and Equipment Programme (SCEP) is the primary vehicle for Government support for the development of sports and recreation facilities and the purchase of non-personal sports equipment throughout the country. Over 13,000 projects have now benefited from sports capital funding since 1998, bringing the total allocations in that time to over €1 billion.

Funding for Dublin West sports facilities as part of the latest package includes:

- Castleknock Celtic FC: €110,730
- Castleknock Hurling and Football Club: €148,591
- Castleknock Lawn Tennis Club: €117,892
- Coolmine Rugby Football Club: €150,000
- Elm Park Golf & Sports Club: €109,158
- Corduff Community Centre Sports Hall Upgrade: €150,000
- Garda GAA Club (Westmanstown Gaels): €150,000
- Hansfield Educate Together Secondary School: €150,000
- Hartstown Sports & Leisure Centre: €39,530

- Mountview Boys & Girls FC: €9,350
- Mountview Fortlawn Community Youth & Sports Hub CLG: €26,960
- St Brigids GAA (Dublin): €150,000
- St Mochtas FC Limited: €42,703
- St Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh GAA: €141,022
- St Peregrine's GAA Club: €146,755
- Tyrrelstown Cricket Club: €16,588
- Tyrrelstown GAA: €15,988
- Westmanstown Golf Club: €50,000

Welcoming the funding, Minister O'Gorman said:

“I'm delighted to see sports clubs in Dublin West receive such strong support through the Government's Sports Capital & Equipment Programme. Being active and getting involved is hugely important to our health and wellbeing, and the funding announced today will help to ensure that high quality facilities are available to everyone.

“That this is the highest ever level of funding awarded under the Sports Capital & Equipment Programme demonstrates the Government's commitment to supporting sport local communities. It is also testament to the work of Minister Catherine Martin and Minister Jack Chambers in the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.”

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