

Thursday, January 29, 2026 Price €3.70 Your Local Newspaper Est: 1980

Best Small Family Business of The Year 2021

Echo

www.echo.ie



READ IT, BELIEVE IT, REAL LOCAL NEWS – SERVING CLONDALKIN, BALLYFERMOT AND LUCAN – BE PART OF THE STORY

Tidy Towns group to cease operations next month

page 14

Lá Fhéile Bríde festival in Clondalkin

page 22



05
9 771649 962073



Basketball Club forks out €115,000 renting halls

DUBLIN Lions Basketball Club paid a whopping €115,000 renting halls for training and matches last year, *reports Michael Howley.* See page 53

CLUB OPERATE OUT OF THREE LOCATIONS IN CLONDALKIN AND PALMERSTOWN

Calls were made by community groups for local authority to purchase 26-acre site

Council concede in bid to buy Coldcut site

THE local authority conceded that their bid for the Coldcut lands was "unsuccessful", although they are yet to receive official confirmation, *reports James Roulston Mooney.* See page 13

STAFFORDS
FUNERAL HOMES



Corner of Drumfinn Rd & Ballyfermot Rd, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10. Call Us Anytime (01) 623 0050
www.staffordfunerals.com

GCM
PROPERTY SERVICES
All domestic, commercial and industrial works undertaken

- All building works & electrical works
- Plumbing and Heating
- Gas registered contractor
- Full bathroom renovation experts
- Gas & oil boiler replacements

087 861 5491
info@gcmfacilities.ie
www.gcmfacilities.ie

REGISTERED RGI GAS INSTALLER

THE Echo

Published by: *The Echo*, The Edge, Avonmore Rd, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 K07Y. Phone: 01-4685350
Printed by: Webprint Ltd, Citywest

***The Echo* Newspaper Group**
covers the following areas:

TALLAGHT: CITYWEST, KNOCKLYON, TEMPLEOGUE, RATHFARNHAM, WALKINSTOWN, BALLYCULLEN, SAGGART, RATHCOOLE & BLESSINGTON
CLONDALKIN: NEWLANDS, MONASTERY, RED COW, BAWNOGUE, DEANSRATH, LIFFEY VALLEY & NEILSTOWN
LUCAN: PALMERSTOWN, DODSBORO, ADAMSTOWN, ESKER, WESTMANSTOWN & NEWCASTLE
BALLYFERMOT: CHERRY ORCHARD, COLD CUT, CRUMLIN, DRIMNAGH, BLUEBELL, INCHICORE & KILMAINHAM

Managing Director: Emma Kennedy *emma@echo.ie*
Executive Editor: David Kennedy *editor@echo.ie*
News Editor: William O'Connor *william@echo.ie*
Sports: *sport@echo.ie*
advertising@echo.ie news@echo.ie
Photos taken by *Echo* photographers are available to purchase in digital or print format

Next Edition

The next edition of ***The Echo*** in the shops from Thursday, Feb 5, 2026. **Don't miss it!**

Man (21) 'testing' vehicle had no insurance is fined and disqualified from driving

A MAN who was "testing" a vehicle for which he had no insurance was fined and disqualified from driving at Tallaght District Court, *reports Maurice Garvey.*

Rhys Murphy (21), Drumcairn Park, Tallaght, pleaded guilty to the charge.

Garda Patrick Roche told the court that on June 7, 2024, gardai in an unmarked patrol car stopped a vehicle on Kilmartin Gardens, Tallaght.

The driver, Mr Murphy, had no insurance for the vehicle, no driver licence, and there was no NCT disc.

A passenger in the car also had no valid insurance.

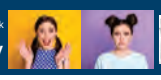
The court heard Murphy has 14 previous convictions, including 10 for road traffic offences.

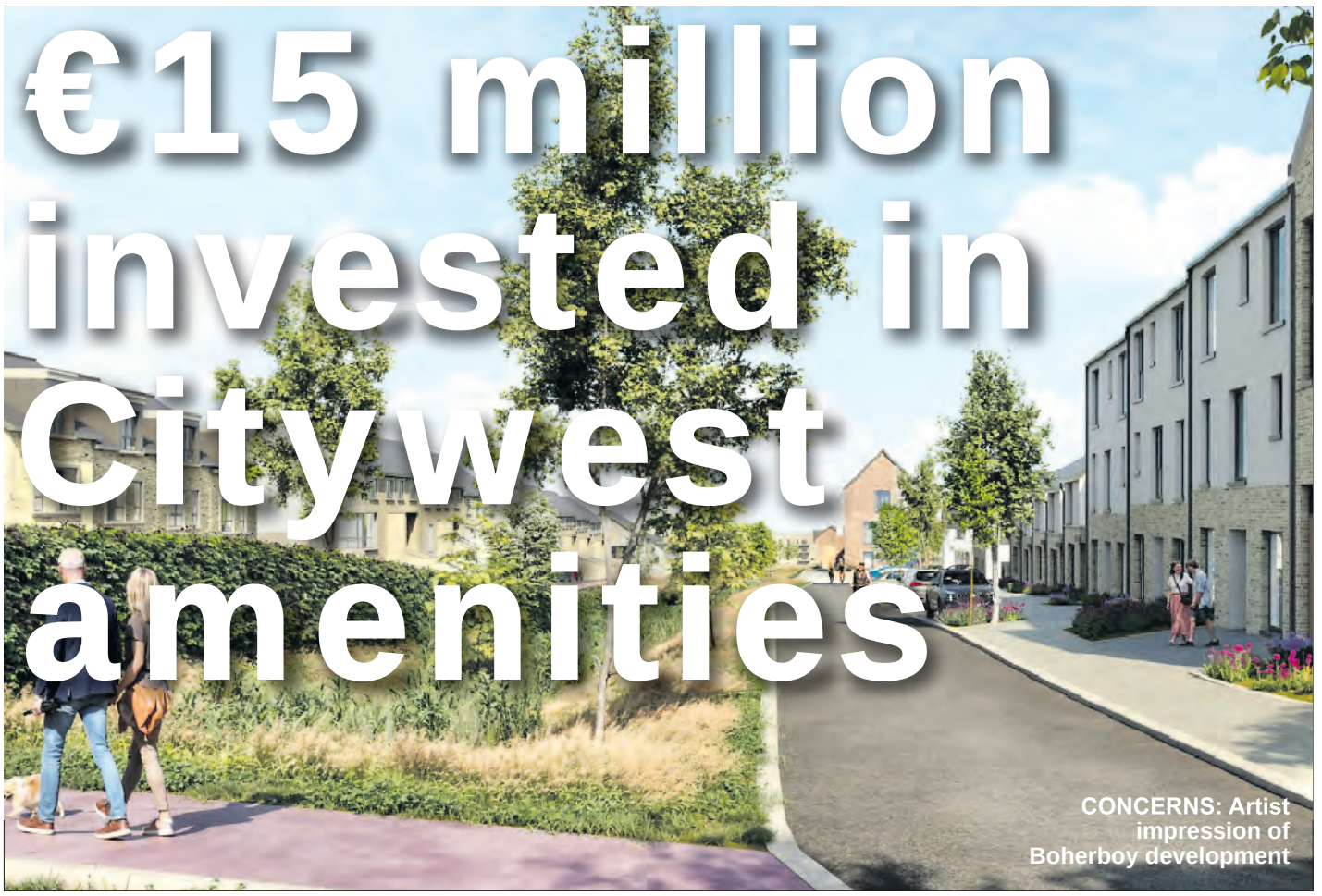
Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy said his client was looking at purchasing the vehicle and was taking it out for a test drive on the day of the offence.

His client is an apprentice electrician who is trying to get a safe pass at the moment, has "turned a corner" and doesn't want to come before the courts again, said Mr Hennessy.

Judge Liz Healy took into account mitigations, and disqualified Mr Murphy from driving for four years, and fined him €1,000, which includes a €500 fine for driving without insurance.

Funded by the Local Cort Reporting Sheme

Do you want the good news or the bad news?
Over 80 news, community, sport and feature articles every week
The ***Echo*** **– Telling the whole story**

Scan the QR code to subscribe online



€15 million invested in Citywest amenities

CONCERNS: Artist impression of Boherboy development

Opposition mounts against residential development

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

ALMOST €15million will be invested in "local recreation and amenity projects" in Citywest, as opposition mounts among residents to more residential developments.

Funding for a new library, a community centre and fit-out of Citywest Youth facility has been earmarked in the SDCC Capital Programme 2026 – 2028, which was presented at the South Dublin County Council meeting in January.

"These projects are allocated €6.865 million expenditure in 2026 and €14.9million over the course of the capital programme," SDCC assistant planner Colm Maguire stated in reply to a question from Cllr Kay Keane (PBP-S) at the Tallaght Area Committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

Cllr Keane had asked the council if they were aware of the "real concerns residents in Citywest have in relation to the proposed Boherboy LRD and the impact this development will have on an area with so little recreational/social amenities available".

The development in question is a joint planning application by Evara Developments and Kelland Homes for a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) of 611 new dwellings on two adjoining sites in Boherboy, Citywest.

Almost 90 objections were lodged by Citywest residents, local representatives and residents' groups during the six-week window for public submissions.

Many of these objections cited overdevelopment of the Citywest area and the lack of social amenities and infrastructure being built to keep up with it.

Citywest Community Council submitted an objection on the grounds of "existing and ongoing pressures on infrastructure, transport, community services, environmental protection, and the principles of proper planning and sustainable development".

Other residents and groups have raised concerns overc"intensive residential" overdevelopment in the Saggart area in recent years, as well as traffic concerns over plans to open the Corbally Heath cul de sac into an access road for the proposed development.

Cllr Keane also submitted an objection written jointly with TD and party colleague Paul Murphy, highlighting that the area "lacks sports facilities, emergency services, and basic community hubs".

"Developing further housing without first securing the delivery of these amenities is contrary to the phasing requirements intended to prevent social infrastructure shortages," they said.

In his written response to Cllr Keane, Mr Maguire noted that the application by Evara Developments and Kelland Homes included plans for a future school within the development layout, and that they have "agreed to pay a special contribution towards the delivery of the new Citywest Community Centre".

"Such payment would take the form of a financial contribution attached as a condition to a potential grant of permission," he said.

"As the application is live, it would be inappropriate for the Planning Department to comment on the merits of the application or particular issues that are being examined as part of the assessment of that application," he added.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Man (48) is charged with directing criminal organisation

By **Tom Tuite**
news@echo.ie

A DUBLIN man has been remanded in custody after he appeared in court on Monday charged with directing a criminal organisation.

Brian Grendon, 48, of Greenfort Drive, Clondalkin, was arrested by officers from the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau on Sunday night after coming back into the country.

He was charged that between the 1st of August and the 17th of September 2024, both dates inclusive, within the State, he directed "the activities of a criminal organisation in the importation and distribution of controlled drugs and the money laundering of the proceeds of the sale of those drugs".

The offence is Contrary to section 71A of the Criminal Justice Act 2006, as amended.

He was held overnight pending his appearance before Judge Máire Conneely at Dublin District Court. Dressed in a white Tommy Hilfiger hooded top and grey jeans, he has yet to indicate a plea.

Det Sgt Hugh McInerney told Judge Conneely the accused "made no reply" when charged at Kevin Street station.

The Director of Public Prosecutions' directions in the case have yet to be conveyed in court. Due to the nature of the charge, he could not apply for bail in the District Court, as the offence category requires a High Court decision.

Mr Grendon was remanded in custody to appeared at Cloverhill District Court on Tuesday.

His solicitor, Wayne Kenny, said there had been some media coverage suggesting his client was leaving the country, but he was returning when arrested and had been allowed to have his passport for travel.



CHARGED: Brian Grendon

Over €121k allocated for repairs to historic buildings

€24,200 will go towards the ruins of the former Oil Mill in Corkagh Park

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie



FUNDING: The former Oil Mill in Corkagh Park

OVER €121,000 in funding has been awarded for repairs and refurbishment works to seven historic buildings across south Dublin.

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) helps property owners to conserve and enhance historic buildings and streetscapes, while also helping to preserve and develop traditional building skills.

€8.1 million in total funding has been awarded nationwide, and will be used to repair, restore and protect historic structures from traditional homes to landmark public buildings across Ireland.

The BHIS is funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's National Built Heritage Service and is administered by local authorities.

Among the funding recipients for South Dublin County Council are St Mary's Priory in Tallaght and 3 Main Street – one of the historic terraced houses in Tallaght Village – which have been awarded €40,000 and €13,500 respectively for roofing works.

Rockbrook Park School on Edmondstown Road in Rathfarnham has been awarded €25,000 for interiors and other works, while 636 Whitechurch Road, a 100-year-old stone-cut cottage in Rathfarnham will receive €5,800 for external wall works.

St Annes Church in Bothernabreena has been allocated €7,000 for roof works and rainwater disposal, with €24,200 going towards works on historic ruins at the former Oil Mill in Corkagh Park, Clondalkin.

Knocklyon House, home to The Rutland Centre for addiction and rehabilitation services, was also awarded €5,511 for "windows, doors and associated elements".

Dublin South West TD Colm Brophy (FG) said he was "delighted to see" the €121,011 funding allocation for South Dublin County Council.

"The scheme will help property owners to conserve and enhance historic buildings and streetscapes, while also helping to preserve and develop traditional building skills," he said.

Man (20) observed moving drugs from 'A to B'

A PROBATION report was ordered for a man who was observed moving drugs from "A to B" in Tallaght.

Jamie Dawson (20), Cushlawn Drive, Tallaght, appeared before Tallaght District Court.

The court heard gardai observed the accused handling drugs on September 3, 2025 at Cushlawn Way, Tallaght, cannabis to the value of €320 and cocaine to the value of €280.

Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy said his client was a very low-level individual, simply moving drugs from "A to B" and had last worked in a factory.

His client was now drug free and has applied for treatment at CARP in Tallaght.

Mr Hennessy asked the court to consider measures available to ensure his client was not back before the courts again.

Judge Áine Clancy ordered a probation report, putting sentencing back to April 17, 2026, at Tallaght District Court.

Funded by the local Court Reporting Scheme

KEANE
Windows & Doors
Est.1985

SHOWROOMS OPEN 7 DAYS
Trinity Court, Fonthill Business Park, Liffey Valley



QUALITY & SERVICE SINCE 1985



- Double Glazing • Triple Glazing
- Anti-Bandit Windows
- Composite Doors & Repairs

For a FREE quote call:
01 6203232
www.keanewindows.ie

Pre-arranged Financing Available
FLEXI·FI
finance made simple

OC LAW
O'COCHLAIN & CO SOLICITORS

Have you made your Will?
Have you made sure your assets and property go to your loved ones?
Don't leave it on the long finger





Services can be provided over the phone where possible. If you have any queries or need any advice please get in touch.

Proud to be a Tallaght business since 2004.
Call today for expert advice in Wills and Probate, Family Law, Personal Injuries or Buying and Selling property.

Please contact:
Colm O'Cochlain at OC LAW O'Cochlain & Co Solicitors
First Active House, Tallaght, Dublin 24
at 01 4590684 or through our website
at www.ocochlain.ie to make an appointment

Work to start on old pool to bring it back into use with €2.25m investment

WORK is set to take place to bring Clondalkin's old swimming pool building back into use as part of a €2.25 million investment in South Dublin's existing leisure centres, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The old pool in Clondalkin is set to be one of the buildings upgraded over the next few years as part of the council's eight-figure commitment to upgrading leisure centres in the region.

It was recently reported by *The Echo* that an assessment was to be carried out to determine what works were necessary and what the space could be reimagined for.

Councillor Francis Timmons welcomed the news that the facility is included in the council's plans and outlined his hopes for its future uses.

Cllr Timmons said: "I have long advocated it as an art community facility, and this will be considered as part of public consultation there will be on its use.

"My hope is St. Joseph's Pipe Band, Clondalkin Youth Band & Clondalkin Drama Group would all get a home here.

"I'd love to see a public performance hall for community events and upcoming talent - it would be a multi-purpose community facility."

However, the Clondalkin councillor acknowledged that there is still a long way to go before the old pool building is back in public use.

Calls for the building once dubbed 'the baths' to be restored from a state of disrepair and returned to public use have been heard for over a decade.

Locals have taken to using the walls of the old pool for graffiti, with the street art being the most life the building has seen since its closure.

Plans to redevelop other buildings, such as the Clondalkin Civic Centre will have an effect on how the old swimming pool building in the village is repurposed.

Timmons mentioned that he spoke to an official from South Dublin County Council, who said that other works set to be carried out using the €2.25m would be prioritised, and that the works needed and timeframe of the project are yet to be determined.

"The team will work on progressing necessary works to the existing operational centres first, perhaps with some crossover in terms of timeframes whereby the consultation on the old pool commences alongside the works to the operational centres.

"SDCC Community and Architects teams will have to examine the work required and timeframes in more detail and will then update councillors on the programme."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



EXAMINE: The old swimming pool in Clondalkin

Junction has 'overshadowed' positive changes to Bawnogue

Local authority says changes made to improve safety and also promote active travel

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"THESE are better crossings now because of what was done."

The local council has stated it is open to an on-site meeting at Bawnogue between themselves and elected members to discuss the concerns raised by them.

It was requested that remedial works be carried out on kerbs at the entrance to Lealand estate in Bawnogue – a highly controversial junction since changes were implemented there last year.

South Dublin County Council noted that traffic calming measures in Bawnogue and across the county are done to improve safety and also promote active travel.

Councillor William Carey noted the struggles that large vehicles that need to make the turn at Lealand have had, citing an infamous moment late last year where a minibus was trapped on the kerb.

Cllr Carey said: "I know what we're trying to achieve here but sometimes we're creating a bigger problem if this is not working.

"I implore you to maybe go out and actually, when we're looking at these projects, that we take on board the traffic levels that are required to go through those estates."

The Clondalkin councillor also highlighted the new turn into Bawnogue Shopping Centre and a proposal to create a tighter junction at Ashwood estate in Clondalkin.

Councillor Francis Timmons stated that the junction tightening measures and the discourse around these measures has "overshadowed" positive changes to Bawnogue.

Cllr Timmons highlighted the enhancement work completed outside the local community centre and outside ACE Enterprise Centre in the area as examples of great work carried out as part of the scheme.

Timmons said: "It's lovely work, but the people aren't talking about that. What they're talking about is the trucks and cars trying to turn, trucks mainly and vans.

He added that he has a large car and that, to make the turn into Lealand, he has to move into the opposite lane to do so, due to the length of the car and feels that continued instances of this manoeuvre is "an accident waiting to happen."

Councillor Linda De Courcy stated that "things like this ruin all the good work the council does."

Cllr De Courcy noted that the area of Bawnogue looks lovely following the enhancement works and has become a more attractive area but that traffic calming measures have dampened the image of the works.

She said: "There are people who are nervous drivers, you know, who are not very comfortable behind a car, so if they have to navigate something that they're now finding very challenging and fear of a bin truck or a lorry or just a big van – them having to get around that at a junction like [Lealand], that's actually stressful.

"If you're delaying the amount of time people have to spend getting out of their estate or into their estate in the morning, afternoon or evening, that's also stressful…

"…With all the other, you know Woodford and the other ones that are planned, we need to make sure that we don't make it so narrow that it's more a hazard than a help."

Councillor Eoin O'Broin dissented from other councillors' views and stated that the changes were not about motorists but the safety of pedestrians and nearby schools.



CONCERNS: Residents at one of the junctions last year

SDCC's Senior Engineer for Road Maintenace Gary Walsh stated that the junctions were improved after the works and that designing the junctions with larger vehicles in mind would lead to higher speed entries from drivers.

Walsh said: "To design these junctions for larger vehicles – buses or bin trucks or delivery trucks – is to provide them with a radii…is actually just going to allow 80 per cent of the vehicles like that to enter at a much greater speed.

"Very few people talk about the safety of the junctions from the pedestrian perspective and these are better crossings now because of what was done."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



TRADING: The coffee van closed as their trading license was not renewed at the end of last year

Park users brewing up a storm over trade license issue

Calls for return of car park coffee van noting the importance of the location for people

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"WE'VE just removed it…we need time to get this right."

The coffee van that did not get its casual trading licence renewed will not return in the near future, as the council reiterated their intention to see the new park café succeed.

The Ruff Café in Corkagh Park opened its doors in November 2025, operating in a space delivered as part of the park's enhancement scheme.

The coffee van that was located at the car park at Corkagh Park ceased operations at the location at the end of last year.

Councillors called for the return of the car park's amenity, with one noting the importance of the location for people with mobility issues.

Councillor Francis Timmons pointed out the lengthy walk from the car park to the new café in the centre of the park and the issue that it causes for those with mobility impairments.

Cllr Timmons said: "You might argue it's a bit early or a bit premature, but I do think there's a need for people who drove into Corkagh Park and would sit in the car and have a cup of coffee.

"That's what they were doing, they wouldn't be able to walk up. It's quite a walk from the main stop up."

The Corkagh Parkrun was raised by councillors as an event that should be accommodated by the café's opening hours in the future.

The free weekly 5km run, which participants can also complete through walking or jogging, begins at 9:30am on Saturdays, with the café opening at 10am daily.

South Dublin County Council stated that the new café will open in conjunction with the park's opening hours – the park opens at 10am currently.

SDCC's Senior Executive Officer for Environment, Public Realm and Water Sharon Conroy stated that the council are "very conscious" of the parkruns and considering opening the café earlier to cater for runners.

Conroy said: "We're very conscious of the parkruns on Saturday morning. It's a perfect time for people to be able to use the toilets before they do their run.

"People after the run might like to come in for a coffee and cake or whatever it is – we're absolutely in favour of having that service for them, the same as every other user.

"The opening hours will extend as time goes on and that will be within the park's opening hours."

The local authority clarified that the toilets at the location are publicly accessible, anyone who wishes to use them can do so even if you are not a café customer.

Conroy stated that the council are looking at having those facilities open outside of the coffee shop's operating hours.

She called for patience as the council continue to work on ensuring their new amenity is satisfactory for all members of the public.

"It's just the timing, it's January, there's not as many around the park, it's getting darker obviously still a bit early…

"…I'm just asking that people are patient and we will get it."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Council are getting a Ruff time about new pet friendly cafe in Corkagh Park

"ARE hens or sheep allowed in?", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The council has urged the public to provide feedback on the new pet friendly café in Corkagh Park so that it can overcome "teething problems."

The Ruff Café at the Park House in Corkagh Park is a pet-friendly setting and is currently addressing initial operational challenges.

The local authority noted that it is not anticipated that animals other than dogs will attend, given that the park is predominantly used for dog walking.

Deputy Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Councillor Trevor Gilligan had asked some hard-hitting questions in a quest for clarification on the pet-friendly designation.

The Deputy Mayor said: "I understand the default is dog runs, people walk their dogs on leads, they don't walk cats, generally speaking.

"Maybe they do, but I don't think they do. But are cats allowed in? Are hens or sheep allowed in? Or is it dogs only?"

They also stated that all pets should be kept under the control of the owner while on the premises.

There is a spot that has been designated a pet-friendly area outside of the café, located just outside the back entrance – the area includes water bowls and its outdoor location "doesn't encroach on other customers enjoyment of the facility", according to SDCC.

Councillor Francis Timmons shared that he spent some time in the new café and has a fear of dogs.

Cllr Timmons had a "comfortable" experience in Corkagh's new café, despite some "teething issues" that he feels can be resolved.

The Clondalkin councillor shared: "I'm not a dog lover, I'm a bit afraid of dogs, but I felt quite comfortable in the coffee shop, and there was a lot of dogs around there.

"I wasn't sure whether I would like it or not, but I felt [that] the people that are running it are very animal friendly and I didn't feel at all intimidated, to be honest."

The council stated that there is a segregated area for kids to play in and that they may consider a non-pet-friendly segregated section of the café in future, pending feedback.

The licensee is also preparing to introduce a hatch service offering takeaway options, which could also be a space be utilised by pet owners without encroaching on other customers' enjoyment of the new facility also.

SDCC Senior Executive Officer for Environment, Public Realm and Water Sharon Conroy said that the council are conscious of all users' wellbeing and wish to improve the facility as time goes on.

Conroy said: "This is our first sort of pet-friendly coffee shop. So, it's new to us as well and we're looking at other pet friendly ones outside of South Dublin as well to see how they work.

"So, all feedback as I say is welcome and we will manage that as best we can because we are conscious that all of our users need to be safe, they need to feel safe and to feel comfortable.

"So, if you're going in with a child, or you're going in just to eat or you're not a dog lover, you need to feel comfortable in the coffee shop as well."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



PET FREINDLY: The Ruff Café opened in Corkagh Park

Working tirelessly to get answers



SCOPE: Andrew McGinley with his children Conor, Darragh and Carla

Andrew McGinley's children - Conor, Darragh and Carla died tragically in their family home

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"I DO not believe there is a parent in the whole country who would accept an inquest being limited in its scope."

The Taoiseach said that he will ask "why the HSE took the position it did" in preventing a widened inquest into the death of three children in Newcastle.

Andrew McGinley's children - Conor, Darragh and Carla – died tragically in their family home in Parsons Court, Newcastle six years ago.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin stated also that Minister for Health Jennifer Carroll McNeill, Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan TD and himself "would be open" to meeting with Mr McGinley to discuss the matter.

Dublin Mid-West TD Paul Gogarty had asked the Taoiseach for the widened inquest in the Dáil on Tuesday, with Mr McGinley present in the gallery.

Mr McGinley stated recently that he was seeking an inquiry into the care of his ex-wife, Deirdre Morley, who was found not guilty of murder by reason of insanity.

Deputy Gogarty stated in the Dáil that the verdict given to Deirdre Morley "has left more questions than answers" and Andrew has worked "tirelessly" to get answers.

Deputy Gogarty said: "Their father, Andrew McGinley, who is in the Gallery today, has fought tirelessly to have the full circumstances leading up to their deaths properly investigated.

"He sought detailed fact-finding processes at their inquest, including the examination of the treatment Ms Morley received in the two years before the children died. However, the coroner has limited the scope of the inquest.

"This followed correspondence with the HSE and from consultants in St. Patrick's Mental Health Services requesting such a limitation.

"I fully respect the independence of the Coroner's Court, but when the HSE asks for a limited scope, that request carries weight, and if the effect is to restrict the facts that can be examined, then the public is entitled to ask why."

The Dublin Mid-West politician added that the Coroner's Act does not limit the establishment of facts and that Mr McGinley's request to widen the scope could be beneficial for future cases.

The Dublin Mid-West politician criticised the role of the HSE in "trying to limit this particular investigation."

He also called for the role of the State claims agency overseeing the HSE to be investigated.

Deputy Gogarty said that the inquest widening request is of great public interest and could lead to improved understandings.

"To enable learning that could improve mental health care and treatment, strengthen diagnoses, ensure robust management of prescription medication, reinforce the need for co-parents to be informed and supported and, most importantly, to ensure warning signs and risks to children are recognised before lives are lost."

The Taoiseach described the matter as "very grave" and acknowledged that there were issues with "how we as a society deal with familicide."

He noted that the Government have an obligation to listen to the concerns of families who have lost their children in tragic circumstances and then act on them.

Deputy Gogarty stated on the inquiry into the deaths of the three children in Newcastle: "It's current, it's not legacy – it needs to be looked at."

Local authority will reduce their use of social media X

SOUTH Dublin County Council will reduce their use of social media platform X following concerns over harmful AI generated content on the site, *reports Ellen Gough.*

Dublin City Council announced they will suspend posting on X after an emergency motion from Green Party councillors.

Their motion called on DCC to stop posting on the main council account, as well as subsidiary accounts such as the Dublin Fire Brigade account, due to the use of Grok, the site's AI chatbot, by users to generate non-consensual sexual imagery and child sexual abuse material.

Cllr Ray Cunningham (GP) said that X was no longer fit for purpose and that there are "alternatives to X that the council can and should use, such as Bluesky and Mastodon or WhatsApp Community groups".

"The relentless monetisation and degradation of the X platform has made it less useful for communication, as users leave and posts must be promoted to be visible," he added.

Many other Irish organisations have also left X in the wake of the Grok scandal, including Women's Aid and Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC).

"Like other frontline organisations who witness the harm first-hand, we cannot disregard the unhindered and escalating abuse, misogyny, racism and hate on this once vibrant platform," DDRC said in a statement.

In a statement to *The Echo*, South Dublin County Council said they maintain a presence on X as a tool to communicate with citizens, but that they are "reducing our use and will review on an ongoing basis".

"We continue to assess the use and value of all our channels, to ensure they align with our core values set out in our Corporate Plan," they added.

The European Commission announced an investigation into Grok as they believe that X may have breached the Digital Services Act on Monday, January 26.

"We have seen over the last weeks and months antisemitic content, non-consensual deepfakes of women, and child sexual abuse material. In Europe, no company will make money by violating our fundamental rights," they said.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



SCHEME: Enhancement schemes benefit villages and districts

Enhancement schemes re-energise retail hearts

City Council encouraged to follow in the footsteps of South Dublin County Council

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"WE SHOULDN'T be having to follow others – we should be the lead."

Calls have been made to introduce enhancement schemes to areas like Ballyfermot and Crumlin following the work done in South Dublin.

Several councillors in Dublin City Council have raised the prospect of physical regeneration of suburban villages and districts such as Ballyfermot, Inchicore and Crumlin.

The calls to do so come after South Dublin County Council lined up several enhancement schemes within its remit, including works in Lucan and Bawnogue.

Councillor Vincent Jackson stated that opportunities to bring similar schemes to Ballyfermot and other areas would help the areas

"We're being asked to take thousands of extra housing units all the time. Every green open space. Every industrial estate.

"But there doesn't ever seem to be a corresponding funding stream to re-energise the retail hearts of these areas and I think it's an essential component.

South Dublin County Council…they've done it up in Tymon North in Tallaght, they've done it in Bawnogue Shopping Centre."

Enhancement schemes in South Dublin have seen areas subject to them adorned with upgraded public lighting, public seating infrastructure, and new footpath and junction improvements among other things.

Money has been earmarked for other enhancement projects in the villages of Rathfarnham, Tallaght and Clondalkin.

Councillor Michael Pidgeon pointed to the work done in Rialto as an example of work that has made a village "much, much nicer."

Cllr Pidgeon said: "I would have thought Inchicore, kind of at the junction or if you call it the village, would be a prime candidate for that because it just seems like something where there is a lot of commercial activity, a lot of commercial life, lots of people there, but it just still feels like a junction."

He added that the shopfront improvement scheme would work well alongside any future enhancement projects the council may undertake.

Cllr Jackson stated his belief that DCC should be taking the lead on projects like this rather than playing catch-up.

However, he added that he felt as if their priority to reinvigorate the retail lifespan of the heart of the city makes every other place in their remit "expendable."

"We've almost put the white flag up that everyone's going to go to Liffey Valley or Blanchardstown or Dundrum.

"If we're saying that, well then the lowest common denominator that currently prevails – nails, hair and takeaways is the predominant retail offering that we're going to offer people in the future."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



Lá Fhéile Bríde
Imbolc Festival Clondalkin

National Holiday Monday 2nd February

1:00pm - 5:00pm St. Brigid's cross, Bridóg Doll and Brat Bríde making workshops at Áras Chrónáin Cultural Centre, Clondalkin with
Meryvn Ennis, Sharon Walsh, Rachel Carroll, Oein de Bharduin and more

Brigid's Way Imbolc Pilgrimage

9:00am Meet at The Sanctuary Holistic Centre, Stanhope Street, Dublin 7
9:30am Brigid's Way Imbolc Pilgrimage departs led by Dr. Karen Ward from Moon Mná (16Km from Clondalkin). Wear suitable clothing and footwear and bring a packed lunch
Walk meeting up points
11:30am Golden Bridge Luas Stop on Canal
(6km from St Brigid's Well, Clondalkin)
1:15pm Áras na Cluaine Apartments, Clondalkin
(3km from St Brigid's Well, Clondalkin)

St. Brigid's Well, Clondalkin

2:00pm Assemble at St. Brigid's Well, Boot Rd., Clondalkin for fire and water ritual with music from Cleamairí Chluain Dolcáin
3:00pm Adjourn to Áras Chrónáin, Clondalkin

All festival events are free of charge

Festival supported by : SDCC Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council · The Sanctuary · Áras Chrónáin · South Dublin County Partnership Páirtíocht Chontae Átha Cliath Theas

Contact : clondalkinimbolc@gmail.com

court reports



Funded by the local Court Reporting Scheme

Driver (41) 'panicked' when he saw gardai while over the limit on Cookstown Road

A DRIVER who "panicked" when he saw gardai while over the limit was disqualified from driving for three years at Blanchardstown District Court.

Ross Byrne (41), The Grove, Kingswood Heights, Tallaght, appeared before court.

Garda Alex Meehan told the court that in February, 2025, gardai observed a vehicle acting erratically on Cookstown Road.

The driver, identified as Mr Byrne, at one stage was driving in the direction of the garda car which had to manoeuvre to avoid a head on collision.

From speaking to the driver, gardai concluded he was incapable of operating a vehicle in a public place.

A subsequent blood test returned an alcohol level of 170mg per 100ml of blood.

Defence counsel said his client has no previous convictions, was very apologetic.

On the night in question, his client had a few drinks and "simply panicked" when he saw gardai.

A plumber by trade, his client is partially deaf and the sole breadwinner for his partner and two kids.

Defence counsel asked the court if a disqualification could be delayed by six months for Mr Byrne to get his affairs in order.

Judge Peter White agreed to suspend the disqualification for six months, and disqualified Mr Byrne for three years and fined him €500 for the drink driving charge.

A dangerous driving charge saw a €500 fine and a two-year disqualification, which will run concurrently.

Funded by the local COurts Reporting Scheme

Man stole sweets worth €280 from service station

28-year-old is currently serving a two-year sentence and has been in custody for 13 months



By **Maurice Garvey**
maurice@echo.ie

A MAN who stole bags of sweets worth €280 at a service station received a suspended sentence at Blanchardstown District Court.

Lee Dowling (28), with an address of MacUilliam Parade, Tallaght, appeared before court in custody, as he is serving a separate sentence.

Garda Jake Dillon told the court that on July 20, 2024, Mr Dowling entered a Circle K in Citywest and helped himself to a selection of sweets, walking out without paying.

Responding to the incident, gardai checked CCTV footage in the store and identified the accused walking on Citywest Road carrying a black gear bag which contained the stolen goods.

Dowling was arrested under Section 4 of the Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Offences) Act and conveyed to Clondalkin Garda Station.

The goods, made up of individual sweet bags worth €4, were returned to the store and were in resaleable condition.

The court heard Mr Dowling has 24 previous convictions.

Defence solicitor Ciaran MacLaughlin said most of his client's offences have occurred in the last five/six years, which was proceeded by the death of his grandmother, who had a positive influence on his life, when he was 23.

"He spiralled at that point and got into a lot of trouble," said Mr MacLaughlin.

His client left school at 16 and dabbled in drugs in his early 20s "when things went wrong for him" but was pleading guilty to the charges as he wants all matters dealt with and nothing pending when he gets out.

The court heard Mr Dowling is currently serving a two-year sentence, has been in custody for 13 months with an earliest release date potentially in July 2026.

Mr MacLaughlin appealed for leniency.

Judge Peter White sentenced Dowling to six months suspended for two years to provide some light at the end of the tunnel for the defendant, but with the "sword of Damocles" hanging over him for the suspension upon his release if he reoffends.

