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Sport is the real winner at Active South Dublin Awards



GOOD SPORTS: Swimmer Ellen Walshe with Ballyboden St Enda's senior football manager Eamon O'Reilly at the gala night

SPORT was the real winner at the Active South Dublin Sports Awards with Ellen Walshe of Templeogue Swim Club named Sports Star of the Year while Ballyboden St Enda's senior footballers secured the Team of the Year Award.

Hillary Nets also was named Coach of the Year for his work with Coláiste Éanna as well as with Éanna's U18s side at club level. **Pages 57 - 66**

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FIONN (15) FACED CANCER WITH SUCH COURAGE



TRIBUTES poured in following the passing of "fighter" 15-year-old Fionn Dooley after a battle with cancer, reports *James Roulston Mooney* See page 12.

BRAVE TEENAGER LOVED HIS FOOTBALL AND TEAM MATES

New development in Cookstown of 82 apartments gets approval with no parking

'Escalation in tensions' due to lack of parking space

COOKSTOWN residents are still no closer to a solution for the lack of sufficient parking in a new development owned by the Land Development Agency, *reports Ellen Gough.* See page 5.



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Next Edition

The next edition of ***The Echo*** in the shops from Thursday, Feb 12, 2026. **Don't miss it!**

Concerns council staff using AI to respond to politicians

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

"WE CANNOT send them out to constituents."

Concerns were raised after it was discovered that staff in the council were using artificial intelligence to provide responses to politicians.

The local authority has a system in place where elected representatives can contact them and get a written response.

However, Dublin Mid-West TD Mark Ward noticed some unusual responses to requests he had placed in the system before Christmas.

The local TD stated that there were issues with the language used in the response and he queried South Dublin County Council on the matter.

Deputy Ward said: "I contacted South Dublin County Council and asked whether it was using AI to generate the responses.

"The response I got was that it has 25 staff members with access to AI and they use it to generate content, including responses to elected members.

"The council stated it is committed to maintaining human oversight of these responses, but I have concerns.

"I have had to contact the council numerous times about some of the responses I have received which did not make sense."

Deputy Ward mentioned that he has been using the system since he was co-opted onto the council 10 years ago and has continued to use it since he won his seat in the Dáil.

The Dublin Mid-West representative also noted that it has become tougher for people to query the council face-to-face in Clondalkin's Civic Office due to the closure of the customer care section to the public.

The cash office and the housing services in the office are all that remain in regard to regular services provided face-to-face to constituents at the location.

Emails and voices on the end of phones are the most popular forms of communication between constituents and the council, and the automation of these services is not beneficial to the people in the region, according to Deputy Ward.

He stated that he felt that the modern technology has its benefits and can work in some cases, but that it is not always "a force for good."

He said: "When they make a phone call, they get an automated message and they cannot get a human at the end of the phone.

"While AI has its benefits, we must not lose human contact. Constituents and people need this human contact as they go on."

'Obstructive parking' is matter for the developer in Citywest estate

ISSUES relating to "illegal or obstructive parking" in a recently built Citywest development are a matter for the developer, not the council, *reports Ellen Gough.*

The Cuil Duin development in Citywest has not been taken in charge by South Dublin County Council and An Garda Síochána are responsible for enforcement of parking violations, according to a senior council engineer.

At the Tallaght Area Committee meeting on Monday, January 26, Cllr Kay Keane (PBP-S) asked the council for measures they can take to "address the road safety issues on Cuil Duin Avenue, particularly in the light of ongoing illegal parking which dangerously narrows the road".

However senior executive engineer Farhan Nasiem replied that the council have no responsibility for this estate.

"Cuil Duin Avenue forms part of a relatively new residential development and is not currently taken in charge by the Council," he said in a written reply to Cllr Keane's request.

"As such, responsibility for the estate, including road layout, parking management, and day to day maintenance, remains with the developer."

He said that issues relating to "illegal or obstructive parking within the estate are a matter for the developer and, where appropriate, An Garda Síochána as the enforcing authority".

"Should a formal request be submitted for the estate to be taken in charge, and once this process is completed, the Traffic Section will be in a position to review Cuil Duin Avenue and assess whether any additional traffic management or road safety measures are warranted at that time," Mr Nasiem added.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



However special school enrolment figures have been on the rise

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

PRIMARY school enrolment in South Dublin has decreased by over 500 in the past year, contributing to more than a tenth of the largest national decline in recent years.

Primary school enrolment in schools within the borders of South Dublin County Council has decreased by 570 students in the previous two years, 11.3 per cent of the 6,470 less students enrolled in primary-level education across the Republic of Ireland.

The national reduction is due to the declining population in the primary school-going age group.

The latest figures come from the most recent dataset published by the Department of Education and Youth, who record primary school enrolment figures annually.

Overall, primary school enrolment across Ireland fell by almost 4,000 last year and had fallen by over 2,000 the year previous.

South Dublin's mainstream schools saw a drop of around 500 from 2023/24 to 2024/25 and the figures are tracking downwards.

However, special school enrolment figures have been on the rise in the last few years, breaking 600 across the county last year and sitting at 610 this year.

Yet, one school in Lucan recorded no new students for the current school year.

Lucan Community Special School at Kishogue Cross recorded zero enrolments for the new school year.

South Dublin's decrease in mainstream primary school attendance is made up of mostly minor deductions in enrolment figures across the board, with some standouts.

Divine Mercy National School in Balgaddy suffered the largest individual decrease with 32 less students enrolled to be in their classrooms this school year, down to 274 from 306.

Holy Family National School in Rathcoole and Scoil Carmel National School in Firhouse are among other South Dublin schools with large decreases – a loss of 28 and 24 students respectively.

Scoil Naisiunta Briotas in Brittas is a small school that suffered a 20-student loss compared to last year, with only 57 now enrolled.

However, SN Briotas avoided the fate of four schools across Ireland that had to close their doors due to incredibly low enrolment.

Despite the overall reduction in the amount of primary school students in the region, some schools, such as Bishop Galvin National School in Templeogue saw increases – in their case, enrolment increased by 11 from 450 to 461.

St Ronan's National School in Deansrath, Clondalkin enjoyed the largest increase in enrolment numbers.

24 more students are attending the school on St Cuthbert's Road in Clondalkin this year – a total of 396 up from 372.

Another notable increase occurred at a school in Tallaght as St Kilian's Senior National School welcomed 23 more students for the current school year.

But these increases are not enough to stop the continued decline of primary school enrolment in South Dublin.

Family ‘beyond proud’ of Archie



THUMBS UP: Archie Ennis gives a thumbs up after getting his treatment

Eight-year-old receives his treatment for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy in America

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

THE family of Tallaght boy Archie Ennis are “beyond proud” of him as he has finished part of his treatment in America.

Eight-year-old Archie, diagnosed just over a year ago with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, had his last round of gene therapy treatment for his condition on Friday, January 30.

He and his family moved to Atlanta, Georgia earlier this year for three months for the gene therapy treatment.

“Today our little boy received his treatment,” Archie’s mother Una shared on Friday afternoon.

“He did it — and we are beyond proud of you, Archie. Your strength and resilience are truly admirable.”

However she told *The Echo* he still has “a long road to go”.

“After gene therapy he will be monitored very closely for signs that the medication is working and not affecting his liver or heart,” Una explained.

“He will have other medication after his gene therapy to keep him strong, he is being looked after very well here in America.”

Archie will attend appointments every second day for the next number of weeks to ensure he continues to respond well to the gene therapy.

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a degenerative condition that causes progressive muscle weakness predominately in young boys, has very little options for treatment in Ireland.

The current treatment for DMD is a drug known as Givinostat, which is not yet available in Ireland.

While it has been approved for the EU market, the HSE is conducting a full health technology assessment (HTA) following an August 2025 application.

“The process is taking some time, we know the HSE and the NCPE (National Centre for Pharmacoeconomics, Ireland) are working on it but we hope that they make it available soon,” Una added.

She also thanked everyone who has supported her and her family throughout Archie’s treatment.

“We are deeply grateful for the incredible support shown to our family, for every event, every donation, and every message, we truly could not have done this without you.”

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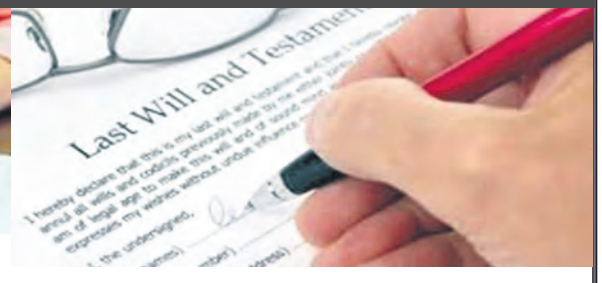
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St Mark's showcase creativity and commitment to languages

Tallaght school reach final of the Think Languages Champion Team of the Year



TOP MARKS: Students from St Mark's Community School were crowned runners-up of the #ThinkLanguages Champion Team Final 2025 following an exciting nationwide competition celebrating language learning, teamwork, and cultural creativity among senior cycle students

THE national final of the #ThinkLanguages Champion Team of the Year competition took place at The Clock Tower in the Department of Education and Youth, marking a vibrant celebration of language learning.

Three finalists' teams made up of transition year students from across Ireland, including a team from our St Mark's Community School Tallaght, showcased their creativity and commitment to languages, with Ennistymon Community School, Clare crowned winners on the day.

St Mark's Community School's exceptional teamwork and innovative approach to promoting language learning during their #ThinkLanguages Week celebrations secured their place in the final, standing out among entries from schools across Ireland.

This year's finalist teams also included students from Our Lady's Bower, Athlone. Each school submitted a vlog-style entry reflecting the competition's themes of enhancing life skills, creating global opportunities, and fostering broader personal connections.

The competition underscores the essential role that foreign language skills play in both personal growth and professional success.

This focus is at the heart of #ThinkLanguages Week, which serves as the foundation for the #ThinkLanguages Champion Team Competition.

Commenting on the significance of the #ThinkLanguages final, Minister for Education and Youth Hildegarde Naughton noted: "#ThinkLanguages highlights the vital role languages play in creating inclusive, connected, and opportunity rich futures for young people. I commend all the students, teachers, and partners involved in the initiative.

Language learning fosters understanding, empathy, and global citizenship—qualities clearly demonstrated by finalists.

"Congratulations to them all, especially the winning team from Ennistymon Community School, and may they continue to champion languages in their studies and future careers."

#ThinkLanguages Week 2025, facilitated by Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) under the Languages Connect Strategy – Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education, took place last November.