Man driving van had no valid insurance

A MAN driving a work van that had no valid insurance was disqualified from driving for four years at Tallaght District Court.

Neil Ussher (50), Raheen Road, Tallaght, appeared before court facing road traffic charges.

The court heard that on October 14, 2024, garda stopped a van on Cookstown Road, Tallaght, and the driver Mr Ussher had no valid insurance or driver licence.

The court heard Mr Ussher has eight previous convictions including two for no insurance and was previously disqualified from driving, but was not disqualified now.

Defence solicitor Padraig O'Donovan said that on the day in question his client was using a work van and was close to home, but has not come to gardai attention since, and was seeking leniency.

Judge Áine Clancy told Mr Ussher that gardai have been "more than fair" with him.

"Somebody who has been disqualified should know better," said Judge Clancy.

Judge Clancy imposed a four-year disqualification and fined Mr Ussher €750 for no insurance and €250 for not having a valid driver's licence.

Search of home led to seizure of cannabis and cocaine worth €1,400

A SEARCH of a home which led to a seizure of cannabis and cocaine worth over €1,400, was for personal use among family members, a court heard.

Michael Hogan (37), Donomore Avenue, Tallaght, appeared before Tallaght District Court.

Garda Jimmy Dillane told the court that on November 30, 2011, a search of a property on Donomore Avenue led to the seizure of cannabis worth €1,050 and cocaine to the value of €400.

The court heard the drugs were for personal possession and family members.

"You're not doing your family much favours by giving them drugs," said Judge Patricia McNamara to Mr Hogan.

The court heard Hogan has 131 previous convictions, including 110 for road traffic offences and 10 for misuse of drugs offences.

Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy said his client has not come to garda attention since the 2021 incident and has undergone drug treatment.

Mr Hennessy said that unfortunately crime and drug addiction were normalised within the family for his client at a young age.

The court heard Mr Hogan had struggled with heroin addiction but was now on a methadone treatment programme for the last seven months.

Judge Patricia McNamara took into account the mitigations and sentenced Mr Hogan to 10 months in prison suspended for a period of 12 months on conditions that include no drug possession, unauthorised use or reoffending.


NORTH
A NEW LOVE FOR WEEKENDS
DISCOVER THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MENU
DISCOVER THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MENU AT NORTH EATERY
Available every weekend from 1:00–6:00pm.
Delicious dishes, seasonal ingredients, unbeatable value.
2 course €30 | 3 course €35
BOOK YOUR TABLE AND FEEL RIGHT AT HOME.
WWW.NORTHEATERY.COM/CITYWEST
Now Open Daily 12pm - 10pm, Book Now: +353 (0)1 461 9966
Email: citywest@northeatery.com

‘We’re in dire need of public transport’ for local commuters

Calls on Minister for Transport to reverse his decision on Dart+ project postponement

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie



DELAYED: The Dart+ South West project has been delayed

“WE’RE not surprised to see these things delayed.”

Dublin Mid-West politicians have called on the Minister for Transport to reverse his decision on the postponement of the Dart+ South West project.

Dublin Mid-West TDs Mark Ward and Eoin Ó Broin called on Minister for Transport Darragh O’Brien TD to change his mind on Dart+ South West and bring forward funding for the project in recent Dáil proceedings.

Construction was expected to begin on the Dart extension this year after planning permission was granted in 2024, but it was shelved until at least 2030 late last year.

The project was expected to commence commercial service in 2029 before the change of plans and provide better transport for South Dublin.

The line that is planned to move from Kildare through Adamstown and Clondalkin towards the city centre is expected to cater for up to 20,000 passengers per hour per direction, with the number of trains rising from 12 to 23 per hour.

Deputy Ward lamented the state of the public transport currently available to the people of Adamstown and its surrounding areas, especially with the 13,000 homes expected to be delivered in Adamstown and Clonburris.

Deputy Ward stated: “We’re in dire need of public transport…this train line was part of that, so I don’t know if you’re in breach of the SDZ, Minister.”

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 had included Dart and Luas expansions in its chapter on the sustainable movement progress in that period.

The expected future population of 25,000 in Adamstown would be able to benefit from an extra mode of public transport to cater for the demand.

Dublin Mid-West TD Eoin Ó Broin noted that the Dart situation at Adamstown and other areas at the moment is not able to keep up with the demand.

Deputy Ó Broin stated: “If you’re somebody who’s recently decided to rent or buy in Adamstown or Clonburris, in Seven Mills, and you’re looking to get a train into Dublin City during peak time or home, you simply can’t.

“Because by the time it reaches Dublin from the commuter belt, it is full and not even standing room.”

Deputy Ward declared that areas like Clondalkin and Lucan were no stranger to delayed projects and undelivered public transport promises.

Old Metro and Luas projects are among those that have been shelved over the years, including the Lucan Luas in 2000, which has no start date as of today.

Deputy Ó Broin noted that the proposed increase of capacity and frequency in the Dart+ South West project underlined the need to start the “vital” transport infrastructure extension urgently.

The Dublin Mid-West TD said: “You can see the scale of the need.”

Volunteer Cathy marks 18 years mentoring young people at risk

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

“TO SEE someone grow in confidence like that is incredibly rewarding.”

A South Dublin volunteer has marked 18 years mentoring young people in the area who are involved in, or at risk of encountering, the justice system in Ireland.

Cathy Leonard has been a volunteer with Le Chéile Mentoring for almost two decades and has worked with young people across the region from areas like Tallaght and Clondalkin.

Le Chéile Mentoring is a national organisation that supports young people aged 12 to 24 by matching them with trained volunteer mentors.

The service also provides parent mentoring, wider family support and restorative justice programmes.

Cathy joined the team to do something different than her day job and give back to the community.

She said: “I was working in science at the time and wanted to try something different. I saw an ad for Le Chéile, sent an email to find out more and here I am 18 years later.”

Cathy has worked with a lot of young people over the years through one-to-one mentoring sessions.

One case that stands out for Cathy is the sessions between a young girl who had moved to Ireland from a young age and herself.

The young girl struggled in confidence and had not finished the education cycle before she met Cathy via Le Chéile.

She was not quick to trust but Cathy was able to get through to her over time.

“At the beginning it was all about trust. She didn’t really know why I wanted to meet her. But over time that changed.

“When I got her a birthday present one year, she told me nobody had ever done that for her before. That moment really stayed with me…that’s what keeps you coming back.”

With the ongoing support of Cathy, the young girl made a return to education and went on to complete her Leaving Certificate.

Through her experience with her work at Le Chéile, Cathy moved away from her work in science and retrained as a teacher.

“I liked my job in research, but I learned from Le Chéile that I’m good at working with young people, and that I can learn as much from them as they can learn from me.”



VOLUNTEER: Cathy Leonard

BRIAN MCELROY

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

The Square, Tallaght

Tel: 452 3030





Gay Murphy and Charlie Fox at our Tallaght branch to help you with all your funeral requirements

Delighted to be offering our services in Tallaght

Superb Facilities

Our Guarantees to you:

- Personal supervision of all your instructions to us
- Funeral costs tailored to suit the family
- Peace of mind immediately after speaking with us regarding your desired requirements.

In fact, complete funeral arrangements conducted for you efficiently, competitively and competently.

"Modern standards & services, traditional values & Understanding"

info@brianmcelroy.ie

Crumlin Village, Dublin 12

Tel: 455 9101

Monastery Road,

Clondalkin Village, Dublin 22

Tel: 464 0048

The Square, Tallaght

Tel: 452 3030

www.brianmcelroy.ie



Upset after primary school and Abacas are broken into

BURGLARY: St Kevin's Boys School and Abacus Special School were broken into

Incidents are 'actually traumatic' for parents and children

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"THIS seems to have been a big operation."

The community in Kilnamanagh are shocked and upset after break-ins occurred in the early hours of Wedensday morning.

The break-ins occurred at 4:20am on Wednesday morning on the Tree Park Road in Kilnamanagh at the grounds of St Kevin's Boys National School, where Abacas Special School was also affected, and the Kilnamanagh Family Recreation Centre.

The locations were broken into by assailants and items such as iPads and laptops were stolen.

Damages to the locations were also noted to have occurred as part of the incidents but all locations were able to open on Wednesday.

A spokesperson for Kilnamanagh Neighbourhood Watch stated: "It's actually traumatic, certainly for the parents and the children."

The spokesperson for the local neighbourhood watch noted that the break-ins seemed well-planned and hoped that Gardaí make a "special effort" to catch those involved.

They added that they felt the assailants may come back for more.

"We're really getting down to where we're going to have to see guards walking the streets again…

"…When word goes around the community, it'll shock them because it's a long time since we've had anything this big."

St Kevin's Girls National School in Kilnamanagh were not affected by break-ins and no alarm was set off on their premises.

A statement from An Garda Síochána reads: "Gardaí responded to an incident of burglary that occurred at approximately 4:20am this morning, Wednesday, 28th of January 2025 on Tree Park Road in Kilnamanagh, Dublin 24.

"Investigations are ongoing at this time."

Two Women's Collective branches raise €9,100 from Tatoo Day event

THE Women's Collective Ireland branches in Liffey Valley and Ronanstown raised over €9,000 with their Tattoo Day event in Clondalkin on Sunday, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The two local WCI branches raised €9,100 throughout the day to ensure that the counselling service the Liffey Valley branch offers will continue.

Over 150 people popped into the Liffey Valley branch for a tattoo and more coming in to make a donation, with a raffle accompanying the tattoos and spot prizes also handed over to winners throughout the day.

152 people walked out of the branch office in Weavers Court on Neilstown Road, Clondalkin, with some new ink.

WCI Liffey Valley Coordinator Anna Taaffe said that the team "couldn't believe" the turnout.

"We opened the doors at 8:45am and there was just a constant stream of people all day… we were just so grateful, and we want to thank the community, and people from outside the community who travelled and came to support us on the day."

Tattoos on the day were done by Skinvibes Tattoo Dublin, a business also located in Weavers Court.

Tattoo Day Events, who helped set up the tattoo day, were put in connection with the WCI and proposed it as a way to help them with their funding problem.

The money will prove invaluable to the team at WCI, who will be able to pay their therapist and continue providing their counselling service.

The team had received a grant from the National Lottery in 2024 to help fund the counselling service they provide but have not had funding from outside the branch since.

Taaffe noted that those who did not get tattoos but turned up on the day were "very kind" with their contributions to the cause.

"People who didn't get tattoos, they were very kind with their donations and supported the raffle on the day."

Dublin Mid-West TD Shane Moynihan popped in to offer his support and a donation for the team.

Moynihan's Dublin Mid-West Dáil colleague, Mark Ward TD walked in the door and got himself a new tat.

The day proved to be a huge success and Taaffe stated that the "kindness and generosity" shown by everybody has breathed new life into her team.

"It's just amazing, it really was. The show of kindness and generosity from everybody. It does revitalise you."



SUPPORT: At the tattoo day fundraiser

Echoopinion...

Scramblers scourge on communities

SCRAMBLERS need to be banned to ensure that the terrible incidents that involve them do not take place so people can feel safer in public spaces.

A young person lost their life earlier this week after a scrambler knocked into them and instances like this will only continue if a ban is not placed on them.

Reports of near misses and injuries caused by scrambler crashes have been a constant over the years and the tragedy in North Dublin is not standalone either.

Areas like Tallaght, Citywest and Ballyfermot have been the victim of other tragedies over the years involving these vehicles.

Scrambler use on our public roads and in our public spaces can be seen across the county on a daily basis, with many used to conduct anti-social activities

The age of scrambler drivers is usually quite young, with many in their teens getting into the driver's seat of these motors.

The Gardaí seizing a load of these bikes, as well as quads in the last few years, is not enough – more needs to be done.

Hundreds of these have been taken off the streets in the last few years, but unless tougher legislation is introduced, people will only hear of similar sadness and devastation caused by these vehicles.

We'll only hear of more near misses, more injuries and worse until these scramblers are taken off our streets and away from our parks.

It should not take a tragedy to bring on a move like banning these bikes, but if this one does not, it won't be long until another comes about.

Stay safe over St Brigid's bank holiday

THE St Brigid's Bank Holiday weekend is always a time to relax and enjoy yourself, but it's also a time to be even more wary of staying safe on the roads.

Bank holidays are some of the busiest periods on Irish roads and they are some of the periods when risk of collision is at its highest, and risk of death.

Many families and people will be travelling on the roads this weekend and making the most of the long weekend, and it's important that they remain safe while they enjoy all of it too.

Nine road traffic deaths have occurred this year so far, according to Gardaí, and the authorities will hope that these numbers remain the same on Tuesday morning.

Drivers should ensure they take all precautions possible, including travelling with dipped headlights during the day and monitoring their speeds.

Cyclists and pedestrians should wear high visibility clothing, and cyclists should also make use of lighting – worn on their helmet or adorned on their bike.

An extra aspect of a ank Hohliday weekend is the freedom to enjoy time with friends all thoughout the weekend – staying in on Sunday night is optional.

People need to take care when commuting to and from pubs and clubs, ensure that the friend group either has a designated driver or all have a safe path home, through public transport or taxis.

If everyone stops and thinks before taking their journeys this weekend, they'll have a higher chance of remembering this Brigid's Bank Holiday weekend fondly.

Council concede in bid to purchase Coldcut lands

It is understood 10.82 hectares site was sold to a private developer for €5.3 million

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie


BIDS: The 26-acre site was put up for sale by Dublin Bus Services Sports and Social Club

"IT WOULD appear that the Council's bid was unsuccessful…"

The council conceded that their bid for the Coldcut lands was "unsuccessful", although they are yet to receive official confirmation.

The Council recently went through a competitive process to purchase the lands known as the Coldcut, comprising 10.82 hectares, after it was placed on the market.

Calls were made by politicians of all levels and community groups for the local authority to initiate a compulsory purchase order on the lands to retain them for public use.

The council engaged in the bidding process, but *The Echo* understands that the lands have been agreed to be sold to a private developer for €5.3m.

South Dublin County Council stated: "It would appear that the Council's bid was unsuccessful, and it is not intended to compulsory purchase the lands.

"It should be noted that the Council has not been officially notified of the outcome of the tender process."

The local authority's submission was presented in writing, and they expect a written response to this.

The 26-acre site was put up for sale in October by Dublin Bus Services Sports and Social Club and bids were accepted until late November.

The lands comprise of a former GAA pitch, a pitch and putt course and a mix of grass and astroturf playing fields.

The council recently singled out a three-hectare section of the land as a potential site for rezoning and listed as a "preferred option for public consultation."

This three-hectare site is anticipated to accommodate 200 dwellings, should a development be constructed upon it.

The singled-out section of the Coldcut lands is located in the top-left corner of the site.

However, many of the calls that urged the council to purchase the 26-acre site were made with the idea of sports pitches and other public amenities becoming available to the public as a result of the acquisition.

Several local clubs such as St Patrick's GAA Club, Collinstown FC and Palmerstown FC had expressed interest, as well as other groups such as the Clondalkin Autism Parents Support Network.

The full Coldcut site had not been in use for several years prior to the sale "for loads of different reasons", according to Councillor Francis Timmons.

Cllr Timmons noted his preference for the future of the site: "I think myself and many other people feel that we would rather see it in council control where we have some kind of say in what goes in there eventually."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Chronic absenteesim figures in DEIS and Special Schools

Over a third of children in DEIS schools did not attend school for 20 or more days

A NEW report from the ESRI has found that chronic absenteeism figures in DEIS schools and special schools are twice as prevalent as their counterparts, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

Over a third of children in DEIS schools and special schools did not attend school for 20 or more days in the academic years of 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The report, produced in partnership with the Tusla Education Support Service, used administrative data to look at patterns of absenteeism in the two school years.

DEIS Urban Band 1 schools have the highest proportion of chronic absenteeism out of all types of schools in the country at 39.8 per cent – just under two in every five children.

DEIS Urban Band 1 are schools with the highest concentration of educational disadvantage – 305 schools in the country fall under this bracket in 2025/26, including schools in Tallaght and Clondalkin.

Special schools hold a rate of 34.53 per cent of students chronically absent, while DEIS Urban Band 2 schools come in just under the 33 per cent mark – both showing a rate of around one in every three kids being chronically absent.

In non-DEIS schools, the proportion of chronically absent students is 19.94 per cent, below the overall average of 22.93 per cent, around one in every five kids in non-DEIS schools were absent for 20 or more days a year.

In terms of days lost per student in schools, Band 1 and special schools come out on top again, with over 20 days lost per student on average at both.

The average number of days lost per student in non-DEIS schools is just under 14, six days less than their counterparts.

Primary DEIS students miss between 5.8 and 7 more days of school on average compared to non-DEIS schools, while post-primary DEIS students miss between 3.7 and 4.5 days more.

The findings show that the wealth of an area correlates to school attendance levels - however, smaller schools at primary outperform larger schools, but DEIS schools struggles most out of any type of school.

The results of the study display that DEIS schools and special schools at both primary and post-primary levels are not recovering as well as non-DEIS schools in the post-COVID world.



Tidy Towns group can no longer function without storage space



STORAGE SPACE: Clondalkin Tidy Towns have announced it will cease operations

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"CTT committee have reluctantly decided that we can no longer function."

Clondalkin Tidy Towns has announced that it will cease operations by the end of February if the local authority does not provide them with "essential" storage space.

Clondalkin Tidy Towns has been looking for an additional storage container since 2024 after the initial one provided to them by the council in 2012 became full.

The local community group received "initial verbal approval" from South Dublin County Council but has not heard a final decision on the matter.

They note that the additional storage space is vital for their continued existence and that they have had to reject funding approval for additional equipment as they would have nowhere to store it.

In a letter to SDCC Chief Executive Colm Ward, the Tidy Towns group said: "CTT committee have reluctantly decided that we can no longer function effectively without a positive resolution to this issue.

"This is not a step Clondalkin Tidy Towns wish to take, but it is unavoidable without the necessary approval of a second container to continue our work in the community.

"We would appreciate written confirmation of SDCC's decision as a matter of urgency."

CTT has received multiple awards since their inception in 2012 and has increased the score of Clondalkin Village from 202 to 363.

Grants and supports have helped the community group survive throughout the years, including ones provided by the council.

Major projects such as 1916 Memorial Garden and multiple permanent planters are examples of the connection between SDCC and CTT.

The council noted that built-in storage space could be provided through the redevelopment of the old pool building beside the leisure centre.

However, SDCC also stated that storage containers located in parks and open spaces "tend to attract antisocial activities" and suggestions about locations received from groups have not yet been feasible.

SDCC stated: "The Public Realm Section does not provide storage facilities for groups.

"The cost of funding these facilities would be a matter for the groups concerned.

"Storage containers that are located in parks and open spaces tend to attract antisocial activities and are not considered to be a long-term viable solution.

"For this reason, siting such facilities in a public area is an onerous task. Suggestions received from groups for locating containers to date have not been feasible due to the proposed site being unavailable, unsuitable or too close to houses."



CLEAN UP: The Tidy Towns group does weekly litter clean ups in Clondalkin



PARKING ISSUES: The development at Airton Plaza opened before Christmas

Tension rises between bus

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

COUNCIL staff have agreed to arrange a meeting with the managers of a residential development on Airton Road to discuss solutions to parking shortages.

A major influx of residential traffic from the new 230-unit Airton Plaza development, and the prospect of further residential developments further along the road, is causing tension between new residents and businesses along Airton Road.

Cllr Mick Duff (Ind) led the calls for council staff to meet with Clúid Housing, who manage the Airton Plaza development, with a motion asking them to "discuss the potential usage of retained commercial spaces by tenants, as the shortage of spaces is causing great difficulties for tenants".

Speaking on his motion at the Tallaght Area Committee meeting on Monday, January 26, Cllr Duff said many residents had been in contact with him and highlighted the issues caused by the parking shortages and ongoing works along Airton Road.

"At the present moment Irish Water are doing major roadworks down there – that already sends cold shivers up my spine because Active Travel is going to come after that – and what are we going to do then with all of those parking spaces the full length of the Airton Road, where are they going to go?" he asked.

"It's a problem for dealing with now," Cllr Duff said, adding that he had read the reply from John Hegarty, senior engineer for road design at South Dublin County Council, and that council staff "were going to do your best to solve it".

His motion received wide support from other councillors at the Tallaght meeting, who said they had also heard from residents of Airton Plaza over parking issues.

In his written reply to Cllr Duff, Mr Hegarty said that council staff would meet with Clúid Housing to discuss parking management at the Airton Plaza development and "in particular… all parking allocations at the development including the commercial element within the development".

He noted that in the planning application it was agreed that 184 parking spaces would be provided for 328 apartments in the Airton Plaza development, 230 of which are managed as cost-rental homes by Clúid Housing, an approved housing body (AHB).



Council plan meeting over Airton Road parking space

sinesses and new developments over parking along busy road

"This is a parking ratio of 0.56 parking spaces per unit… this is a low parking ratio, but the figure is not the lowest levels granted in the Tallaght electoral area," he said.

Speaking to councillors at Monday's meeting, Mr Hegarty said he had already met with one of the managers of the development from Clúid, who was "preparing a plan to see what options he has".

"His options are pretty limited because they [Clúid] have rented a certain number of spaces off the developer in an agreement," he said.

He also said the council would look into "parking hubs" or "overflow parking" in place within the Airton Plaza development as a temporary measure until planned public transport links were established along the Airton Road.

"As the public transport comes through, we can then repurpose that," he said, noting that these links have not "come through as quickly as we would've thought".

Mr Hegarty also said the manager "would talk to the developer in relation to the small number of commercial spots available" though that could prove difficult as these are due to be sold.

He also noted a point raised by Cllr Jess Spear (PBP-S) who said she had been contacted by a resident of Airton Plaza whose partner had only recently become disabled and was having difficulty in obtaining a disabled parking space within the development.

"There should be a proportion of disabled spaces, a minimum number, that said if more tenants become disabled then Clúid should be managing that aspect of it, they should be adjusting that."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



ISSUES: Emergency services attending an accident on Airton Road two weeks ago

192 bonfire damaged facilities still in need of repair

"BONFIRES are an unnecessary and avoidable extra burden", *reports James Roulston Mooney*.

Almost 200 bonfires were lit across South Dublin during Halloween, which resulted in considerable damage to public facilities that are still in need of repair.

192 bonfires were set alight in South Dublin leading to damage of green spaces across the region, as well as the vandalization of other public facilities – 14 of these occurred in the Rathfarnham/Templeogue/Firhouse/Bohernabreena area.

Some of the sites where the fires took place are still in need of restoration, with some work delayed due to cold conditions and the state of the ground throughout the winter season.

A Halloween leaflet from South Dublin County Council stated: "Bonfires are bad for our environment, burnt earth on our open spaces takes approximately 18 months to recover…

"…Every year Dublin Fire, Ambulance and Rescue Services answer hundreds of calls over the Halloween period. Respect the Emergency Services, Council Staff and An Garda Síochána who are already busy fighting fires and saving lives.

"Bonfires are an unnecessary and avoidable extra burden on them."

SDCC use a cross-departmental approach to to prevent damage and promote the "Safe Halloween" message, as well as liaising with An Garda Síochána.

The communication with Gardaí ensures that both parties coordinate well on the issue and ensure actions taken by both bodies are effective.

The council has run several initiatives to promote safe ways to celebrate Halloween and noted that they engaged with local communities on the topic.

The council provide communities and resident groups with plant bulbs through the 'Bulbs Not Bonfires' initiative instead of creating bonfires on Halloween.

The initiative is intended to promote pride in green areas within estates across South Dublin.

Free recycling events held in the run-up to the autumn celebrations and a social media campaign is undertaken.

SDCC's Samhain and Halloween events held across the region provided creative and fun events for families, including costumes swaps, creepy crafts, silent discos, spooky science, and storytime sessions in libraries.

The council stated that they will continue to work into 2026 to develop family friendly Halloween events for the whole community, such as Tallaween and Spookdalkin.

The council provides contact details for the public to report locations of suspected bonfire material.

In the weeks prior to Halloween, local authority crews alongside local Gardaí arrange for the collection of the stockpiled material and ensure its correct disposal.

The council also writes to business owners to remind them of their obligations under the Waste Management Act for the correct safe storage and disposal of waste and carry out inspections to ensure compliance.

SDCC aim to continue their 'Safe Halloween' work throughout the year with initiatives like 'Bulbs Not Bonfires' to work to prevent damage done to spaces in South Dublin.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Campaign strengthens sense of community and inclusion

Three activists complete four-day residential bootcamp with workshops and clinics

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie



CAMPAIGN: Jennifer Keane with Moninne Griffith (L), Community Foundation Ireland, and Martina Quinn (R), CEO, Alice Public Relations

THREE activists from Clondalkin and Tallaght completed a residential bootcamp with workshops and clinics led by legendary names in campaigning and communications.

Three South Dublin activists completed the Alice Academy for Activists four-day residential bootcamp, where they learned new skills from the likes of Repeal the Eighth leader Ailbhe Smyth and former RTÉ journalist Eileen Dunne.

Clondalkin activists Bel Aghedo and Siphiwe Moyo took part in the course, as well as Tallaght entrepreneur Jennifer Keane.

Founder and CEO of Alice Public Relations Martina Quinn noted that the event was a great way to connect veterans of campaigning and communications with budding prospects and allow them to share skills.

The Alice PR founder and CEO said: "The range of experts who presented at the Academy includes people who have been involved in campaigning their whole lives, so the participants had the chance to tap into a huge well of expertise and knowledge and experience, and to use the opportunity to pick the brains of those who have come before them."

Bel Aghedo created a campaign called 'One Story, Many Voices' inspired by her time in Direct Provision.

The campaign to strengthen connections between ethnic minority groups in Ireland, foster a shared sense of community, and promote broader intercultural understanding and inclusion.

Siphiwe Moyo is currently developing a racial justice campaign in response to the rise of hate crimes and racism in Ireland, with plans to develop a national network where people can take action.

Moyo has developed a tool kit with TU Dublin, as well as received support from her employer, Empower.

Tallaght's Jennifer Keane is the founder of PayGap.ie, where she gathers all available pay gap data in the country into one online library.

Keane wants to build on her campaigning skills to challenge the misperceptions of the gender pay gap and teach others about the systemic issues behind it and what can be done to close it.

The academy is supported by Community Foundation of Ireland who work with over 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable partners on a mission of 'Equality For All in Thriving Communities.'

The Alice PR CEO Martina Quinn concluded: "The people who participate in the Academy…are among the many good people who want to make the world a better place.

"That has to give us all hope."

> **"The range of experts who presented at the Academy includes people who have been involved in campaigning their whole lives, so the participants had ....**



INCLUSION: Bel Aghedo and (inset) Siphiwe Moyo

Cllr Mick Duff

"I am here for my constituents, to help in any way I can. Please get in touch"

Mick can be contacted on:
Mobile: 087 2865570

Email:
mduff@cllrs.sdublincoco.ie

Twitter: @CllrMickDuff



196 public lighting lamps currently out cannot be repaired

ALMOST 200 of public lighting outages across Rathfarnham, Templeogue, Firhouse and Bohernabreena cannot be repaired "in the standard two-week repair window", *reports Ellen Gough.*

As of December 2025, there were 255 public light faults across the area, representing "2.5% of the overall lighting stock".

Of these 255, around 60 are cable faults or require ESB attendance, surrounding trees to be pruned or traffic management plans to allow access for repair.

At the Rathfarnham/Templeogue/Firhouse/Bohernabreena Area Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 13, councillors were told that most of the outages in the area are "old obsolete low-pressure sodium 'orange' lights".

This style of light fixture is being replaced with LED lights around the county as part of a wider upgrade scheme operated by ESB Networks.

However, "resource issues" within ESB has slowed replacement works, and council staff are not permitted to replace fittings themselves without "site attendance" by ESB staff.

"We unfortunately can't immediately upgrade them to LED, the ESBN will not allow us to do this, it's outside regulations," senior executive engineer Caitriona Lambert told councillors at the meeting.

She said that replacement parts for the older sodium lamps are in "extremely short supply" and that council staff can "only do piecemeal repairs" on the 196 lamps that are currently out around the Rathfarnham/Templeogue/Firhouse/Bohernabreena area.

Ms Lambert also presented councillors with a list of 734 lights to be upgraded from sodium to LED around the area, particularly in estates in Kilakee, Orwell Park, Rossmore and Carriglea.

She said that despite the ESB resource issues, the network "cooperate as best as they can and are working very well with us on site" and have promised to complete upgrade works faster this year due to "forthcoming availability of approved third-party subcontractors".

"Every time there's a severe weather event, it knocks us all back by weeks and weeks," she added.

The successful replacement of the 734 lights with LEDs "entirely dependent on resources throughout the year, and any of the listed estates that are not addressed in 2026 will be prioritised for 2027, she said.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Tourism Events and Festivals Grant 2026

Proudly supported by SDCC



Find out more at sdcc.ie/en/events

court reports

Man who tried to use stolen Revolut Card is fined €600

A MAN who tried to use a stolen Revolut card to make a purchase of just over €5 was fined €600 at Tallaght District Court, *reports Maurice Garvey.*

John Green (33), St Louises Park, Temple Hill, Blackrock, appeared before court in custody for separate offences, facing theft and fraud charges.

The court heard that on January 9, 2025, the accused used a Revolut card, which belonged to another person without their knowledge, at a Circle K, Nutgrove, Rathfarnham, purchasing goods to the value of €5.05.

The accused has 106 previous convictions, mainly for theft offences.

Defence solicitor Ethan Foley said his client has three kids and is eager to finish his custody in Mountjoy in the next month, in order the return to civilian life and look after his kids and elderly parents, whom he resides with and who have medical conditions that require care.

Mr Foley said his client has undertaken a crime awareness course and addiction treatment in Mountjoy, seeking leniency for lower end scale offending in this case.

Judge Áine Clancy fined Mr Green €600. *Funded by the Local Courts Reporting Scheme*

Man jailed for hit-and-run found with mobile in his cell

24-year-old was sentenced to five years three months after death of Dylan (21)

By **Eimear Dodd**
news@echo.ie



A MAN jailed for the hit-and-run death of a 21-year-old apprentice electrician has been told he will spend longer in prison after a mobile phone was found in his cell.

Cameron Cooper (24) was handed a sentence of five years and three months last March for the hit-and-run death of 21-year-old Dylan Killalee Maher.

The final year of this sentence was suspended for five years on a number of conditions including that Cooper be of good behaviour and keep the peace while in custody and for five years following his release.

Cooper was also disqualified from driving for nine years.

He was before a sitting of Dublin Circuit Criminal Court on Wednesday for a prosecution application under Section 99 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006.

The court was asked to consider whether to activate part, all or none of the suspended portion of the sentence imposed on Cooper last March.

Cooper was convicted by Cloverhill District Court in December of an offence of possessing a mobile phone while in prison.

The court heard that a mobile was found during a search of Cooper's cell on September 26, last. He had no permission to have the device.

Cooper pleaded guilty to the offence and was handed a fine of €300.

The sentence hearing last March heard that Cooper was driving at twice the speed limit when he struck Mr Killalee Maher, killing him instantly, before fleeing the scene.

Cooper, of Ballyneety Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, called emergency services in the wake of the fatal crash – but instead of seeking help, he falsely told gardaí his car had been stolen in an attempt to avoid blame, Dublin Circuit Criminal Court previously heard.

He pleaded guilty to dangerous driving causing death, driving with no insurance, making a false report of a crime and failing to offer assistance to avoid criminal or civil prosecution, at locations on the Naas Road and Turnpike Road on November 12, 2023.

Members of Mr Killalee Maher's family were in court for the hearing on Wednesday, with Judge Ronan Munro acknowledging their presence and expressing the court's apologies that they were back again.

While a summary of the sentence hearing was read into the record, Mr Killalee Maher's mother shouted out.

The judge noted he remembered the case and Ms Catherine Killalee said that she would "never forget it either".

Addressing Ms Killalee, the judge said he appreciated the experience was traumatic, but Cooper had to receive the same treatment as anyone else in the court.

"I'm afraid if you can't control your emotions, you can't be here," the judge said, adding that he was sorry but he would have to ask her to leave the court if there was another emotional outburst.

He said on a human level, he has sympathy for her situation, "but this is a court of law, not a place for you to shout out when you feel like it".

Oisin Clarke BL, defending, submitted that his client's offence is at the lower end of the scale. He said notwithstanding this incident, Cooper is doing well in custody and attending school.

Cooper lost his status as an enhanced prisoner and his job following this incident. He has since regained his enhanced status. Two random drug tests provided to the court were clear of all substances.

Mr Clarke said Cooper's mother is supportive of him, but did not attend court as she did not wish to inflame matters as she was aware that members of Mr Killalee Maher's family would be present.

Counsel asked the court to not re-activate any of the suspended portion of the sentence, suggesting that Cooper has already been punished within the prison system and by the conviction at the District Criminal Court.

Judge Munro said he accepted that this offence was at the lower end of the scale. The judge said the court did not expect to see Cooper at least until after his release if at all.

He noted that the function of a suspended sentence is to ensure compliance with conditions on release from custody.

The judge said the court noted Cooper had been doing relatively well in custody and "hasn't been just causing mayhem".

He re-activated two months of the 12-month suspended portion, saying that the court had to mark the violation.

Addressing Cooper, the judge said "I hope for your sake we don't meet again between now and the end of your term of imprisonment, if there is any breach on the outside, the consequences could be different".

During the sentence hearing last March, five victim impact statements were read to the court from members of Mr Killalee Maher's family which described him as a kind, caring and driven young man, who is deeply missed by family and friends. Mr Killalee Maher was an apprentice electrician, the court heard.

In her statement, his mother said: "We haven't lost him once. We have lost him every day since."

Facing money laundering charges in relation to valeting business

A MAN who was facing money laundering charges in relation to a car valeting business he operated on a cash basis, received a six-month suspended prison sentence at Blanchardstown District Court.

Sean Hulgraine (35), with an address of Woodford Meadows, Clondalkin, appeared in court.

Garda Barry O'Shea told the court that on July 5, 2019, a search of the defendant's home led to the discovery of €2,335 in cash and Dolce and Gabbana runners valued at €645.

The court heard the accused has 11 previous convictions, including a money laundering offence in 2018.

Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy accepted his client had cash there to avoid revenue scrutiny, had been car valeting at the time but was no longer able to run the business in which he had "limitations" and "did not have his affairs in order."

Since the offence seven years ago, Mr Hulgrain was now a PAYE worker, got married, has two young kids and has "radically changed his life", said Mr Hennessy.

Garda O'Brien accepted that Hulgrain was a registered sole trader for the valet business.

Judge Peter White took into account the guilty plea, testimonials provided to court including by Hulgrain's current employer, and that he has "turned a corner" and is pro social in helping neighbours and gainfully employed.

However, noting the seriousness of the offence, Judge White imposed a six-month sentence which he suspended for a period of 12 months.

Funded by the Local Courts Reporting Scheme

Pick up a copy of *The Echo* in your local shop* every Thursday or scan the QR code to subscribe online

SDCC
Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council

CUID 8 FÓGRA POIBLÍ
AN TACHT UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT, 2000 (ARNA LEASÚ)
NA RIALACHÁIN UM PLEANÁIL AGUS FORBAIRT, 2001 (ARNA LEASÚ)
FÓGRA AR FHORBAIRT ATÁ BEARTAITHE AG ÚDARÁS ÁITIÚIL

De bhun cheanglais na reachtaíochta thuas, tugtar fógra leis seo maidir leis an togra chun an fhorbairt seo a leanas de chuid Chomhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas a thógáil:

SCARTÁIL BHEARTAITHE AR LÁITHREÁN CÓIRÍOCHTA DO THAISTEALAITHE AR A dTUGTAR 'ÁRÁIS BHÓTHAR NA CARRAIGE', LEAMHCÁN, CO. BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH AGUS FORBAIRT BHEARTAITHE SCÉIM TITHÍOCHTA GRÚPA MAIDIR LE CÓIRÍOCHT DO THAISTEALAITHE AR LÁITHREÁN AR A dTABHARFAR 'BÓTHAR AN LOIC', CAISLEÁN NA GRÁINSÍ THIAR, LEAMHCÁN, CO. BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH.

Beidh an méid seo a leanas i gceist leis na hoibreacha:

1. Scartáil ar Láithreán Cóiríochta do Thaistealaithe atá ann cheana (Achar 0.81 heicteár) ar a dtugtar 'Árais Bhóthar na Carraige'.
2. Forbairt scéim tithíochta grúpa maidir le Cóiríocht do Thaistealaithe (Achar 1.56 heictéar) ar a dtabharfar 'Bóthar an Loic'. Beidh an méid seo a leanas i gceist leis an bhforbairt atá beartaithe;
   i. Teach nua scortha aon stóir a mbeidh dhá áit pháirceála leis.
   ii. Trí bhá láithreáin stad nua, ina mbeidh aonad lae aon stóir, aonad soghluaiste in aice láimhe agus dhá áit pháirceála.
   iii. Club nua obair bhaile aon stóir.
   iv. Áit súgartha nua agus áit a bhfuil dromchla crua air.
   v. Áit fiontraíochta nua.
   vi. Dhá sheid stórála.
   vii. Stóras nua taobh amuigh do bhoscaí bruscair.
   viii. Stáisiún nua caidéalaithe Uisce Éireann.
   ix. Suiteáil soilse nua láithreáin taobh amuigh.
   x. Athchoigeartú ar an mbealach isteach chun an láithreáin atá ann cheana féin chun rochtain do choisithe agus d'fheithiclí a chur ar fáil.
   xi. Gach bóthar, cosán agus fál teorann gaolmhar.
   xii. Le gach tírdhreachadh crua agus bog, áireofar Beirm ar an taobh thiar agus ar an taobh thoir den fhorbairt bheartaithe.
   xiii. Na hoibreacha coimhdeacha gaolmhara uile sna limistéir in aice láimhe a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ag teastáil, áirítear leo siúd an méid seo a leanas, ach gan a bheith teoranta dóibh ach oiread: draenáil uisce salach agus dromchla agus soláthairtí fóntais.

Rinneadh Scagadh Measúnachta Cuí ar an moladh i gcomhréir le hAirteagal 6(3) den Treoir um Ghnáthóga (92/43/CEE) agus Scagadh do Mheasúnacht Tionchair Timpeallachta faoi Threoir MTT 2011/92/AE, arna leasú ag Treoir 2014/52/AE.

I gcomhréir le hAlt 81 na Rialachán um Pleanáil agus Forbairt 2001, arna leasú, rinne an tÚdarás Pleanála an cinneadh seo a leanas:

(a) Nach dócha go mbeadh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbairt bheartaithe, ar bhonn aonair ná in éineacht le pleananna agus tionscadail eile, ar láithreá(i)n Eorpach(a) ar bith agus nach gá Measúnacht Chuí Céim 2 dá réir sin.

(b) Nach bhfuil aon fhíordhochúlacht ann go mbeidh tionchar suntasach ar an gcomhshaol de bharr na forbartha beartaithe agus nach forbairt í den chineál atá leagtha amach faoi Sceideal 5 de na Rialacháin Um Pleanáil agus Forbairt, 2001, arna leasú, agus nach bhfuil aon ghá le Tuarascáil um Measúnacht Tionchair Timpeallachta (TMMT) dá réir sin.

Is féidir le haon duine, laistigh de 4 seachtaine ó dháta foilsithe an fhógra seo, iarratas a dhéanamh chuig an gCoimisiún Pleanála ar chinneadh scagtha i dtaobh an dócha go mbeadh tionchar suntasach ag an bhforbraíocht ar an gcomhshaol.

Beidh pleananna agus sonraí na forbartha beartaithe ar fáil lena n-iniúchadh ar líne ar thairseach Comhairliúcháin Phoiblí na Comhairle (http://consult.sdublincoco.ie) idir **an 29ú Eanáir 2026 agus an 13ú Márta 2026.**

Beidh sonraí agus pleananna priontáilte ar fáil lena n-iniúchadh, nó lena gceannach ar tháille nach mó ná an costas réasúnach a bhaineann le cóip a dhéanamh ag Halla an Chontae, Tamhlacht, Baile Átha Cliath 24, le linn uaireanta oifige ón **29ú Eanáir 2026 go dtí an 27ú Feabhra 2026.**

Aighneachtaí:

Féadfar aighneachtaí nó tuairimí maidir leis an bhforbairt bheartaithe, i ndáil le pleanáil chuí agus forbairt inbhuanaithe an limistéir ina mbeidh an fhorbairt bheartaithe suite, a dhéanamh i scríbhinn go dtí **an 13ú Márta 2026** agus féadfar iad a chur isteach ar na bealaí seo a leanas;

- Ar thairseach comhairliúcháin phoiblí Chomhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas http://consult.sdublincoco.ie, faoi **11:59pm an 13ú Márta 2026.**

  Nó

- I scríbhinn chuig an Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin Sinsearach, an tAonad Cóiríochta do Thaistealaithe, Stiúrthóireacht Tithíochta, Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas, Halla an Chontae, Tamhlacht, Baile Átha Cliath 24, le go bhfaighfear iad ar nó roimh **5.00pm an 13ú Márta 2026.** Ba chóir an teideal seo a leanas a chur ar an aighneacht: **"Bóthar an Loic, Cóiríocht do Thaistealaithe, Caisleán na Gráinsí Thiar, Leamhcán, Co. Bhaile Átha Cliath".**

TABHAIR FAOI DEARA: Níor chóir d'aighneacht a dhéanamh ach ar bhealach amháin. Ní dhéanfar ach aighneachtaí a fhaightear faoi an **13ú Márta 2026** agus a bhfuil an seoladh agus na sonraí thuasluaite orthu a mheas. Ba cheart go luafaí ar na haighneachtaí ar fad d'ainm agus seoladh teagmhála agus, más cuí, sonraí aon eagraíochta, grúpa poiblí nó cuideachta srl., a n-oibríonn tú ar a son. Ní dhéanfar a mheas ach aighneachtaí a fhaightear ar an mbealach atá leagtha amach thuas. Ba cheart a thabhairt faoi deara go bhfuil feidhm ag an Acht um Shaoráil Faisnéise, 1997-2006 (arna leasú) maidir leis na taifid uile atá i seilbh Chomhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas.

Is féidir breathnú ar ráitis phríobháideachais um Shonraí Pearsanta Chomhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas ar www.sdcc.ie agus coinneofar na sonraí pearsanta ar fad de réir na gceanglas reachtúil.

Sínithe: Stiúrthóir Tithíochta, Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas.

Suíomh Gréasáin: www.sdcc.ie

PART 8 PUBLIC NOTICE
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, 2001 (AS AMENDED)
NOTICE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY A LOCAL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the requirements of the above, notice is hereby given of the proposal to construct the following development by South Dublin County Council:

PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING TRAVELLER ACCOMODATION SITE KNOWN AS 'ROCK ROAD MANSIONS', LUCAN, CO. DUBLIN AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TRAVELLER ACCOMODATION GROUP HOUSING SCHEME ON A SITE TO BE KNOWN AS 'LOCK ROAD', GRANGE CASTLE WEST, LUCAN, CO. DUBLIN.

Works to comprise of:

1. Demolition of the existing Traveller Accommodation Site (Area 0.81 hectares) known as 'Rock Road Mansions'.
2. Development of a new Traveller Accommodation group housing scheme (Area 1.56 hectares) to be know as 'Lock Road'. The proposed development will include;
   i. New single story detached house with 2 No. car parking spaces.
   ii. 3 No. new halting site bays, each with a single story day unit, an adjacent mobile unit and 2 No. car parking spaces.
   iii. New single story homework club.
   iv. New play area and hard standing.
   v. New enterprise area.
   vi. 2 no. storage sheds.
   vii. New external bin store.
   viii. New Irish Water pumping station.
   ix. Installation of new external site lighting.
   x. Reconfiguring of the existing entrance to the site to provide pedestrian & vehicle access.
   xi. All associated roadways, paths and boundary fencing.
   xii. All hard and soft landscaping to include a Berm to the West and South of the proposed development.
   xiii. All associated ancillary site works as may be required in adjacent lands but not limited to foul and surface water drainage and utility supplies.

The proposal has undergone Screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

In accordance with Article 81 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the Planning Authority has made a determination and concluded that:

(a) The proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s) and therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

(b) There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that the proposed development is not of a class set out under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and therefore does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Any person may, within 4 weeks from the date of publication of this notice, apply to An Coimisiún Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The plans and particulars of the proposed development are available for inspection online on the council's public consultation portal website (http://consult.sdublincoco.ie) during the period from **29th January 2026 to 13th of March 2026**

Printed plans and particulars of the proposed development are available for inspection or purchase at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy at County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24, during office hours from **29th January 2026 to 27th February 2026.**

Submissions:

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the proposed development will be situated may be made in writing up to **13th of March 2026** and may be submitted as follows;

- On South Dublin County Council's public consultation portal website http://consult.sdublincoco.ie, under Consultation by **11:59pm on 13th of March 2026.**

  Or

- In writing addressed to the Senior Executive Officer, Traveller Accommodation Unit, Housing Directorate, South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24, to be received on or before **5.00pm on 13th of March 2026.** Submission should be labelled **"Lock Road, Traveller Accommodation, Grange Castle West, Lucan, Co. Dublin".**

NOTE: Please make your submission by one medium only. Only submissions received by **13th of March 2026** and addressed as set out above will be considered. Submissions should state the name, address, and, where relevant, details of any organisation, community group or company etc. which you represent. Only submissions received as set out above will be considered. It should be noted that the Freedom of Information Act, 1997-2006 (as amended) applies to all records held by South Dublin County Council.

The council's personal data privacy statements can be viewed at www.sdcc.ie and all personal data will be retained in line with statutory requirements.

Signed: Director of Housing, South Dublin County Council.

Website: www.sdcc.ie

Development will have names from Irish Revolutionary era

13 residential blocks at old Nissan site on Long Mile Road will have bilingual names

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie



NAMING STRATEGY: This was created in line with the development standard of Dublin City Development plan

A NEW development at the Old Nissan site on the Long Mile Road is set to have 13 residential blocks with bilingual names referencing local figures from the Irish Revolutionary Era.

The Landsowne Quarter development situated on the former Nissan site at the junction of Walkinstown Avenue and Naas Road is expected to have its 13 residential blocks named in tribute of figures involved in the 1916 Rising, War of Independence and the Spanish Civil War.

Mernin Tower (Túr Ní Mhearnáin), McGuinness Lodge (Lóiste Mhic Aonghusa) and Connolly O'Brien Court (Cúirt Ní Chonghaile Uí Bhriain) are among the names of the blocks in the new development.

The names were created following a research process undertaken by the genealogy and research company Eneclann and ongoing preplanning compliance submission discussions with the Heritage Officer.

Mernin Tower refers to Irish Intelligence agent Elizabeth 'Lily' Mernin, also known as the 'Little Gentleman.'

McGuinness Lodge is named in reference to Joseph McGuinness, an Irish revolutionary who participated in the ambush at the Halfway House, Drimnagh.

Connolly O'Brien Court will pay homage to Nora Connolly O'Brien, a labour activist and revolutionary organiser, and the daughter of James Connolly.

Other names of blocks include Dwyer House (Teach Uí Dhuibhir), Byrne Residence (Áras Uí Bhroin), Hawes Apartments (Árasáin Hawes), Mullaly Apartments (Árasáin Uí Mhaolalaidh), Mitchell Apartments (Árasáin Mistéil), Rowan Residence (Árasán Uí Ruáin), Power Residence (Áras de Paor), Shelley Court (Cúirt Uí Shealbhaigh), Scott Court (Cúirt Scott) and Hepburn Apartments (Árasáin Hepburn), all referring to local revolutionary era figures.

Four new access routes and two new public open spaces will also be included as part of the development.

Esker Road, Berneval Avenue, Grand Canal Way and Camac Way, as well as Portlester Square and Esker Park were all named after geological features, industrial heritage, natural features and a prominent Anglo-Norman historical family.

The naming strategy was created in line with the development standard of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, as planning permission was granted in 2021 following an application by O'Flynn Construction Co. Unlimited Company.

Dublin City Council recommended that the developer install a heritage sign in a prominent public space that explains the origins and significance of the chosen place and block names.

The planning authority will approve the naming of residential developments in order to avoid confusion with similar names in other locations.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Calls for CCTV cameras after playground damaged by fire

CALLS have been made to install CCTV cameras at a playground in Chapelizod after it was damaged over the Christmas period, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

A request was made to install CCTV cameras at the new playground at Liffey Valley Park in Chapelizod after it was damaged in an effort to deter future cases of similar antisocial behaviour.

The playground was damaged when a plastic bin was set alight at the location, but the council noted that CCTV would be difficult to set up at the location.

The council stated that setting up cameras at playgrounds would be "extremely difficult" due to GDPR regulations.

However, Councillor Vincent Jackson shared an anecdote where one of the schools he chaired did not have funds for a CCTV system and decided to set up less costly cameras on the premises.

Cllr Jackson said: "We put up a number of cameras that look very good. Let's just say, we've 95 per cent reduction in the crime that was happening in the school yard and in the vicinity of the school.

"A lot of people, they don't know whether it's real or they're unreal, cause even red lights in them come on and everything else.

"What I'm saying is that, to me, it's good spending – the money. If you buy a good car, you put an alarm on it."

Cllr Jackson also described GDPR as "the greatest excuse in the world not to do anything."

He noted that there are consequences for everything that people do and those who damage playgrounds should face the consequences that come with those actions.

DCC South Central Area Executive Manager for Culture, Leisure, Community & Area Services Bernard Kelly noted that the council have looked at CCTV options across Dublin, but that this one is particularly difficult.

Mr Kelly noted: "One of the problems with CCTV in a playground is that it involves minors, the GDPR bar is much, much higher than it would be for normal CCTV.

"So, it's extremely difficult to get and extremely expensive."

The council also noted that the CCTV might not be as successful as they would hope, due to a lot of antisocial behaviour in parks taking place at night.

Raymond Conway of DCC's Parks & Landscape Services also mentioned the likelihood that assailants may be wearing dark clothing with hoods up as a reason for a set of CCTV cameras' possible ineffectiveness.

Mr Conway also said that the costs associated with staffing people to monitor the footage would add to the already expensive task to install cameras in a playground.

Conway stated: "Really, you would only be paying for the deterrent aspect that CCTV cameras could provide."

Cllr Jackson called on the council to do more to protect their equipment and their facilities and noted that antisocial behaviour does not have the same barriers such processes to protect these facilities do.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



DAMAGED: The playground damaged by fire



DAMAGE: Teenagers consider it as a bit of harmless fun

Dramatic rise in spinal cord damage after nitrous oxide use

Study highights the risk posed by the recreational use of laughing gas

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

"THE rise in cases of spinal cord damage since the pandemic is alarming…"

A recently published research study has outlined a dramatic increase in the number of young people presenting with spinal cord damage after nitrous oxide use.

The study from the Royal College of Surgeons was published in the American Journal of Neuroradiology and highlights the risks posed by the recreational use of nitrous oxide.

14 cases were diagnosed at Beaumont Hospital between 2021 and the end of 2024 with the median age of patients being just 20 years old – no cases were recorded between 2012 to 2020.

Dublin Mid-West TD Mark Ward noted that the study was published in the same week the Government delayed his bill to regulate the sale of nitrous oxide by nine months.

Deputy Ward stated: "In the same week the government voted to delay my legislation to regulate the sale of nitrous oxide, yet another research study into the neurological harms to young people has been published…

"…The study showed that although the young people made improvements with treatment, none of them made a full recovery, with all experiencing some form of lasting neurological damage."

Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, Jim O'Callaghan TD noted that the bill was delayed for nine months to "determine the extent to which this legislation can be moved forward" as recent developments at EU level will be taken into consideration.

Deputy O'Callaghan commended the bill and stated: "Somebody who is taking nitrous oxide, I regret to say, is playing Russian roulette with their health."

The study noted that its findings support claims made by youth workers and community organisations in recent years.

The availability of canisters of 'laughing gas' is listed as one of the reasons for the sharp uptick in popularity, as well as its low cost.

Nitrous oxide is commonly used in kitchens and for medical use, with many sold one described as 'food grade' or 'medical grade' canisters.

The recent study was led by Professor Seamus Looby, Honorary Associate Professor at RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences and Consultant Neuroradiologist at Beaumont Hospital.

Professor Looby stated: "Increasingly teenagers, many of whom may not use other substances, are inhaling laughing gas canisters as they consider it a bit of harmless fun.

"But what we're seeing tells a different story. The rise in cases of spinal cord damage since the pandemic is alarming and we hope it prompts greater awareness and education on nitrous oxide's potential for permanent, damaging effects."

"We want to encourage anyone experiencing early symptoms to seek medical help early and be open about any nitrous oxide use, to facilitate timely diagnosis and enable treatment to limiting long-term neurological damage."

stronger you FOR LIFE


The Team L-R: Emma Kennedy, Clare Kennedy, Margaret O'Mahony and Jennifer Hickey

www.strongeryouforlife.com

- Daily live classes - Resistance Training, Pilates and Yoga
- Suitable for all levels
- Huge on demand library
- Communities, mentors and more
- Scan or visit strongeryouforlife.com
- Membership from just €6 per week

Get and stay stronger so that you can live long and live well.
www.strongeryouforlife.com

AA Hello Tallaght

FREE WINDSCREEN WIPERS*
with any Full Car Service

Scan QR code to Book

You don't need to be a member, everyone is welcome

HT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT
HT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLAGHT | AA TALLA

AA SERVICE CENTRE
Unit 3 | Belgard Industrial Estate | Mayberry Rd | D24 VK11

Green Eye

Nature on our doorsteps



Rosaleen Dwyer is the County Heritage Officer at South Dublin County Council – every week she gives us an insight into the natural heritage around us and the beautiful biodiversity of the plants and creatures

Winter Heliotrope



WInter Heliotrope can carpet shady riverbanks, hedgerows, and roadsides

ONE of the earliest plants to flower along woodland edges, shady riverbanks and roadsides is the Winter Heliotrope.

In mild winters, this plant can start flowering as early as November, and it can continue to bloom well into February.

Winter Heliotrope's sturdy rounded kidney-shaped leaves are low-growing and can grow to 20cm wide. Its small pink and white flowers grow in little tufts towards the top of stems that can reach to 25cm tall.

While the plant's individual little flowers are perhaps not very spectacular, their intense vanilla-scented fragrance certainly is.

This scent can hang in the air on still winter days, attracting the attention of any pollinating insects that may be venturing out in mild weather.

Winter Heliotrope is not a native Irish species.

It originates from the Mediterranean region, and was introduced to Ireland in the early 1800s.

Today, it is naturalised and widespread in Ireland.

Because it flowers so early in springtime, it is thought that it was initially introduced to help beekeepers manage their hives over winter.

When it flowers in mild winters, the boost of nectar and pollen can help bee hives survive until native wildflowers came into bloom later in springtime,

The disadvantage of Winter Heliotrope, however, is that the plant can form extensive carpets of densely packed leaves wherever it takes a hold.

Its rapid growth helps the plant to spread very quickly, particularly in shady damp places such as along rivers and hedgerows.

The plant can often dominate these locations, to the exclusion of other native wild plants. For this reason, Winter Heliotrope is referred to as being an invasive plant.

In its own native range in the Mediterranean, there are likely to be grazing insects, animals, or plant diseases that might help manage it. Here in Ireland, however, it has no natural predators, and because its roots can grow rapidly there is nothing to prevent it from spreading.

Gardeners, however, have noted that if they constantly mow Winter Heliotrope in their gardens, the plant is weakened and it may eventually die back.



PINKY WHITE: Winter Heliotrope's pinky white flowers are vanilla scented



PILGRIMAGE: At the primgrimage too St Brigid's well last year

St Brigid's Day with a packed p

Lá Fhéile Bríde events include pil

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

THE Brigid's Day festival in Clondalkin will return this year for one day with a packed programme for Monday, February 2, which everyone can enjoy for free.

The events to celebrate Lá Fhéile Bríde in Clondalkin include a pilgrimage to St Brigid's Well via the Northside, a ritual at the well and cross-making in the evening.

The day is also known as Imbolc, and it symbolises the beginning of Spring, falling halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

Imbolc translates to 'In the belly of the mother' – spring starts to blossom from within Mother Earth.

Festival chair Eoin Ó Broin told *The Echo* about what's to come as we near the big day.

Mr Ó Broin said: "There are three parts to the day. First part is a walk from the city centre to the St Brigid's well in Clondalkin – it's a 16-kilometre pilgrimage.

"People meet at 9am at The Sanctuary in Dublin 7 and then we'll go through Kilmainham, down the canal to Woodford, through Knockmeenagh and

> **"People can burn the Brigid's crosses they made last year there, and then the third part of the day in Áras Chrónáin from 1pm to 5pm where people can drop in and make Brigid's crosses...**



festival returns programme

grimage to well and cross-making

Newlands then over to the well. That'll be led by Dr Karen Ward, who is with an organisation called Moon Mná.

"The second part of the day is at the well itself – Karen will lead a fire and water ritual at the well.

"People can burn the Brigid's crosses they made last year there, and then the third part of the day is at Áras Chrónáin from 1pm to 5pm where people can drop in and make Brigid's crosses."

Mervyn Ennis will lead the workshop at Áras Chrónáin where people can make their new crosses, and other creations and holiday customs will be created and observed on the day such as Brídeog dolls.

Brídeog dolls are part of a tradition that dates back thousands of years, creating an effigy of the Patron Saint of Ireland to guide and protect people, homes and ships from danger.

Sharon Walsh will help people to create their dolls while Rachel Carol will work with people to make Brat Bríde – cloaks or ribbons that are left out to be blessed by St Brigid.



TRADITION: Sharon Walsh, centre making crosses last year

Imbolc celebrates renewal and through the long walk, the burning of the old crosses and the embracing of new creations, Clondalkin's festivities mirrors that.

For more information on the Brigid's Day Festival in Clondalkin, visit the dedicated Facebook and Instagram pages.

€20 million funding allocated to active travel and greenways



ACTIVE TRAVEL: Minister Darragh O'Brien with Deputy Mayor of South Dublin Cllr. Trevor Gilligan and representatives of TII, NTA and SDCC

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

OVER €20 million in government funding has been allocated for Active Travel and greenway projects across South Dublin for 2026.

It's part of the €360 million national funding from the National Transport Authority announced by Minister for Transport Darragh O'Brien on a visit to a section of the Dodder Greenway in Templeogue on Friday, January 16.

South Dublin County Council were allocated €19million by the NTA for Active Travel Greenways projects across the county, including €400,000 towards design work and sections of the Dodder Greenway project from Firhouse Road to Butterfield Avenue and from Kiltipper Road to Old Bawn Road, and €495,000 for phases of the Grand Canal to Lucan Urban Greenway.

Speaking during the Minister's visit, Deputy Mayor of South Dublin Trevor Gilligan said the funding is "key to the council achieving our corporate plan goal of promoting sustainable and accessible transport initiatives and to encourage a shift towards their use."

Over €14.7 million has been allocated to Active Travel Projects across the county under SDCC's Cycle South Dublin programme, which aims to provide 260km of cycle track across 134km of road network by 2029.

These schemes include the Tallaght to Clondalkin Active Travel Scheme, the Baldonnel to Grand Canal Active Travel Scheme and schemes in Castletymon, Firhouse Road and Whitehall Road.

Also covered by the €14.7million are staffing costs for the Active Travel Office, rapid deployment measures and communications.

€640,000 in funding has been allocated to 11 individual schools for the Safe Routes to School programme, for improvements to roads and junctions at schools, including Sacred Heart SNS in Tallaght, Scoil Naomh Aine in Clondalkin and Kingswood Community College.

Active Travel Investment Grants have also been allocated for initiatives such as the South Dublin Bike Library, Bike Hub and Quiet Streets programme, as well as the Esker Permeability Scheme and cycle parking.

Allocations through other NTA funding streams include €500,000 for a Bus Stop Enhancement programme and €1milllion for Bus Priority/Traffic Management improvements, bringing the total funding for SDCC to €20.5 million.

Cllr Gilligan welcomed this funding which will allow SDCC to continue "transforming how our citizens can traverse around the county, making cycling, walking and wheeling safe and accessible to all".

"Since 2021, SDCC had received over €95 million in funding from the NTA and TII to deliver active travel infrastructure.

"We look forward to 2026 allocation to continue delivery of active travel and sustainable infrastructure."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

"Since 2021, SDCC has received over €95 million in funding from the NTA and TII to deliver active travel infrastructure. We look forward to 2026 allocation to continue delivery of active travel and sustainable infrastructure

Work is due to commence to 'link up' sections of cycle paths

Scheme will 'improve pedestrian and cycle facilities and safety' at three main junctions

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie



SCHEME: The works will occur along Firhouse and Ballycullen Roads

WORK is due to begin in the coming weeks on a scheme to "link up" various sections of cycle paths along the Firhouse Road.

The council are in the process of confirming a contractor for the Firhouse Active Travel Improvement Scheme, which will "improve pedestrian and cycle facilities and safety via three main junctions" along the Firhouse and Ballycullen roads and other secondary side road junctions in the Firhouse area.

This scheme forms part of South Dublin County Council's Active Travel Schemes and is one of three improvement projects under the Oldbawn to Ballyboden Network.

The improvement works will look at linking up cycle paths along a 2.5km stretch of the Firhouse Road, Ballycullen Road and Castlefield Avenue, plus 1.5km of secondary routes around Firhouse to St Dominics National School, Scoil Maelruain, Scoil Treasa and from Scoil Carmel to Dodder Valley Park.

"As you know Firhouse Road has existing cycle paths, but when they come to junctions or road crossings, they do not provide a satisfactory safe route for cyclists to continue on," Andrew O'Mullane, senior executive engineer and project manager for Active Travel at SDCC told councillors at the Rathfarnham/Templeogue/Firhouse/Bohernabreena Area committee meeting on Tuesday, January 13.

The three main junctions where work will be carried out are at Firhouse Road and Ballycullen Drive, Firhouse Road and Ballycullen Avenue and at Firhouse Road and Ballycullen Road near the M50 flyover.

These will become "protected junctions" for cyclists to cross, with "entrances with reduced traffic lane widths and tighter corner radii for shorter pedestrian crossing, segregated footpaths and cycle lanes".

He said the scheme would improve links to schools across the Firhouse and Ballycullen areas and would also link up with other schemes such as the Dodder Valley Greenway and the D24 Neighbourhood Cycle Scheme "which is being built in Ballycullen".

The council are in the process of completing the tender process for the works with Murphy International as main contractor, and construction of the scheme is "due to commence in Q1 2026" with completion by the end of the year.

Councillors had mixed reactions to the scheme, with some expressing concerns over the impact the works would have on commuter traffic along the Firhouse Road, and over increased congestion at the "protected" junctions.

Cllr Emma Murphy (FF) asked how Active Travel "is actually going to encourage students not to be dropped to school by cars" as she expressed concern over the accessibility for students once the cycle lanes were in place.

Cllr Alan Edge (Ind) said that the "availability of safe cycling infrastructure was welcome" but noted that Firhouse and Bohernabreena are "not served well enough" by public transport for residents to avail of cycling, adding that these types of works can have a "crippling effect on the local area and makes life miserable for huge numbers of people".

Responding to councillors concerns, Mr O'Mullane noted that while there are always "disruptions" during construction of such schemes, once they are complete "they work well".

He added that construction was due to take nine months to complete, and that while most of the construction would have to take place during the day because of the number of residential areas around the junctions, some work like resurfacing could be done at night to reduce traffic disruptions.

Addressing Cllr Murphy's concerns, he said that parking outside schools would be "largely preserved except for immediately outside the front of the school where we want a larger area for pupils and parents to congregate" and that they would work with the contractor to delay as much of those works to school holidays as possible.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Former computer lab transformed into wellbeing and sensory room

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

A FORMER computer lab in Sacred Heart Senior National School has been transformed into a wellbeing and sensory room for all pupils

The Killinarden school launched their new Seomra Sonas on Thursday, January 22.

Principal Gerry Diver told *The Echo* that the room is "fully inclusive and available to all students".

"It's a wellbeing area for small groups, but it's for whole class groups as well for subjects like music or we have a weaving wellbeing class," he explained.

"There's no tables or chairs, there's very large beanbags so the children can come in, sit down relax – it creates a very calm and nurturing environment that fully supports our curriculum."

The room has a sensory aspect as well, where students can play music, with light displays to help them relax.

"It's not just for students, the staff have had after-school mindfulness sessions in it as well," Gerry said.

While the room was funded and installed by Resmed PEI, who focus on delivering a complete, professional, and caring managed-care service, Gerry said the "whole project wouldn't have happened without deputy principal Bernadette McCarthy, who coordinated and led the whole thing".

Former principal Margaret Greene, who retired in July 2025, returned as the guest of honour to cut the ribbon on the new room.



WELLBEING: Fifth class pupils and staff in the new sensory room

Residents are unhappy at length of time to resolve drainage issue

‘Some horrible stuff’ as damage led to water flooding into residents gardens

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie



ISSUES: Some of the work done in one of the back gardens

“IT’S HORRENDOUS the amount of things they have had to put up with over the years.”

Drainage issues in a Saggart estate are expected to be resolved at the end of January as a new drainage system nears completion, but residents remain skeptical.

Residents of the Fairgreen in Saggart have repeatedly reported an unacceptable situation in their back gardens for the last few years.

Digging was carried out in the green area behind their homes to build a raised football pitch, but existing land drainage was damaged in the process.

The damage led to water flooding into the residents’ gardens and in mounds of muck facing their homes.

Work started on a ‘deep drain’ in November to protect houses in the estate from any repeats of the situation in the future, and the developer is expected to meet their deadline for completing this work at the end of January.

Councillor Shirley O’Hara explained that the residents are “very unhappy” at the length of time it took to resolve the issue.

Cllr O’Hara said: “The residents are very unhappy that the drainage issues continued for such a prolonged period of time, and it’s still impacting…

“…There is confirmation by the end of January that the deadline will be met, but the residents want to know, although the deadline will be met, will the issue be resolved?”

SDCC published the SuDS guide in 2022, which lays out the standard of drainage to which developers must apply to.

> **“It’s horrendous the amount of things they have had to put up with over the years. So, look, if it happens again it’s resolved, absolutely would be great**

South Dublin County Council’s Natural Water department have been liaising with the developer on the private lands beside Fairgreen, Saggart.

The developer committed to installing a drainage pipeline on the field side of the Fairgreen houses and is connecting all existing land drains into the new drainage system to prevent surface water from passing property boundaries.

Councillor Francis Timmons noted that the situation the residents of the estate had to go through was stressful and some of the communication with the developer was unsavoury.

Cllr Timmons said: “I’ve seen some pictures of people’s back gardens, I’ve seen some horrible stuff that they’ve been living with, and some of the communication with the developer hasn’t been very nice towards residents.

“So, you’ll allow that they feel very sceptical that anything is going to really change because they’ve been living with it for a number of years now…

“It’s horrendous the amount of things they have had to put up with over the years. So, look, if it happens and it’s resolved, absolutely it would be great.

“It’s a small enough area first of all, and for a small area they’ve really had hell over the last few years.”

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

‘No excuse for litter now’ as solar bins rolled out at cost of €450,000

“THERE is no excuse for litter now!”, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

Over 100 solar bins have been rolled out across South Dublin in recent months as part of a €450,000 operation, with 20 installed in Clondalkin.

102 solar compactor smart bins will be placed around the county as part of an operation worth €450k.

The bins will be part of South Dublin County Council’s efforts to reduce their carbon footprint with the increased bin storage capacity and inbuilt smart technology meaning that the frequency of bin emptying will be reduced.

Councillor Francis Timmons has welcomed the new solar-powered bins in Clondalkin and hopes that the initiative will continue across other areas in the council’s remit.

Cllr Timmons said: “I’m delighted to see 20 Solar Bins starting to be rolled out throughout Clondalkin! Hopefully eventually they will be in all villages as soon as possible.”

He added that the bins will assist Clondalkin Tidy Towns in their work to keep the village litter free.

The current provision of solar compactor bins is intended for the Tallaght, Rathfarnham, Clondalkin and Lucan areas, with works in Tallaght and Rathfarnham complete.

The Lucan installations are set to be completed this month, and the council intends to extend the programme in the future.

100 more solar compactor bins are expected to be acquired, with a provision of €500k set aside for them in the latest Three-Year Capital Programme.

The additional installations will be targeted at high-footfall areas such as town, village and district centres, as well as busy park entrances.

Once funding is confirmed, a phased programme of delivery will be developed and made available for circulation.

Cllr Timmons noted: “There is no excuse for litter now!”

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



SOLAR BINS: A solar bin installed in Clondalkin

Richard's rewards for work on film Avatar



BLOCKBUSTER: Richard Baneham earned his third BAFTA

A MAN from Tallaght has earned his third BAFTA and Oscar nominations respectively for his work on a billion-dollar blockbuster movie series, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

Richard Baneham from Old Bawn, Tallaght has earned his third BAFTA and Academy Award nominations for his visual effects work on the team that worked on Avatar: Fire and Ash.

Baneham has been the Visual Effects Supervisor on all entries in James Cameron's Avatar franchise and won both accolades twice before for previous films Avatar and Avatar: The Way of Water.

He has also won three VES awards for his work on Cameron's hit space epics.

The Tallaght native has also worked on other high-profile movies since his career began in the 1990's after he attended Ballyfermot College of Further Education.

Baneham also has animation and visual effect credits on films such as The Lord of The Rings, The Chronicles of Narnia and The Iron Giant.

Concerns over safety at no-through road at school

SOMETHING will happen, something most definitely will happen,", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

Concerns have been raised over the safety of a no-through road where a school and several businesses are located in Bluebell.

St Cillian's National School is situated on the Robinhood Road just off the Naas Road, near the Kylemore Luas stop, and no school safety markings exist in front of the building.

The cul-de-sac is often busy with vehicles moving up and down the road, cars resting by either boundary and parents doing pick-up/drop-off runs, and incidents and near misses have occurred.

A concerned parent told *The Echo* of a time when their spouse was hit by a scooter on the road while dropping their six-year-old off for the day.

"My six-year-old was with him and, luckily enough, my husband just seen him out of the corner of his eye and managed to push the six-year-old to safety.

Several businesses operate out of the same dead-end street as St Cillian's NS and a typical scene on a school day includes cars parked on either side of the lane and heavy goods vehicles moving up or down.

The concerned parent noted that no pencil bollards or colourful spots line the way in front of the school – the current markings on the road are double yellow lines and zig-zag yellow lines.

A ramp exists at the turn into Robinhood Road but there is no ramp present in front of St Cillian's, and it's noted that the school has trouble getting adequate facilities.