The eighth annual #ThinkLanguages involved over 21,500 Transition Year students from more than 240 schools celebrating language learning through workshops, cultural events, music, dance, film and talks.

The annual event highlights how language learning enhances life skills, fosters inclusivity, boosts employability, and opens doors to global opportunities.

Karen Ruddock, Director of PPLI who led the event, commented, "The #ThinkLanguages Champion Team Final showcases huge creativity, teamwork, and passion for languages among students across Ireland. These young people are not only embracing multilingualism but also demonstrating skills that will open doors to global opportunities. At PPLI, we believe that it is important to showcase activities that celebrate language learning and empower students to experience a wider world.

The final also featured Meabh McMahon, Euronews journalist, broadcaster and multilinguist, as a guest speaker, inspiring students with insights into the global impact of multilingualism.

€550,000 earmarked for accessibility funding from a fund of €2.5 million

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

ALMOST €2.5 million in funding has been allocated for 147 roadworks repairs and projects around Tallaght for 2026.

A portion has also been set aside for accessibility funding, and the council are seeking suggestions from councillors on where to spend this.

€2.464 million was allocated for the Tallaght Central and Tallaght South areas out of a county wide budget of €10.35m for roadworks by South Dublin County Council.

€855,000 has been allocated for road resurfacing, with €860,000 for footpath repairs across the area, according to the 2026 Roadworks Programme presented at the area committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

€300,000 has been allocated for routine maintenance works, €200,000 for patching potholes and €100,000 respectively for cycle track maintenance and overhead costs such as plant hire and enabling works.

Split across the two electoral areas, €410,000 will be spent on roads resurfacing and €370,000 on footpath repairs in the Tallaght South area, as well as €150,000 specifically for social housing pavement improvements in Kiltalown Court, Glenshane Lawn and Fettercairn Road.

€445,000 has been allocated for roads resurfacing and €490,000 for footpath repairs in the Tallaght Central area.

Presenting the 2026 programme to councillors at the Tallaght meeting, senior council engineer Gary Walsh said €550,000 has been earmarked specifically for accessibility funding, which is "targeted at small/medium level interventions such as kerb dishings" rather than larger facilities such as zebra/pelican crossings.

"We don't have this allocated under the roadworks programme because what we really want is to have people come to us – either yourselves as representatives or individual members of the public – if you're having issues with mobility from your home to your shop or bus stop come and talk to us, we have funding to resolve these issues," Mr Walsh said.

This funding in particular was welcomed by councillors, including Cllr Niamh Whelan (SF), who asked if the council had engaged with "any of the services particularly in Tallaght village that have people with mobility issues" to see where this funding could be allocated.

"We have mobility groups coming to us sporadically but it hasn't been a regular discussion so I'm hoping they will hear this and come to us and we can have a broader plan," Mr Walsh replied.

"We could make a multi-annual programme to keep working with them, I'm sure if there's a high uptake on the €550,000 that's something that can be increased over the coming years if there's demand for it," he added.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



CONCERNS: A Build-to Rent development of 82 apartments has been approved at Cookstown House site, with no car parking spaces, which is beside Cookstown Gateway

Residents 'left with no choice' but to park on streets

Cookstown Residents say they have seen no improvements on solution to situation

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

COOKSTOWN residents are still no closer to a solution for the lack of sufficient parking in a new development owned by the Land Development Agency.

Only 67 parking spaces were provided for the residents of 204 apartments in the Cookstown Gateway development, which was completed by the LDA in 2024.

Despite numerous communications with management and council, the Cookstown Gateway Residents' Association say they have seen no improvement on the situation.

Speaking to *The Echo* in July 2025, a resident described the "escalation in tensions" between those living in the development and residents in the surrounding Springfield/Cookstown area.

The lack of parking within Cookstown Gateway meant residents were "left with no choice" but to park in the streets since moving in.

"Due to a lack of parking spaces for the apartments, including 0 disability spaces - residents have to resort to parking on the loading bays or neighbouring communities," an email to local councillors from the residents' association read.

"Management have clamped residents for parking anywhere outside the building, they are also being ticketed by the council on a daily basis for parking along the loading bays," the letter, shared with *The Echo,* continued.

As reported last year, the parking shortage has led to Cookstown Gateway having their cars damaged by "by individuals believed to be from the neighbouring area".

"These acts of intimidation are deeply concerning and have left residents feeling unsafe and anxious, simply for trying to find a place to park," the letter added.

This issue is not just a matter of inconvenience, it has now become one of community safety and wellbeing – simple tasks like bringing in shopping, unloading children, or returning home late at night have become frustrating and, at times, genuinely distressing."

The residents' association have also raised concerns over a new Build-to-Rent development of 82 apartments that has been approved on the nearby Cookstown House site – with no car parking spaces provided.

"There are going to be 190 bicycle parking spaces with no car spaces, which is going to add more frustration to the entire situation," they said.

"We kindly urge the LDA and council to review this situation and consider measures that can alleviate the problem, whether that be additional parking provision or permits."

Parking provision is developing into major issue for new developments across south Dublin, with recent new developments on Airton Road causing serious problems for residents of the new 230-unit Airton Plaza and businesses along the road.







35 years of baton twirling

CELEBRATIONS: Linda, Amy, Laura, Jade and Amanda. See more photos on page 40
Photo by Leslie Evans

The Kilnamanagh club has represented Ireland at World and European Championships

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

THE Kilnamanagh Twirlers marked 35 years of baton twirling with a major birthday celebration at the Kilnamanagh Family Recreation Centre on January 24.

The club offers classes for all who wish to try their hand at twirling three times a week, with kids as young as three welcome.

Aimee O'Neill, the current head coach of the Kilnamanagh Twirlers, was just three-years-old herself when she joined the club, 34 years ago.

"I was thrown into it," she told *The Echo* with a laugh.

"My older sister was involved, and my mam was on the original committee.

"I'd sit in the hall as a toddler, and one of the young girls got sick, and they didn't know what to do, and they said oh Aimee knows it, throw her in. So, three-year-old me just jumped in and didn't look back after."

Classes and training – including twirling, pom-pom and solo work – take place 6pm-9pm in Tallaght Sports Complex on Mondays and St Kevin's Boys School on Thursdays, and Kilnamanagh Family Recreation Centre on Saturdays from 10am-3pm.

"We're probably more on the competitive side, we wouldn't typically do parades or majorette type of style," Aimee explained, adding that their next big competition will take place the Easter weekend.

"Over the 35 years we've had, we've represented Ireland at World Championships, European Championships, and the group that we have now are more kind of UK and Ireland based competitions."

While it is primarily girls that take part in the club, she said they've had their fair share of boys with batons over the 35 years.

"We have one adult man that twirls with us, he is amazing and all the girls look up to him, and we'd love to have more.

"I guess it's not maybe your typical go-to sport, but we've had some brilliant guys that have trained with us and that have been part of the group, so it is open to anybody."

After growing up in twirling, Aimee's daughter now also takes part in what she calls her "second family".

"It's that family environment that it brings, you feel like you belong, no matter what walk of life you come from.

"When you're in the hall, everybody is the same and it's just such a supportive environment," she said.

After 35 years, the future still looks bright for the Kilnamanagh Twirlers, and Aimee's own daughter now also takes part, a "full circle moment" for her.

"She was very much like me, she grew up in the hall and started when she was three, and I very much did not want to pressure her into it, but she's fallen in love with it, an it's great getting to see it now through her eyes," Aimee added.

Contact the Kilnamanagh Twirlers at Kilnamanagh.twirlers@hotmail.com for more information.

Over 300 lighting upgrades to take place throughout this year

MANY of the LED street light faults across Tallaght are due to quality issues with parts that are "attributable to a particular supplier", *reports Ellen Gough.*

Over 300 lighting upgrades are also scheduled to take place throughout Tallaght this year, but the timeline is "dependent on the availability of the required resources to complete it".

That's according to a report on public lighting faults requested by Cllr Adam Smyth (FF) at the Tallaght Area Committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

There are currently 187 "standard" public lighting outages around Tallaght, 68 of which are the newer upgraded LED type of lighting, the report from senior executive engineer Caitriona Lambert read.

She said many of these can be attributed to cable faults, which can take out several lights in a row, and "some are attributable to a particular supplier who has had quality issues".

"Our contractor no longer sources our fittings from them," she stated.

"We intend to investigate further to ascertain if there are quality issues with other suppliers and will take action accordingly."

The remaining 119 "standard" outages in the Tallaght area are older sodium style fixtures which are being replaced with LED lights around the county as part of a wider upgrade scheme operated by ESB Networks.

In response to a question lodged by Cllr Mick Duff (Ind) at the ACM, Ms Lambert said there were 304 LED upgrades planned across the Tallaght Central area in 2026.

These will be rolled out in estates in Jobstown and Whitehall through the year.

"This programme is entirely dependent on the availability of the required resources to complete it," Ms Lambert said, as the LED upgrade scheme requires "site attendance" by ESB staff.

A further 143 light outages across Tallaght require more time to repair due to cable faults or to ESB presence required on site, while another 27 are delayed due to "access issues".

Cllr Louise Dunne (SF) had also asked for a report on "ongoing issues of street lights not working and delays in repairs" in the Tallaght South area, particularly in Fortunestown Lane and Citywest Drive, however Ms Lambert said that their "contractor assures us that all these outages and cable faults at Citywest and Fortunestown were repaired prior to the Christmas break".

"If there are any remaining issues, please provide the location for us to follow up and inspect," she added.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



Man accused of sexually assaulting girl (10) sent forward for trial

VIOLENCE: A garda van was burned out during the violent scenes in Citywest in October

Following the alleged assault violent scenes broke out in Citywest and gardai were injured

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

A MAN accused of sexually assaulting a 10-year-old girl in west Dublin in October has been sent forward for trial.

The 26-year-old non-Irish national appeared again at Cloverhill District Court for his ninth hearing and was served with a book of evidence by the prosecution.

Judge Áine Shannon granted a return for trial order and remanded him in custody to appear at the Dublin Circuit Criminal Court on a date in May.

The accused, who cannot be named for legal reasons and has yet to enter a plea, was initially charged with sexual assault of the girl at Garter Lane in Saggart on October 20, 2025, and was remanded in custody a day later.

Earlier, Garda Sergeant Connolly said the man replied, "I have nothing to say," to that charge.

The child had been missing from care.

Last month, a second count was brought against him for sexual assault of the same complainant at another location close to Garter Lane.

His reply to that charge was "I spoke to my solicitor and told him she sat beside me; you can check the CCTV. She started talking to me and I asked her her age, she told me she was 18. I just kissed her".