ISSUES: The road outside St Cillian's School

"The school had to fight to get one streetlight on the opposite site of the road from the school – one streetlight – and it took them forever to get that…they are entitled to a safe environment.

"It's a fantastic school, and the school deserves the same amount as what any other school gets."

The parent stated that the speed at which vehicles move up and down the no-exit road is unsafe.

They noted that if it were not for the alertness of the parents leaving their kids to school and collecting them, there would be a worse incident than the one involving the scooter and their husband.

"Kids are going to be kids and they run out, especially when some of them are on the other side of the road when it's raining and they'll run over to their friends…

"…It's just the parents are very vigilant, and you shouldn't have to be that vigilant."

South Dublin County Council released this statement in response: "Our Traffic Section is not aware of any recent road safety complaints at this location.

"However, we are aware of traffic congestion during peak hours, with delays for traffic exiting Robinhood Road towards the M50 and the Long Mile Road.

"This is a capacity and congestion issue rather than a reported road safety matter."

‘I was in water up to my shins’ as apartments flooded in storm

Residents waited 12 hours before floodwaters receded after rising two foot in homes

RESIDENT Cathy Kavanagh was resigned rather than frightened when she woke up to a foot of water surrounding her bed at 4am on Tuesday morning, *reports Ellen Gough.*

“It’s the third time it’s happened, so it was just like “oh for f*** sake,” she said.

Living in a ground floor apartment in Stocking Wood Well in Rarthfarnham, Cathy’s home has been flooded twice before Storm Chandra on Tuesday, January 27, but never as bad.

She’s now facing homelessness from the damage to her home, and with three cats and a dog, has very few options of where to go.

Cathy and her neighbours waited for almost 12 hours before the floodwaters, which covered their homes with almost two feet of water at their highest, receded on Tuesday afternoon.

She initially thought the noise that had woken her up was her new rescue dog, Pip, peeing on the floor.

“The lamp wouldn’t switch on, so I stood up out of the bed to get the main light, and I was in water up to my shins,” she told *The Echo.*

She found Pip and her cats Princess, Grape and Crystal on her sitting room couch “in shock”.

“The whole house was covered in the same level of water, and it just kept rising, rising and rising.”

This is the third time Cathy’s apartment has been flooded since she moved into Stocking Well Wood.

“We’re professionals at being flooded now,” she said with a wry laugh.



CLEAN UP: Families will be cleaning up their homes this week

The first flooding happened in October 2011 just after she moved in with her daughter, and again in October 2023, due to issues with drains in the estate.

She said the management company for her estate, Circle VHA, offered her a hotel room for Tuesday night but she was forced to stay in her home without power or heating as it wasn’t pet friendly.

Cathy and her neighbours are technically council tenants but are “without a tenancy agreement” because they were housed under a now-defunct scheme that saw South Dublin County Council lease homes left unsold after the property crash as affordable housing in 2009.

The scheme had an option for tenants to either buy their homes after renting for five years or sign up for another five-year lease, but Cathy said this ended in 2017 and the council “never renewed our leases”.

“We have no tenancy agreement with anybody except we pay rent, but no one accounts for anything.”

Cathy has requested a transfer to another council home, but says she and a neighbour were told by a council official they “have no housing” to accommodate them in.

“When this happened in October 2023 they wanted us to move out to redo the houses and I refused, I have three cats, I can't possibly go anywhere.”

“It took four months and they worked around me, I lived in a room and they worked in one room,” she explained.

“It was all doable, but I don't think that's a solution now.”

Cathy was also reluctant to accept a transfer last time because of her connections to her neighbours, but feels she has been left with no other choice this time.

The lack of suitable housing has left her “in limbo” with nowhere to go.

“I looked at pet friendly AirBnBs and they were €1,800 a month.”

“One of my neighbours has taken my dog, I have lights but no power or heating, I just bunkered down last night with the cats,” she said, speaking to *The Echo* from her upstairs neighbours kitchen, who let her shower and eat breakfast there on Wednesday morning.



FLOODING: The water in the sitting room

“I'm very lucky where I live, it is a beautiful estate. My neighbors are amazing, but I don’t know where to go from here.”

“I’m just looking for a permanent transfer to live and never be flooded for the rest of my life.”

Big clean up underway after Dodder River bursts its banks

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

CLEAN up operations are still underway after sections of the Dodder River burst its banks following heavy rain from Storm Chandra.

Grange Park Road and Dodder Park Road in Rathfarnham remained closed on Tuesday evening due to major flooding that also saw sections of the M50 closed between Firhouse and Dundrum, with homes in Whitechurch and Kilinarden also flooded.

A Status Yellow Wind warning for Storm Chandra was issued for county Dublin for Tuesday, January 27, however the forecasted rainfall for the county fell just below the threshold for any flood warning to be issued.

Significant flooding occurred early on Tuesday morning on Nutgrove Avenue and Loreto Park, while parts of Woodside Estate, Coolamber Park, Ballyboden Road and Templeogue Road were also flooded, as well as a number of homes in Stocking Wood Well.

Dublin Fire Brigade said they rescued motorists trapped in floodwaters in Kilmacud and Rathfarnham throughout Tuesday morning, and that four people were “taken to safety by water rescue trained firefighters using an inflatable sled” on Dodder Park Road.

Approximately 20 homes flooded on Whitechurch Road due to the Whitechurch River overtopping and a home in Kilinarden was flooded due to “runoff from the mountainside”, according to South Dublin County Council.

Power outages also occurred across the county from Storm Chandra, with 1,788 residents affected on Tuesday afternoon in Palmerstown.

Labour climate spokesperson and TD for Dublin South West Ciarán Ahern has expressed his devastation to see the flooding and criticised the government in particular for delays to the Whitechurch flood alleviation scheme.

“Thankfully no one was injured, but families have been scrambling to save their possessions as floodwater came up through their floorboards,” he said.

“Unfortunately, the Whitechurch flood alleviation scheme commenced construction approximately three years ago, yet it is still not completed.



FLOODS: A member of Dublin Fire Brigade walking throuugh water on Nutgrove Avenue

“Works for this OPW project have been met with a number of delays of preventable delays,” Deputy Ahern continued.

“It beggars that the Minister for the OPW would not prioritise such projects when we know the real risk of flooding to communities in this area.”

Met Éireann have warned that flood risks may last until the weekend due to saturated soils, overflowing rivers and slow drainage.

South Dublin County Council issued an update on the flooding and clean-up operations, saying they are working alongside crews from neighbouring local authorities “to alleviate flooding, protect homes, and assist with clean-up operations”.

“As water levels recede, crews continue to monitor the situation to ensure public safety,” they said.

“Residents are advised to avoid flooded roads and not attempt to drive or walk through floodwater.”

ESB Networks is highlighting the dangers posed by fallen live wires and is advising the public and the emergency services to stay away from these fallen cables and to report such cases immediately to ESB Emergency Services at 1800 372 999.

Uisce Éireann customers can check the website and social media channels for updates and to get in touch with any issues or concerns via their 24/7 customer care centre at 1800 278 278.

AS PART of *The Echo* celebrating 45 years, we're celebrating you, and local faces and places. Over the last four years we've shared the stories of local people, and remind ourselves of the great community spirit alive across local areas. This week, ***Ken Doyle*** talks to Maria O'Connor, community volunteer from Clondalkin



PASSION: Maria O'Connor is involved with the Clondalkin Camac Groups

The Echo – celebrating community for 45 years



DEDICATED: Maria O'Connor was chair of Friends of the Camac for five years

MANY people consider the Round Tower to be the absolute centre point of Clondalkin. St Mochta's granite and limestone landmark which was built around the turn of the seventh century, has stood proudly over the area since Viking times and this week we feature a woman who's been intimately involved with Clondalkin's centre her whole life, Maria O'Connor.

Maria is from Clondalkin, nothing particularly special about that announcement in these pages but, how can I put this? There's from Clondalkin and then there's from Clondalkin. You see Maria actually grew up in Mill View Cottages on the land that Brú Chrónáin occupies. So she's been at the centre of things in Clondalkin for the best part of her life. And in all of that time, she has given her time and energy selflessly to the promotion and improvement of her beloved home area.

"My link to Brú Chrónáin actually goes back to 1889 when my Grandmother Mary moved in there. Mary's maiden name was Bailo, telling me that I had Italian ancestors back down the line. It's always been a huge part of my consciousness and it's really wonderful to see the visitor's centre now in place sharing the history of the Tower and its environs."

"I was educated at Schoil Mhuire and then Coláiste Bríde in the village. Then I started my career which took me out of the locale for the first time."

Maria has spent almost her entire career as a public servant, working in the Healthcare and Educational sectors primarily. These skills were first adopted when she accepted a position across the Irish Sea.

"I went to Scotland and worked as a Medical and Education copywriter for an Edinburgh based firm as a young woman and it really suited me. I then followed the work as it were and did this and that in the same field around Scotland. This led me to a period in Glasgow, which I suppose you could say, had a big impact on my future."

Ah yes, Glasgow. In reality, the next chunk of our conversation was spent chewing the fat about one of the true loves of Maria's life, football, particularly teams that play in green and white.

"I've always loved the game and in Glasgow, I spent many, many happy days and nights at Celtic Park. I joined in with some friends and asked if I could go to the games with them and they agreed, on condition that when I eventually went home to Ireland, I'd become a Shamrock Rovers fan. I agreed and I was true to my word. When I moved home in '96 I became a card carrying true hoops supporter which I am to this day. Somehow I managed to marry a Bohs fan, my other half Brian Ronan. I kept my name but he's definitely mine, for better or worse. He's not all bad though I suppose. He's as football mad as me and his latest away day saw him witness, in the flesh, Troy Parrott's instantly legendary hat-trick in Hungary. I'll admit I was slightly jealous."

So, back in her homeland in 1996, Maria re-started her career, in her words "doing a bit of everything." She had a six month contract to cover maternity leave at Gill and Macmillan, the educational publishing company. "I loved it there but then the woman who went off to have a baby had the temerity to want her job back," she laughs, "so I changed direction again working in UCD doing everything from admin support to giving presentations at conferences."

Soon, Maria felt a change was overdue, so she re-trained as an aromatherapist and based herself in the village once more with Athy-born Clondalkin adoptee Brian under her arm. She also did a lot of voluntary work with Clondalkin Mental Health at that time which she found incredibly gratifying. She felt the same way about her time volunteering at Open Heart House, a facility in Phibsboro which helped people living with HIV and AIDS. "They lost their funding years ago and were forced to close which was just awful."

Being back in her old stomping ground, Maria rediscovered her passion for it and set about getting involved in numerous good local initiatives.

"My main thing I guess, is the Friends of the Camac group and we're dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of the river which runs through our village. I actually served as Chair of the group for five years and my husband Brian is Chair now. We've had some great success over the years and we work with local schools to educate people on the river and ecology in general. We have a big clean-up once a month and we fish out all manner of rubbish during these events. People would be surprised at how much there always is. I am also involved with the Clondalkin Anglers Club who work alongside us to take care of the river."

The FOTC's next collection is on the 14th of February incidentally so if anyone feels inclined, they meet in Clondalkin Sports and Leisure's car park at around 9.45 and the more the merrier. What better way to show your love for your community than spend Valentine's Day morning helping to clean its river. The gang would be delighted to have some extra pairs of hands, just come dressed for the weather, equipment will be provided.

The good work doesn't end there, far from it. Using her skills, Maria volunteered with Special Olympics Ireland doing massage therapy on the athletes. A complete joy, she says. She's also spent some years as the Honourary Secretary of the famed Laurels Cycle Crew, helping with the outstanding charitable work they carry out each year.

Maria has also turned her presentation skills to help out her friends in the seemingly thriving Clondalkin Irish Crochet scene. In tribute to famed fashion designer Sybil Connolly and local woman Patricia Power, a fascinating mini-documentary about Irish design and crochet in the Clondalkin area was made. Maria wrote and introduced the film and it's a fascinating piece of our history. It's available on YouTube as Clondalkin Tangible Threads and I urge all of our readers to see it.

Expanding on her burgeoning film-making portfolio, Maria wrote and narrated another fabulously presented film, The River Camac. Again, this is a must watch for anyone interested in local history and don't ask questions, just check it out on YouTube and thank me later.

Maria got involved with that particular production from her membership of the Clondalkin Camera Club. "I'm very much a novice photographer but I really do enjoy it. Hopefully we'll have a lot more good stuff to share with the community going forward. It'd be exciting just to be a small part of that."

Maria is also quite the genealogist and has been tracing her family's history for many years now. Indeed it was this particular hobby which led to the discovery of a fascinating and priceless local artefact.

During her searches one day she came across a page from what was called the 'Clondalkin Mass Book.' There was no more information than that included, so Maria turned the search for the whole book over to a group of experts. It seemed like a lost cause for a time, but an answer to the mystery eventually was given in the most unexpected place.

"Well we found it, in a library in Karlsruhe, Germany of all places. Although we don't have it here in our possession, a facsimile of it can now be seen in the Visitor's Centre and it's wonderful to know that it still exists and where it actually is."

I've probably missed out a load of things Maria's done over the years but I have to end somewhere so I'll just leave you with this. Maria is an absolute gem and Clondalkin is lucky to have her. If you ever see her shouting expletives at the opposition in the Tallaght Stadium stands, make sure to say hello.



SUPPORTER: Shamrock Rovers fan Maria O'Connor

Man (31) injured a garda's finger while resisting arrest

A MAN who injured a garda while resisting arrest five years ago has been directed to complete 240 hours of community service, *reports Eimear Dodd.*

Keith Daly (31) of Dun Saithne Crescent, Balbriggan, Co Dublin, pleaded guilty to one count of assaulting a peace officer and one count of possession of cannabis for sale or supply on January 26, 2021, at Killakee Road, Rathfarmham.

During the incident, Daly injured a garda's finger while resisting arrest. A total of 9.6g of cannabis, valued at €192, was also found along with cash.

Daly has 55 previous convictions including for assaulting members of An Garda Siochana, making a threat towards a garda, drugs offences, burglary and theft.

Having heard the facts of the case and reviewing a probation report which placed Daly at high risk of re-offending, Judge Orla Crowe placed Daly under the supervision of the Probation Services for six months last July.

On Tuesday, Judge Crowe said the updated report before the court was positive and that Daly had engaged proactively with the Probation Services.

The judge said Daly had "demonstrated violence" towards gardai in the past, adding that the injured party in this case was "doing his lawful duty at a time of national and international crisis".

She noted that the Probation Service had assessed Daly as suitable for community service unusually, without a request from the court.

She said it appeared he had made "considerable progress" since this offending occurred and appears to have turned his life around in the last five years.

Judge Crowe said the court would give Daly a chance as he is not engaging in criminal offending, is working and contributing taxes to society.

She directed Daly to complete 240 hours of community service within two years in lieu of a two-year prison sentence.

Garda Natasha McAleese told Pieter Le Vert BL, prosecuting, during an earlier sentence hearing, that she was on patrol in a garda vehicle with Garda Sergeant Wes Kenny when they noticed a car driving on Killakee Road at around 11.10pm.

The car attracted their attention as Covid-19 five kilometre travel restrictions were in place at the time. They stopped the car and spoke to the driver.

Daly was a passenger and said he was from Balbriggan. After the officers pointed out the men were more than five kilometres from Balbriggan, Daly became agitated, telling gardai to "stop hassling us".

Sgt Kenny went to the passenger side, where Daly opened the door in an aggressive fashion.

He then asked why they were being hassled and was asked to stop using profanities. After getting



out of the car, Daly lifted his shirt, shouting: "I've nothing fucking on me."

Sgt Kenny noticed a number of plastic bags poking out of Daly's tracksuit bottoms, and began to caution him.

Daly took bags from his trousers and started to throw them away. Sgt Kenny's finger was injured while Daly attempted to evade arrest.

There was a struggle, during which Sgt Kenny was thrown to the ground. Daly then fled the scene.

A bag containing cannabis was taken from Daly by Sgt Kenny during the struggle. Two small bags of cannabis were also dropped by Daly with €3,445 in cash found beside the passenger side of the door.

Sgt Kenny was later treated in hospital for the injury to his finger.

Daly was identified and a print matching him found on a bag of drugs. He denied any wrongdoing when interviewed.

In his victim impact statement, Sgt Kenny said he was "shocked" by the deliberateness of Daly's actions. "It genuinely makes me question how easily my life could be put at risk while doing my job."

He said his mental health had been affected and he has since taken a different career path within the force.

Sgt Kenny said his finger was "forcibly bent and injured" in the course of his duties.

He said he was in "no doubt that it was not an accident" and said Daly "attacked me with no regard for my safety or life".

Sgt Kenny said he developed a "heightened fear" in certain situations and afterwards "understood the psychological toll on victims of crime".

Defence counsel expressed her client's remorse, and apologised to Sgt Kenny for Daly's actions that night.

Gda McAleese accepted that Daly had a difficult background.

Counsel submitted to the court that while her client had a "difficult and sad start" in life, he is now working and living a pro-social life.

Counsel said her client instructs he fell into drug use at an early age and at the time of this incident, there were issues with cannabis. He is engaging with addiction support services.

Advertorial

South Dublin businesses meet thousands of buyers at local enterprise showcase

BUSINESSES from South Dublin had the opportunity to meet buyers from all over the world this week as part of the Local Enterprise Showcase at Showcase 2026 at the RDS in Dublin. There were over 100 Local Enterprise Office supported businesses from across the country present at the event with four in attendance from South Dublin.

Gabriela Baptista from Crea with Baby with creative stationery for journaling and planning, Arzu Gorbil from The Crochet Dolls with handmade crochet dolls and gifts, Paul Brereton from Facet Ireland, Irish made jewellery, Tanya Byrne from Daisy & Tanya, were all exhibiting at the Local Enterprise Showcase, part of Showcase 2026, that saw over 3,300 buyers from 27 countries attend the three-day event in Dublin looking to secure new sales and partners for the year ahead. Upwards of €32 million in business was expected to have been transacted across the three-day event.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin visited the Local Enterprise Showcase as part of Showcase at the RDS and highlighted how important trade shows such as Showcase are to the design and crafts sector and the impact they can have in helping these businesses to reach new markets.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin said: "I'm delighted to visit Showcase 2026, an event that continues to highlight the very best of Irish craft and design. Showcase remains a vital platform for our makers, providing them with the opportunity to present their work to national and international audiences and to build meaningful connections in global markets. The creativity, skill and innovation on display here today reflect the depth of talent that exists across Ireland, particularly within our rural and regional communities. Craft is not only central to our cultural identity but also plays an important role in supporting sustainable enterprise and employment throughout the country, contributing to the national economy and Ireland's export market. The Government remains committed to supporting Ireland's craft and design sector as it continues to grow, adapt and compete internationally. I wish all the exhibitors every success at Showcase 2026 and look forward to seeing Irish creativity continue to thrive on the world stage."

The South Dublin companies were selected by Local Enterprise Office South Dublin to take part in this year's Local



Tanya Byrne from Daisy & Tanya, exhibiting at Showcase 26



Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan at The Crochet Dolls stand at Showcase 26 at the RDS

Enterprise Showcase at Showcase 2026. They have been working closely with them in recent months to ensure they are in the best possible position to maximise their appearance at the event including sales technique, marketing materials and stand production.

Other South Dublin companies who participated in Showcase Ireland are Feebee Foran from Forager, Emma Higgins Art, Linda Proudfoot Artist, TJG Ltd, Jeweller, Yoko Wool, Green Angel and Crafty by Illina, who won the Local Enterprise Showcase Award winner for her beautiful handbags.

This year saw the third year of the Business of Craft Awards by the Local Enterprise Offices open to all the craft and design companies taking part in Local Enterprise Showcase at Showcase 2026. The initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices recognises the business behind the amazing craft and design products that are created across the country.

The awards had three categories; **Best Newcomer** for the best craft and design business who is exhibiting for the first time, **One to Watch** for the best craft and design business who has excellent export and international potential and **Sustainability Champion** for the best craft and design business who is excelling in sustainability.

In the Newcomer category the winner was **Bó Bar Soap**, who have been supported by Local Enterprise Office Kilkenny. Their signature offering is a handmade cow's milk soap created in small batches using milk from grass fed cows. The family run business was identified as having significant growth potential with a defined sales and export plan for what is a unique product.

In the One to Watch category the winner was **Appleberry Atelier**, who have been supported by Local Enterprise Office Wicklow. Founded by Ailbhe Cronin, Appleberry Atelier is luxury stationery design house set in the garden of Ireland, County Wicklow. Having worked with over 150 Irish high end hotels and castles, the business was picked for the high quality of the product backed up with a scalable business plan to grow into new markets.

Finally in the Sustainability category the winner was **EcoKinly**, supported by Local Enterprise Office Wexford. Set up by Kate Doyle, EcoKinly offers thoughtfully designed reusable products that support sustainable living from cloth nappies and reusable period pads to swimwear and wipes, EcoKinly provides practical, planet-friendly alternatives to single-use products. The business was identified as having true sustainability baked into the product and a defined sales strategy and product expansion plans.

FINALISTS - Business of Craft Awards 2026 – Local Enterprise Showcase @ Showcase 2026

Newcomer

- Beyond the Ferns – supported by LEO Wicklow – www.BeyondTheFerns.ie
- **Bó Bar Soap – supported by LEO Kilkenny – www.BoBarSoap.com (WINNER)**
- Carmel Grant Designs – Supported by LEO Waterford – www.CarmelGrantDesigns.ie

One to Watch

- **Appleberry Atelier – supported by LEO Wicklow – www.AppleberryAtelier.com (WINNER)**
- Polly & Andy – supported by LEO Waterford – www.PollyandAndy.com
- CAYO – supported by LEO Limerick – www.CAYO-Brand.com

Sustainability

- WASI – supported by LEO Cork North & West – www.WASI.ie
- Bean Around – supported by LEO Dun Laoghaire Rathdown – www.beanaround.ie
- **EcoKinly – supported by LEO Wexford – www.TheNappyMarket.ie (WINNER)**

It was also another strong year for Local Enterprise Showcase exhibitors as part of the Showcase Awards with several Local Enterprise Office client companies securing awards and recognition through the Showcase awards including Michael G O'Donoghue Carpentry who was a part of Local Enterprise Showcase and supported by LEO Kerry.

SHOWCASE AWARDS WINNERS

- Overall Best Product Award winner - Michael G O'Donoghue Carpentry from Kerry
- Local Enterprise Showcase Award winner - Crafty by Illiana from South Dublin
- Best Product Category Award winners:
  - Fashion - Wendy Louise Designs from Longford
  - Home - Sam agus Nessa from Kildare
  - Gift - Hanna's Bees from Cork
  - Jewellery - Saw Framed from Cork
  - Wellbeing - Paper + Cloud from Kerry
  - Sustainability Award - Martina Hamilton from Sligo

For more information on Local Enterprise Showcase 2026 and supports available to those operating in the design and crafts sector, log on to www.LocalEnterprise.ie and for more information on Showcase 2026, log on to www.ShowcaseIreland.com

E business
recruitment,motoring&property
January 29, 2026

tel: 01 4685350
email: business@echo.ie
property@echo.ie
motoring@echo.ie

LEO supported companies created 91 jobs last year

Figures highlight the significant impact Local Enterprise Office has on the economy

THE Minister of State for Employment, Small Business and Retail, Alan Dillon, T.D., announced the annual results of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) for 2025 which showed that Local Enterprise Office South Dublin supported companies created 91 jobs in 2025.

The net jobs created by Local Enterprise Office South Dublin supported clients in 2025 was 91, which takes into account companies that amalgamated, ceased trading and those that transferred on to Enterprise Ireland.

The new figures show that the LEO South Dublin financially supported 275 small businesses in their portfolio across the county these companies in turn employ 1,228 people.

The total national figures for the Local Enterprise Offices across the country were announced with the LEOs now financially supporting 40,285 jobs across 7,148 companies. This is the most jobs the Local Enterprise Offices have supported nationally since their inception in 2014.

In 2025 there were 7,261 new jobs created by LEO clients companies with a net jobs creation figure of 2,479. This was up 7% nationally on 2024.

From the jobs created, 82% were outside of the Dublin region.

The LEOs also provide substantial funded supports to thousands of other small businesses across the country with programmes such as the Grow Digital Voucher, Lean for Business and Green for Business along with training and mentoring.

Minister Alan Dillon T.D., said; "The 31 Local Enterprise Offices continue to be the backbone of local economic development, supporting 40,285 jobs in 2025, the highest level since their establishment. Last year alone, LEO client companies created 7,261 new jobs, delivering a 7% increase on 2024 and marking the 12th consecutive year of jobs growth.

Crucially, 82% of these new jobs were created outside Dublin, demonstrating the impact of targeted local supports in every region. From digitalisation to sustainability and export development, our LEOs are helping small businesses compete and scale. Government remains firmly committed to strengthening these supports so that entrepreneurs nationwide can continue to grow and thrive."



HIGHLIGHT: Minister Alan Dillon T.D. at the premises of LEO client Áine Kennedy of The Smooth Company from Lucan and Kieran Comerford, Chair of the Local Enterprise Offices at the announcement

The Local Enterprise Offices were to the fore in supporting small businesses across the country in 2025, helping thousands to secure funding, upskill and avail of supports to becoming more sustainable and competitive. Recent supports such as the Grow Digital Voucher enables small businesses to take their first steps in digitalisation and the Market Explorer Grant supports companies in looking at new markets.

Peter Connolly, Head of Enterprise said, "These figures highlight the significant impact that the Local Enterprise Offices and their clients are making in driving economic growth across the country. The creation of over 7,000 jobs is only a small part of the role that LEOs are playing in fostering entrepreneurship and growing enterprise in towns, villages and communities all over Ireland

"These jobs and clients figures only reflect those who have received financial funding from their LEO and do not capture the thousands more that receive the likes of Lean, Green and Digital supports or training and mentoring. The numbers today are immensely positive and reflect the resilience of the small business sector and we look forward to growing our work with these businesses in 2026 and to help those who have a great idea to get started."

Anne Lanigan, Head of Local Enterprise and Regions, Enterprise Ireland, said; "These strong employment results reflect the impact of the Local Enterprise Office network and the ambition of the small businesses it supports across the country. The continued growth in jobs, with 82% of the new jobs created last year outside Dublin, shows that entrepreneurs can start, grow and scale their businesses from anywhere in Ireland. Enterprise Ireland will continue to work closely with the Local Enterprise Offices in areas such as competitiveness, sustainability and digitalisation, supporting businesses to strengthen capability and create jobs in 2026 and beyond."

The Local Enterprise Offices located in the local authorities and funded through Enterprise Ireland support thousands of small Irish businesses and entrepreneurs nationwide.

Since their establishment in 2014 they have been for the first stop shop for entrepreneurs and small businesses and providing a range of supports including financial, mentoring, training and sector specific expertise to help guide businesses at any stage of their development.

Football club looking to add more features and a coffee shop

KILNAMANAGH AFC are looking to add more community features to their new clubhouse, including a coffee shop.

Work is almost complete on the club's €500k state-of-the-art clubhouse on Treepark Road.

A fresh planning application was submitted on January 15 by the club seeking amendments to the previous approved application to "facilitate new coffee shop unit at ground floor and a school aged childcare unit at part of first floor level".

According to the new floor plans submitted, the ground floor layout would be reconfigured to have the coffee unit operate out of a corner room in the club house alongside the changing rooms.

The first floor would be reconfigured and replace the previously proposed board room, visitor's room/canteen and activity room with a smaller activity room and a shared school aged childcare/club activity area "that will be used during primary school term, with the area remaining for club activity use at all other times".

The plant room and storage would also be moved upstairs to make way for the coffee unit below.

Kilnamangah AFC are still fundraising for the final touches on the project including fitting of plumbing and electrical services as well as drainage facilities for the pitch.

Third party observations for the change of use application can be submitted to the council's planning portal until February 18, and a decision is due from the planning authority by March 11, 2026.

E business

tel: 4685350 email: business@echo.ie

Applications now open for Local Enterprise Awards

Awards celebrate entrepreneurship and business excellence



CELEBRATE: Winners at last year's Local Enterprise Awards
Photo by Lafayette Photography

LOCAL Enterprise Office South Dublin is delighted to announce that applications are now open for the Local Enterprise Awards 2026, which will take place on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at The Maldron Hotel, Tallaght.

The awards celebrate entrepreneurship and business excellence across South Dublin, recognising the innovation, resilience and ambition of local enterprises at every stage of development.

This year's awards will showcase outstanding businesses across nine categories, highlighting the diversity and strength of enterprise in the county.

Winners will share in a total prize fund of €14,000 and can apply under headings which include export, start-up, one to watch, tech/innovation and food and drink.

There are also categories for entrepreneurial spirit, green award, NEWS Female Entrepreneur of the Year and SCENe (Creative Economy).

The Local Enterprise Awards provide a valuable platform for local businesses to gain recognition, raise their profile and connect with the wider business community.

An overall winner will go on to represent LEO South Dublin at national level.

All applicants must have availed of one or more of the following supports: Measure 1 Financial Support (Feasibility, Priming and Business Expansion), Mentoring and/or Training, Market Explorer Grant, Completion of a LEAN, Green or Digital Start programme, GradStart or IP Start.

The closing date for applications is Friday, February 13, 2026.

For further information and application details, visit Local Enterprise Office South Dublin.

Uniphar announce plans to acquire TouchStore

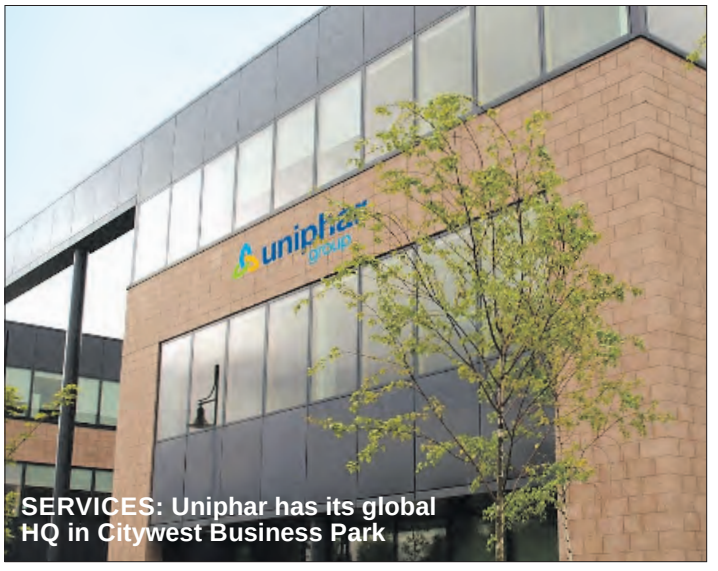
By **Maurice Garvey**
maurice@echo.ie

UNIPHAR recently announced plans to acquire TouchStore, a Limerick-based provider of dispensing and retail management software for pharmacy teams across Ireland.

Pharmaceutical wholesaler and international healthcare services giant Uniphar has its global HQ in Citywest Business Park and operates four major Irish pharmacy chains – Life, Allcare, Hickey's and McCauley.

Financial details of the acquisition have not been disclosed.

Established in 2001, TouchStore provides retail and management software to other businesses. Currently the company employs 35 developers and support staff in its Limerick office and will continue to operate as a separate legal entity with its existing management and support teams in place.



SERVICES: Uniphar has its global HQ in Citywest Business Park

Uniphar Group is a diversified healthcare services business that works with more than 200 multinational pharmaceutical and medical technology manufacturers across three divisions, Uniphar Pharma, Uniphar Medtech and Uniphar Supply Chain and Retail.

It has a presence in Europe, North America, APAC and MENA.

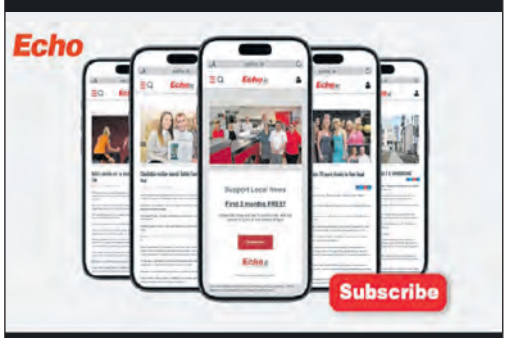
With the acquisition, Uniphar aims to bolster "TouchStore's product roadmap and continued innovation in support of the Irish community pharmacy sector."

Uniphar also recently invested in a new wholesale distribution facility in Dublin, enabling the organisation to double capacity and boosting the company's solutions to significantly reduce the non-clinical workload in pharmacies.

Since 2020, Uniphar has acquired a number of companies, including US pharma consulting firm RRD International, pharma marketing agency E4H, pharma distributor Devonshire Healthcare Services and Dutch pharmaceutical services business platform BModesto Group.

Your Local Business News at Your Fingertips.

Subscribe for full access to ***Echo.ie*** content and the weekly ePaper. All for less than the price of a coffee!



Scan to Subscribe

business@echo.ie

E business
tel: 4685350 email: business@echo.ie

Tallaght Stadium on the look out for new manager

Nicola Coffey leaves Tallaght to take up role with Shelbourne Football Club

By **James Roulston Mooney**
jamesrm@echo.ie

A HIGH-ranking official at Tallaght Stadium will remain in charge "for the weeks ahead" while the search for her replacement takes place following her switch to Shelbourne FC.

Stadium Manager Nicola Coffey will become Shelbourne FC's next Chief Operating Officer in March after almost 17 years in her council role at Tallaght Stadium.

Coffey has been in her role at Tallaght Stadium since April 2009 and has managed the facility through Real Madrid's visit, Shamrock Rovers' European journeys and more.

South Dublin County Council noted that she will remain in her current position for the coming weeks and the stadium will continue to run as smoothly as possible.

SDCC stated: "The existing South Dublin County Council Tallaght Stadium Manager remains in place for the weeks ahead, with their replacement subject to an ongoing recruitment process.

"There will be no impact on operations and Tallaght Stadium will continue to run successfully."



OPERATIONS: Tallaght stadium and (inset) Nicola Coffey who is leaving for Shelbourne

Coffey's new assignment will be to oversee the running of Tallaght Stadium tenant Shamrock Rovers' rivals, Shelbourne FC.

Shelbourne are no stranger to Tallaght Stadium and even called it home during their UEFA Europa Conference League home games after they successfully moved past the qualifying rounds for the first time in the club's history.

One of the aspects of her career cited by the Drumcondra-based side is her experience working with UEFA during her time at Tallaght Stadium.

Shelbourne FC CEO Tomás Quinn stated: "Nicola's experience, leadership, and proven track record in managing complex sporting environments make her an outstanding addition to Shelbourne FC.

"We are delighted to welcome her to Tolka Park and look forward to the expertise and ambition she will bring to the role."

As COO, Nicola will oversee Shels' day-to-day operations, with responsibility for operational strategy, facilities, compliance, and the continued professionalisation of structures across the club.

Coffey stated on the announcement of her new role: "I'm honoured to join Shelbourne FC at such an exciting time for the club. Shelbourne has a proud history and a strong identity, and I'm really looking forward to working with the board, management, staff, players, and supporters to help build on the excellent progress already being made.

"I'm excited to bring my experience in operations, facilities, and governance to support the club's continued growth, both on and off the pitch."

Talent shortages growing with resources stretched

By **Maurice Garvey**
maurice@echo.ie

OVER 80 per cent of businesses are struggling to plug skills gaps in critical areas that are impacting productivity and growth, according to new research.