Garda Sergeant Connolly has already said the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) has directed trial on indictment.

The man had the assistance of an Arabic interpreter during the hearing after the courtroom was cleared for the in-camera proceedings.

There was no application for bail.

Legal aid was granted. He must notify the prosecution within 14 days if he intends to use an alibi in his defence.

Following the alleged assault, there were violent scenes in Citywest, Dublin, resulting in more than 30 arrests, and gardaí suffering injuries, and a Garda vehicle was burned out. Court prosecutions have commenced while an investigation continues to identify others at the scene.



court reports



Funded by the Local Court Reporting Sceheme

Man (25) found with six bags of cannabis worth €300 for personal use

A MAN had six bags of cannabis worth €300 on him for personal use, a court heard.

Dean Brannigan (25), Deansrath Avenue, Clondalkin, appeared before Blanchardstown District Court, facing a Section 15 of the Misuse of Drugs Act charge.

Garda Daniel Thoms told the court that on September 17, 2023, while on patrol in Clondalkin, gardai observed a large group of youths congregated at The Mill shopping centre carpark.

Upon approach to the group gardai detected a "strong smell of cannabis."

Mr Branigan was searched and gardai found six bags of cannabis with a total value of €300.

He was conveyed to Clondalkin Garda Station.

Mr Branigan has 19 previous convictions including two for possession of drugs and two for sale and supply.

Defence counsel said their client was "holding up their hands" to the offence and was a young man operating at the "lower end" of the drugs scale.

She was instructed that Mr Branigan was a heavy cannabis user at the time of the offence, and had the drugs for personal use, pleading for leniency for a man who "wouldn't have a great amount of funds."

Judge Áine Clancy asked if Branigan was willing to do community service, putting the case back for a community service assessment (120 hours in lieu of a three-month sentence), on February 13, 2026 at Blanchardstown District Court.

Man aggressive to Luas security staff is jailed

Gardai responded to the incident after the Luas was stopped at the Belgard stop



AGGRESSIVE: The Luas stop at Belgard

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

A MAN who became aggressive with security staff on a Luas tram, forcing it to stop in Belgard, was sentenced to three months in prison.

Johnathan Conway (32), with an address of Ripley Court Hotel, Talbot Street, Dublin 1, formerly Cloonmore Green, Tallaght, appeared before Tallaght District Court in custody, facing a Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act charge.

Garda Aaron Melinn told the court that on December 29, 2023, garda responded to a report of a male being aggressive with staff on a Luas.

Upon arrival by gardai to the scene at Belgard, where the Luas had stopped, Conway continued to act aggressively and refused to listen to security staff, telling them "you f***ing watch."

He was conveyed to Tallaght Garda Station.

The court heard Conway has 26 previous convictions, is currently serving a sentence, having been convicted in 2025 for offences committed between 2022-2024, and due for release in December 2026.

Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy said at the time of the offence his client had not been taking his medication and felt he was getting better.

Since then, his client has resumed medication, apologised for his behaviour, has no real family support and has been living in a hostel.

Judge Patricia McNamara said the incident would have been very disturbing to people on the tram.

Taking into account the guilty plea and mitigations including Conway's behaviour on the day and that he is in custody now, Judge McNamara sentenced him to three months.

Man (24) lost control of scrambler and slid into another vehicle

A MOTORCYCLIST who lost control and collided with a vehicle was disqualified from the road for a year at Tallaght District Court.

Shane Brogan (24), Donomore Crescent, Tallaght, appeared before court pleading guilty to road traffic charges of driving a scrambler without insurance and licence.

Garda Eoin Deveraux told the court that on January 25, 2024 at Killinarden Heights, the accused drove past gardai on a scrambler bike and lost control, sliding into the rear of a vehicle.

The court heard Mr Brogan has 15 previous convictions, including a previous disqualification for no insurance.

Defence solicitor Michael Hennessy said his client was not banned at the time of the offence in question but had apologised unreservedly for his actions and has a disability with Autism and ADHD.

Judge Liz Healy disqualified Mr Brogan from the road for a year and fined him €800.

Woman with 11 previous convictions fined and disqualified from driving

A WOMAN with a poor track record of road traffic offences was fined and disqualified from driving at Tallaght District Court.

Tshegofatso Ejie (26), Alymore Green, Newcastle, Dublin 22, appeared in court pleading guilty to charges of driving without insurance or a driver licence.

Garda Evan O'Brien told the court that on January 7, 2025, at Rossfield Avenue, Jobstown, gardai stopped a vehicle that had no insurance, and spoke to the learner driver identified as Ms Ejie, who was not accompanied by someone with a full driver's licence.

The vehicle was seized and a fixed charge notice was issued to produce driver licence and insurance within 10 days which Ms Ejie failed to do.

The court heard Ejie has 11 previous convictions, all for road traffic offences, and was already disqualified at the time of the offence for driving without insurance.

Defence solicitor Ciara Ní Ghabhann said her client's mother was in court to support her, and that Ms Ejie was "taking it very seriously" and hadn't worked since July in sales as her contract wasn't renewed due to her conviction.

Given the evidence provided in court, Judge Patricia McNamara said it was not evident that Ms Ejie is taking it seriously.

Judge McNamara fined Ejie €500 for driving without insurance and disqualified her for four years with a suspended prison sentence for 12 months, with additional fines of €100 in relation to driving unaccompanied, and €400 for no drivers licence.

Heartbreaking pregnant horse struggles and dies on the road

My Lovely Horse service said that Anne had a broken pelvis and was heavily pregnant

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

"IT'S just heartbreaking."

A pregnant horse nearing her due date died after an incident on the N4 in Ballyfermot on Monday evening.

A pregnant horse named Anne with a "fully formed foal" in her womb died shortly after collapsing on the N4 in Ballyfermot on the evening of Bank Holiday Monday.

She was found lying on the side of the road with an abandoned cart nearby and was seen struggling up the road and collapsing earlier before eventually being left on the hard shoulder.

The horse was named Anne by the vets after local service My Lovely Horse were able to transport her to UCD Veterinary Hospital to receive care.

My Lovely Horse co-founder Martina Kenny was on the scene on Monday and brought Anne to UCD after the service was contacted by a man who saw the horse being kicked and whipped on the N4.

Kenny said: "The man's daughter was like, totally screaming and distressed, and he said that he could just see them whipping and kicking her and trying to get her up off the ground.

"Then, they tried to take the sulky and the straps and stuff off – she was tangled up – and then they ran because people were stopping.

"They ran with the sulky and they tried to hide it in the bushes…we just all dropped everything and ran, and what we saw was just rotten."

A vet gave her some injections and painkiller at the scene and the team at MLH managed to get her in the box and to the hospital.

However, when she reached UCD, she collapsed once more and never got back up again.

An post-mortem examination was carried out and she was found to have a broken pelvis and was heavily pregnant.

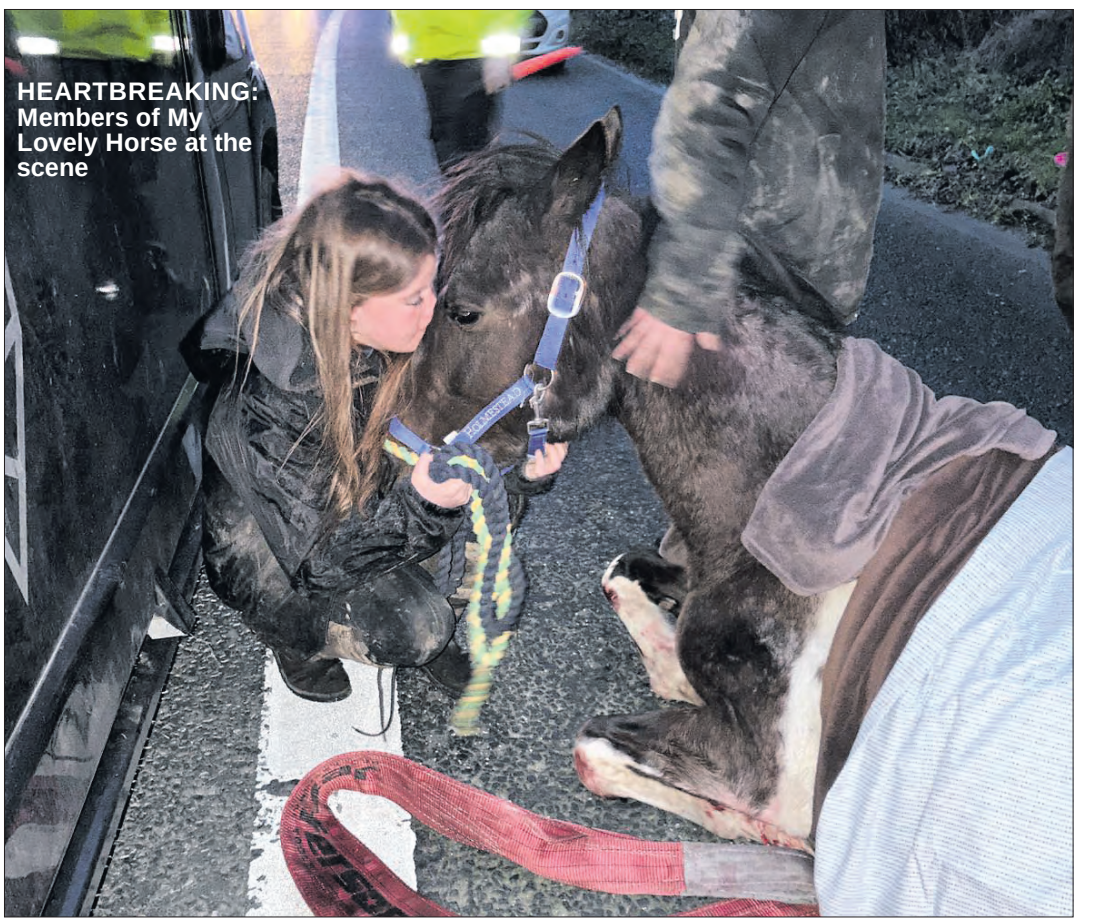
"It was really weird, because when I got there and another volunteer got there, we both went, 'she looks pregnant', and the vet said that she could well be – he'd be very surprised.

"He said 'surely, they couldn't be that cruel', and, lo and behold, they are that cruel."

> **"Then, they tried to take the sulky and the straps off and stuff off - she was tangled up - and then they ran because people were stopping...**

My Lovely Horse stated that anyone with information on or footage of the incident should contact them and the Gardaí.

Martina also noted that the team at MLH love animals and called on "urban horse lovers" to stand up and ensure that their name is not tainted by the actions of Anne's owners.