Ibec's 2025 Skills Survey has found that the mismatch between available talent and the needs of a modern economy has moved from a marginal concern to a major strategic threat.

Findings of the study reveal that firms are managing intense competition for talent in a tight labour market amid escalating pressure to keep pace with emerging technologies, including AI.

Meanwhile, employers are expecting the competition for talent to increase in the next five years, further impacting the productivity of businesses in Ireland.

Recruitment for skills was highlighted as a major concern for businesses.

According to the report, large organisations are more than twice as likely to be training for AI compared to their smaller counterparts because SMEs are forced to prioritise immediate operational and compliance training over long-term strategic upskilling.

Ibec is calling on the Irish Government to unlock the National Training Fund (NTF) as a matter of urgency.

The business group cites the significant surplus in the fund, estimated to reach €3 billion by 2030, which it said signals "a clear underutilisation of resources."

Meadhbh Costello, Ibec Senior Executive, said: "With talent shortages growing and internal resources stretched thin, it is deeply concerning that firms who are actively contributing 1 percent of their payroll to the National Training Fund are not able to access the supports they need to prepare their workforce for the future."

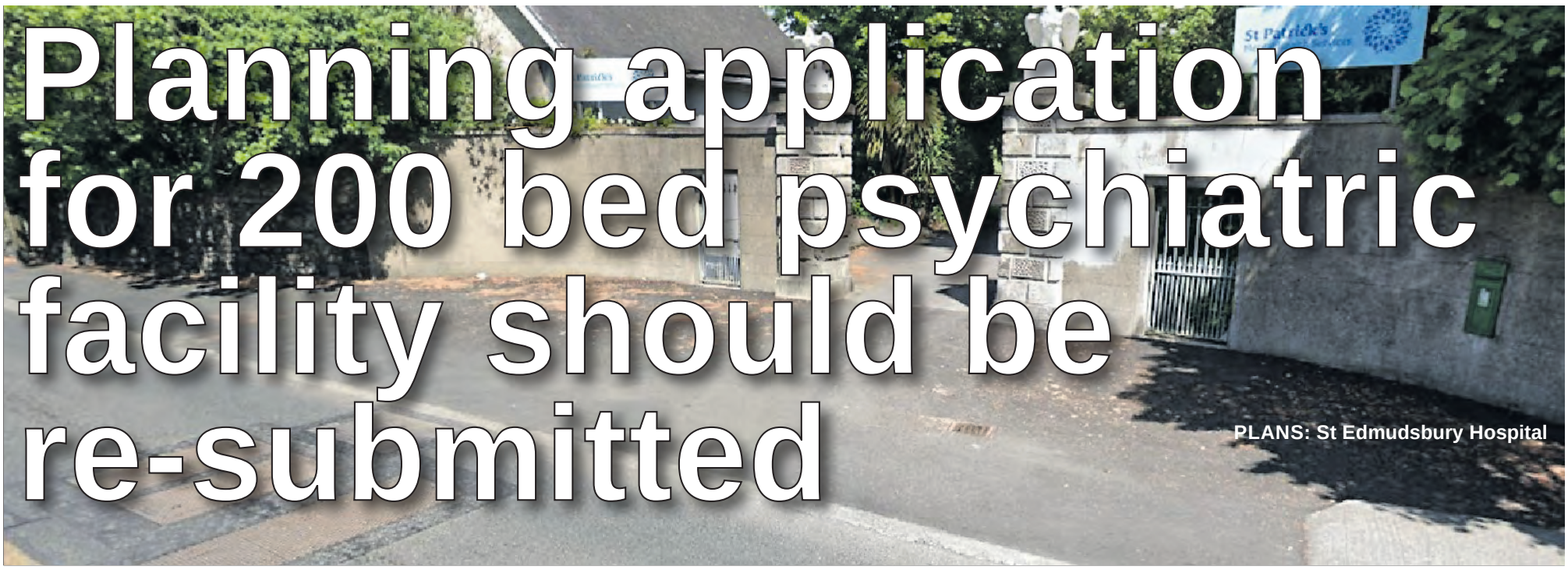


RESOURCES: Meadhbh Costello, Ibec Senior Executive



property

tel: 4685350 email: property@echo.ie



PLANS: St Edmudsbury Hospital

Planning application for 200 bed psychiatric facility should be re-submitted

The plans for the development were refused on the grounds of St Edmundsbury Hospital

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

A PRE-application consultation for a new 200-bed psychiatric in-patient facility on the grounds of St Edmundsbury Hospital in Lucan has been ruled as a "strategic infrastructure development" for national mental health services.

St Patrick's Hospital Lucan, formerly known as St Edmundsbury Hospital, is located within large grounds of a renovated and refurbished 19th century Georgian house (including sitting rooms, recreational rooms, therapy rooms and kitchen-dining room facilities) as well as modern purpose-built resident accommodation.

It is part of St. Patrick's Mental Health Services (SPMHS), who are proposing to construct a 200-bed adult in-patient general psychiatric hospital set in and around the existing historic walled garden located to the south of the St Edmundsbury site.

The development would include refurbishment and repurposing of a number of historic farm buildings in support of hospital operations, continued use of St. Edmundsbury House for extended day care service provision and construction of a new 14-bed in-patient adolescent psychiatric unit, to be located on the site of the existing 52 bed unit.

This would allow increased provision of services at the Lucan site, such as adult and adolescent inpatient and day services, eating disorder, age care, higher acuity and general psychiatric care services, consultant and hospital administration and a full range of therapeutic services, including music, arts, crafts, and horticulture.

The development would also provide public open space to preserve the existing walking loop and ensure public access to the future Liffey Valley Park.

Open gardens accessible by service users and staff only, connecting the new hospital to the existing buildings also form part of the development, along with private gardens as secure spaces for service users with direct access form the new hospital and courtyards intended to be private and secure spaces situated within ward areas.

In a decision published on January 6, An Coimisiún Pleanála ruled that the 200-bed in-patient facility can be classed as a strategic infrastructure development and that St. Patrick's Mental Health Services should submit a full planning application to the commission.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Access and parking arrangements sought on proposed mosque site

THE developers of a proposed mosque in Lucan have been asked to supply additional information regarding "access and parking arrangements", *reports Ellen Gough.*

Plans were lodged in November 2025 for a Lucan Islamic Community Centre, on a vacant site in Balgaddy, and are a modified version of a previous planning application that was approved by South Dublin County Council in 2020.

The new planning application for the site proposes a modified design for the mosque and community centre, which would now occupy a detached single storey/part two storey building with a feature minaret and dome, and removed plans for a basement space that would have included underground parking and mortuary rooms.

The building will also contain a reception/refreshment zone, two retailing/services units, a prayer room and gallery, a multi-purpose events room and a three bedroomed apartment (to be occupied by a security person/caretaker), with rooms for a health/medical clinic and other community resources

"This need for the redesign of the previously planned and approved building arises out of a recent review by the community," the planning proposal from South Dublin Maktab CLG read.

31 third party submissions were lodged during the application process, including from local representatives.

Many of the submissions expressed their support for developing a mosque on the site, with TD Paul Gogarty (Ind) noting the "sizeable Islamic community in Lucan and the wider South Dublin area" and that the community already use the South Dublin Football Leagues premises "directly across the road" as a meeting place for Friday prayers.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
The site for the mosque in Lucan

However, some submissions were opposed to the development of the mosque and noted concerns around parking and increased traffic in the area, noise pollution and "calls to prayer", especially late at night.

In their planning report, SDCC found that the proposals for the mosques operating hours adhered to the conditions set out when planning permission was granted previously i.e. from 8am to 10pm, and they considered that the "proposed development... would not adversely impact on the amenities of existing adjacent properties or visual amenities of the wider area".

They have now asked that the developers submit additional information for the planning application with regards to parking and access for the mosque, as well as "surface water management to serve the subject proposal".

The planning report states that the 37 proposed parking spaces in the development are "consistent with requirements of the SDCC Development plan... without any reliance on third parties for 'daily' services", and that the "Roads Department are satisfied that the proposed development will not have a significant negative effect on traffic in the Balgaddy area".

However, they have asked for a 'Stage 1 - Road Safety Audit' that assesses risk for pedestrian and bicycle movements through the carpark, dimensions for car park spaces, a dedicated parking provision for the residential and retail units and for at least 10% of the 37 parking spaces to be designated for EV charging, among other details.

South Dublin Maktab CLG now has six months from Friday. January 16, to comply with the additional information request.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

property

tel: 4685350 email: property@echo.ie

Appeals against converting historic house into apartments

Council granted permission for Scholarstown House to be converted into apartments

By **Ellen Gough**
ellen@echo.ie

MULTIPLE appeals have been lodged after planning permission was granted for a historic house in Knocklyon to be converted into apartments and for an apartment block to be constructed on the grounds of the house.

South Dublin County Council granted permission in December 2025 for Scholarstown House to be converted into two residential units – one two-bed and one three-bed apartment – and to demolish four existing shed structures "within the curtilage of the protected structure" to make way for a 55 unit apartment block, ranging in height from 3 to 5 storeys, containing 16 one-bed, 26 two-bed apartments, and 13 three-bed apartments on the grounds of the house.

The proposed development also includes residential amenities, car and cycle parking accessed via a new pedestrian and vehicular access off Orlagh Grove with the existing entrances on Scholarstown Road and Orlagh Grove being re-configured to provide for pedestrian and cycle access.

Three seperate appeals have been lodged with An Coimisiún Pleanála over the decision to grant permission, citing overdevelopment of the Scholarstown Road area, increased traffic congestion, and insufficient public transport services for the area.

The appeal submitted by Orlagh Grove Residents Association stated that the proposed five-storey building would "severely impact the special character" of Scholarstown House, and that its height would result in "overlooking of rear gardens of houses on Orlagh Crescent and Orlagh Green".

Their concerns over traffic congestion and public transport links were echoed in an appeal lodged by an individual resident of Orlagh Grove, who stated that the development would put "undue strain on an already congested infrastructure, increase traffic hazards and compromise the safety of residents", due to the proposed new vehicular access point though the Orlagh Grove estate.

"Introducing this new development would inevitably increase traffic flow compounding existing issues," the resident appeal noted.

A further appeal was submitted by Ballyboden Tidy Towns, who said the new development failed to address issues that led to refusal of a previous planning application by An Bord Pleanála, and that it represents "overdevelopment of a constrained site containing a protected structure" and is "not justified", among a list of other concerns.

A decision is due from An Coimisiún Pleanála by May 14, 2026.



APPEALS: Scholarstown House

Permission granted for 20 unit apartment block



PLANNING permission has been granted for a 20-unit apartment block in Larkfield Square in Lucan, *reports Ellen Gough.*

The development will see seven one-bed and 12 two-bed apartments, plus one three-bed apartment, in a three-five storey block with balconies and/or private terraces provided for all apartments.

According to the design statement, this apartment block will be built on "a compact infill plot within the established Larkfield development, which already provides a significant number of larger family homes, including three, four and five bedroom houses".

The first three phases of the Larkfield development had been completed in the early 2000s, while the site for the new apartments "remained vacant and was used as a construction compound for a period and is now a cleared / vacant site".

The plans approved on January 16 by the council also include "alterations to the existing car parking to provide a total of 21 car parking spaces for the apartment units" as well as provision of 46 bicycle parking spaces (34 long stay and 12 short stay spaces).

"Secure cycle parking spaces are provided at ground floor level of the building to serve the residential units," the application stated.

A new pedestrian link from the apartment block to the Ballyowen Road will also be part of the development.

Concerns were raised during the application process by residents of the existing Larkfield development over loss of daylight and overshadowing of their properties by the new development.

However, the council were satisfied that the Sunlight, Daylight & Shadow Assessment submitted with the initial application and an addendum Shadow Assessment submitted later showed "no material or unacceptable shadowing effects arise for any adjoining garden or communal space". *Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.*

REA McGEE
Sales - Lettings - Valuations - Property Management
YOUR LOCAL ESTATE AGENT
Tinking of selling? Thinking of letting?
Contact us today! We have offices in Tallaght & Harolds Cross.
Tallaght: 01 405 7700
info@reamcgee.ie
Harolds Cross: 01 671 1111
hello@reamcgee.ie
Proud to be working with you for over 20 years.
www.reamcgee.ie

education•training•jobs

advertising@echo.ie

Advertorial

Is January really a good time to look for a new job

The Career Expert with Sarah Louise



EVERY January, I have the same conversations with candidates, clients and people I meet socially. "Is now actually a good time to move, or should I wait until later in the year?"

Speaking honestly, from someone who works in recruitment day in, day out, January is one of the most powerful times to look for a new role.

I see what happens behind the scenes. Long before Christmas, companies are reviewing teams, planning growth and signing off hiring budgets. By the time January arrives, many of those roles are ready to move quickly. Hiring managers are focused, refreshed and clear on what they need which is not always the case later in the year.

January is also when I see candidates gain real clarity. The Christmas break creates space to think. People realise they've outgrown their role, they're exhausted from giving more than they receive, or they want better balance and progression. That self-awareness changes how people show up in conversations and interviews.

One thing that always surprises people is this: January isn't as crowded as you'd expect. Lots of people talk about changing jobs, but fewer actually take action. The candidates who reach out early, update their CV and are open to honest conversations tend to stand out quickly.

I always say January isn't about rushing it's about being intentional. It's about asking, "What do I really want this year?" not just "What job can I get?"

From my experience, many of the strongest placements I make all year start in January. They set the tone for confidence, growth and momentum.

So yes January really is a good time to look for a new job. And sometimes, it's exactly when people give themselves permission to want more!

Sacred Heart Senior National School is seeking:

Two dedicated and reliable Cleaners to join our school cleaning team.

SACRED HEART SENIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

Duties & Responsibilities:

- General cleaning of classrooms, corridors, toilets, and common areas
- Maintaining high standards of cleanliness and hygiene
- Safe use of cleaning equipment and materials
- Adhering to school policies and health & safety standards

Requirements:

- Previous cleaning experience desirable
- Reasonable level of English
- Reliable, punctual, and can work independently
- Garda Vetting required prior to appointment

Closing date: Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Position Details:

- Start date: ASAP
- Monday to Friday, 2:45pm – 4:45pm (2 hours per day)
- Rate of pay: Competitive and in line with industry standards

How to Apply:

Submit your CV and/or application by email to: recruitment@sacredheartsns.net
or drop a copy into the School Office (FAO: School Secretary).



RECRUITMENT

OPEN DAYS

Come & chat with us for more information!

Wednesday 11th February — From 10am - 2pm

Wednesday 4th March — From 10am - 2pm

Applewood Homecare, 140A Terenure Rd N D6W X433

Homecare Assistants required for:

Terenure, Rathfarnham, Ranelagh, Rathmines, Templeogue, Tallaght, Firhouse, Knocklyon, Dundrum, Ballinteer, Walkinstown, Crumlin, Drimnagh, Ballyfermot

★ GREAT PAY RATES ★ FLEXIBLE HOURS ★

jobs@applewoodhomecare.ie 01 499 2201

Full time Sales assistant

ODC Chemist, Kilnamanagh Tallaght requires a full time Sales assistant.

Permanent Role with competitive salary. Retail experience preferred but not essential.

Must have good communication skills and be available to work 37.5 hrs per week Monday to Saturday with one late evening. No Sundays or bank holidays.

Apply with CV & Cover letter to: odckilnamanagh@outlook.com

Life & Social

The Echo – dedicated to having the conversation about local arts and entertainment.Tell us your story.

tel: 01 4685350 **email:** news@echo.ie

'Lines of Exile' examines the two parallels of two partitioned nations

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

'LINES of Exile' is a new full-length play presented by Parallax Theatre Collective that examines the parallels of two partitioned nations.

Set in 1950 Lahore, Pakistan, it follows the story of Bishan Singh, a man with schizophrenia, who struggles to comprehend why he is being uprooted and sent to a new facility in Amritsar and why the country itself has been divided.

His psychiatrist, Dr Diarmaid Ó Flaithearta, tries to guide him through the confusion, even as he recognizes echoes of his own homeland's partition. Exploring mental health, displacement, and shared histories of colonial division, 'Lines of Exile' bridges the emotional landscapes of Ireland and India, offering a deeply human perspective on trauma, care, and belonging.

This week, *The Echo* sat down with director and co-writer Leah Flowers to discuss 'Lines of Exile'; the show performs in the Civic Theatre on February 4 and 5.

There will be 3 performances across the 2 days, including 7pm performances for each night and a 1pm performance on the latter date.

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased on the Civic website.

What can you tell us about the story of 'Lines of Exile' without giving too much away?

Lines of Exile is a new 70-minute drama, and its world premiere is at The Civic Theatre in Tallaght on February 4th, 2026. Set in 1950 Lahore, Pakistan, during the final transfers of psychiatric patients following the Partition of India, the story follows a man with schizophrenia who struggles to comprehend why he is being uprooted and sent to a new facility in Amritsar—and why the country itself has been divided. His psychiatrist, an Irish doctor, tries to guide him through the confusion, even as he recognizes echoes of his own homeland's partition. Lines of Exile uses the intimacy of small-scale performance to humanize history, creating space for dialogue about mental health and finding meaning and connection in the aftermath of division.

What inspired 'Lines of Exile'?

Ankit Raj Mathur, an expat from India, brought this story to my attention after we had graduated from the UCD MA in Theatre Practice programme together. He wanted to create a full-length play based on the short story "Toba Tek Singh" by Saadat Hasan Manto from 1955. Ankit recognised parallels between the partitions of Ireland and India and wanted to create a bespoke story for the people who live here: Irish, Indian, and Pakistani alike.

What have been your favourite parts of producing this show so far, and why?

By far my favourite part of any production is the time spent in the rehearsal room because I really enjoy watching actors pour their passion, skill, and perspective into their roles. This piece is a collaboration between myself (Leah Flowers, director and co-writer), Ankit Raj Mathur (actor and co-writer), and Darragh Scannell (actor and co-writer). After we spent weeks researching, brainstorming, and workshopping foundational story elements, we had devising sessions in which I gave the actors free rein to improvise along set signposts within each scene. They're both skilled and intuitive, which helps a great deal, but they also have great scene-partner chemistry. During the devising session for the turning point of the play, Ankit and Darragh were so in sync that it was electric. I can't wait to share that scene and this story with the Dublin community.

What have been some of the biggest challenges involved with producing this show, and how have you navigated them?

As a recent graduate of the UCD MA Theatre Practice programme and a US transplant, I didn't know a lot of people fresh out of the scholastic environment. The biggest challenge in the beginning had been finding a producer. There aren't a lot of them in Dublin, or at least I didn't have any connections to any available producers when we started writing. I invited Kevin Rahill, playwright and fellow UCD MA graduate, to see if he would produce. He was uncertain at first, but I invited him to a rehearsal so that he could see the work firsthand, and before the session was up, he was excited to join the project. I can tell you from this experience that having him on board has made a world of difference.

What messages are you hoping audiences will take from 'Lines of Exile'?

The world is so divided right now. There is a lot of bigotry bubbling to the surface, here in Ireland, and worldwide. Partition literally and figuratively divides people, and I'm not here to point to a particular ideology as the way forward, but I wanted to create a story that illustrates the humanity of two people caught in the middle of political strife. I invite audiences to look closer at a person they might not think they identify with and see if they recognise something of themselves in another. The reason I make theatre, which is such a hard thing to do, is because, at its best, theatre's ability to bring people together is second to none.

What is next for Parallax Theatre Collective after this? Do you have any more projects or shows in the pipeline?

Parallax Theatre Collective has been selected to participate in the Scene + Heard Festival of New Work this February 19th with another original piece! Ankit and I will continue our partnership with another piece conceived by him and written by both of us. His master's thesis was a play called The Ninefold Spiral based on his experience of the ancient and the modern and on East meeting West, and so he created a piece that blends the acting traditions of Stanislavski and the Rasa Theory of the Natyashastra. Its first iteration was a one-person show in which he used voice recordings of real people from his life to tell a semi-autobiographical tale of a man choosing to follow his passion, even when faced with unsupportive loved ones and a difficult industry. Each scene is based on a rasa, or core emotion. We have developed an expanded version that includes dance interludes between each scene that embody the rasas through a fusion of Bharatanatyam, Bhangra, and hiphop.

Who would you like to thank for helping to make this play possible?

I'd like to thank Ankit Raj Mathur and Darragh Scannell for their hard work over these few months and Kevin Rahill for being an amazing producer. Thank you to Donal Shiels for saying yes to our project, and a big thanks to my husband, Michael Flowers, who encourages my creative work and is my number one supporter!



PREMIERE:Director and co-writer Leah Flowers and (inset): actors and co-writers Ankit Raj Mathur and Darragh Scannell rehearsing for 'Lines of Exile'



"Only the pure in heart can make a good soup.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Food with Passion

PEA & SMOKED BACON LARDONS



by **John Paul Kennedy** / jpkennedy.kennedy@gmail.com

I adore garden peas and I fell in love with this soup when I first tasted it when I was on a day cookery course a number of years ago and it was served to us for lunch. Soup, especially at this time of year is one of my favourite weekday lunches and this recipe is quick, easy and nutritious. Once you get into making homemade soup you quickly realise how easy it is and how much better tasting and fresh it is than any packet or container soups. Some might be thrown by the bright green colour but if you like peas you will love this soup. Delicious with some crispy bacon lardons served on top or if you prefer you can leave out the bacon for a vegetarian option instead. The cream is also optional if you are trying to be heatlhier!

Ingredients: Serves 3-4

50g butter
I onion coarsely chopped
1 potato, peeled and diced
100g smoked bacon lardons
800ml of hot chicken stock or veg if you prefer!
450g frozen garden peas
100ml double cream (optional if you are trying to be heatlhier)
2 tablespoons for freshly chopped mint
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper













John Paul KEnnEdy IS A Self-TAughT COOK AnD An AvID fAn Of COlleCTIng COOKerY BOOKS WITh A PASSIOn fOr gOOD OlD-fAShIOneD hOMe COOKIng. hIS PASSIOn fOr PrOPer fAMIlY COOKIng STeMS frOM hIS grAnDMOTherS, WhO Were BOTh exCellenT COOKS, One Of WhOM WAS A TrAIneD Chef. **JP** PrOMISeS TO BrIng uS PlenTY Of fAMIlY-InSPIreD reCIPeS AnD TASTY TreATS WhIle ShOWIng uS hOW TO geT The BASICS rIghT.

Method:

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan then add the onion and potato and fry over a medium heat for about 8-10 minutes, stirring often as you only want them softened but not browned.
2. Pour in the stock and bring to a boil over a high heat, leave to simmer for 5 minutes then stir in the peas.
3. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer and cook for 3 minutes – you don't want to overcook the peas otherwise they will lose their bright green colour.
4. While the peas are cooking in a separate pan cook off the bacon lardons until crisp and brown and set aside on some kitchen paper to soak up any excess oil.
5. Season the soup and using a blender or food processor, puree the soup and then return to the saucepan. Then stir in the cream (optional) and fresh mint.
6. Season with salt and ground black pepper if more seasoning is needed and pour into bowls and adorn each one with some of the crispy bacon and serve with crusty bread and enjoy.
7. You can add a dollop of crème fraiche or even some freshly chopped mint at the end – Delicious comfort food heaven in a bowl – My kind of cooking.

Whenever I make soups I will often whip up some of my healthy loaf bread or Irish Soda bread with fresh herbs as I believe the two go hand in hand and you need some bread to dunk into your bowl of warm and comforting joy. If you would like either of these really tasty and again good for your bread recipes; just get in touch and I would be happy to share them with you. As I write this recipe I am inspired to do some batch cooking for weekday lunches and soups are just perfect for that. If like me and many others out there; you are working from home this is a really good staple and nutritious recipe that will see you through to clocking off and dinner time. Perfect at this time of year as we get back into our routines and hit the reset button!

Contact JP on:
Twitter: @JPKCooking
Email: JPKCooking@gmail.com
Instagram: jpkennedy.kennedy

Westside come to life in K-Pop Demon Hunter in Dancing with the Stars

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"WE were approached by the creative team last November, as they were looking for dancers to join the show's professional dancers in a 'K-Pop Demon Hunter' segment," explains a spokesperson for WestSide Performing Arts.

During RTE's 'Dancing With The Stars's Movie Week night on January 18, the 'K-Pop Demon Hunters' pro dance came to life, with WestSiders sharing the floor alongside 'DWTS' pros.

WestSide's next generation of dancers from Celbridge, Kimmage, Longwood, Lucan, Naas, Newbridge, Rathdrum, Rush, and Walkinstown went through the exciting new process of taking their craft from rehearsal studio to live television.

This all started when they were approached by the 'DWTS' creative team last November, as one of the choreographers, Neil O'Brien, asked if any students were available to dance, having worked with WestSide before.

The students joined the show's professional dancers in a few rehearsal sessions before Christmas, had costume fittings with the costume team, and were in the studio for camera rehearsals the weekend of the show.

The spokesperson remarks that the best part of preparing for the performance was that "we knew it would be a learning experience for the students" as "everyone in that studio is at the top of their game."

When asked about challenges, the spokesperson states that the only real challenge was the students having to "adapt to live TV as a medium", pointing out that one must be aware of where the camera is at all times as well as memorising and performing the routine.

They continue, "It was a real learning curve, and they embraced the challenge."

Following WestSide's success at the Global Dance Open last year and at 'Can You Dance?',, they decided their next project to focus on was to enter the Dance World Cup this year.

Its qualifiers are in April of this year, with the finals in July; rehearsals have begun in the studio already.

Meanwhile, they are also on the lookout for businesses interested in "supporting the students as they compete on a world stage", as they "know the cost of sending a team to such a prestigious competition".



CREATIVE: Luize Brengmane, Brianna Byrne, Caitlin McEniery, Lenna Shields, Kate Doyle, Maria Harvey, Julia Janossy, Emily Derrien, Carla Venet, and Alice Dempsey representing Celbridge, Kimmage, Longwood, Lucan, Naas, Newbridge, Rathdrum, Rush and Walkinstown

The spokesperson would like to thank all at Shinawil, the crew and creatives, including Darren, Lilanna, Josh, Neil and all the pro dancers who "embraced working with the next generation."

Congratulations to all involved on a successful performance.

Hearing the audiences laugh and join in made us feel like superstars



WONDERFUL: Some of the cast of Clondalkin Drama Group

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"OUR panto 'Aladdin' went brilliantly," smiles Clondalkin Drama Group's Michaela Courtney. 'Aladdin' was performed in Colaiste Chillain from January 10 to 18.

According to Michaela, their panto had some "slightly smaller" audiences this year, but they think that the flu that is currently going around contributed to that. Despite some smaller crowds, people seemed to really enjoy it, and they had plenty of people of all ages tell them after the show that they loved it.

"Hearing the audience laugh and join in throughout the show really encouraged us and made us feel like superstars," Michaela beams.

Since this was the group's second year in Coláiste Chilliain, they were able to improve their setup from last year; they had more lights and a better speaker system.

They still had some issues with volume, as the room is "so big and echoey", so the group would love to invest in some microphones so that their cast can be heard perfectly at all times.

They "nearly had a disaster" when one of their cast members, Mary, ended up too sick to perform.

They scrambled to find somebody to stand in, and thankfully the "wonderful" Sarah Murphy Massey stepped in, script in hand, to play the role of the baddie sidekick Iago.

"We are so grateful to her, especially since she's not even a member of the group," continues Michaela. "We're hoping she might officially join our ranks, though!"

Clondalkin Drama Group would like to give a huge "thank you" to Coláiste Chilliain, to Quinlan's Black Lion pub for serving as their rehearsal space, and to Clondalkin Village Hardware, who sold their tickets.

They are also very grateful to *the Echo*, who "kindly featured us several times." They would also like to thank everyone who came and supported them. It was "lovely" talking to audience members after the shows who told them that they come to see everything they put on.

Michaela concludes, "The support we receive from the community is beautiful and helps us to grow and put on better shows."

She thanks everyone who came and says to "keep an eye on our socials to see what we get up to next!"

Congratulations to all involved on a successful production.

Traditional Folk Music Festival

BRIAN KENNEDY PLAYS AS PART OF TRADFEST IN ST MAELRUAIN'S CHURCH

Photos by **Paddy Barrett**

Photos taken for *The Echo* are available to purchase. Email **reception@echo.ie** or call 01-4685350.
You can view *The Echo* Photography Policy on ***echo.ie***



Tony and Mary



Tony and Catherine



Kay and Kathy



Karen and Louise



Fiona and Bridie



Regina and John



Peter, Sally, Paul and Kay



Sinéad and Máiríad

‘Araya’ is debut novel by Saggart author Aneta


DEBUT NOVEL: Saggart-based author Aneta Ciszek-Kowalska

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"THE story wouldn’t exist without Ethan," explains Saggart-based author Aneta Ciszek-Kowalska, regarding her debut novel, 'Araya'.

The story of the book is set in 2050, and every household has an AI assistant. Araya is sent to help Ethan, a writer in a time where writing is a dying profession.

When his wife is seriously injured in a car crash, doctors offer one hope: an experimental transference of her memories into a virtual system.

Zara, though, is pregnant, and the baby is not Ethan’s. He needs access to her most secret memories to discover the truth.

Aneta describes Ethan as a "very distinctive protagonist", particularly protective of his family, wife and son.

He is acutely aware of the "traps and pitfalls of the modern technology", has an inquisitive nature, and is not afraid to question authority.

On top of that, being a rather accomplished writer, he still gets "frowned upon, ridiculed even," due to the fact that the job he does is a "dying profession," and he relies on the governmental grants to keep him afloat.

When he is presented with a dilemma, something that goes against his nature, then the central conflict of the book comes into play.

The idea for this book came to Aneta through a conversation with her colleagues, where they discussed the "doom and gloom" of what is to come regarding AI.

This conversation also saw them discuss what it would mean to certain aspects of life and some professions, with Aneta remarking, "the fear that the writers might get replaced was something that has shaken me to the core, and the idea was planted."

She cites her favourite part of writing 'Araya' as creating the characters, watching how they all came to life and "dictated" to her what to write, and the twists of the plot too.

The technological and medical aspects of writing the book were the biggest challenges for Aneta, as she remarks that she did as much research as she could.

"For any faults or errors, I sincerely apologise to the readers, and I hope I'll be forgiven due to the fictional nature of this book."

In regard to what messages she hopes readers take from 'Araya', Aneta reflects that she hopes she has drawn a strong enough picture of "what it means to be a human".

She wants people to question that "perhaps where we are right now is on the verge of crossing a line that we never have before."

For future projects, Aneta has two more adult books already written, several chapter books for children and numerous texts for children’s picture books, along with some short stories and even short theatre plays.

These are all waiting to be polished, edited, and possibly published based on how well 'Araya' performs.

Aneta would like to thank her best friends, husband, family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues for their support with this book.

She also acknowledges her two "little but biggest cheerleaders", Robert and Hubert; graphics designer PJ; publisher Ellis Delmonte from Hawkwood Books; and readers.

'Araya' will be published on June 16 by Harkwood Books UK; the paperback can be pre-ordered on Amazon now.

Research Day dedicated to brain health dementia in the Civic


SUPPORT: Professor Sean Kennelly, consultant physician in geriatric and stroke medicine in Tallaght University Hospital


RESEARCH: Dr Laura O'Philbin, Research Policy Manager at the Alzheimer Society of Ireland

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"THIS event was inspired by a clear and growing need for trustworthy, accessible and evidence-backed information about brain health and dementia." explains Dr. Laura O'Philbin, Research Policy Manager at the Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

Join the Civic Theatre for a free public research day dedicated to brain health, dementia and ways to support wellbeing at every stage of life.

Featuring leading researchers and clinicians from across Ireland, the event will share the latest evidence-based insights in a clear, accessible way and equip attendees with practical actions they can use in everyday life.

Local dementia and community services will also be on hand to provide information, advice and resources, making this a valuable opportunity to connect with supports in your area.

Designed for the public, including people living with dementia and family carers, the event also welcomes researchers and healthcare professionals.

Whether you are looking to understand brain health, stay informed about new research, or connect with support in your community, there is something for everyone.

Above all, this event reinforces a hopeful message: it is never too early or too late to look after our brain health. 'Brain Health and Dementia' is a dementia-inclusive event, and quiet areas will be available.

This event is hosted by the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Dementia Research Network Ireland and is made possible with support from the Health Research Board.

'Brain Health and Dementia: Understanding and Connection' opens at 10am in the Civic Theatre on February 25; tickets are free, but booking is required.


I'M FLASH GORDON
AND I WON'T LIE TO YOU, MY TANK'S RUNNING PRETTY LOW.
I HAVEN'T EATEN SINCE THE DRAGON GROTTO. EDDA'S BEEN LOCKED IN THAT HELMET SINCE YESTERDAY MORNING.
IF WE DON'T FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS PLACE SOON, THE HUNGER, LACK OF SLEEP AND KILLER ROBOTS JUST MIGHT TAKE US OUT FIRST.
EDDA AND I MAKE IT TO THE CENTER OF THIS LABYRINTH: A MOLTEN GARBAGE GRINDER FOR THE FACTORY ABOVE US.
TURNS OUT THE KEY I FOUND UNLOCKS THE SERVICE ROOM THEY BROUGHT EDDA DOWN IN.
THERE'S AN ELEVATOR WE CAN'T CALL FROM WAY DOWN HERE, BUT THERE'S A LADDER, TOO.
BAD NEWS: THE FERAL BOTS AREN'T DONE WITH US YET.
I THROW THE HUNK OF JUNK IN THE TRASH...
DAN SCHKADE 7-13-25
...BUT NOT BEFORE IT WRENCHES EDDA'S ARM. THE LADDER'S NOT AN OPTION FOR HER NOW.
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE HER--
--BUT WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE.
I HAVE TO FIND FOOD, A MED KIT AND A KEY TO HER HELMET.
SO I START CLIMBING.
NEXT: VERTICAL INTEGRATION
©2025 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
THE PHANTOM™
CREATED BY LEE FALK
THE SONGHAI CELEBRATED LONG INTO THE NIGHT...
I TOOK MY OPPORTUNITY TO SLIP AWAY UNSEEN.
SAVE FOR ONE FINAL TASK...
THE SONGHAI CAPTAIN HAD PLACED HIS TRUST IN A TRAVELER FROM THE BANGALLA COUNTRY TO THE EAST...
...A STRANGER WHO HAD STEPPED FORWARD IN THE CAUSE OF WHAT WAS RIGHT, AND WITH NOTHING TO GAIN BY IT.
HE SEEMED JUST THAT SORT OF MAN. ONE WHO STANDS OPPOSED TO THE WRONGS OF THE WORLD.
PIRACY, GREED, INJUSTICE...
CRUELTY IN ALL ITS FORMS...
© 2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
Tony DePaul & Jeff Weigel 3-30-25
...ALL MY SONS WILL FOLLOW ME.
NEXT: NEW ADVENTURE!
www.thephantomcomics.com
THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS POPEYE
BY RANDY MILHOLLAND
POPEYE! THAT AWFUL BLUTO IS LOOKIN' FOR A FIGHT!
THANKS FER LETTIN' ME KNOW, OLIVE, ME SWEET!
THE POOR DIP'S TOO DENSE T'FIND ONE WIT'OUT ME HELP! ARF! ARF!
ALRIGHT, SHRIMP, YER A PROBLEM I'M 'BOUT T'SOLVE.
YA KIN'T BEAT A RUG. YA GOTSK NO CHANCE BEATIN' ME!
KA POW
popeye.com
THAT PUNCH SHOULDA HAD YA CLEAR TH' MOON.
GUESS I NEEDS MORE SPINACH.
PLOP!
I'M STRONG T' TH' FINISH 'CUZ I EATS ME—
KRINKLE
SPLORT
ZZZZ-?!?
IF ONLY SPINACH MADE ME INVINSKIBLE TO LATE-NIGHT AWKWARD MEM'RIES.
1-25
TASQ-ART
WWW.TASQART.COM

> Yoga begins right where I am – not where I was yesterday or where I long to be.
>
> *Linda Sparrowe*

Health & Fitness

YOGA FOR EVERYBODY: A CHAT WITH AUDREY BROWN

by **Ursula Frawley** / info@moveitfitness.ie



I contacted yoga teacher and wellness advocate Audrey Brown to find out about how she fell in love with yoga, what most people get wrong about the practice, and why showing up for yourself is the most important move you will ever make.

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how your yoga journey began?

I took my first yoga class many years ago and at first I wasn't sure if I liked it or not, but at the time I didn't realise that there are many styles and types of Yoga and also that the teacher themselves will have their own style of teaching. I continued Yoga at home following youtubers and once I found a teacher that I could connect with – I was hooked.

For over 25 years now my studies in health & fitness, holistic studies, anatomy & physiology to mention a few - gave me such a great foundation to finally train as a Yoga teacher 3 years ago.

What do you think is the biggest myth about yoga?

The major misconceptions about Yoga are probably mainly down to what people see online, a lot of people think you need to be fit and flexible to join a Yoga – but that couldn't be further from the truth, you become flexible because you joined and not only that but your overall health improves – from building strength, stamina and flexibility, to also tuning into your nervous system and learning how to focus and relax, sleep improves, circulation improves, mental clarity improves – the list is actually endless. So I would encourage anybody to try a class, or try a couple of classes with different teachers until you find a teacher style that you like and feel comfortable with.

In your view, why is yoga such a powerful tool for modern life?

We are living in a fast paced world and have high demands placed on us on a daily basis, and that means that being able to switch off becomes more challenging, but if you actively seek out ways to stay as mindful as you can and live from day to day – you will cope better with challenges when they come along, no one escapes life's challenges and everyone has a story, but doing something like Yoga can really make a huge impact to your overall health and wellbeing and although it is possible to follow someone online – I would also highlight the importance of connection with other people, my Yoga studio is best known for the community that is created in the classes, new friendships are formed easily with like-minded people and I hold a strict policy of Non Judgement, we don't even have mirrors in the studio! and I often tell people that whatever way they show up is ok – the main thing is that they showed up and showed up for themselves – which gives yourself the message that 'I matter too'.

UrsUlA FrAWlEy IS A PeRSoNAl TRAINeR ANd oWNeR oF Move IT FITNeSS. HeR oNlINe STReNGTH & FITNeSS clASSeS, WHIcH RuN llve SeveN TIMeS A Week, HAve BeeN HelPING WoMeN To Feel STRoNGeR ANd FITTeR SINce 2020. HeR oNlINe ANd IN-PeRSoN PRoGRAMMeS ARe FocuSed oN MoTIvATING ANd cHANGING A MINdSeT To eNJoYING THe FITNeSS JouRNeY, WHIle FeelING eMPoWeRed WITH A PoSITIve MINdSeT. uRSulA llveS IN duBlIN 24 WITH HeR HuSBANd ANd FouR cHIldReN. GeT MoRe INFoRMATIoN BY eMAIlING HeR AT INFo@MoveITFITNeSS.Ie oR WWW.MoveITFITNeSS.Ie

How does yoga complement other types of exercise?

Yoga also compliments other exercises, for example if you are lifting weights – you should be also stretching out those muscles to prevent them from becoming stiff and rigid, if you are running – you should be warming up & stretching properly to prevent injury and the same goes for all sports, if we warm up & stretch properly we are preparing the body for more exercise.

Yoga is for every body and every ability and after time you will start to bring elements into your daily life.

If you're curious to learn more or want to join one of Audrey's welcoming community classes, visit www.audreybrownbalance.com or call 085 1605066.

This article is not a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Remember, always consult with your GP before embarking on any change in diet or new health & fitness regime.



Audrey Brown





Karl, Marian and Leigh



Niamh and Martha



Mary and Anne



Mick and Maura



Michael and Sheila



Ita and Claire



The Carroll Family



Sean and Katie



Noel and Declan



Teresa and Donal

Enjoying TradFest

IN ÁRAS CHRÓNÁIN WITH FRANKIE GAVIN TRIO

Photos by **Paddy Barrett**

Photos taken for *The Echo* are available to purchase. Email **reception@echo.ie** or call 01-4685350.
You can view *The Echo* Photography Policy on ***echo.ie***



Nathy and Ann



Paddy, Robert and Daniel



Frankie Gavin with son Conor and daughter Catherine



Ted, Aidan and Eileen



Colm and Kenan

Hope you're all enjoying our



Colouring Competition 2026

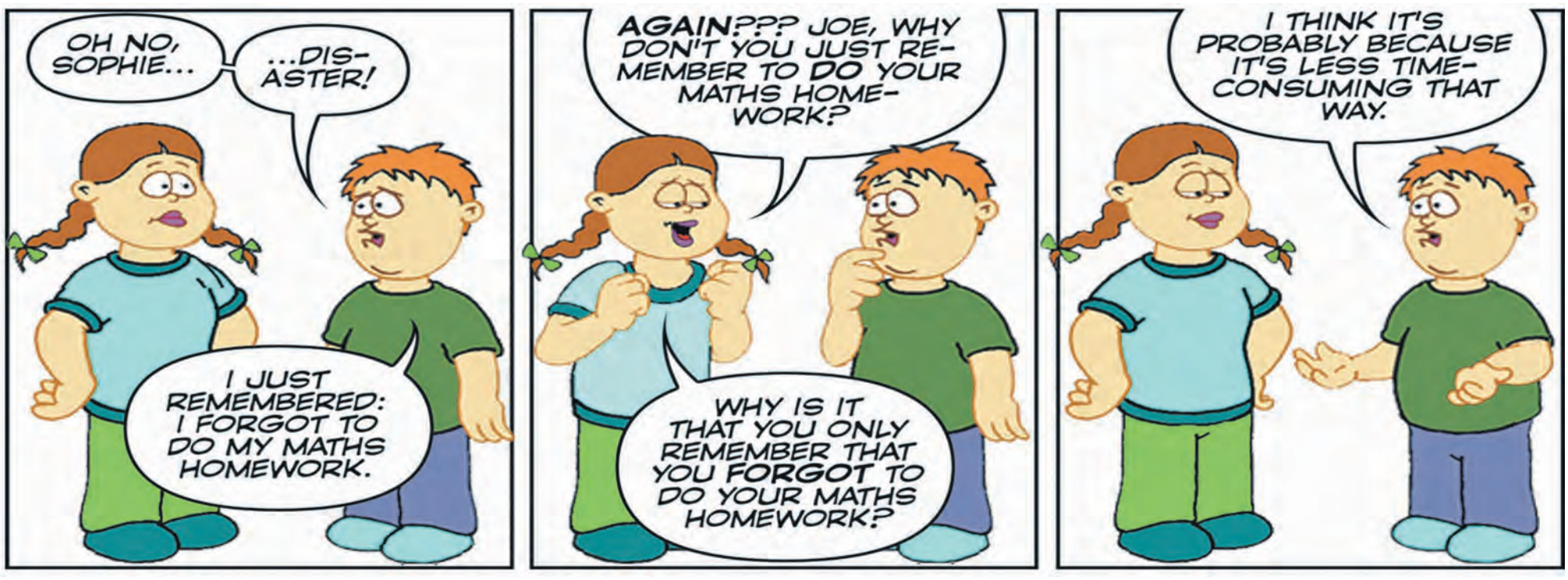
Colour in the Birds picture on page 47, take a picture of it and **email it** to reception@echo.ie or **whatsapp it** to **083 0106275** and be in with a chance to win a **PRIZE.**

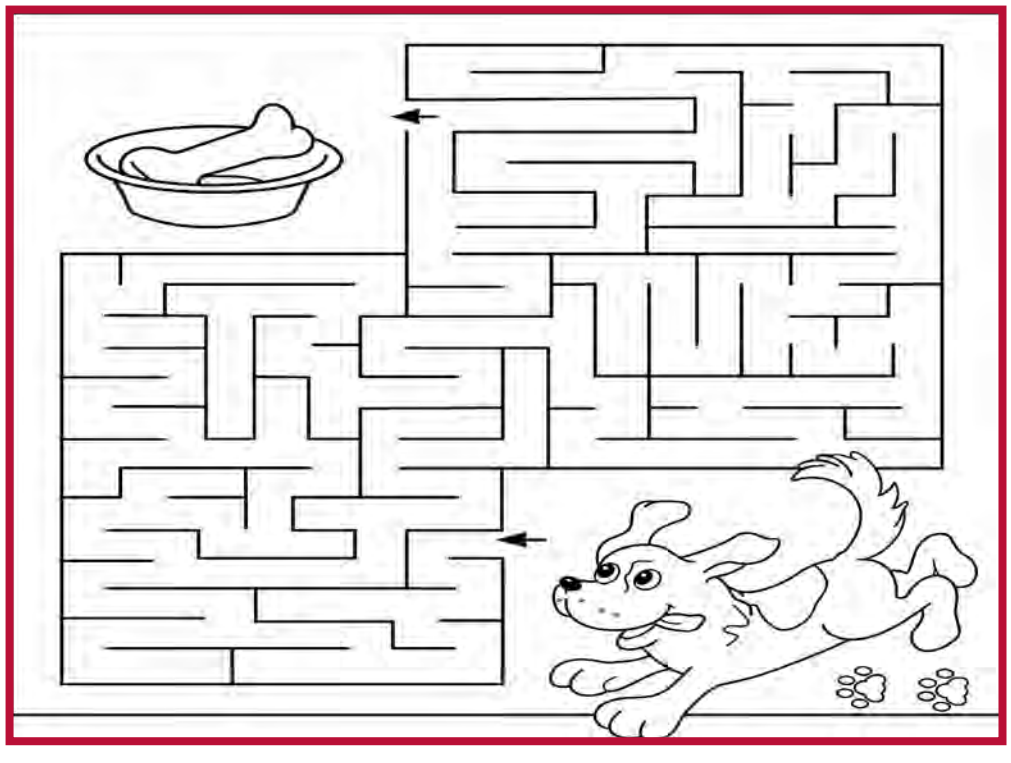


A Word with Echo So...

Organisation









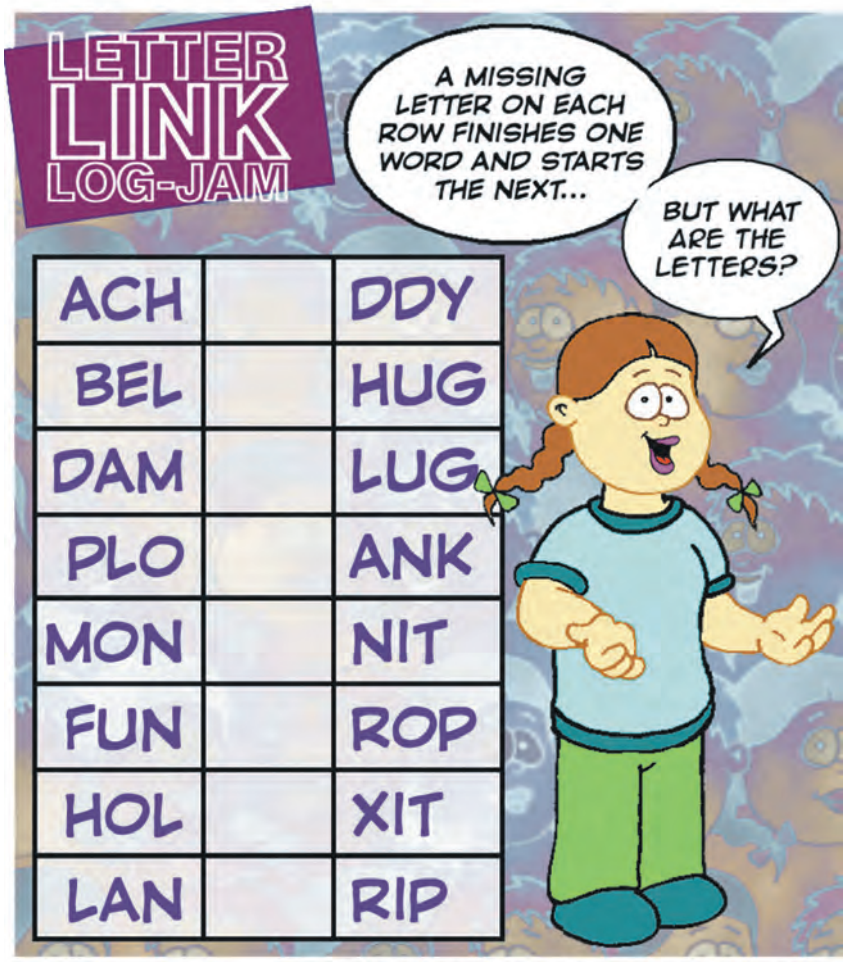
These 2 EchoJoe pages of Awesome, Amazon,

Spot the Difference Game

Find 10 Differences!

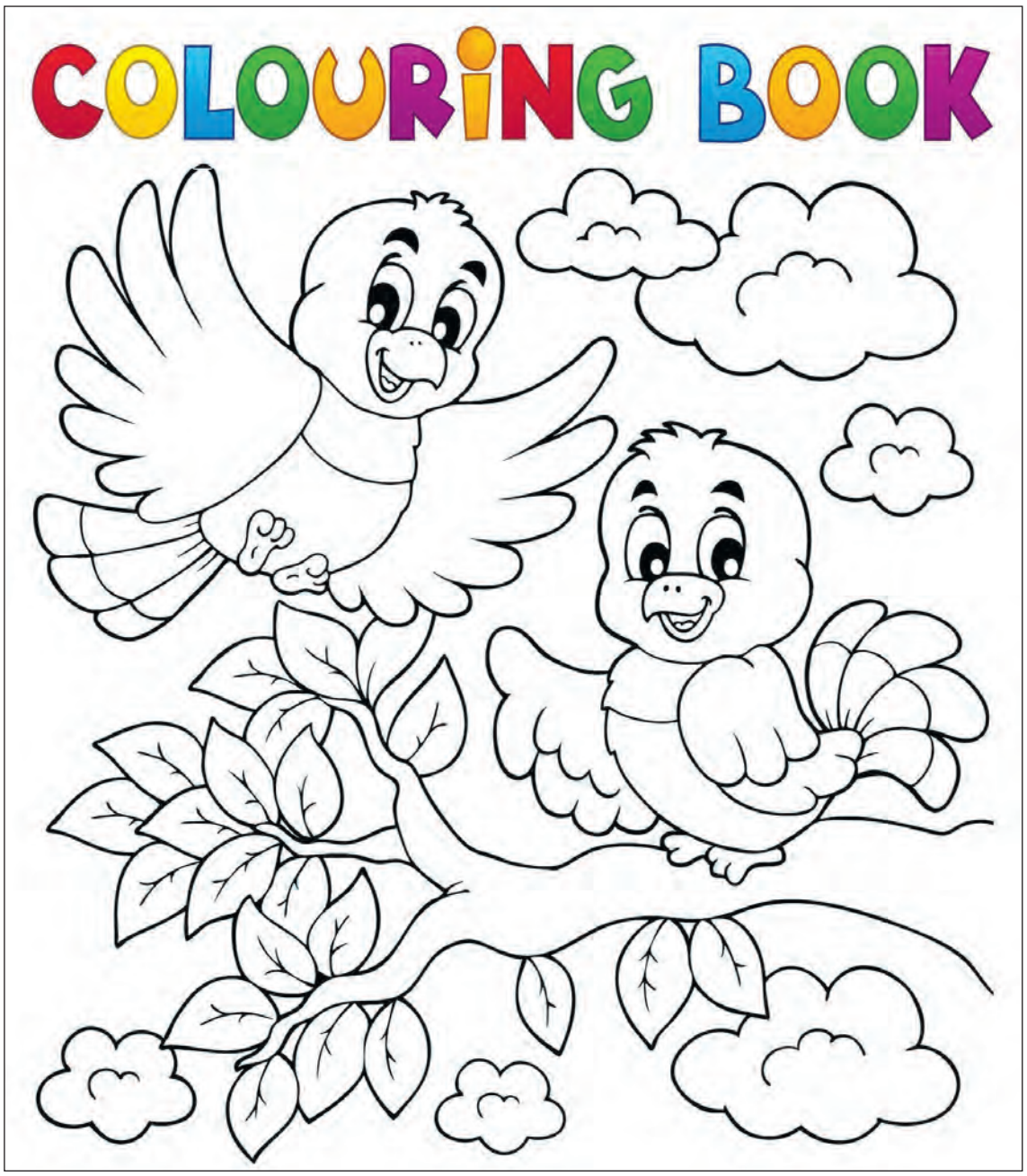


LETTER LINK LOG-JAM



ACH		DDY
BEL		HUG
DAM		LUG
PLO		ANK
MON		NIT
FUN		ROP
HOL		XIT
LAN		RIP

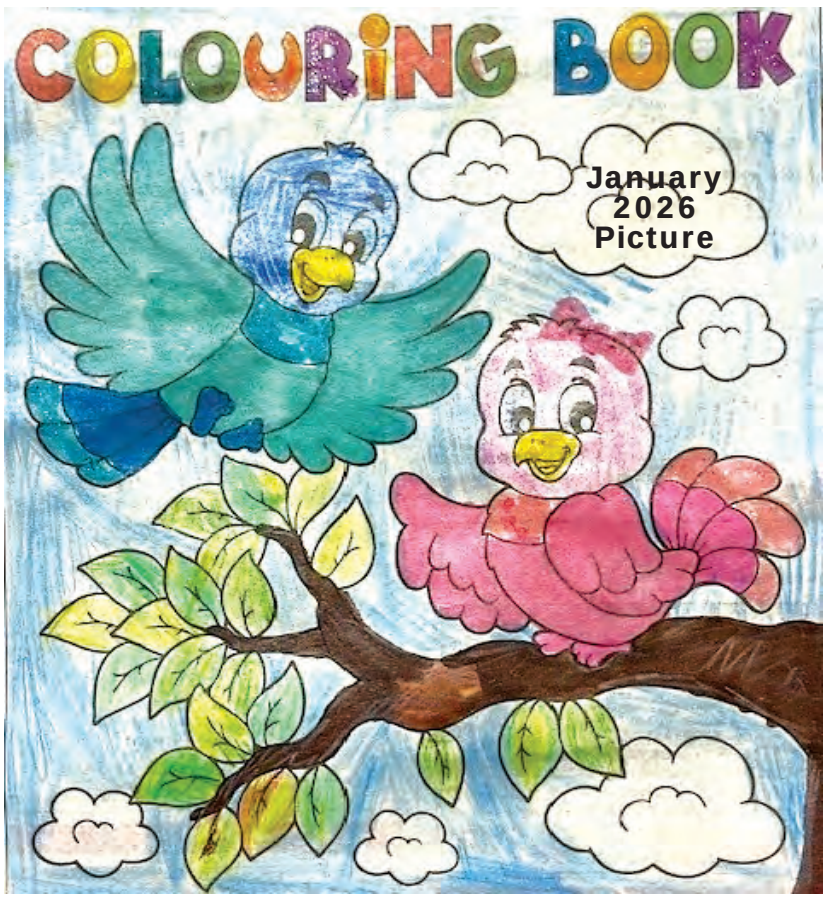
the missing letters: E, T, P, T, K, D, E, D.



This week's winner!

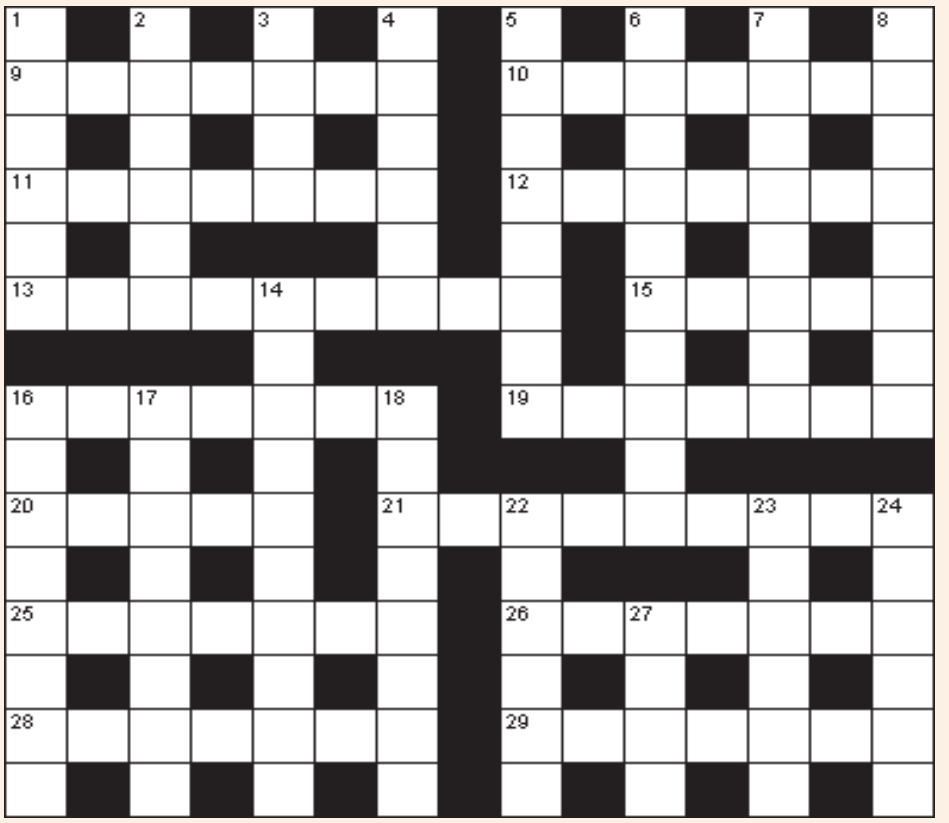
Mia, aged 11, is this week's winner of the Echo Joe colouring competition. Mia, your prize will be on the way to you soon.

Each month the picture will change, and all entries stay in for the month so you have lots of chances to win!!



Activities are kindly sponsored by amazon

echocrossquiz Q2901



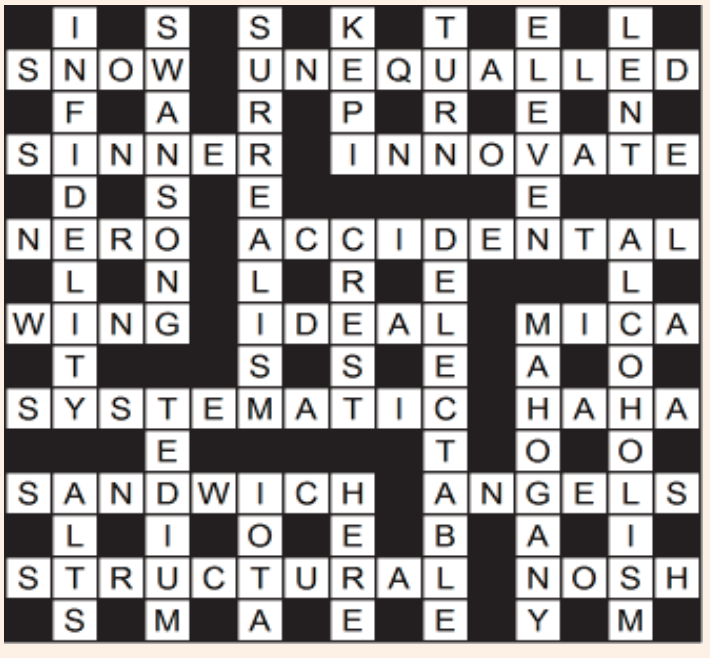
ACROSS

9. Lethargy (7)
10. Sad (7)
11. Cocktail (7)
12. A twisting force (7)
13. Closelipped (9)
15. Accumulate (5)
16. Provoking laughter (7)
19. Arm muscles (7)
20. Permissible (5)
21. Speedway (9)
25. Picture (7)
26. Deer meat (7)
28. Catastrophic (7)
29. Shackle (7)

DOWN

1. Acid-base indicator (6)
2. A system of measurement (6)
3. Decorative case (4)
4. American elk (6)
5. The number obtained by division (8)
6. Druggist (10)
7. Decay (8)
8. Mesmerism (8)
14. Shield (10)
16. A female prostitute (8)
17. Service man (8)
18. Song writer (8)
22. Hollow (6)
23. Take for granted (6)
24. Cause to start burning (6)
27. Close (4)

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS 2201



CAN YOU BEAT THIS WEEK'S CROSSQUIZ?

SUDOKU 1

				9				
		1			8	2		
	3	4	2					8
					1	5		
8							2	
7		3	4	6				
			9				1	
		9	6			8		
			3	2	7			6

SUDOKU 2

1		3						
	7			3				4
	9				8			
		9	5	8	4			
					1			6
4					2	1		
8						7		
	5	4				2		
		2					6	9

ANSWERS

9	6	4	5	1	8	2	3	7
1	8	2	3	7	6	4	5	9
3	5	7	2	9	4	1	6	8
6	9	3	7	4	2	8	1	5
5	1	9	6	2	3	7	8	4
4	6	8	1	9	7	5	2	3
7	2	1	9	6	5	3	4	8
8	3	6	4	5	1	9	7	2
2	4	5	8	3	9	6	7	1

SUDOKU 1

2	8	7	1	9	3	6	4	5
5	6	1	7	4	8	2	3	9
9	3	4	2	5	6	1	7	8
4	9	2	8	7	1	5	6	3
8	1	6	5	3	9	7	2	4
7	5	3	4	6	2	9	8	1
6	4	9	7	2	5	3	1	2
3	2	9	6	1	4	8	5	7
1	8	5	3	2	7	4	9	6

SUDOKU 2

Poet's Corner

WALLOW

by **Gerard O'Keeffe**



I moved to Tallaght 35 years ago and quickly came to love it. I've been writing poetry for almost 50 years. I'm now retired and I have five grandchildren – they mean the world to me.

Stinking thinking
Has me drinking
and throwing my life away
I can't keep blaming
others on what I do today
Its my arm that lifts
the bottle
my throat that drinks it down
As I wallow in self pity
And blame all those around
So I'll slip into oblivion
Wake up and start once more
That devil on my shoulder
Has me in his grip for sure

family notices

Important Notice
Items for publication for memorial pages must be in by 1pm Friday for next Thursday's paper

Tel: 468 5350
email: reception@echo.ie

ANNIVERSARY



Stacey, Catherine
24th Anniversary away from home occurs 2nd February. Also remembering her Mam who passed away in November 2017.

The heartache and the sadness,
Might not always show,
People say it lessens,
How little do they know.
They say we have our memories,
But they just don't understand,
We cannot kiss a memories face,
Or hold a memories hand.
On the outside it seems we're healing,
But God if they could see inside,
The pain and the sadness of losing you,
Hasn't changed since the day you died.
But when we're sad and lonely,
And everything goes wrong,
We seem to hear you whisper,
Cheer up and carry on.
Catherine you were so special,
What more can we say,
Except we wish with all our hearts,
That you were here today.
Will love you always, Dad. xxxx

Meet me in my dreams Catherine,
And talk to me once more,
Ease the everlasting pain,
That makes my heart so sore.
And when I reach the golden gate,
Where life is free from pain,
I will put my arms around you sister,
And never let you go again.
Love you always from your sister Laura.

Catherine
Although I'm sad without you,
And wish that you were here,
Within my heart your lovely smile,
Still shines bright and clear.
I treasure all those memories,
Of growing up with you,
The secrets we would always share,
The childish things we'd do.
And as the years pass quickly by,
We grow closer still,
I miss you dearest sister,
And you know I always will.
Sadly missed from your brother James, Maria and family.

Sister
Beautiful memories woven in gold,
That is the picture, I tenderly hold,
Deep in my heart your memory is kept,
To love, to cherish, to never forget.
Sadly missed from your sister Dolores and niece Catherine.

Till the roses lose their fragrance,
Till the heather sheds its dew,
Until we leave this world behind,
We will never stop loving you.
From you sister Margaret, Rachel & Jamie.

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRNACE



Green, Mary (Maureen)
3rd Birthday away from home occurs 30th January.

Thinking of you on your Birthday
It's especially difficult today,
Not to have you here,
To celebrate the times we've shared,
Over another joyful year.
I wish I had just one more chance,
To see your happy smile,
To laugh and celebrate with you,
Just for a little while.
I'll hold onto you forever,
Deep within my heart,
And though you are not here with me,
Know that we'll never part.
This day was always special,
So I just want to say,
That I'm thinking of you with love,
On this your Birthday.
Sadly missed by her loving husband Martin, children Mark, Caroline, Lee, Eamonn, Fiona & Paul, her sister Judy, her brothers Peter and Christy, Grandchildren, Nieces and Nephews, daughters-in-law Tara, Annette, Caroline and Alex, sons-in-law Anthony and Lloyd, sisters-in-law Lillie and Eileen U.K. and all her Friends.

ANNIVERSARY



McEvoy, Eamonn
27th Anniversary occurs 2nd February. Late of Harelawn Drive, Clondalkin.

February comes with sad regret,
The day, the month we will never forget.
As each day dawns and starts anew,
As each day ends we think of you.
And in between no matter where,
Deep in our hearts you will always be there.
Sadly missed by all your Family.

ANNIVERSARY



Wade, Jane
10th Anniversary occurs 29th January.

Precious people are very few,
That's why there was only one of you.
Nothing on earth can ever replace,
The sound of your voice,
Or the smile on your face.
No verse or flowers,
No tears can say,
How much you are loved,
And missed each day.
You left us a memory,
We are so proud to own.
So treasure her lord,
In your garden of rest,
For when on earth,
She was simply the best.
Time may go, years will pass,
But memories will always last.
Send a whisper on a feather gently from above,
Let us know you hear us sending all our love.
Sadly missed by your loving husband Ben, Sons, Daughter, Grandkids, Great-Grandkids, Son-in-law & Daughters-in-law. "Always in our hearts forever"

NOVENA

Miracle Prayer
Dear heart of Jesus I ask you this special favour (mention one) take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will become your favour not mine. Amen. say this prayer 3 days promise publication and favour will be granted never known to fail. **P.M.**

ANNIVERSARY

Griffin, Jackie
7th Anniversary away from home occurred 24th January.

You left us without warning,
Not even a goodbye,
And I can't seem to stop asking the question why.
I didn't see this coming,
It hit us by surprise,
And when you left for heaven,
A small part of me died.
Your smile could brighten anyone's day,
No matter what they were going through,
And every day for the rest of my life,
I'll be missing you.
A part of me will always be with you Jackie. I love you till the end, your Lynda. x

A special person,
A special face,
Someone we love,
And can never be replaced.
Love always Mikeala. x

ANNIVERSARY



Raftery, Mary
9th Anniversary occurs 1st February. Late of Avonmore Close, Tallaght.

Of all the special gifts in life,
However great or small,
To call you our Mam,
Was the greatest gift of all.
May winds of love and peace blow softly,
Whispering in your ear,
"We love and miss you Mam,
And we wish you were still here".
They say there is a reason,
They say that time will heal,
But neither time nor reason,
Will ever change how we feel.
The treasured memories of you,
Will always bring a smile,
If only we could have you back,
For just a little while.
Missing you and thinking of you today and always, Fran, Catherine, Shay, Donal, Lily, John, Sons-in-Law, Daughters-in-Law, Grandchildren, your sister Lily, and all the Family. Also remembering our grandmother, Kathleen Culloty, whose Anniversary occurs the same day.

NOVENA

Miracle Prayer
Dear heart of Jesus I ask you this special favour (mention one) take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will become your favour not mine. Amen. say this prayer 3 days promise publication and favour will be granted never known to fail. **B.N.**

ANNIVERSARY



Dooley (nee Curtis), Rita (Mary)
Whose 12th Anniversary away from home occurs 31st January. Late of Allenton Avenue.

You can only have one mother,
Patient, kind and true,
No other friend in all the world,
Will be the same to you.
When other friends forsake you,
To mother you will return,
For all her loving kindness,
She asks nothing in return.
As we look upon her picture,
Sweet memories we recall,
Of a face so full of sunshine,
And a smile for one and all.
Sweet Jesus take this message,
To our dear mother up above,
Tell her how we miss her,
And give her all our love.
Love forever and always, Francina, Matty, John, Mark, Angel May, Morgan, Lindsay, Family and Friends.

NOVENA

Miracle Prayer
Dear heart of Jesus I ask you this special favour (mention one) take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will become your favour not mine. Amen. say this prayer 3 days promise publication and favour will be granted never known to fail. **M.C.**

ANNIVERSARY



Tierney, Stephen
2nd Anniversary away from home occurs 2nd February. Also remembering his 2nd Heavenly Birthday occurred 21st January.

Stephen
You're the snowflake that kisses our nose,
You're the frost that nips our toes.
You're the sun bringing us light,
You're the star that shines so bright.
You're the bird up in the sky,
You're the cloud that's drifting by,
You're in our hearts each and every day.
Rest in heavenly peace our forever friend.
You are sadly missed and forever loved by Mam, Dad, sister Karen, brother-in-law Cathal, nephew Lee and niece Tegan. xxxxxx

NOVENA

Novena Sacred Heart of Jesus
Dear Heart of Jesus in the past I have asked for many favours I ask you for this very special one. Take it Dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your broken heart, where your Holy Father sees it then in his merciful eyes it will become your favour and not mine. Say this prayer for 3 days promise publication and favours will be granted never known to fail. Promise to publish, many thanks for favours received and about to be received. **P.M.**

TALLAGHT STÕNE CENTRE
HEADSTONES CRAFTED FOR ALL CEMETERIES



DESIGNED SCULPTED ERECTED RENOVATED



OUR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES INCLUDE
HEADSTONES ~ INSCRIPTIONS
RENOVATIONS ~ CHIPPINGS ~ RE-LETTERING
COUNTER TOPS ~ FIRE PLACES ~
HOUSE NAMES
& GRANITE ESTATE SIGNS

BELGARD ROAD, TALLAGHT, DUBLIN 24
(OPPOSITE JACOBS)
TEL: (01) 462 6200 FAX: (01) 462 6209

EMAIL: info@tallaghtstonecentre.ie
WEB: www.tallaghtstonecentre.ie

APPLIANCE REPAIRS

Appliance Repair Centre

59 Seskin View Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Ph: 01 4057853 • Mobile: 087 2622740

Expert service and repairs for all domestic appliances
WASHERS • DRYERS • DISHWASHERS
COOKERS • GAS BOILERS • GAS COOKERS

RGI registered and fully insured

REGISTERED RGI GAS INSTALLER



ELECTRICIAN

CORE Electrical & Building Services
Fully Insured & Registered Company

Internal & External Lights & Sockets
•Replace Old Fuse Box
with new TripSwitch Board
•Full House Rewires
Including Extensions and Attic Conversions
•24 Hour Call-Out
and Maintenance Service
• Domestic • Commercial • Industrial
Mobile: 087 9790697
Office: 01 532 6573
email: coreelectrical@live.ie

RECI

LANDSCAPING

Richard Kinsella Garden Services

087 9983821
richardkinsella2001@yahoo.co.uk
Hedge Cutting / Planting
Pruning / Garden Maintenance

OIL & GAS HEATING

GAS & OIL SERVICES

Gas Boilers fitted from €3,050
Oil Boilers fitted from €4,050
All Gas and Oil Boilers repaired
– Best Prices
Gas Safety Certs
Oil and Gas Boiler Servicing
New Radiators • New Cylinders
• All Showers supplied and Fitted
• New Attic Tanks supplied and fitted
• New Sinks • Outside Taps etc
Over 35yrs Experience
www.gas-oil-services.com
Call: 086-8132203
or 01-2442976

REGISTERED RGI GAS INSTALLER

To advertise phone 4685350 or email advertising @echo.ie

Echo.ie
Your Local Newspaper

BUILDING



LANDSCAPING

Blossom Landscaping

Full landscaping services include:
Patios • Walling • Decking
30 years' experience in planting of shrubs and trees

- Patios
- Front Driveways
- Instant Lawns
- Fencings
- Plants and Trees
- Garden Lights
- And all other gardening needs.