HEARTBREAKING: Members of My Lovely Horse at the scene



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€3m in benzo tablets seized

SEIZURE: The boxes of benzodiazepine tablets seized. Photos by An Garda Síochanba

Tallaght gardai carry out searches in business premises

OVER €3million of Benzodiazepine tablets have been seized following searches of businesses in Dublin city, *reports Ellen Gough.*

As part of an ongoing investigation targeting the sale and supply of drugs, Gardaí carried out a number of searches of business premises in the Dublin Metropolitan Region on Wednesday, January 28.

During the course of these searches, Benzodiazepine tablets with an estimated value of €3.4million were seized, subject to analysis.

The searches were conducted by members attached to Tallaght District Drugs Unit.

No arrests have been made at this time but investigations are ongoing, according to a statement from An Garda Síochána.

The drugs have been sent to Forensic Science Ireland for analysis.

Framework aims for a greenway link along Knockmeenagh Lane

THE draft Clondalkin Local Planning Framework will work towards an active travel link or greenway along Knockmeenagh Lane as part of the area's regeneration, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The Knockmeenagh Framework site lands are expected to be included as part of the review of zoning for new housing targets and land capacity within South Dublin.

The potential for a mixed-use development to be erected within the lands was identified in the draft LPF for Clondalkin.

The wider lands at Knockmeenagh are currently zoned for employment, aside from the residential St Brigid's Cottages.

The potential mixed-use development could also include the creation of a central open space.

Knockmeenagh Lane in Clondalkin is set to receive a high level of protection from the latest variation to the draft Clondalkin LPF.

South Dublin County Council noted that they wish to maintain the historic lane and the walls, while also serving as an active travel route in the future.

The local authority recognise that the lane is a route that is recognisable in maps dating back to the early 1800s and facilitated access for pilgrims travelling from Dublin City to St Brigid's Holy Well, a pilgrimage recreated every year as part of the village's St Brigid's Day festivities.

The lane is also connected to An Slí Mor, a historic pathway that connects Dublin City to Galway through Clondalkin, and also included areas such as Bluebell and Drimnagh.

Any improvements made to the lane will be done without "compromising the integrity" of the historic route.



FRAMEWOK: Knockmeenagh Lane

SDCC Senior Planner for Forward Planning, SDZ and Schools Hazel Craigie stated: "Given the constraints to the widening of the lane due to current ownership and historic quarrying on either side at its eastern end, the Clondalkin LPF has examined potential solutions for improved active travel solutions which would meet universal design standards without compromising the integrity of the lane.

"This can only be achieved as part of regeneration of the lands on either side of the lane."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

SDCC
Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council

ROADS ACT 1993, SECTION 75

PROPOSED TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF SECTION OF OLD CELBRIDGE ROAD LUCAN, CO. DUBLIN

To facilitate Arborist Tree Services, carry out a **safe tree removal from Lucan Golf Course**, South Dublin County Council propose to temporarily close a section of the following road:

Road Name: Old Celbridge Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin.
From: Monday 16th February 2026.
To: Tuesday 17th February 2026.
Time of Closure: 8:00am to 4pm.
Detour Route:

- Traffic from Tuber Lane will be diverted via Old Celbridge Road to the R403.
- Traffic on the R403 will remain on the R403 and access Lucan via the Leixlip Road roundabout.
- Local access will be maintained.
- 24hr emergency access to be maintained at all times.

Any person interested may lodge an observation/submission in writing to the Senior Executive Officer, Land Use, Planning and Transportation, South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 or by email to seoroads@sdublincoco.ie no later than 5.00 p.m. on **Monday 9th February 2026**.

Web: www.sdcc.ie

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SHOW TOURS

Fionn faced cancer with such courage



PASSIONATE: Fionn Dooley who played for Knocklyon United sadly passed away this week

Football player sadly passed away just before his 16th birthday

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

"HE LOVED everyone on the team…he was just so passionate about football."

Tributes poured in following the passing of "fighter" 15-year-old Fionn Dooley from Rathfarnham after a battle with cancer.

Fionn passed peacefully at home on Friday night after his fight with the illness, just before his 16th birthday.

He will be deeply missed and remembered forever by mother Linda, father Chris, brothers Oisín and Callum, sister Leah, grandparents Seán, Sheila, Marie and Dermot, aunts, uncles and cousins.

The 15-year-old played U16s football for his local side, Knocklyon United, and his manager Kenny Soper paid tribute to his defender.

Soper said: "It's very, very sad. It's going to be a big hole in the team…You look forward to seeing him every weekend, every training session."

Fionn was a member of Oscar's Kids Ireland, the national childhood cancer society.

He was originally meant to go on a trip to Lapland thanks to the charity, but the plans did not work out and he was instead sent to a football match in Europe, which complemented his great love for the sport.

Oscar's Kids issued a statement after Fionn's passing, which stated: "This incredible teenager faced cancer with such courage. We originally had Lapland booked for Fionn, but when the time came, it didn't work out and we vowed to do something else fun when the time was right for him.

"Fionn loved his football, so we finally got to treat him and sent him to see Real Madrid in their home turf in the past few weeks which he absolutely loved."

Back home, Fionn showcased that love of football with Knocklyon United, even when he was very ill.

Manager Soper recalled one day in December when Fionn played the full match and refused calls to come off.

Soper stated: "One of our last games we played down in Celbridge, he was very sick at that stage, just there in December. He played the full game.

"I asked him at halftime, 'are you ok?', he said, 'yeah, I'm ok.' Then I asked a few times in the second half…he said, 'I'm not going off."

Soper added that the centre-half had a strong football IQ and commanded Knocklyon United U16s' backline with ease.

He complemented Fionn's tackling abilities as well as his leadership skills and noted also that he was a driven and determined player, always attentive in training.

The team are set to train on Thursday evening for the first time since Fionn's passing and their first game after the passing of their defender is slated for this weekend.

"All the lads just said we're going to really do everything we can to win the league for Fionn."

Fionn's mother Linda wished to thank several charities for their support over the last few months, which she noted helped ease the pain.

Fionn's mum extended thanks to Oscar's Kids, Michael's Fan Club, Aoibheann's Pink Tie, the Keeley D Foundation and the Cancer Fund for Children, who rely on donations to provide the services they do.

Echoopinion...

Stricter rules required for road users

ROAD safety is a big issue across this country and that is underlined by the latest figures from Gardaí over the bank holiday weekend, which reveals over 3,500 cases of speeding.

Motorists across Ireland were caught at high speeds from the north of Donegal to Limerick's N18, but high speeds can also be found close to home.

A motorist drove 74 kilometres per hour over the 60 km/h speed limit on the Katharine Tynan Road in Tallaght, clocking in at 134 km/h when they were caught by guards.

The 3,500 cases of speeding during the weekend peaked on Bank Holiday Monday, with over 800 detections.

On top of this, there is a worrying amount of drivers that were caught using their phones – nearly 400 were found to have done this.

Driving is a task that deserves the full attention and focus from the driver, but the figures Gardaí shared show that this is far from reality for many drivers in Ireland.

It's clear that stricter rules need to be put in place to ensure that those who do not wish to put the safety of everyone above their own adrenaline and lack of focus on the road.

Perhaps more traffic calming measures need to be implemented on local roads to deter people from driving at speed over twice the speed limit of nearby thoroughfare and ensure everyone is wary of the tarmac in front of them.

If that's met with criticism and resistance, like existing traffic calming measures, ask why authorities are so eager to bring them in.



SPEEDING: A motorist was clocked doing a 134km/h on Katharine Tynan Road a 60km/h zone

Parking system 'terrorising the whole estate'

"HOW anyone's ever going to get out of that is mad", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

An emergency general meeting is on the table for Kiltipper residents after a new permit-based parking system was brought in with barely three weeks' notice.

Residents in the Marlfield Estate in Tallaght are now expected to abide by a new permit-based parking system announced to them in the middle of January, with clamping set to be carried out to enforce this.

The parking permits come with new restrictions in the area on visitor parking, with a €1 fee for a 24-hour stay, registration via QR code and a max of two days a week for visitors to park.

Councillor Niamh Whelan was present at a recent meeting of local residents where they discussed the issue and noted that problems in Marlfield go beyond the parking system.

According to Cllr Whelan, 39 properties owned by South Dublin County Council are in the area.

Cllr Whelan said: "There's a couple of people that have fallen into arrears and they're not being given parking permits until their arrears are cleared…



PARKING ISSUES: Marlfield residents at the meeting

"…It came to light that there are some people with arrears of over €30,000 because the management company are putting an interest of 20 per cent on every 21 days."

Whelan noted that some residents felt as if the move to block permits for some people until arrears are cleared is a form of debt collection.

She also stated that councillors and senators have all attempted to engage with the management company to act as mediaries to no avail – Whelan claimed that they were "stonewalled."

A resident in Marlfield told *The Echo* that the road in the estate, claimed by the property management company, is not actually owned by them and in fact under the name of another company.

The resident claimed: "The company claims that they do have ownership over the road, but they are actually not showing the actual document that gives them that authority to enforce anything around the parking.

"What we can see at the land of registry is that they do own the footpaths, they own the green area, the common areas, but nothing about the roads."

The resident said that questions put to the company by residents on this matter have been "dismissed" and that correspondence is "not even consistent."

Dublin South-West TD Paul Murphy wrote to APCOA, who are expected to carry out the clamping on behalf of Kiltipper Property Management and asked them not to begin the process while residents are in talks with the property management company.

The Dublin South-West TD said in the letter that the clamping is a "punitive measure against residents."

"The legal basis upon which the management company has instructed you to clamp people is unclear, given that the management company does not have ownership of the relevant land.

"I also understand that the houses at this development were granted private parking rights as part of their title/lease.

"This is not a permission that can be revoked by a decision of the management company or third-party contractor."

The concerned resident of Marlfield told *The Echo* that the company are "terrorising the whole estate" and that an EGM will go ahead without them if they do not cooperate.

Mother heartbroken after son's memorials removed

18-year-old died last year after a collision between a scrambler and car in Citywest

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

THE mother of a Tallaght teenager who died in a tragic scrambler accident last year has been left frustrated and heartbroken over the removal of memorials to her son.

Jason Monks, an 18-year-old father of one, died after a collision between a car and the scrambler bike he was driving on Citywest Avenue on Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025.

His mother Donna wants to erect a small plaque on the garden wall of a house in the Cuil Duin estate on Citywest Avenue to mark the place of her son's fatal accident.

However, following a vote by local residents, her request to do so has been denied, and previous memorials she and her family have placed around a tree near the crash site have also been removed without notice.

"It's just horrible what it's putting us through," she told *The Echo*.

After Jason's death in April, Donna and her family had erected a memorial for him with flowers, fairy lights and pictures around a tree on Citywest Avenue, where they could visit and "be close to him"., but towards the end of September, someone removed the main picture of Jason.

"A few days later my other son rang me, he was distraught, he said Mam it's all gone, nothing's left".



HEARTBROKEN: Jason's memorial and on Citywest Avenue and (inset) the notice left to take it down

Donna contacted the management company for the Cuil Duin estate, Indigo Real Estate Management, who she said were sympathetic but told her they hadn't removed anything.

She and her family then attached wooden letters spelling Jayo, Jason's nickname, to the tree during October, but these were damaged a short time later.

"It was like someone had tried to pull the letters off the tree and damage them all and then threw them on the ground," she said.

There was also a notice tied to the tree stating it "forms part of the Owners Management Company and is therefore private property", and that no memorabilia should be left on or around the tree.

The notice, seen by *The Echo*, also stated that any items left would be removed, but Indigo Real Estate Management denied to Donna that they had posted the letter.

In November, Donna requested permission to erect a commemorative plaque for Jason on a garden wall close to the tree.

"If they didn't want a memorial up around the tree, was it okay if we attach this plaque on the wall there," she said.

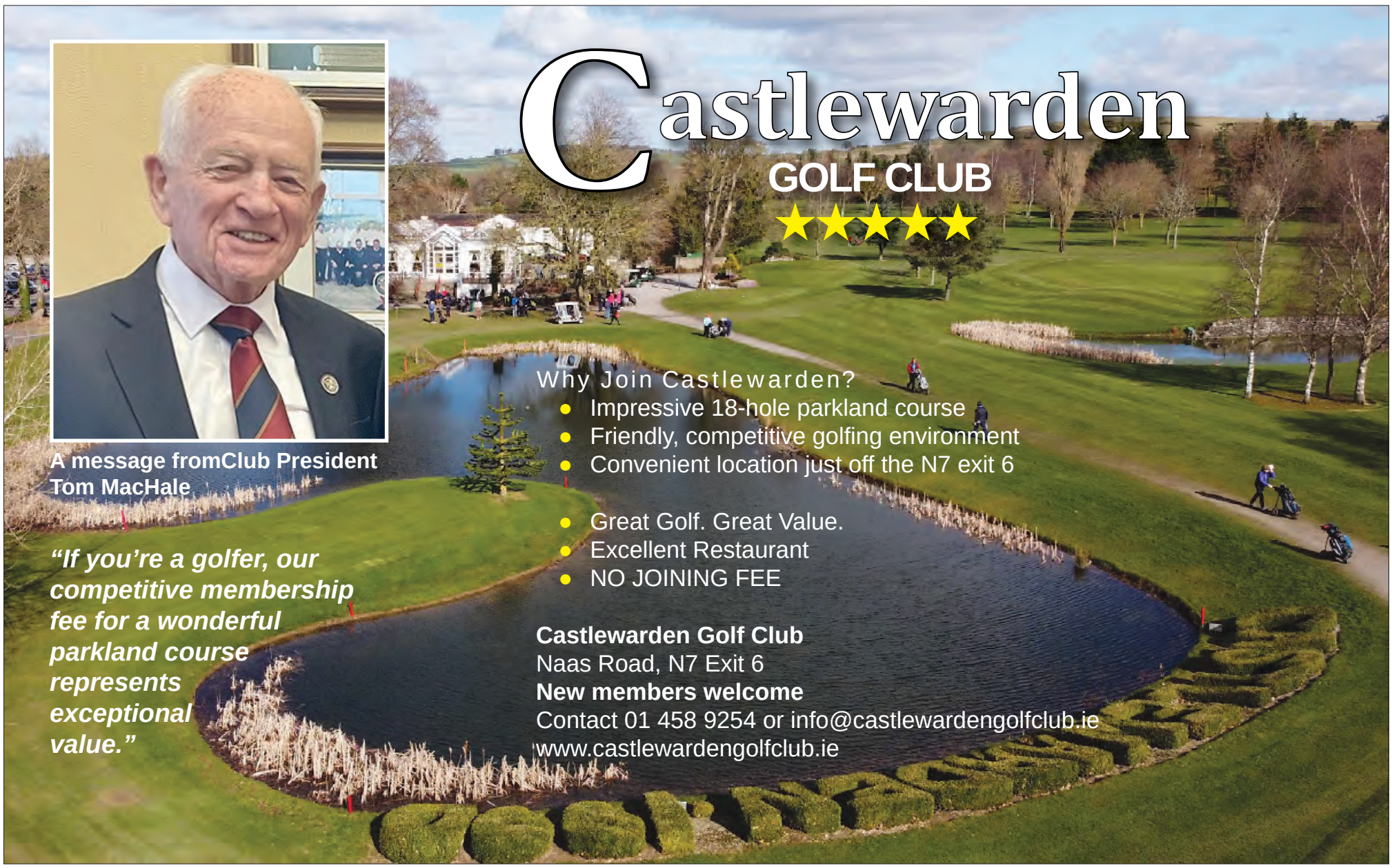
After hearing nothing for months, Donna was contacted again by Indigo Real Estate Management, who said that after a poll, residents in Cuil Duin "confirmed they are not in favour of a plaque being installed on a boundary wall".

They also told her in emails seen by *The Echo* that a plaque had already been installed and that it must be removed, but Donna said her family haven't installed anything since the tree memorial was removed and that the plaque they had made is still in her home.

"The worst part of it all is everything that they took away from the first memorial, we still don't know where my child's belongings are," she added.

"There's still no answers to who, who took it down and where all this stuff is."

"It's not a big, massive plaque, he just deserves to be remembered, I mean, if it was one of their children, would that be different?" she asked.





ENTERTAINMENT: Images from scenes in the film Avatar

‘It’s recog for Ri

Richard Baneham talks to *The Echo* on nomination for his third Oscar and BAFTA Aw

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

FROM Avonbeg Drive to the Academy Awards, Tallaght’s Richard Baneham has gone a long way from home, but it’s still something he holds close.

Richard has two Academy Awards and two BAFTAs to his name as a Visual Effects Supervisor, with the chance to pick up a third of each soon and is a key cog in James Cameron’s Avatar machine - he is also an Executive Producer and 2nd Unit Director for the two Avatar sequels.

However, he returns to his home in Los Angeles after work to his wife, Aisling, from Inchicore, and his three sons born in the USA, who all love a bit of Gaelic football when they’re on Irish soil via Liffey Gaels GAA Club.

His new hometown still carries with it an essence of the old, with other members of the Irish creative community nearby.

Richard may not live in Tallaght or Ireland anymore, but he stated that this career in animation and visual effects kicked off in his local neighbourhood when he was 11.

He won an art competition where the offices of *The Echo* are now, once the site of a community hall for local neighbourhoods.

Richard said: “They had an art competition - I might have been 11- and I ended up doing an image of Avalon, the cover of a novel.

I went back and got a little trophy and was all happy with myself. But the artwork went missing, it was interesting.

“The guys who gave me the trophy said it was a testament to how good it was that somebody stole it. So, it started way back when.”

What started in a community hall in Tallaght and was further nurtured in Ballyfermot Art College has now evolved into the creation of a new world, Pandora, the setting of the three Avatar films.

At Lightstorm Entertainment, Richard leads 160 artists and all of them make up a chunk of the Avatar visual effects team.

Peter Jackson’s Weta FX, his old employers, work alongside him, as well as George Lucas’ ILM to help bring to life the stunning scenery and engrossing characters in the blockbuster franchise

The Oscar nominations are not all Mr Baneham’s work – they are indicative of the work the team has put in.

“We carry a very large, strong, cohesive team across a couple of different companies…so, it’s lovely to have that, you know, the continuity of the feeling of a single team.

“It's a conscious effort, and it takes a lot of energy to make sure everybody stays on the same page but it’s by far, you know the most important thing, you know the act of inclusion – make everybody feel a part of the same film and you end up with a cohesive result.

“I think that’s where we ended up. So, it’s lovely to be recognised [for awards] in other words.”

Richard has worked on many other projects aside from Avatar during his time in Hollywood – Space Jam, The Iron Giant and creating Gollum for The Lord of the Rings series, to name a few.

The Two Towers and Return of the King also received Visual Effects Oscars for work that Baneham played a hand in.

The advancement of visual technology has been a strong part of his career, but it’s also been important to his life away from home.

Richard credits the likes of Skype and Facetime with the ability to remain in constant contact with his parents when he’s not back in their Old Bawn home they moved into when he was 16 and taking them for coffee at The Edge.

“The advent of visual communication changed everything. The fact that our kids are all born here in the States, but they are talking to their grandparents every other week, maybe every week and they get home once a year…

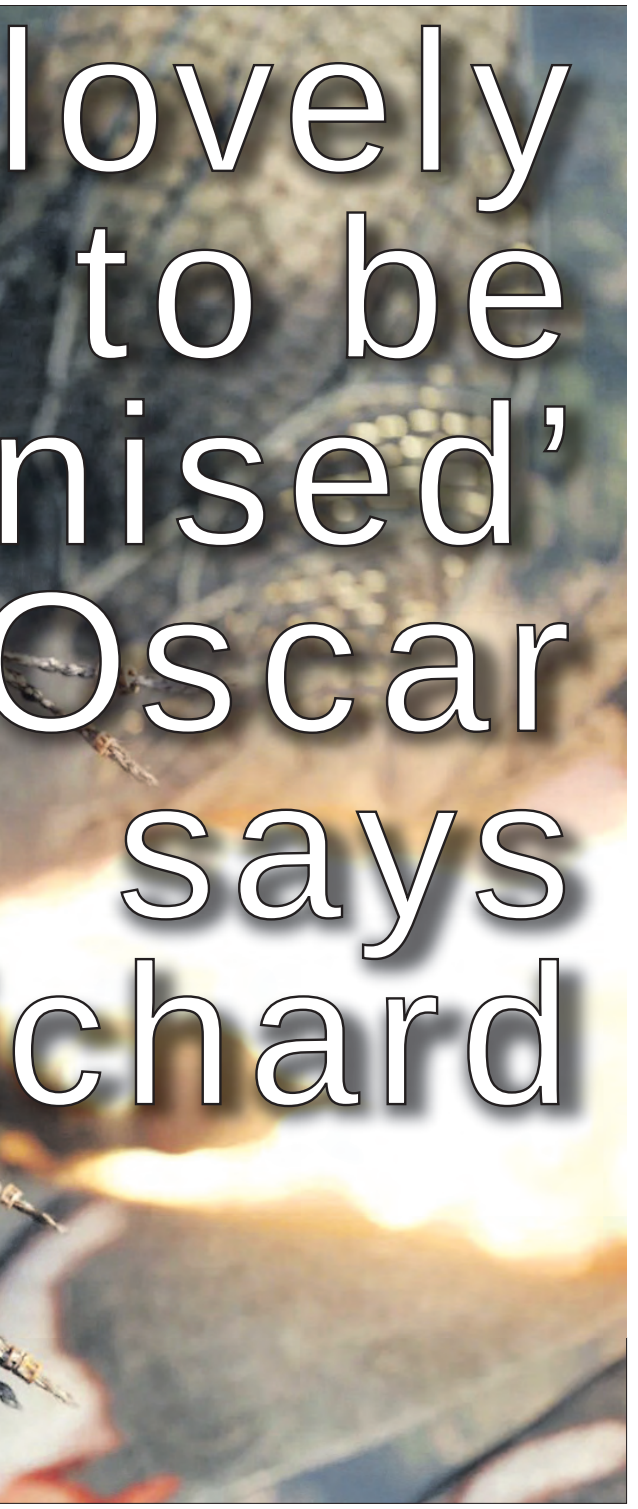
“…Our families are constantly in contact, and we're just very lucky like that.”