Aidan Flood
Mobile: 087 2443220
Home: 01 4591916

Free Estimates. No job is too small.
No payment until job is completed.

MOULD REMOVAL

MOULD SOLUTIONS

LEADING THE WAY IN MOULD REMOVAL!

- Effective mould treatment
- Ventilation holes cored
- Bathroom extractor fans fitted

email: info@mouldsolutions.ie
tel: 01 851 2480

www.mouldsolutions.ie

PAINTER

M&T Superior Painters

Interior /Exterior
• Clean & Efficient • Competitive Rates
• 3 Bedroom House Interior From €1250 (including woodwork)
• Bedroom €120
• Bathroom €80
• Hall stairs & landing €200
• One Door (including frames) €40
• Wallpaper €45
Every surface receives 2 coats, All Damage Filled and Fixed



For a FREE
No Obligation
Quote Call
087 355 0580

Email: mtsuperiorpainters@gmail.com

www.echo.ie

SERVICING

GCM PROPERTY SERVICES

- Plumbing & Heating Services
- Building Services
- Electrical Services
- Gas & Oil Boiler Repair & Replacement

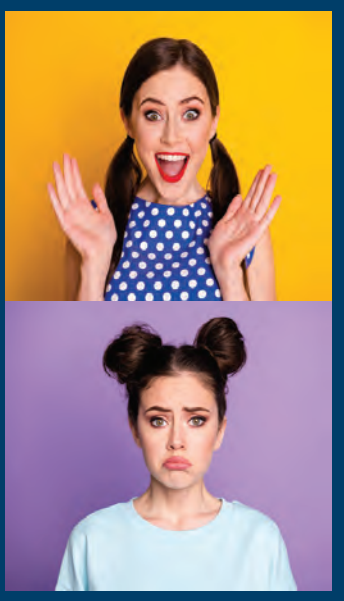
www.gcmfacilities.ie
info@gcmfacilities.ie
Tel. Gary: 087 861 5491

To advertise phone 4685350 or email advertising @echo.ie

Echo.ie
Your Local Newspaper

Over 80 news, community, sport and feature articles every week.

Do you want the good news or the bad news?



The *Echo*
Telling the whole story

WINDOWS



H.K REPAIRS
WINDOWS & DOORS

EXPERT REPAIR SERVICE
Over 30 years Experience

SECURITY
- Locks • Handles
- Hinges • Snap safe cylinders fitted
- Child locks fitted to windows



REPAIRS
- Windows & Doors • Locks
- Double Glazed units • Patio Doors
- Tracks • Wheels

Also "A" Rated Windows & Doors Supplied and Fitted at keenest rates!

Tel: **4557605 or 087 6500913** anytime
Email: **hkrepairs@eircom.net**
www.hkrepairs.com

UPVC Windows

Palladio Composite Doors

Triple Glazed Windows

Double Glazed Windows

Draughty Windows Serviced

Glass Replacement



Contact Rob: 083 8341635

ROOFING

ROOFMART

VISIT OUR **NEW DUBLIN SOUTH** STORE FOR ROOFING, WATERPROOFING & INSULATION

Unit 5, Broomhill Business Complex, Tallaght D24 X270

01 417 9641

dublinsouth@roofmart.ie



visit **www.roofmart.ie** for further details

KEANE
Windows & Doors
Est.1985

SHOWROOMS OPEN 7 DAYS
Trinity Court, Fonthill Business Park, Liffey Valley



- Double Glazing • Triple Glazing
- Anti-Bandit Windows
- Composite Doors & Repairs

For a FREE quote call: 01 6203232
www.keanewindows.ie

Pre-arranged Financing Available
FLEXI-FI

www.echo.ie

planning notices

All planning applications must be in before 1pm Tuesday

tel: 468 5350

email:reception@echo.ie

Dublin City Council

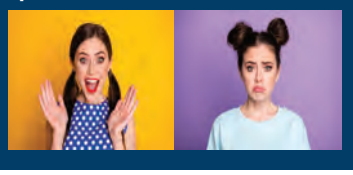
I Ezio Giuilio Landi, intends to apply to the above-named planning authority for planning permission for development at 6 St. Agnes Road, Crumlin Village, Walkinstown, Dublin 12, D12 PY02. The development will consist of minor changes to the front elevation and ground floor plan, to include removal of an existing Abbot Press Printers signage above Broe auctioneers sign, new front door, automated shutter and new Aesthetic Clinic signage above front door, partial demolition of an existing ground floor stud wall, removal of two doors to create a new reception/waiting area on ground floor plan, and all ancillary site works.
This Planning Application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Dublin County Council Planning Department during public hours (Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm). Written submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the Planning Authority in writing within a period of 5 weeks from the date of receipt by the Authority of the application and on payment of the prescribed fee of €20.00

South Dublin County Council

We, Jonathan Hickey and Niamh Halliden, intend to apply for Planning Permission for development at this site 16 Brookvale, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14. The development will consist of 1) Single storey rear extension, 2) Replacement and extension of existing two storey side extension, 3) Loft conversion, pitch extension and installation of rear dormer, 4) Installation of new roof lights to the front of the property as well as all associated works. This application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of South Dublin County Council during its public opening hours of 9am - 4pm, Mon-Fri, and a submission or observation may be made to South Dublin County Council in writing and on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by South Dublin County Council of the application.

Do you want the good news or the bad news?

Over 80 news, community, sport and feature articles every week



Scan the QR code to subscribe online

Echo.ie Your Local Newspaper **Telling the whole story**

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) ACTS 1963 - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS 1977 TO 1994

PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED WEEK ENDING JANUARY 9, 2026

SD25B/0302W 15 Jan 2026 Retention Additional Information
Applicant: Mohamed Abokhshabah
Location: 38, Anne Devlin Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, D14 K2C8
Description: Retention permission of the existing rear dormer and application for permission to modify the rear exterior walls, eaves, and garden Shed and all associated works.

SD25B/0542W 15 Jan 2026 Permission Additional Information
Applicant: Keith Rochford
Location: 1, Birchview Drive, Dublin 24, D24A9R7
Description: 1) the demolition of the existing single storey side garage and the construction of a single storey front, side & rear extension to the existing two storey detached dwelling, ancillary alterations to all elevations , demolition of existing chimneys and all associated site works, 2) the wrapping of the existing two storey dwelling with external insulation and ancillary alterations to all elevations 3) Widening of the existing vehicular entrance and all associated site works and 4) the increasing in height of a portion of the existing side boundary wall to 2.9m as measured from public footpath side and all associated site works.

SD25B/0592W 13 Jan 2026 Permission Additional Information
Applicant: Aoife Clancy & Paul O'Grady
Location: 14, Woodstown Park, Knocklyon, Dublin 16, D16 WR92.
Description: The development will consist of A. demolition of existing single storey pitched roof rear extension, to be replaced with a proposed single storey flat roofed rear extension, B. conversion of existing garage to ground floor bedroom, C. works to front elevation to include a proposed roof tiled porch with 2 no. brick bay windows serving living room and proposed ground floor bedroom, D. replacement of existing windows E. widening of existing driveway piers to facilitate improved vehicular access, F. PV solar panels to rear roof, (g) all associated internal works, drainage, and site service works.

SD26A/0006W 11 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Kevin Shanahan
Location: 1, Oatfield Park, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Description: Planning permission sought for the construction of a detached 2 storey house, connection to existing public foul and surface water, amendment of existing boundary walls and new vehicular entrance arrangement for existing and proposed house and all associated site works.

SD26A/0007 13 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Gerard Stafford
Location: 20, Springfield Crescent, Dublin 6W
Description: A new dwelling House on lands at 20 Springfield Crescent, Templeogue, Dublin 6w comprising 2 no, bedrooms plus bathroom at first floor level in total internal area of 52 Sq. and 1 no bedroom/sitting room at ground floor level with Kitchen, dining area, bathroom and utility room in a toral area of 28 Sq. The proposal will have garden areas to rear, sides and front. with all associated planting and paving works as noted, Windows at 1st floor level to garden side will be screened by a solid brick wall to 1.8 meters above finished floor level. A new vehicle entrance to off street parking area is proposed to front of site onto Springfield Crescent between the existing entrances to Nos 20 and 21. The large existing mature tree and existing garden walls on the site will be retained. The proposed dwelling house will match the existing adjacent properties in terms of scale, bulk and massing and will have materials and finishes to match.

SD26A/0009W 14 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Enable Ireland
Location: Unit 1 B, Ground Floor, Tallaght Cross, Tallaght, Dublin 24.
Description: Change of use from retail unit to unit for Day Care Centre use along with signage.

SD26A/0010W 15 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: John Murphy
Location: Treepark Road, Kilnamanagh, Dublin 24
Description: Amendments to previous approved Planning Permission Ref. SD21A/0044 for part change of use to facilitate new coffee shop unit at ground floor and a school aged child care unit at part of first floor level, that will be used during primary school term, with area remaining for club activity use at all other times and all associated works.

SD26A/0011W 16 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Liffey Valley Management Limited
Location: Units 54 & 55, Liffey Valley Shopping Centre, Fonthill Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Description: The proposed development will consist of the amalgamation of existing Unit 54 (c. 174 sq.m) and existing Unit 55 (c. 201 sq.m), both retail use, into a single retail unit of c. 381 sq.m through the removal of the existing partition wall between the two units. New internal centre facade for the amalgamated unit to include for 2 no. banner signs of 6.4m x 1.25m.

SD26A/0012W 16 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Vantage Data Centers DUB11 LTD
Location: Profile Park (in the townland of Kilbride), Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Description: Amendments to planning permission Reg. Ref.: SD21A/0241, as previously amended by Reg. Ref.: SD23A/0035, SD23A/0203, SD23A/0291, SD24A/0162W and SD25A/0102W. The proposed amendments consist of the following: The provision of an underground firewater retention tank c. 840m3 located to the north of the overall site; The provision of a new entrance onto the New Nanagor Road to service this tank and for infrequent maintenance; Security fencing and associated ground pipework and planting; and All associated and ancillary works.

SD26B/0006W 12 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Terrie Healy
Location: 31 Pinetree Crescent, Dublin 24, D24 Y7YX
Description: Planning permission for attic conversion with 2 dormers to rear roof to accommodate stairs to allow access to attic conversion as non-habitable storage space with roof windows to front all with associated ancillary works.

SD26B/0007 14 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Joe Monaghan
Location: 12, Wheatfield Road, Palmerstown, Dublin, D20 FXG2
Description: Remove the existing roofs to garage at side & flat roof to the rear extension & replace with a new single storey extension to the front, side & rear of the existing two storey semi - detached dwelling with concrete tiled roofs with rooflights in new side tiled roof. Internal alterations & associated site works.

SD26B/0008 15 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Ruth Kennington & Colm Merriman
Location: 94, Glenmaroon Road, Palmerstown, Dublin 20, D20 EV96
Description: Demolish existing single storey, front side and rear extension, and detached shed to rear. Construct two storey side with forward projecting front and rear two storey extension extended elements, single storey front extension, single storey rear extension, varied internal modifications

SD26B/0009W 15 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Noel Keogh
Location: 26, Brookvale, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, D14 X2T4
Description: Planning permission for attic conversion with hip to Dutch gable roof and dormer to rear roof to accommodate stairs to allow access to attic conversion as non-habitable storage space with roof windows to front gable to side all with ancillary works.

SD26B/0011W 15 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Lucy Sinead Peden
Location: 60A, Suncroft Drive, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 XT0A
Description: Planning permission is requested for a detached single-storey domestic sunroom to the rear of the existing dwelling.

Contact *The Echo* to have a planning notification published

Call 468 5350 or email reception@echo.ie

Your Local Newspaper email: sport@echo.ie www.echo.ie

Find us on

Echo Sport

Deputy Sports Editor: William O'Connor

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Templeogue get the better of Dublin Lions in the league

IT WAS a big weekend for women's basketball in South West Dublin as Templeogue and Dublin Lions faced off against each other in Division 1 with Templeogue picking up the victory winning 76-48, *reports Michael Howley.*

The game was held in Cholaiste Bride in Clondalkin with Templeogue making the short trip away from home.

With the club celebrating their 50th anniversary last weekend also, a derby win against Dublin Lions was an excellent supplement to go alongside it.

Again Sofia Paska proved to be the main scoring threat for Templeogue managing an impressive 23 points, 12 rebounds and also managing to grab herself an assist at the same time.

Hannah Murphy was another who impressed on the day with 14 points, four rebounds and an assist to her name.

Lauren Darcy's contribution must be noted being a notable scoring and creative outlet for the side managing 10 points, four rebounds while also providing five assists.

The win sees Templeogue remain in second place as they fight at the top of table to keep themselves in the mix for title contention.

At this stage of the season it is still extremely close with several teams vying for the top spots.

Cleveland Rockets lead the charge on 27 points while Templeogue, Limerick Sport Huskies and Limerick Celtics all find themselves on 24 points hot on their heels.

They will be looking to keep their momentum as they take on Limerick Celtics in what will be a pivotal clash with the winner having an excellent run at the top of the table.

It was a tough game for the Dublin Lions who were unable to keep up with the impressive scoring capability of Templeogue.

They did benefit from an excellent individual display from Emily Smyth who managed to score 15 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

The result leaves them second from bottom in the table on nine points, they currently are three points behind University of Galway Mystics with their next game set to be a home clash against Swords Thunder this Saturday.

Basketball Club has a huge €115,000 bill for renting halls

Dublin Lions has grown to be one of the biggest clubs in the area

DUBLIN Lions are recent winners of the U18 men's Billy Coffey National Cup and possess some of the most talented young basketball players in the country, *reports Michael Howley.*

Their development and the growth of the club however are being hampered by large operational costs with rent for halls being around €115,000 per year, the total figure being closer to €140,000 with all costs included.

The club currently operates in three locations across Clondalkin and Palmerstown including Colaiste Bride, Collinstown and Palmerstown College and are extremely thankful for the support that they have received from these local institutions as well as the wider community as a whole.

Yet despite all the support, the question of funding unfortunately still remains for the club with needs for finances having a major impact on development of players within the club and for clubs across the country as a whole.

About 70% of revenue generated for the club comes in from parents paying subscription/membership fees for kids while 30% has to be generated from within using fundraising events.

Rob White spoke on the difficulties of juggling being an actual coach and also trying to fund raise for the teams.

"If Basketball Ireland could find a way to give clubs a base then we could focus on development. Half of my time is focused on raising money and the other half is coaching. If we could have more time to focus on coaching than fundraising then we'd all be a lot better than where we are."

White spoke on how in order for Basketball in Ireland to improve this needs to change.



Dublin Lions celebrate their Billy Coffey U18 National Cup win earlier this month
Photo by ©INPHO/Tom Maher

"If you can only train twice a week as a basketball team you are only going to be a certain level, if you can double that and train four times a week like most European countries we'd have a much higher chance of doing well."

"If you go to Spain they are training six days a week and two games. In Ireland the max is we train twice a week and then have a game. In European standards we are never going to overtake the European giants unless we can match their training."

White acknowledged the difficulty of solving this problem.

"I'm not sure what the best way to approach it would be. I think the biggest thing would be if there was a way to subsidise the training or halls which is very difficult to do. If there was a way to build halls so that we aren't sharing facilities with other sports as well. It would make a huge difference in my opinion."

Templeogue U18s march into final

THE Templeogue's U18s men's side played their DMBB Cup semi-final against Declan's who had only lost 1 game this season, *reports Michael Howley.*

A great crowd came along to see if this Templeogue team could get into their first cup final and they weren't disappointed as Templeogue came out on top 51-41.

Declan's took a deserved lead in the first quarter 11-8 but with some great defensive work they managed to limit Declan's to 10 points in Q2 whilst scoring 20 to edge ahead at the half 28-21.

The scoring remained low in the second half due to great defensive work on both sides and the Q3 score had Templeogue ahead at 40-30.

Both sides then went for the win in Q4 with Templeogue holding their nerve with both sides scoring 11 and to go on and secure their final berth in March.

They are due to play the winners of Dublin Lions and Oblates in the final which no doubt will be a cracking game.

Templeogue chairman Brian Booth spoke on the achievement of the team reaching its first final.

"They've had some great players over the years and we're just delighted that they've managed to make it into a final and this is the last year for this team before they have to move into U20s and Adult teams. It's brilliant, they are our first team this year that has made it into the final of the DMBB with plenty of others left to play for positions in March."



Templeogue U18's beat Declan's to make it through to the final

The Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Star of the Year Award 2025

Superb line-up of contenders

January Sports Star
Abbey Molloy



Abbey Molloy made history for Sacred Heart Boxing Club as she became the club's first ever member to win the National U18 Female Boxing Championships. Abbey is now a six time national champion and after turning 16 the month previous was a year younger than the majority of her opposition.

February Sports Star
Eileen O'Brien

Eileen O'Brien played a pivotal role in helping the Irish Athletics Track and Field Masters O70s team break two world records.The Lucan Harriers athlete helped break the W70 4×800 metres world record and the W70 4x400m metres just two weeks later.



March Sports Star
Ellen Walshe



In March, Templeogue swimmer Ellen Walshe smashed the oldest Irish swimming record, the long course 200m Butterfly at the Leinster Aspiring Champions Swim Meet held in Dublin. The record was previously held by Rathcoole native Michelle Smith.

April Sports Star
Zoe McDermott

Kilnamanagh's Zoe McDermott was the first female from Ireland to ever win a medal at the prestigious WKF karate event.Zoe's path to the final saw her overcome four incredible rounds and narrowly missed out on gold in the final by two points after fighting 11th ranked Yuliia Krot from Ukraine in the final.



May Sports Star
Adam Charles



Éanna basketball player Adam Charles has played a huge role in his club and school's success this year. He also saw himself named Basketball Ireland Player of the year following a brilliant campaign.

June Sports Star
Tiffany Spencer



Member of Jobstown Boxing Club, Tiffany Spencer became the new National Elite Champion, with the 19 year old emerging victorious in the 48kg division with a win over reigning champion Ciara Walsh. It was the first time that she had ever entered the competition and she is now the youngest boxer to ever win a title.

July Sports Star
Cormac Dixon

Tallaght Athletic's Club member Cormac Dixon won gold at the National U20 and U23 Championships in Tullamore in July. The Rathcoole lad was first over the line in the 1,500m with a time of 3:59:85 in the U20 division.



August Sports Star
Gabrielle Mongan



Jobstown BC boxer Gabrielle Mongan won her seventh national title at the U23 National Championship. She won the title against Lucan Boxing Club's Jessica Talbot to secure the Middleweight crown.

September Sports Star
Derek Tohill

Derek Tohill was named the national rallycross champion for 2025. The win was his ninth title in a row with Tohill aiming to secure a decade worth of titles in 2026. He kicked off his season for 2026 in a positive manner with an excellent performance at Mondello Park .



October Sports Star
Ellen Walshe



Ellen Walshe had a massively impressive showing at the short course Swimming World Cup with the swimmer managing a huge seven medals at the competition alongside breaking six Irish records in the process.

November Sports Star
Stephen Jones

Stephen Jones won gold in the masters category at the WAKO Kickboxing World Championships representing Tallaght Martial Arts. A Tymonville native, Stephen is a coach within the club and has been a member for the past 15 years.



December Sports Star
Jessica Talbot



Lucan Boxing Club's Jessica Talbot secured a victory at the National Intermediate Boxing Championships winning the 70kg title. She was the first fighter from her club to win a title at National Level and has big plans for 2026, planning to represent Ireland on the international stage.

THE Active South Dublin Amateur Sports awards in association with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council will hold its annual awards night in the Plaza Hotel on Thursday.

Running for the past 17 years, the awards honour and recognise the tremendous achievements of local athletes and sporting groups within the community.

Among the nominees in the running for the 2025 Sports Star of the Year award include Templeogue swimmer Ellen Walshe, rallycross driver Derek Tohill among many others.

Many of the athletes here have represented their club, school or country at the world stage or at the very highest of level and they will be recognised in the ceremony on the night where an overall 'sports star of the year' will be crowned.

Jobstown Boxing Club possesses an impressive contingent of nominees with Tiffany Spencer and Gabrielle Mongan both being nominated due to their championship winning performances across the year.

Abbey Molloy and Jessica Talbot of Sacred Heart and Lucan Boxing Club are others who will be nominated for the overall sports star of the year award.

Zoe McDermott finds herself in the running after an excellent performance at the WKF Karate Championships winning a silver world medal.

Stephen Jones of Tallaght Martial Arts is another combat sports athlete who made the cut this year thanks to his excellent performance at the WAKO Kickboxing World Championships in November.

Adam Charles was nominated following a huge year for both school and club and was named Basketball Ireland's player of the year for May.

Athletics will also see its fair share of nominees, Cormac Dixon, member of Tallaght AC currently studying in America performed admirably at the National U20 and U23 Championships before representing Ireland at the European stage.

Eileen O'Brien of Lucan Harriers broke two world records in just two weeks to become a double world record holder at the age of 74 in February.

The team's category will also see a number of teams nominated for an overall award.

Three soccer teams made the list with Kilnamanagh's girls U16s, St Francis' senior women's side and Shamrock Rovers U14s teams all being represented.

GAA saw four candidates become possible sports teams of the year with Lucan Sarsfields having the Mens and Ladies minor sides nominated for championship and league wins respectively.

Commercials Senior Hurlers and Ballyboden St Endas' Senior Footballers found success in both county championships with Boden going on to have success at provincial level.

Hockey saw Loreto Women's and Glenanne Men's teams nominated in back to back months while Clondalkin Rugby Club picked up the Leinster League Division 2A title, picking up a win over a highly fancied Coolmine side.

The Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Star of the Year Award 2025

for the 2025 Sports Star title

January Sports Team
Éanna U18s



ÉANNA lifted the U18 Men's Billy Coffey National Cup following a 92-72 win over Titans at the National Basketball Arena. Titans made a blistering start to this contest and by half time Éanna trailed 29-10. Éanna, who overcame a 25-point deficit in their semi-final win over Limerick Lions had to dig deep in the third and fourth quarter to claim the prize they last won in 2021.

February Sports Team
Clondalkin Rugby Club



Clondalkin Rugby Club claimed the Leinster League Division 2A title with a win over Coolmine. Underdogs heading into the match Clondalkin would prevail running out winners with a 23-3 scoreline amidst terrible conditions.

March Sports Team
Glenanne Hockey



Glenanne's men first hockey team won the Neville Davin Cup. The team from Tallaght picked up the championship with a win against Bray, managing to run out 3-1 winners. Goals from Gary Shaw, John Stewart and Ian Walker all contributed to Glenanne winning the cup for the first time in their history.

April Sports Team
Loreto Women's Hockey Team



Loreto secured the EYHL Hockey League trophy for the second year running following a superb season for the team. A 2-2 draw against Old Alex on the final day of the campaign would see them win the title by four points with their closest rivals being Railway Union.

May Sports Team
Kilnamanagh U15s



The Kilnamanagh girls u15 side claimed the SFAI All Ireland title for the first time in the club's history at that age group with a 2-1 win against Peamount United in Jackson Park. The team won the trophy two years ago at u12 level with many of the current players involved in that team and now playing a year ahead, making the win all the more impressive.

June Sports Team
Lucan Sarsfields Minor Team



Lucan Sarsfields Minor Ladies Footballers secured the Division 1 title for the first time with a last gasp winner against Naomh Mearnog being the game to get them over the line. This is the first time that the minor ladies team has won the Division 1 title in their 35 year existence.

July Sports Team
Ballyboden St Enda's Senior Team



Ballyboden St Enda's clinched the AFL Division One title with a victory against Ballymun Kickhams which saw them win by a single point. After losing their opening game of the campaign to St Patrick's Donabate Boden would remain undefeated for the remainder of the league campaign .

August Sports Team
St Francis Women's Soccer Team



St Francis FC won the FAI Amateur Shield after a fantastic win over Cabinteely in the final. The team reached the final following victory over Leeside United in the semi's. Rachel McGrath played a crucial role scoring a brace to secure a 2-1 victory with Sarah Winders, Caroline Thorpe and Emily O'Brien also playing a massive role in the game.

September Sports Team
Shamrock Rovers U14s



The Rovers U14s side lifted the Eddie Wallace cup with the win being a reflection of the hardwork that has been done by all members of the team and staff, transforming into one of the most dominant underage sides in the country.

October Sports Team
Commercials Senior Hurlers



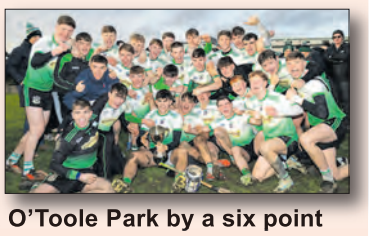
Commercials found themselves as winners of the Premier Intermediate Hurling Championship after dominating throughout the championship campaign. The Rathcoole side dominated the final against St Sylvester's coming out on top of a 1-22 to 0-13 scoreline. The team would also win the league with a game to spare, lifting the AHL Division 3 title .

November Sports Team
Coláiste Éanna U19



Coláiste Éanna's U19 side were crowned world champions in Valencia Spain after winning the World School Basketball Championships with a victory against St Vincents Castleknock college in the final. After their success in regional and national competitions in Ireland the team was invited to the World School Games where they captured the gold medal after an incredible run in the tournament.

December Sports Team
Lucan Sarsfields Minor Footballers Men



The minor side won the Division One Hurling Championship for the third time in the club's history. They defeated St Jude's in the final at O'Toole Park by a six point amargin. The club hopes that this conveyor belt of talent will supplement the senior side in the coming years as they continue to build.

Hockey

Glen ladies suffer narrow defeat to Clontarf

GLENANNE Ladies seconds suffered a narrow 1-0 defeat to Clontarf in a fiercely contested encounter played out in extremely challenging conditions.

With heavy rainfall, cold temperatures and a pitch made increasingly difficult by standing water, both sides were tested physically and mentally over the course of the match.

Despite the final scoreline, the game was evenly matched and hard fought from the opening whistle to the very end.

The decisive moment came midway through the second half when Clontarf struck on the counter attack.

Breaking quickly down the left flank, they engineered a two on one situation against the Glenanne left back Pamela Bastable and worked the ball cleverly across the top of the circle.

The first shot was well met by goalkeeper Karen Dunne who produced an excellent save utilising her stick, unfortunately for Glenanne, Clontarf benefitted from the rebound with their forward reacting sharply to capitalise and put them 1-0 ahead.

Despite the setback, Glenanne showed tremendous resilience and character, continuing to press and compete right up until the final whistle.

In conditions that made playing a flowing brand of hockey difficult there were still passages of genuinely enjoyable play, a testament to the commitment and skill on display from both teams.

Every player gave everything over the full 70 minutes, battling relentlessly in what became a true test of determination.

The effort on the pitch was matched by the effort on the sidelines with Glenanne receiving unwavering support from the crowd.

Their encouragement was greatly appreciated by the players who despite losing the fixture can take positives from a strong all around performance and build on for the rest of 2026.

Motorsport

Dooley in a class of his Eoin in Mondello Park

TALLAGHT native Eoin Dooley has won the Mondello Park Junior Mini Challenge Scholarship for the upcoming 2026 ICCR motorsport season, backed by Patch Tyre Equipment, *reports Michael Howley.*

Only 16 years old, Dooley was awarded the Mondello Park Junior MINI Scholarship following a recent assessment in Mondello Park with over 20 other possible candidates.

Young drivers were marked both on their driving ability, their public speaking and media capability with the categories being awarded a 60/40 split of the marks.

The scholarship will see Dooley supplied a car for the year, he is currently competing in the Irish Junior Rallycross Championship. Rallycross is typically done on mixture of rougher terrain and asphalt, whereas Circuit will be done on an all asphalt track.

His parents Elaine and Vincent Dooley were delighted with the scholarship and feel this will bring his racing career to another level.

"It's a big win to be honest with you, Eoin will get the car for a full season. The car will be race prepared but we will have to maintain it and have it set up to Eoin's liking, Entries are covered for the season, there are 10 races altogether with eight in Mondello. Testing is also included along with a set of new racing tyres, as part of the Scholarship, Eoin will have to attend a Motor Sport Licence Course to compete in ICCR as his current Irish Rallycross licence is not valid for Circuit Racing"



Eoin and his father with the new car

Eoin will be competing in the Junior Division of the Irish Circuit Racing Championships with the first race set to take place this April.

He is currently competing in the Irish Rallycross Championship.

"He's competing in a Fiesta against Minis so he is down on power. In an underpowered car he is doing very well and is sitting around 6th in the Championship. His race craft is very impressive and he's working on his fitness a lot. It's a big thing but with the right tuition and people around him we're hoping he can do quite well in it."

Now after receiving the scholarship Dooley will have an excellent platform to build upon for 2026, expect to see his name coming to the forefront of Irish Racing over the next number of years.

Athletics

Niall crowned Adventure Racing champ

ROUND Towers member Niall Corless was recently crowned the 2025 Adventure Ireland Racing Champion after finishing up the series with a gruelling race in Mayo towards the end of last year, *reports Michael Howley.*

The sport of adventure racing sees athletes take part in a long distance race, usually between 50-80km particularly at the elite levels.

The race will see them transition to various forums of racing such as running, biking or even kayaking.

Organisational body Adventure Racing Ireland identifies its champion by examining eight races that are held around the country. The athlete's best five scores are taken with the winner being crowned the series champion.

Niall was first introduced to racing in 2020 while still playing football and hurling for Towers and it wasn't long before he found himself hooked on the sport.

"I did my first race and it was like something clicked with me. I just started doing more races but I didn't even know about the series to be honest. I just thought it was a one and done type of thing, you book it, enjoy it and that was it. Someone told me eventually there was a series. I think I came fourth or fifth in the series one year without even knowing that there was one!"

"Every year I sign up for it now, even without the competitive aspect of it, it allows you to go see different counties and places and get a different perspective of places that you might not normally get to see."

Niall entered his first race in 2020 but it wasn't until 2023 that he really began to kick into gear.

2024 was the year where Niall aimed to finish inside the top 10 of every race and also where he would pick up his first podium, finishing third at the event held in Lough Derg.

2025 was finally when he felt like he had a real opportunity of not only being able to finish all of the races well, but be competitive for some of the top spots in the overall series.

"I like challenging myself. There's something mentally there just me as a person where I like to challenge myself. It's just how I am. Training is a hefty schedule and there's a lot of thanks I owe to my wife Felicity and even the kids to allow me to train as much as I do in order to be competitive."

Niall also drew upon the talents of Simon Breslin of The Flow Team in his preparation for the Series this year.

Based in Clondalkin, The Flow Team offers coaching towards general well being and focuses on techniques such as breathwork and meditation in order to offer both improved mental and physical performance.

Using these techniques as well as an intense physical training regiment of his own was what allowed Niall to achieve what he did in 2025.

It would be a second place finish at the Sea to Summit race held in Westport last November that saw him being crowned the overall series champion.

The race itself was split into a 4km run, an 8km cycle, a 7km run up Croagh Patrick, a 35km cycle through the hills and finally another 4km run to finish off a total of 56 km covered.



Niall Corless won in Glendalough

Niall has big plans for 2026 however and is aiming to undergo a 225km distance in April and likely will go on to defend his series championship over the course of the year.

Basketball

Templeogue edged out by Portlaoise Panthers in league

IN THE men's Division 1 Templeogue were narrowly defeated by Portlaoise Panthers by a narrow margin of just five points 84-79, *reports Michael Howley.*

It was an extremely valiant effort on behalf of Templeogue with the team having a number of standout performers on the day.

Evan Cook was their chief scorer and managed an impressive tally of 29 points while completing four steals and two assists.

Millan Lopez was another who impressed on the day and garnered a total of 12 points along with four rebounds and two assists.

Hector Parras matched Lopez's scoring total of 12 points while also managing a huge seven rebounds, while providing an assist.

The result sees Templeogue sit in 14th position sitting on nine points alongside Malahide and Killarney Cougars.

While Team Northwest appear to be rooted to the bottom of the table having failed to win a game, it appears to be a mini tournament between the trio of Templeogue, Malahide and Killarney Cougars to decide who finishes from 13th to 15th with 12th placed Tipp Talons currently nine points ahead of all three.

Dublin Lions were also defeated at the weekend and saw their unbeaten run come to a close.

The side were narrowly defeated in Killarney by SPK Utility Trust Lakers with the final score reading 87-83.

Lee Aaron managed a very impressive individual performance clocking up 20 points while also managing nine rebounds in the process. Nacho Folgueiras also chipped in with four assists.

The result still sees them sitting on in joint first position with Drogheda Wolves though they will be frustrated at not taking the opportunity to create a gap between themselves and Drogheda.

Drogheda sit also on 33 points but now also have a game in hand, the loss also saw SPK get some points on the board which has seen them creep up into third position in the table on 30 points.

Griffith College Eanna also found themselves defeated at the weekend with the side losing out by five points to Glasnevin based team St Vincents with the scoreline being 73-68.

The result leaves Eanna in 5th place, still in the battle for the final play off spot alongside UCD Marian and Vincent's with all three teams now sitting on 24 points.

Athletics

Tallaght athletes have a successful weekend

TALLAGHT AC athletes tasted success at Day 1 of the Dublin Juvenile Indoors Championships and at the recent Leinster Masters Cross Country Championships, *reports Michael Howley.*

Athletes participating at the Juvenile Indoors Championship displayed their talents at the National Indoor Arena in Abbotstown last Sunday.

Beauty Ikpefua finished top of the podium in the U18s girls shot put final with a throw of 11.87m. Talented in multiple events she would also finish 5th in the 200m final with a time of 27.83.

Mason Mitchell was another to top the podium after he posted a leap of 5.69m in the U16 long jump division and he would finish fourth in the 200m final with a time of 24.85.

Brendan Solarin earned himself a first place finish in the U19 boys long jump with a best jump of 5.06m.

In a very close finish to the U18 boys 200m final, Abdullahi Adeleke recorded a new personal best time of 22.74 for silver while Gabriella Azeez recorded a time of 26.88 in the U18 girls 200m final earning a bronze medal.

Daniel Thomas made the U18 200m final where he recorded a time of 24.71 for 5th place while Matilda Porcu recorded a time of 27.57 being 5th in the girls U19 final.

Olivia McDermott was another to reach a final finishing 8th in the U15 60m hurdles with a time of 10.93 while Katriel Fernandes recorded a time of 10.30 going 6th place in the U16 60m hurdles final.