While far away from Ireland, Richard, Aisling and their sons still have home in their heart, be it on the end of a phone, in the Irish community around them in LA or in the beating of their cores.

“The face that our kids are all born here in the States, but they are talking to their grandparents every other week, maybe every week and they get home once a year ...



FAMILY: Richard with his wife Aisling and their t



ard for his work on Avatar



three sons

Plans for upgrade to paths and installation of picketball courts

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

FOOTPATH upgrades, hedge planting and boules and pickleball courts are just some of the public upgrades that will be carried out across the Tallaght area for 2026.

Tallaght councillors were presented with the draft programme of work for Public Realm improvements for 2026 at the area committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

The proposed list of works has been "compiled from issues raised as agenda items at area committee meetings throughout the course of 2025, undertakings given in response to members representations throughout the year as well as works that have been identified by staff," according to Brendan Redmond, senior executive Parks and Landscape officer at South Dublin County Council.

Works on the list include upgrades to footpaths in Jobstown, Killinarden, Ballymount and Sean Walsh Parks, as well as at various locations in open space running adjacent to the Old Blessington Road in Balrothery Estate, and between Tamarisk and Elmcastle Estates in Kilnamanagh.

Hedges will be planted along open green spaces on Greenhills Road and at the rear of Kilnamanagh Resource Centre and Kilnamanagh AFC, and at The View Belgard, along with pollinator friendly bulb planting in various locations around Tallaght Village, Bancroft Park Estate and on Tree Park Road in Kilnamanagh.

Outdoor gym equipment will be installed in open spaces at Mac Uilliam Park and at Tymon Park North, after the "hugely successful" installation of similar equipment in Dodder Valley Park and Green Trees Park.

"I got a report for November/December that we've had over 800 users using the age-friendly equipment which is phenomenal," Mr Redmond told councillors.

A boules court near the Pavillion and pickleball courts will also be installed in Dodder Valley to further "support age friendly exercise".

"A lot of older people can't play tennis anymore but pickleball is one that they can actually play because they don't have to move as far," he added.

Benches will also be installed in "various locations" around Bancroft Park, and upgrades and levelling will be carried out on the go games GAA pitch Killinarden Park open space.

The report was welcomed by councillors, with many commenting there was "something for everyone" on the list and some asking questions about specific locations for upgrades and equipment being installed.

Cllr Louise Dunne (SF) congratulated Mr Redmond and the Public Realm team for the work they had already done, noting that a number of Tallaght parks had been nominated for awards and that it was "fantastic to drive by or walk through and see the level of participation within the parks".

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Library 'ideal venue' to trial setting up of a new Chess Club

"THERE'S great, untapped potential,", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

A trial for a chess club in Palmerstown Library is to be considered following the success of clubs in North Clondalkin and Lucan.

The council stated that they will explore the creation of a new chess club in Palmerstown to add to clubs already run in North Clondalkin Library, Tallaght Library and Lucan Library.

The local authority noted that they will also look into extending their chess offerings further beyond the already-existing clubs and potential newcomer.

Councillor Joanna Tuffy has seen the popularity of the club in Lucan with her own eyes, as she is a regular on the Tuesdays and Fridays the sessions are held, and noted that members wish to make it even bigger.

Cllr Tuffy said: "The library is an ideal venue for it and it's just working really well. So, the more we do to build it up…

"…There's a plan to have a Lucan chess team in the community games this year. So, when they were last in it, they were winning prizes all around them.

"So, I just feel we can become a centre of excellence in chess – excellence in the sense that it's open to everybody."

Cllr Tuffy promoted the club online and found "huge interest" from the local community, but she noted that beginners may find it tough to enjoy.

She requested that a one-day workshop take place in Lucan to help people who wish to join the club get up to speed with the rules.



EXPLORE: The local authority will look at thecreation of a chess club

SDCC Senior Executive Librarian Rosena Hand stated the local authority's libraries division will continue to pursue the possibility of more chess clubs in their libraries.

Hand pointed out that, although only some of the libraries in South Dublin have clubs, others have the facilities to play chess.

Several chessboards are available for use by members of the public in Tallaght Library and the Senior Executive Librarian mentioned that this could be extended also.

"It's something we're going to try in North Clondalkin and have, you know, the adult space chess stations set up and we will pursue it and try it in Palmerstown as well."

Cllr Tuffy requested that the same considerations be given to Lucan Library, as several members of the club there differ on their preferred time of day to attend the chess meetings.

Measures to deal with 'toxic waste' dumping from drug use

Area in Kingswood estate taken over by drug dealers and people taking drugs

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



ISSUES: Residents have reported the issues to gardai

MEASURES including pruning hedges and trees to "improve visibility" will be implemented to tackle anti-social behavior and suspected drug use in Kingswood Heights.

Cllr Jess Spear (PBP-S) has urged the council to make a plan to deter "anti-social behaviour and associated toxic waste dumping" in a motion to the Tallaght Area Committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

"I said toxic waste in my motion because it's my understanding that nitrous oxide canisters are toxic and you can't dispose of them," Cllr Spear said in the chamber at Monday's meeting, saying the use of the gas was becoming a "real issue in the estate".

"The area at the top of the green has essentially been taken over by very young drug dealers and young people using it to hang out and take drugs," she stated.

She said that residents had to frequently call An Garda Síochána over the issue and have been "calling for action for a long time".

"Now recently there have been fires lit, you can see the damage, and there's also huge amounts of nitrous gas being consumed there which is extremely worrying and attracting more and more anti-social behaviour."

In their written reply to Cllr Spear, the councils Public Realm department said litter cleared from the green space in the past "includes Nitrous Oxide canisters, drink and canister packaging, an office chair, mattress springs, a bucket, miscellaneous wood items and paper".

"Two of the beech trees which form the hedge have been vandalized, and the resulting gap is where anti-social gatherings are taking place," they stated, as the hedge is wider on one side and "is providing a level of cover".

Actions proposed by Public Realm to address the issue include planting new beech trees into the gap, pruning the hedge "tighter to the wall for approximately 5meters each side of the gap to reduce the cover that it provides" and removing low branches on the trees opposite the gap to improve visibility of the location.

Cllr Spear welcomed these measures and suggested more footpath be installed on all four sides of the green space to improve passive surveillance of the site.

Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer Brendan Redmond, who was in the chamber noted that as "potentially a good idea" and that his department were "committed to doing what we can in terms of trying to allow that passive surveillance and to get more visibility".

He said the sheer volume of nitrous oxide canisters that council staff are now dealing with is "a challenge" and they're trying to "minimise the impact".

"We're trying to open more areas up, to add more recreational facilities and gym equipment and the whole idea there is to try to get young people to come and work with us," Mr Redmond added, noting that while they have had some success there is "still work to be done".

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

'His excuse for his delay does not wash' on regulation of nitrous oxide

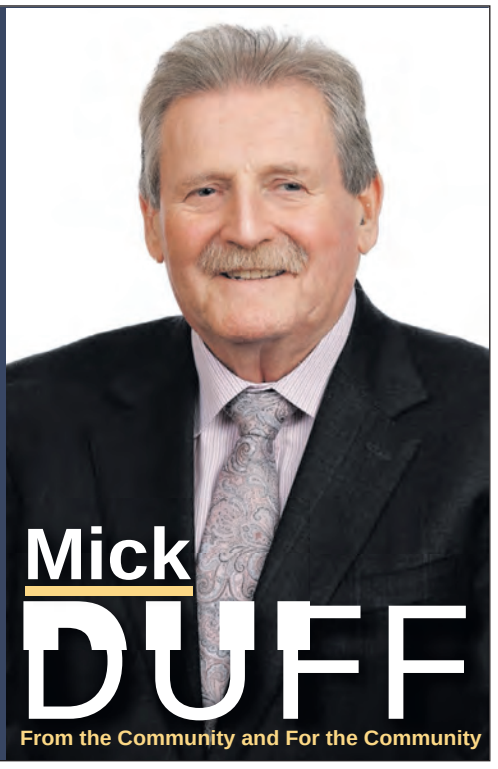
Cllr Mick Duff

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"HIS excuse for his delay simply does not wash", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

A TD has called on an Oireachtas Committee to pass his bill on the regulation of nitrous oxide sales in October after it was delayed for nine months.

Dublin Mid-West TD Mark Ward has written to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice to request they pass his bill once the delay brought in by the Government ends.

The bill will enter stage three of five once the Committee on Justice are able to give it detailed consideration in October.

If passed through the committee stage, the bill will have to pass through a report stage based on the committee's issues with the proposed legislation before the elected members review and vote whether to bring it into law or not.

Deputy Ward criticised the Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan TD, who had stated that the proposed bill only came to his attention in recent weeks.

Deputy Ward said: "I have written to the Justice Committee asking for my legislation to regulate nitrous oxide to be considered for Committee Stage after the government's nine-month delay has passed…

"The Minister for Justice said it only came to his attention two weeks ago, but I have been raising this for five years.

"I first introduced this legislation in October 2024 and again in April 2025, so how is it that the Minister is only reading it in January 2026."

The Sale of Nitrous Oxide and Related Products Bill 2024 was introduced to the Dáil on Wednesday, October 9, 2024.

In the time since, reports and studies on nitrous oxide misuse have been completed.

Recently published research from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland noted a spike in spinal cord damage among Irish teens due to nitrous oxide in recent years, with no patients said to have made a full recovery.

A study from December outlined that 18 young people were diagnosed with nitrous oxide-associated myeloneuropathy in Tallaght University Hospital over the course of 21 months from October 2022 to July 2024.

Revenue also said in December that organised crime was driving a surge in sales of the inhalant.

Deputy Ward concluded: "In the same week that Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael TDs delayed my bill for nine months, a report was released to show a sharp increase in spinal cord injuries due to nitrous oxide since Covid. None of the patients in the report made a full recovery, even after treatment.

"Either Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael TDs don't understand the real harm that nitrous oxide misuse poses for our young people, or they simply do not care. At this stage, I am not sure which is worse.

"I am calling for my bill to progress through Committee Stage in October so that there is no further delay."

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Man caught with ‘a cornucopia’ of counterfeit cash and stolen bike

A MAN who was caught with “a cornucopia” of drugs, counterfeit cash and a stolen motorbike has been jailed for three years, *reports Sonya McLean.*

Dylan Sheridan (23) Lissadel Avenue, Drimnagh, pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to having cannabis, ketamine and tablets with a street value of €151,046 at his home on March 20, 2024.

He also admitted handling a stolen motorbike, having two different items, stretching agents, connected to a drug trafficking offence and having 645 €50 and 11 €100 counterfeit notes, totally €33,350, on the same date.

He has two previous convictions for drug possession and drug dealing dealt with in the District Court.

The court heard that Sheridan’s home was searched by gardaí investigating the stolen motor bike.

The bike had been stolen the previous December and the owner had later found it online for sale.

He made contact with the supposed seller of the bike and contacted gardaí.

On March 19, 2024, arrangements were made to meet Sheridan opposite his home in order to buy the bike.

During a subsequent search of his home, the bike was found in the front garden under a canvas cover.

It had false plates fitted but was identified as the stolen bike by the chassis number.

Justin McQuade BL, prosecuting, told the court that most of the other items were found in Sheridan’s bedroom.

Sheridan later took responsibility for everything found during the search.

He told gardaí in interview that there was a threat on his life after he had built up a €25,000 drug debt.

Pieter Le Vert BL, defending, said his client was living with his grandfather at the time as his parents had “their own demons”.

He said Sheridan started using cannabis and tablets in his early teenager years but it spiralled into addiction and very quickly led to a significant drug debt.

Counsel said his client described his arrest “as the best moment of his life”. He has been attending drug rehabilitation and has been assessed as being at a low risk of re-offending.

Sentencing Sheridan on Wednesday, Judge Orla Crowe said “a cornucopia” was discovered by gardaí, referring to the stolen bike, the counterfeit money and a cash counting machine as well as the drugs and the other items in connection with drug dealing.

She commended the gardaí for their investigation which had started with their inquiries into the stolen motorbike. Judge Crowe acknowledged Sheridan’s expression of remorse and the fact that he fell into drugs in his early teens, built up a significant debt and claimed he was under “huge pressure” to get involved.

She said drugs were “a blight on a society” before she set a headline sentence of six years.

Judge Crowe reduced the sentence to four years, taking into account the mitigating features in the case.

She suspended the final 12 months of the term on strict conditions after acknowledging that Sheridan had never been in custody before.

Man stole over €129,000 worth of electronics from his employer

Two years jail for man (45) who stole 371 electronic items from DID Electrical

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



A MAN who stole over €129,000 worth of electronics from his then-employer has been jailed for two years.

Magdi Ba (45) stole 371 electronic items including smartwatches, Fitbits, phones and laptops from DID Electrical over a three-year period, which he then sold on to another shop.

Ba of Ellensborough Grove, Kiltipper Road, Dublin 24 pleaded to nine counts of theft.

The court was asked to take a further 362 counts into consideration. He has no previous convictions.

He worked at DID Electrical in the Fonthill Business Park between November 2017 and the end of 2021 and had access to the warehouse, the court heard.

Dublin Circuit Criminal Court heard that suspicions were raised in November 2021 when a warehouse manager noticed that five Apple devices were missing from a box.

A loss prevention officer viewed CCTV from the warehouse at the Fonthill Business Park store, and Ba was in the vault at the time it was believed the items were taken.

Another employee said he'd seen Ba at the CEX store in Tallaght. Karl Moran BL, prosecuting, told the court this chain of shops buys second hand electronic products from members of the public. CEX takes a note of the serial number from any product bought and a description.

A full list of Ba's alleged transactions at the CEX store was obtained by DID, which cross-checked products sold with its suppliers.

Mr Moran told the court that staff at DID manually identified the 371 items sold by Ba to CEX with stock previously supplied to DID.

The total loss to DID Electrical is €129,651 while Ba received a total of €60,009 from CEX.

None of the items taken have been recovered as they were all sold.

As part of their investigation, gardai reviewed bank records, which showed money which could not be explained by Ba's then income and a payment to his then-partner's mortgage.

Ba's home was searched in January 31, 2022 and electronics including iPads, iPhones, Samsung Galaxy watches and Earbuds were found.

He was arrested in his car in the Fonthill Retail Park three days later and was interviewed three times.

Ba initially denied taking anything, but later accepted that he had, estimating the figure was about 200, but saying he wasn't sure.

He said he took them from a returns box, but accepted he'd taken other items as well.

Judge Orla Crowe on Thursday described his offending as a ‘consistent breach of trust’ protracted over a period of time.

“This has to be a custodial sentence,” she remarked.

She noted that Ba had forfeited the contents of two bank accounts with a value of €67,000, along with his car, and she sentenced him to two years in prison.

Man caught with 50,000 images and videos of child sexual abuse material

A "HIGHLY technically proficient" man who was caught with over 50,000 images and videos of child sexual abuse material has been jailed for three years, *reports Fiona Ferguson and Eimear Dodd.*

Niall Syms (70) of Station Close, Clondalkin, pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to possession of child sexual abuse material, known in law as child pornography, at his former family home on March 3, 2018.

He further pleaded guilty to distribution of the material on dates between November 2017 and March 2018. He has no previous convictions.

Passing sentence on Tuesday, Judge Orla Crowe said Syms was an "active cog" in the wheel of the distribution of this material. She said the "sheer number" of images and videos was aggravating.

Judge Crowe noted that despite Syms's age, he was "highly technically proficient" and had an "unusually high level of knowledge and experience" of computers due to his professional background in IT.

The judge set a headline sentence of six years, which she reduced to three years taking the mitigation and Syms's personal circumstances into account.

Judge Crowe noted that Syms had completed a "considerable amount of work" towards rehabilitation, but that a custodial sentence must be imposed. She backdated the sentence to January 23, when he went into custody.

The court heard the delay in the case arose due to a backlog in material for analysis in the computer crime division, which led to a delay of several years before the results of analysis were available.

The garda accepted that there was hardship to Syms in having the case hanging over him.

Detective Garda Darragh Phelan told John Gallagher BL, prosecuting, that the offence came to light when gardai were contacted by an international agency which reported suspect activities at an address associated with Syms. Gardai obtained a search warrant and searched the home.

Gardai recovered a considerable number of computers, hard drives and phones. Syms was cautioned at the scene and made some outline admissions that there would be child sexual abuse material on some devices. He said he had rarely accessed the material.

The devices were sent for analysis, a process which took a number of years, and child abuse material was discovered on four devices. A total of 53,890 images and 2,055 videos were found.

The majority of the images involved child exposure, with just over 11,000 on the child explicit scale.

Some of the images involved serious sexual abuse of children from the age of four to teenagers.

One folder contained 26 images and 6 videos of a seven-to-nine year old child being digitally and orally raped by an adult male.

The court heard Syms had qualifications in computers and made his living in the computer industry.

The distribution charge arose through the BitTorrent technology Syms used to download the images. As he downloaded images from around the world, the images he had were available to be uploaded.

Syms told the gardai he did not leave the system running so the images would not be distributed but the investigation found the images were available to be uploaded.

Gda Phelan agreed with Gerardine Small SC, defending, that gardai found him polite and courteous, that he had given them passwords and told them they would find some of the material.

The garda agreed with counsel that there had been no re-offending and Syms had attended therapy. There was a loss of his marriage and family as a direct consequence of his actions.

Ms Small said there had always been a guilty plea in relation to the possession charge and the disputed aspect had been the distribution charge as a result of residual software activity when the images were downloaded.

She said the automatic sharing brought the activity within the ambit of distribution.

The garda replied that an ordinary person might not be aware of that, but with Syms's qualifications there was no doubt he did know.

The garda agreed with Ms Small there was no commercial gain or setting up of websites involved.

Ms Small referenced difficulties outlined in the psychological report before the court. She said Syms had taken immediate steps to rehabilitate himself and had undergone over 400 hours of therapy.

Counsel said he had an extensive work history and has ongoing medical difficulties. She said around the time of the offending, there had been a progressive deterioration in his marriage and isolation.

She said there was a significant lapse in time between the detection and coming before the court and that period undoubtedly weighed heavily on him. She said this was a factor recognised by the higher courts.

She handed in testimonials and said a friend was in court to support Syms. She said the material outlined the positive aspects of his personality, that he is remorseful and that he has taken responsibility for his actions.

She said he had a small reliable network of adult peers who are aware of the offence and provide regular practical support.

Syms wrote a letter in which he outlined his remorse and said he was mindful of the hurt he had caused.



Food bank makes urgent appeal

APPEAL: The foodbank is at risk of closing

Helping Homeless charity 'at a real risk' of having to shut down the service

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

A LOCAL food bank has made an "urgent" call for more monthly donations from the public as they are "at a real risk" to having to shut down.

Clondalkin Helping Homeless has made a call to the local public to ask for monthly food donations so that they can continue to meet the needs of those they help.

The weekly food bank that takes place on Tuesdays saw a strong surge in donations for their Christmas run but note that more is needed on a consistent basis to ensure that the service can keep going.

Organiser Francis Timmons said that the food bank is looking for tinned foods, cereal, tea, coffee, soup, pasta and rice among other things to help continue their weekly dates.

Timmons said: "We are at a real risk of not being able to continue to meet the needs of those in need.

"We had a lot of donations around Christmas but those in need are in need all year round.

"We have always been there when other services are shut, we want to continue this vital community service but can only do so with community support."

The organiser noted his gratefulness for the support of regular donators and hopes that more can do the same in the coming weeks.

Broadline Recruitment and the Liffey Valley Vineyard Church are some of the groups that send donations to the food bank on a consistent basis.