Eva Halpin recorded a time of 11.57 going 3rd in her heat for the U13 60m hurdles while Noah Halpin recorded a time of 28.43 in his U17 200m heat.

In the U19 60m heats Franklin Onwuzulumba recorded a time of 24.38 while Ciara Maasoed recorded a time of 30.64.

The previous Saturday week at the Leinster Masters Cross Country Championships in Carlow saw success for Tallaght AC members also.

Sharon Tighe ran a brilliant race to win an individual bronze medal in the F55 category and picked up a gold Intercounty medal as a scoring member on the Dublin team.

Gerry Woods also picked up an inter-county gold medal on the Dublin M65 winning team while Jack Tyrell and Pauline Madden both ran well in their categories.

Elsewhere on Sunday at the Raheny Annual 5 mile road race Adam Lawlor posted a new personal best time of 00:30.19 and was the first of the Tallaght AC contingent to cross the finishing line.

He was quickly followed by Sean McCarville (00.31.04), Karol McLaughlin (00:33.41), Robbie Furlon (00:37.19 and Ross Swords (00:37.21)



Members of Tallaght AC masters team

Golf

Castlewarden to start project works

CASTLEWARDEN Golf Club, located just off the N7 Naas Road at Exit 6, is delighted to announce that work has commenced on a significant programme of improvements to the clubhouse, *reports Michael Howley.*

The project includes the construction of new shower and toilet facilities, along with a comprehensive upgrade of the clubhouse roof.

These works form part of a major capital development programme following several months of detailed planning and design and are scheduled to be completed over the coming months.

Speaking about the development, Club President Tom MacHale said "it was great to see construction underway following a very successful fundraising initiative."

He noted that the project will "further enhance the club's excellent facilities and ensure an even more enjoyable post-round experience for both members and visitors playing the club's impressive 18-hole parkland course, which continues to receive widespread praise from golf societies and visiting golfers alike."

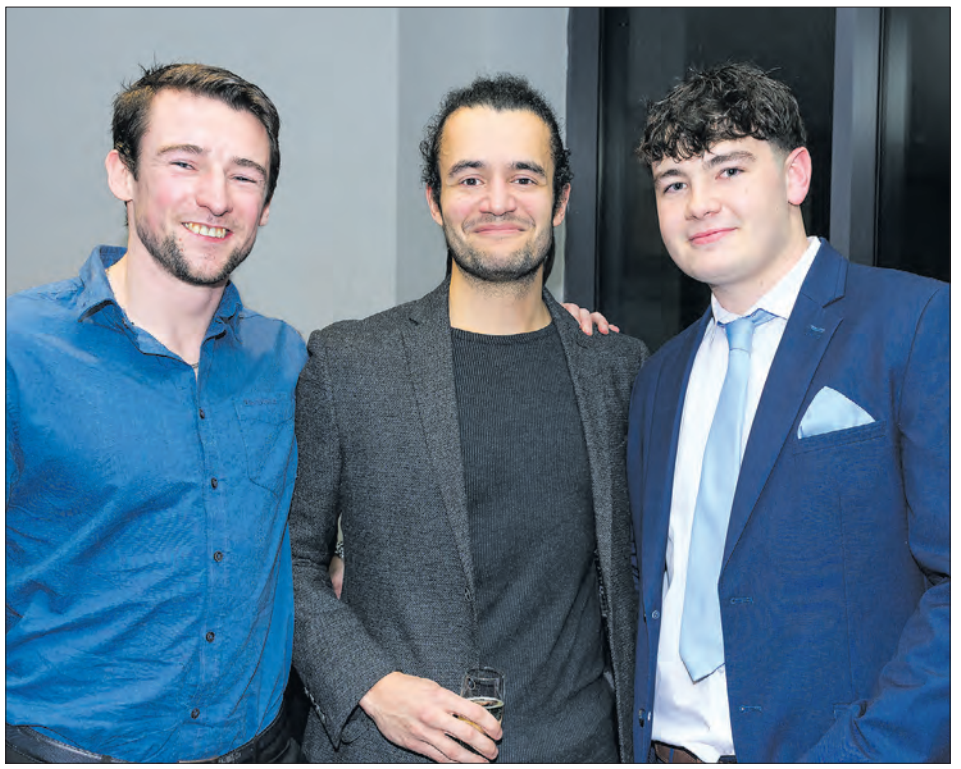
Plans are also in place to renovate the restaurant and bar later in 2026, once the current structural works are complete.

In addition, preparations are well advanced for the installation of solar panels which will significantly improve the club's energy efficiency and long term sustainability.

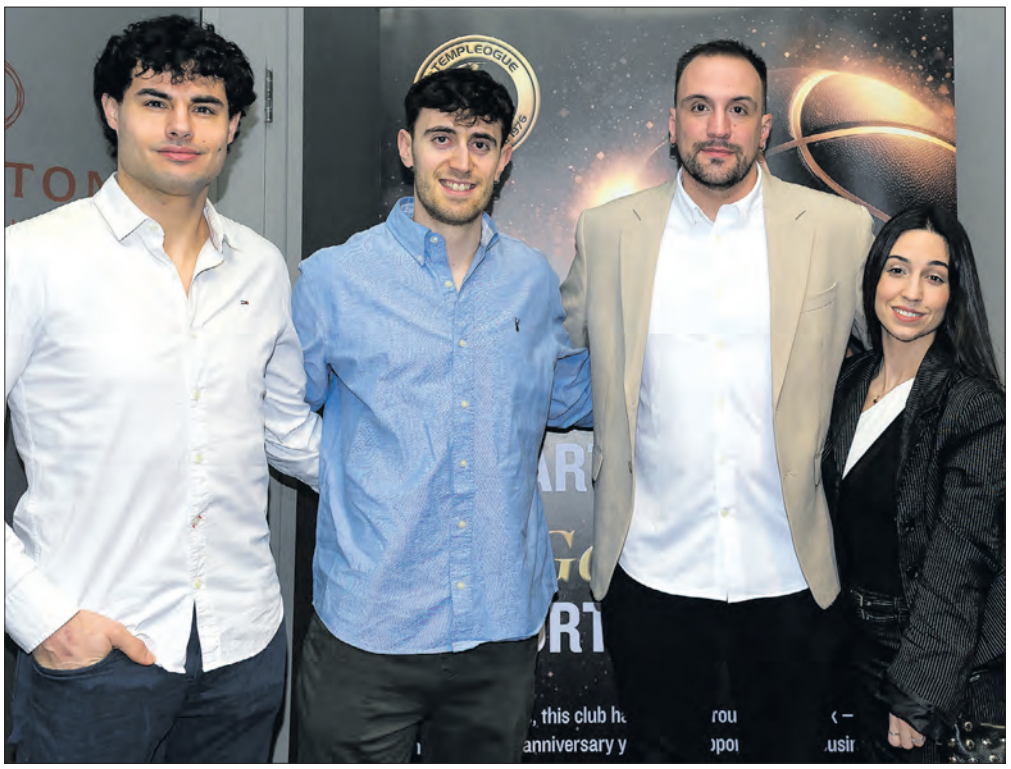
While these works are ongoing, careful arrangements have been put in place to ensure there is no disruption to the golf course or to play for members, competitors and visitors.


Castlewarden President Tom MacHale with Captain Tom Morris

Basketball



Lorcan, Dario and John



Sergio, Edwardo, Millan and Cynthia



Will and Noel



Ger and Ken



Linda and Anthony



Mark and Carmel



Holly and Martin



Evan and Ciara

Basketball

50th anniversary celebrations for Templeogue Basketball Club in Clayton Hotel

TEMPLEOGUE basketball club celebrated their 50th anniversary with a Gala dinner held at the Clayton Hotel in Liffey Valley last Saturday, *reports Michael Howley.*

Marty Guilfoyle of Today FM mc'd the event which saw over 120 people attend with both present and past players and committee members being invited.

Alongside the meal was a slideshow with attendees submitting 400 photos showcasing the 50 years of history within the club.

Other activities at the event included a trivia quiz, silent raffle and a disco.

The event marks the beginning of 2026, the 50th anniversary of the club and starts the year on a high.

While the dinner last weekend was for over 18s only, the club will be hosting an event targeted towards more junior members with May being a time possibly discussed for such an occasion.

The club has continued to expand over the decades after initially being founded out of Templeogue college with a very localised catchment area.

Brian Booth spoke on the continued expansion and appeal that the club has managed to build over the years.

"So we're traditionally from Templeogue college. In the early 2000s the club was opened up with girls teams as well and now our catchment area has spread far and wide. Wicklow, Kildare and lots from Meath as well along with a lot of the outlying suburbs in Dublin."

An example of expansion the club is currently undergoing can be seen in the recent start of a new academy in Old Bawn which runs every Thursday evening from 6pm-7pm with children below the age of 10 of all abilities welcome.

The club has also seen great performances from senior and underage teams in recent times with both senior sides being involved in National Cup Semi Finals in Cork and the U18 also reaching a semi final and the newly formed U20 side reaching a national cup final.

The club is also organising events for the Basketball For All section throughout 2026 and the group will be holding their first blitz this Sunday in TUD with five other teams being invited from around Dublin.

"We're all volunteering and it's going to be a great day for all those teams throughout Dublin."

Several other teams have been set up within the club and are doing well such as Division 4 teams and even Over 50s sides competing in Masters Division.

"It's great to see at both ends, we are catering to players from the youth system giving them somewhere to play and players who maybe have aged out of playing senior level basketball. Basketball is definitely on the rise. We've needed to get all these new teams."

The club has other plans for the year ahead which will be revealed over the coming weeks ahead and can celebrate their 50th anniversary knowing that for 2026 and hopefully the next 50 years they have a bright future ahead of them in Templeogue BC.



Conor, Martina, Glenda, Margaret and Alan



Peter, Frances, Anne, John, Philip and Paula



Christine and John



Anthony, Margaret, Conor, Mags and Brian (Committee)



Owen and Yvonne



Mary and Rolf



Will, Ann and John

GAA

Hurlers are edged out by the Banner in Cusack Park

DUBLIN kicked off their Allianz National Hurling League Division 1B campaign with a two point feat courtesy of Clare at Zimmer Biomet Cusack Park on Sunday afternoon, *reports Michael Howley.*

The visitors impressed for the bulk of the first half but would be undermined due to late goals from David Reidy and Peter Duggans leaving them trailing by 2-8 to 0-11 at the interval.

Dublin would come out strongly in the third quarter and would see themselves brought back into the game thanks to a goal from Brian Hayes however a rocket of a goal in added time from the one and only Tony Kelly saw Clare get over the line.

The starting XV saw four changes made from the side that were defeated by Galway last weekend in the Walsh Cup Final.

Chris Crummey was brought into the fold with the Lucan Sarsfields man making his first appearance in 2026 for the Intercounty side.

His clubmate Cathal Kennedy was unfortunate to lose out on his starting position from the Walsh Cup and found himself on the bench for this game while stalwart John Bellew rounded off the Lucan trio maintaining his position from pre season and will likely be a constant in that Dublin defence for the rest of the year.

Diarmaid O Dulaing was another who found himself starting with the young Commercials clubman making his first competitive appearance for the year.

Unfortunately he would find himself unable to break through the Clare defence and was taken off after 41 minutes.

Other local players involved included Thomas Davis' Davy Keogh who was brought on early on before being taken off in the second half.

Others who were on the bench but did not get to play in the game included Faughs' Liam Mostyn and BallyBoden St Enda's Darragh Kenny and James Madden.

Manager Niall O Ceallachain spoke after the game giving his thoughts.

"We're definitely disappointed, probably in the first half we went in a couple points down but I thought we could have been quite a bit better and I thought we were in the second half. I thought we were dominant for long periods and put ourselves in a position to win the game and just couldn't close it out."

The side are back in action this coming weekend where they will be offered a chance to pick up their first league win of 2026.

They take on Kildare in Parnell Park on Saturday evening with the match scheduled for a 7:30 start time

Dubs need to focus on next league match against Mayo

IT WAS a lackluster performance by Dublin in their first league game of the year as they found themselves defeated by Donegal 0-20 to 1-20 at Croke Park last Saturday afternoon, *reports Michael Howley.*

Donegal had gone into the break with a healthy six point lead after Shea Malone's goal in the 33rd minute effectively put them in the driver seat for the rest of the game.

Con O'Callaghan and Nathan Doran dragged Dublin through the first half while the second half admittedly saw the team look rejuvenated following the introduction of Sean Bugler and Luke Breathnach following the start of the second half.

Unfortunately by this stage the damage had already been done and while Dublin did perform well, Donegal were always doing enough to keep their noses in front for the rest of the game.

In terms of local representation in the Footballing panel there doesn't seem to be a huge amount this year.

St Judes' Tom Lahiff started in the midfield alongside Ethan Dunne of Skerries. Templeogue Synge Street also had two players starting with Niall Scully and Lorcan O'Dell present in the forward lines.

O'Dell would be brought off for Breathnach at half time with Lahiff making way for Sean Bugler.



Templeogue Synge Street's Niall Scully in action for Dublin and (inset) Lorcan O'Dell gathers possession Photos by Paul Lundy

Even on the bench, there was only one player from a Dublin South West club present with Hugh O'Sullivan representing Ballyboden St Enda's.

Manager Ger Brennan touched on the performance after the match.

"They just outworked us, particularly in the first half. We managed to get ourselves going at half time and the lads put in a far more energetic performance. Ultimately it's great to play against All-Ireland finalists. That's the bar and that's where you're trying to get to. I think we were given a fair sense of where we were in that first half when we didn't work hard enough but the second half was a lot more positive."

The side now find themselves with a quick turnaround as they travel to Castlebar this weekend to take on Mayo in their next league game.

Jackies edged out by Kerry

DUBLIN Ladies kicked off their first league game of 2026 last weekend in a losing effort against Kerry where they found themselves defeated by six points with the scoreline reading 2-09 to 0-09, *reports Michael Howley.*

Played at JYSK Park in Clondalkin the women's team of both sides battled through horrendous conditions on the day with the pitch resembling a scene from the Battle of the Somme at times.

The Dublin line up was full of new faces with only three players starting who had started in the All Ireland Final against Meath last year.

Dublin would be the first side to get themselves off the mark and while Kerry responded quickly, Dublin did well to keep themselves in contention for the first 15 minutes of the game with Ballyboden St Enda's player Kate Donaghy restoring the deadlock between the sides at the end of the first quarter.

This deadlock would be broken shortly after however as Kerry made use of their excess in possession and fire home courtesy of Jaydn Lucey to cause the green flag to be raised.

Rather than roll over however, Dublin responded admirably entering into a purple patch of sorts.

The team scored several points on the bounce, including one form St Judes' forward Orla Keighran to again bring the teams level, though a late burst from Kerry at the end of the half would leave the away side up by three points heading into the interval.

The second half would see Dublin make several changes in an attempt to turn the scoreboard on its head.

Sophie McIntyre of Lucan Sarsfields was brought on at the beginning of the second half and would be joined shortly on the pitch by her clubmate Siobhan Birnie.

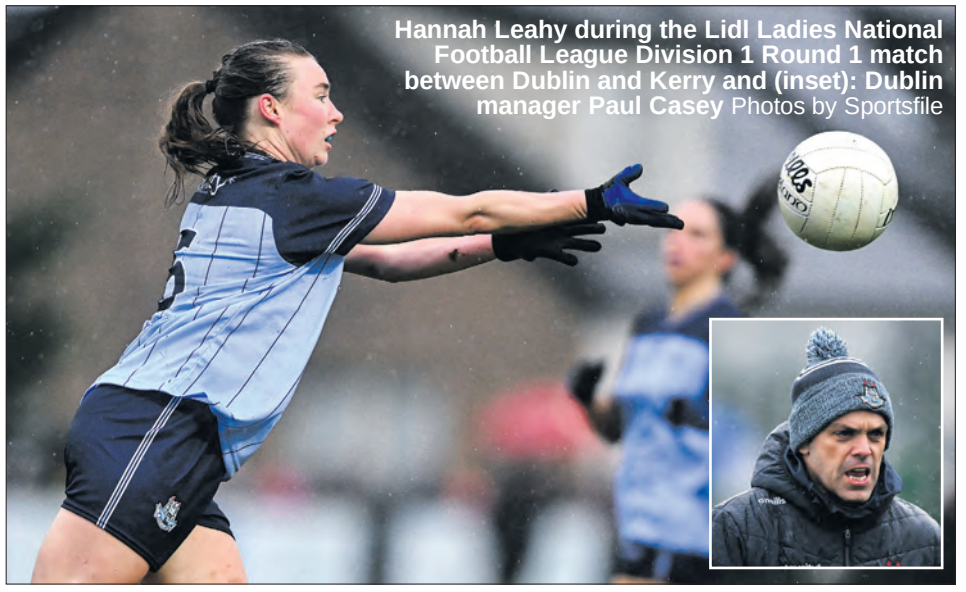
Dublin Minor Captain Charlie Murphy would also be introduced in the second half with the Ballyboden St Enda's star coming onto the pitch in the 58th minute for Hannah Leahy.

Despite all of the the changes and fresh legs brought on Dublin were unable to close the gap on Kerry and would in fact concede a second goal in the second half losing the game by six points at the final whistle.

One of the joint managers of the side Paul Casey spoke on the game and positives that could be taken from the performance.

"Really tough conditions, for both teams as well. We'd loads of new faces on the pitch today. I thought the honesty of effort they had was fantastic. They fought there until the end and kept plugging away. It was really, really tough conditions there, but good to get the show on the road as they say and good to see so many new faces play for Dublin today as well."

Dublin's next outing will be against their All-Ireland opponents Meath next Monday afternoon.



Hannah Leahy during the Lidl Ladies National Football League Division 1 Round 1 match between Dublin and Kerry and (inset): Dublin manager Paul Casey Photos by Sportsfile

Soccer

O'Callaghan adds Ellen to squad ahead of new season

SHAMROCK Rovers have the signing of the highly rated Kilkenny native Ellen Molloy with Molly being James O'Callaghan's sixth new acquisition ahead of the upcoming 2026 season, *reports Michael Howley.*

The 21 year old attacker makes the move from Wexford with O'Callaghan commenting on the signing.

"I'm really pleased to welcome Ellen Molloy to Shamrock Rovers. She brings an impressive level of experience for such a young player and is an energetic, hardworking, exciting presence on the pitch. Ellen was keen for a fresh start and felt a genuine connection with the environment and people here, and our focus now is on supporting her, helping her settle, and allowing her to enjoy her football as she takes this next step."

Molloy joins from Wexford but has had a spell in England in 2024 with Sheffield United and has actually been capped six times by the national team.

Aged just 21 now, Molloy shockingly made her first cap for Ireland back in 2020 and while playing for Wexford regularly battled it out for top scorer in the league all the while playing in midfield.

She is a huge signing for Rovers and a real statement of intent for their plans in the coming season.

Molloy herself spoke on the move in an interview with the club.

"I have so many great memories at Wexford and they have been amazing to me and I'm so grateful for my time though but I wanted a new experience and a new challenge so this seemed like the right move for me."

So young but already an FAI Cup and All Womens Cup winner, Molloy spoke on the experience that she already has had in her budding career.

"I've played with some great players so I suppose I have experience in that sense, I've learned a lot from the players that I have played with so if I am able to pass on any of that experience then I certainly will"

"I think on a personal level I want to just enjoy playing football, I think that's when I probably play my best when I have a smile on my face. But as a team I think we are really hoping to get some silverware."

GAA

Annual Ciaran Carr 7s proves another success





THE Annual Ciaran Carr 7's tournament was held in Round Towers Clondalkin last weekend in memory of former player Ciaran Carr who passed away during a training session in 2012 aged just 20 years old, *reports Michael Howley.*

The tournament now sees his former teammates and those associated within the club honour and remember him.

Ciaran's family have since set up the Ciaran Carr foundation which campaigns to prevent deaths from Sudden Adult Death Syndrome, also known as SADS. The foundation is now in its 13th year of existence.

His father Philip spoke at the annual game held in Round Towers.

"It's more of a social gathering for the lads who are still playing. Most of those guys would now be in their mid 30s and we also try to get some of the younger lads involved."

The event itself sees a combination of football and hurling played across all different age brackets and different abilities.

"It's great, you get some of the lads playing who are in Senior, some of the guys who might be playing at Junior level and even those who might be playing in the GAA for Dads or something like that."

Despite being an exhibition the game was heated with a real sense of competitiveness throughout.

"It was very competitive and very enthusiastic anyway! At the end of the day nobody was hurt and everyone left in a good frame of mind, we went back to the club and had a presentation there."

Philip also touched on the role of the Ciaran Carr foundation and what it aims to achieve.

"Our main objective is to provide people, not only in sporting clubs but in communities with Defibrillators and first aid training."

The foundation has not only been limited to their local area of Clondalkin but has defibrillators put in place in various locations across the country including Skibbereen Co. Cork, Manorhamilton Co. Leitrim, Galway and even on the Hill of Tara.

"The Ciaran Carr foundation has donated those defibrillators, people have gotten in touch. Normally it comes after they have had an incident and they realise they should have one on site. If there's nothing there and people don't have training then that is the worst case scenario that anyone could find themselves in.

"If there is a defibrillator on site and you have someone who has experience or done a course then the survival rate skyrockets compared to someone standing, making a phone call and waiting for the emergency services to arrive."

Carr also spoke about possible things that could be implemented in the future which would improve people's knowledge on a far more broad scale.

"We actually had an initiative with local schools a few years ago where training and courses were part of the Gasice award for transition year students. It would be great if we could push it onto the actual curriculum for schools so that as part of the transition year for all students, this course must be completed. It would be perfect. It is something that we will probably look at a bit harder going forward."





Soccer

United in second spot in top division

LUCAN United find themselves in second place in the top division of the Leinster Senior League as they have reached the halfway point of the season, *reports Michael Howley.*

The side took on UCD in a winning effort this past weekend and are in good condition with their cup competitions in the quarter final and the last 16 of two separate competitions.

Winners of the title in 2024, Lucan did not have the same performance last year finishing mid table. Manager Keith Baker spoke about the preparation heading into this season.

"Last season I felt that we had dropped our standards from both players and management. Maybe that came from lack of hunger from already winning it. We've since refreshed our squad and if I'm being honest at the start of the season I was expecting big things, I wasn't expecting us to be back there [finish in 2025]."

The side returned after the Christmas break with a 2-0 defeat to Bangor Celtic but since then have played Usher Celtic and found themselves back to winning ways with a 5-1 victory.

Their most recent game against UCD saw them win via another 5-1 margin with goals from Dylan O'Boyle, James Doona, Mark Byrne and Regan Lennon with UCD also scoring an own goal in the process.

The league at the moment is extremely crowded with only seven points separating first place Kilbarrack United from sixth place Finglas United with Lucan just a single point behind the league leaders.

Hot on their heels however are Malahide and Tolka Rovers who are just one and two points behind them respectively.

Baker touched on the importance that Lucan are giving the league with anything except a title win being seen as a shortcoming.

"We juggle the league and cup well, we take each game as it comes whether it's a league or cup fixture. The league is your bread and butter though. We need to win the league, that's the standard we have at the club."

Despite the importance of the league there is a competition which Baker has his eye on which is set to begin later on in the spring.

"The Intermediate hasn't started yet and it's the one cup that has gotten away from me. I've been beaten in the final, the semi final twice and the quarter final three times so that's the one that has gotten away from me, the Intermediate."

Bazunu suffers injury after joining Stoke City on loan

FIRHOUSE native Gavin Bazunu has suffered an injury just days after joining Stoke City on loan in the January transfer window from Southampton, *reports Michael Howley.*

After a difficult period at Southampton this season, Bazunu was afforded the opportunity to go to Stoke as number one keeper following an injury to their first choice Viktor Johansson.

Things seemed initially to be going well as he kept a clean sheet on his debut against QPR.

Only days later however he would find himself ruled out of their game against Middlesborough on Wednesday after an injury to his quad during training with manager Mark Robins confirming that he is out for up to six weeks.

"The players are giving everything they can, they are running on fumes. Whatever can go wrong is going wrong. We've got to keep giving everything until we can get some bodies back. I cannot believe how people are going down with the injuries they are. It is biting us on the backside. Gavin Bazunu will be out for six weeks or so. We are paper thin."

The timing is less than ideal for Bazunu who would have been hoping to impress on loan at Stoke with an €8 million buy option inserted as part of the loan deal.

Even if Stoke had decided to not pursue him permanently the experience would have been a real opportunity to put himself in the shop window for other teams to pick him up during the summer transfer window.

Struggling for form at Southampton the last number of years as well as dealing with a horrific achilles injury, the former Shamrock Rovers shot stopper has played just 28 times since the 2024/25 season.

Hopefully this quad injury is just a minor setback and he can get himself back in some sort of form by the end of this season.

Kilnamanagh U12 and U13 sides progress in SFAI Cup

IT WAS a great weekend for Kilnamanagh AFC as both their girls U12 and U13 sides progressed to the last 16 of the Subway SFAI National Cup, *reports Michael Howley.*

The U12s found themselves making the long trip to Colemanstown Park in Galway where they took on Corrib Celtic.

The Rockets got off to a flying start thanks to a goal from Elsa Duffy, however Corrib would get one back from a corner.

Duffy would again put her side ahead however with one minute remaining the home team would equalise to force the match to extratime.

Neither side was able to break down the other in extra time and the game was to be decided on penalties.

Cool finishes from Elsa, Ellie and Hollie put Kilnamanagh in an excellent position in the shootout and they were assured of the victory thanks to the heroics of Eabha Smith in goal, making two fantastic saves to ensure her team progressed to the next round.

The U13 girls would find themselves in an equally thrilling affair as they welcomed a determined Ballyoulster United team to Ned Kelly Park.

The game was end to end action from the first to the final whistle and with only 18 seconds left in extra time the two sides were level, the score sitting at 3-3.

Kate Breen would be the one to seize the opportunity as she delivered a poacher's finish converting while in the 18 yard box.

That would be the final move of the game as the referee blew for the final whistle with Kilnamanagh running out 4-3 winners.

Both teams are now set to progress to the last 16 of the national cup.

Crumlin working hard to get back into top flight


Crumlin are fighting at the top of the table in the Leinster Senior 1 league

CRUMLIN United currently find themselves fighting for the top of the table halfway through the season in the Leinster Senior 1 Sunday League, *reports Michael Howley*.

The club suffered their first league defeat of the year upon the resumption of matches after the Christmas break after losing to Home Farm. Though they would recover shortly after and defeated Sacred Heart 2-0 to get their 2026 back on track.

Crumlin are looking to get themselves back into the top division of amateur football after being relegated from Senior Sunday in 2024.

Manager James Lee spoke on the ambitions that the club had at the start of the season this year.

"The goal and expectation was to win the league. To get promoted of course but to get promoted by winning the league. Especially the way we finished last season just finished out. We have some of the top young players in amateur football. You need to be aiming high and set the bar, especially for these young players."

The team faces stiff competition. There are several clubs who are battling it out for the top spots in their division including the likes of Montpelier FC, Glebe North and Hartstown Hunstown to name just a few.

The team is also present in all of their remaining cups and has a quarter final in the Metropolitan cup against Hartstown Huntsown set for this Friday.

They also played their last league game against the side which ended in a 1-1 draw last Friday evening.

Crumlin had been ahead for the majority of the second half following a goal from Calum Bridgeman with Anto McKay providing the assist.

Frustratingly they were unable to hold onto the lead with Hartstown getting an equaliser in the 96th minute, Sean O'Reilly being the man to get the ball in the back of the net.

Now fighting for the top position in the table, Lee reflected on how important winning silverware is to the side this season.

"If you finish third and you get promoted there is nothing to show for it aside from the promotion. Look we wouldn't be too disappointed but for every young player the aim has to be to physically have that medal in your hand. If it means that much to you then you will get it. I would be lying if I said I wouldn't be disappointed if we missed out on the league."

"My aim is to win this division. We aren't just going as a newly promoted team, you're champions. Hopefully that mentality is instilled then and you can achieve more in future years."

Marks Celtic fielding over 20 teams

A STAPLE of Tallaght since 1973, Marks Celtic are continuing to flourish in 2026 with the club now fielding over 20 teams across all age groups, *reports Michael Howley.*

The pinnacle of the club, the Men's Seniors team playing in the Leinster Premier Sunday Division are currently second in their league after only being promoted into the league the year before.

The side started off 2026 on the right note with a victory against Wayside Celtic in their first game back after the Christmas break.

They did find themselves in a clash with league leaders Athy on Friday night where they were unlucky to be on the receiving end of a 1-0 loss.

Still despite the defeat they find themselves still well within the hunt for promotion and have a very important game coming up in February against third placed side Beggsboro who at the moment are their closest rivals in the table.

Manager Keith Maher spoke on the performance of the side so far this season.

"We're second in the league halfway through the season and we're still in all cup competitions. We've a great group of lads there. Honest and committed and a lot of them could probably play at a higher level but they are there because of the relationship that they have with the club."

"We definitely want to get promoted if not win the league but getting promoted at least is a big aim for ourselves."

Along with getting promoted in the short term, Maher has longer term ambitions for the club with the current side being on the cusp of making history for Marks Celtic.

"The club has never seen intermediate football in the Leinster Senior, obviously we are in the run for promotion this year and that would leave us very close to reaching Intermediate football. We're second in the league at the moment and I'm happy with where we are. We want to go fair in the cup, particularly the Albert Walsh cup and do well and try win it."


Mark's Celtic Men's Senior team continue to flourish in the Leinster Premier Division

Soccer

Aaron leaves Rovers to join Glentoran

THE first transfer deal of Ronan Finn's new era as Director of Football was recently completed which saw Aaron McEneff depart Tallaght for an undisclosed fee with the Derry native now heading to NIFL Premiership Glentoran, *reports Michael Howley.*

Originally making his name as a star player for Derry City during the Mid 2010s, McEneff would have two spells with Rovers where he would win two leagues and two cups across both.

Though brief, his first spell consisted of two seasons at Rovers where he became a fan favourite in Tallaght Stadium before making the transfer to Hearts.

Two years in Edinburgh would be followed by a spell in Australia before a return to Shamrock Rovers in 2024, initially on loan and later being made a permanent move.

Director of Football Ronan Finn was officially announced as the director of football from Shamrock Rovers following reports that the club was set to appoint him to the role.

Finn gave his first media interview in his new role where he outlined his aims, plans and responsibilities now as Director of Football.

"For me, I'm at the centre of all the specialist football departments, men's, women's, academy everything. There's a lot of areas that tie everyone in together. We see how crucial the production line of the academy is, recruitment is so crucial in order for the football club to keep moving forward. There has to be a clear distinct alignment back to the board room. I have good relationships with everyone in the club and I think I can tie everyone together."

"I think the club is in a really good place right now, over the last eight, nine years there has been a steady progression. I was a big part of that on the football side and now I want to continue that growth behind the scenes. Off the pitch the club can still improve. If the football department keeps progressing on the pitch it lines everything up to keep pushing forward off it."

League of Ireland return for Irish stars in Tallaght

SHAMROCK Rovers are set to take on Derry in the President's Cup this weekend with the match to be played in Tallaght Stadium at 5pm on Saturday, *reports Michael Howley.*

Of course traditionally the match is played between the winners of the league and the winners of the FAI Cup, Shamrock Rovers did the domestic double this year meaning they will play Derry City who finished second in the league in 2025.

Rovers themselves are champions of the 2024 edition while Derry won the trophy in 2023.

While it is always good to win silverware, the tournament serves as almost an official end to pre season and marks the return of the competitive league the week after.

Rovers will come into the game with a new squad following the 2026 January transfer window with key players such as Josh Honohan, Darragh Nugent and Aaron Eneff no longer with the club.

There will be plenty of new arrivals for the team to keep an eye on however as Jake Mulraney and Enda Stevens will both be afforded the chance to make competitive debuts for Rovers.

Rovers are not the only team involved who have done business in the January transfer window however.

Derry City have been extremely active in the window with signings such as James Clarke from Bohemians, Darragh Markey from Drogheda United and more importantly James McClean from Wrexham.



Former Ireland players Enda Stevens and James McClean could play in the Presidents Cup in Tallaght on Saturday

Capped over 100 times for his country, McClean is making his return to Irish football for 2026 after a long career in England with clubs such as Sunderland, Wigan, West Brom and Stoke. McClean has made over 150 premier league appearances in his career and played 16 times in the Championship this season for Wrexham where he has captained the team.

He began his career with Derry in 2009, playing in the First Division and made 88 appearances for the club before signing with Sunderland for a fee believed to be around £350,000 in 2011.

Ballyer moving in the right direction

BALLYFERMOT United have been having an excellent season as we are past the halfway point in the Leinster Senior League, *reports Michael Howley.*

The side find themselves in 2nd place in the Leinster Senior 1A division having won eight games, drawing two and losing one.

Now back in the league after the Christmas break, the side got their 2026 league campaign off to an excellent start after they defeated Glenville in a local derby.

Glenville had been on hot form coming into the game winning their last five matches on the bounce but Ballyfermot were able to get it over the line and managed a 2-0 victory to keep themselves towards the top of the table.

Their last game saw them travel to third place Leixlip United where they played out a 0-0 draw, securing themselves a valuable point in the process and keeping themselves hot on the heels of league leader Blackrock College.

Manager Tony O'Dowd reflected on the team's performance so far this season and what was making the key difference.

"The lads have been brilliant and show a lot of commitment. At this level it makes a big difference. The lads have their own business, work and family but have said this year look we're going to give it a go and get up twice a week, three times a week and train. The lads aren't missing training and I think that has made a big difference this year."

The club had not anticipated to be performing so well this year and with O'Dowd only coming into the role in the summer were initially expecting this season to be more about finding their feet rather than challenging for top honours.



Ballyfermot United are having an excellent season and sit second in the league

"I came in late in mid july, this year was just to try and steady the ship and see how we got on. We were hoping to get things set in place for having a good go at the league next year. We are probably a bit ahead of where we thought we'd be."

The team is out of the Metropolitan cup but is still in their league cup after beating Dublin Bus on penalties and will be in more cup competitions during the rest of the season.

Despite the prospect of a cup, O'Dowd and Ballyfermot are prioritising the league. Blackrock are currently ahead of them by a single point in top spot and they have plenty of teams nipping at their heels including Leixlip, Newbridge and St Paul's Artane.

"We're taking each game as it comes. We're second in the league so obviously we're going to be trying to win the league. Generally though in the league you finish up where you deserve to finish up, it's not like the cup where you can get an easy draw."

"We deserve to be second at the moment and when you're second you're obviously looking to win the league but we are under no illusions. It's going to be very tough. There's teams that probably have underperformed up till now and will have strengthened after christmas. This is where it really gets down to the nitty gritty so we will see where we end up."

EZ LIVING furniture

BIGGEST SALE EVER

MUST END THIS BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY

LAST WEEKEND TO SAVE ON ALL RANGES



0% INTEREST FREE FINANCE AVAILABLE | NO INTEREST | NO FEES | NO DEPOSIT

EZ LIVING furniture

Dublin
Tallaght Retail Park
Naas Road, Woodies
Fonthill Retail Park
Airside Retail Park, Swords
Blanchardstown Retail Park
Malahide Road

FIND YOUR CLOSEST STORE HERE:

www.ezlivingfurniture.ie
0818 222272

T&C's Apply *Images used for illustration purposes only.