Q's Bingo Hall on the Nangor Road in Clondalkin is one business that has also provided several donations to CHH in recent weeks.

Timmons underlined the importance of food banks in today's society to many families.

He said: "Those needing food varied from one-off to a few weeks to long term needs.

"The foodbank is a lifeline to many local families who are struggling."

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Land acquisition process for Dart gets underway with 750 owners

Impacted landowners were issued with a Notice to Treat to start Dart process

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



ON TRACK: The train station in Adamstown

"THE Dart+ Programme is a priority for Government."

Work to make the Dart+ South West project a reality has gotten underway as Iarnród Éireann began the acquisition process for 750 directly impacted landowners.

The formal land acquisition process for the 750 directly impacted landowners along the planned Dart+ South West route has gotten underway.

Landowners were issued a Notice to Treat - a formal document served to property owners and occupiers once a Complusory Purchase Order is confirmed.

Minister for Transport, Darragh O'Brien TD welcomed the news and noted that the Government considered the Dart+ Programme a priority.

The Minister for Transport said: "I am happy to see the DART+ South West project progressing.

"The acquisition of land is a crucial step in working towards the delivery of DART+ South West, which will help provide a significant uplift in services along the rail line from Hazelhatch and Celbridge to Heuston Station and will also provide access to key strategic housing developments such as at Adamstown.

"I also look forward to the progression of the procurement for this project, with frameworks to be established under DART+ West later this year, supporting the delivery of DART+ South West."

The Dart+ South West project was shelved until at least 2030 in the Government's last National Development Plan Review for transport back in November.

The new service would cater to areas like Clondalkin along the way, double the current amount of trains per hour and quadruple the capacity.

The extension would travel from Kildare into Adamstown, onto Kishoge and then Clondalkin/Fonthill, before reaching Park West and Cherry Orchard and then continuing on towards Heuston and a proposed Heuston West station.

> **"Although phasing for funding for the project is still under discussion, land acquisution must commence to complete the compulsory purchase orders within statutorily allotted ....**

The amount of trains running per hour per direction is expected to jump from 12 to 23 upon completion of the proposed programme.

20,000 passengers are anticipated to make use of the project's final product per hour per direction, up from 5,000 approximately.

Iarnród Éireann Chief Executive Mary Considine said that the land acquisition process needed to commence to keep the project ticking over.

The Chief Executive of Irish Rail said: "Although phasing for funding for the project is still under discussion, land acquisition must commence to complete the compulsory purchase orders within the statutorily allotted time within the railway order, which is 18 months from when the Railway Order received its approval.

"The provision of DART services will transform commuting for the existing and new communities along this railway corridor."

The project is funded by the National Transport Authority, under Project Ireland 2040 and the EU Structural Development fund.

Politicians at county and national level across South Dublin criticised the shelving of the project in the recent review and urged the Government to reconsider.

Those who did noted the amount of housing and development of areas like Adamstown as reasons for the urgent need for more public transport in the area.

Some also stated that the current trains operating in the local areas like Adamstown and Clondalkin/Fonthill are dealing with capacity issues.

The NTA's Assistant Director for Transport Investment, Eoin Gillard stated that the project will improve the lives of thousands when delivered.

Mr Gillard stated: "These improvements will make a real difference to the quality of journeys for thousands of people who rely on this line every day."

€2.5 million is allocated for roadworks repairs and projects

ALMOST €2.5 million in funding has been allocated for 147 roadworks repairs and projects around Tallaght for 2026, *reports Ellen Gough.*

A portion has also been set aside for accessibility funding, and the council are seeking suggestions from councillors on where to spend this.

€2.464 million has allocated for the Tallaght Central and Tallaght South areas out of a county wide budget of €10.35m for roadworks by South Dublin County Council.

€855,000 has been allocated for road resurfacing, with €860,000 for footpath repairs across the area, according to the 2026 Roadworks Programme presented at the area committee meeting on Monday, January 26.

€300,000 has been allocated for routine maintenance works, €200,000 for patching potholes and €100,000 respectively for cycle track maintenance and overhead costs such as plant hire and enabling works.

Split across the two electoral areas, €410,000 will be spent on roads resurfacing and €370,000 on footpath repairs in the Tallaght South area, as well as €150,000 specifically for social housing pavement improvements in Kiltalown Court, Glenshane Lawn and Fettercairn Road.

€445,000 has been allocated for roads resurfacing and €490,000 for footpath repairs in the Tallaght Central area.

Presenting the 2026 programme to councillors at the Tallaght meeting, senior council engineer Gary Walsh said €550,000 has been earmarked specifically for accessibility funding, which is "targeted at small/medium level interventions such as kerb dishings" rather than larger facilities such as zebra/pelican crossings.

"We don't have this allocated under the roadworks programme because what we really want is to have people come to us – either yourselves as representatives or individual members of the public – if you're having issues with mobility from your home to your shop or bus stop come and talk to us, we have funding to resolve these issues," Mr Walsh said.

This funding in particular was welcomed by councillors, including Cllr Niamh Whelan (SF), who asked if the council had engaged with "any of the services particularly in Tallaght village that have people with mobility issues" to see where this funding could be allocated.

"We have mobility groups coming to us sporadically but it hasn't been a regular discussion so I'm hoping they will hear this and come to us and we can have a broader plan," Mr Walsh replied.

"We could make a multi-annual programme to keep working with them, I'm sure if there's a high uptake on the €550,000 that's something that can be increased over the coming years if there's demand for it," he added.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Merging of 80 bus service with the 130 is expected to solve issues

THE merging of the 80 bus service with the 130, expected to solve issues residents from Chapelizod and Palmerstown have encountered, is now not set to happen until 2027, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The National Transport Authority said in a recent statement that the merging of the two services will not be executed until next year.

The move was previously expected to happen in Q2 2026 after a brief period of temporary realignment for the 80 route from Liffey Valley to Palmerstown Park.

The 80 and 130 merger would see the bus operate along the north and south quays between Liffey Valley and Clontarf, providing a continuous link between Heuston Station, O'Connell Bridge and the Custom House for commuters.

Councillor Madeleine Johansson expressed her disappointment with the delay and labelled the whole situation with the 80 "unacceptable."

Cllr Johansson said: "I just don't think it's acceptable that this is happening and now that that merger has been delayed even further."

"I don't think the communities are going to accept that either."

The temporary realignment of the 80 is set to come into effect on Sunday, February 8 and will see the service divert after Bridge Street and continue along the Quays and service central areas of the city.

The bus will move down O'Connell Bridge, College Green and Dame Street then onto South Great Georges Street as part of the short-term realignment to resume its current alignment to Palmerston Park.

The brief change will be removed before the planned closure of Dame Street between College Green and South Great George's Street for Dublin City Council's College Green Pedestrian Plaza scheme.

The 80 service was introduced in October as part of BusConnects Phase Seven but was immediately criticised by Palmerstown and Chapelizod residents, who called for the return of the 26 from Liffey Valley to Merrion Square.

The initial change meant that some stops on the 26 route now needed two buses to reach and led to several protests from unsatisfied commuters.

Cllr Johansson said that she expects more protests as a result of the merger being delayed and noted that commuters are unsure if the merger will solve their problems with the new service.

"I saw Thursday, three 80 buses were cancelled in a row in the evening, around the kind of rush hour time. Three of them from town going out towards Liffey Valley.

"So, people just can't get to work, can't get to school. They can't rely on the bus service anymore."

She added that she felt the 26 service was working "very, very well" before it was phased out.

NTA Director of Public Transport Services Jeremy Ryan said: "These amendments are a direct response to customer and community feedback and are aimed at improving reliability, resilience and connectivity across the network.

"We will continue to monitor the performance of these routes closely and make further adjustments where necessary to ensure passengers experience a more dependable service."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



SERVICE: The 80 bus

Work to start on 12th Lock studio and Grange Cottages in summer



MASTERPLAN: The 12th Lock studio plans and (inset): the Grange Cottage buildings

€9.3 million was allocated for the studios and €3.5m for the cottage buildings

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

SOME of the key projects in Lucan's 12th Lock Masterplan are set to begin construction this summer, with facilities expected to open in early 2027.

The planned 12th Lock Studio and the Grange Cottage buildings by the Grand Canal in Lucan are both set to move closer to being a reality when construction starts in Q2 2026.

The masterplan seeks to fill the 12th Lock area with activity and provide public spaces that complement the natural look of the location.

€9.3m was recently allocated for the project by the council in their latest Three-Year Capital Programme, 2026-2028.

€3.5m of this allocation is set aside to be spent in 2026 to deliver projects such as the studio and the cottage buildings.

The studio will be located beside Lucan Sarsfields GAA Club and will act as a "creative incubator", according to South Dublin County Council, and will include a variety of spaces for multimedia creations.

The facility will include film and television studios, digital and podcasting suites, gaming and visual effects production spaces, exhibition areas, creative offices, workshops, co-working accommodation and shared social spaces.

The "community-focused" Grange Cottage buildings will also include several spaces, in this case a café, a crèche, events space, artist studios and a dedicated storage facility for canoes and paddle boats for use on the Grand Canal.

The works at 12th Lock Studio and the Grange Cottage Buildings are expected to carry on into 2027 and be completed in the first quarter of next year.

Operation tenders for the café and creche at Grange Cottage have been published online.

The construction tender for the new studio is expected to be published this month, and mobilisation is anticipated to take two to three months before construction can begin.

The 12th Lock Studio is intended to result in a "flagship hub" for creative talent and investment in the region, supporting collaboration, innovation and experimentation.

Funded by the Lcoal Democracy Reporting Scheme.

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

Tangles of twigs



CLUSTERS: Birch trees often carry clusters of twigs called Witches' Broom

IN WINTER, when trees are bare, nests that were built last springtime by crows and wood pigeons can sometimes be seen remaining amongst the branches.

Some trees, however, appear to have many nests scattered throughout the branches.

A closer look at these trees shows that these nest-like structures are not birds' nests.

They are, in fact, dense tangles of small twigs that appear to be growing from single points along the tree's branches.

These unusual growth masses are known as witches' brooms.

They occur when the tree experiences some form of stress, caused perhaps by an infection caused by bacteria, a fungus, or a virus.

They can also be caused by aphids, mites, or some other type of insect damage.

Normal hormone activity in trees controls the regular growth of buds along the branches.

When a tree is under attack these normal hormonal processes are disturbed and the buds respond differently.

One result is the rapid and exaggerated growth of buds and twigs in locations along an otherwise normal branch.

Birch trees appear especially vulnerable to this stress response.

These trees can carry many tangles of twigs, ranging in size from quite small clusters to bundles that are so heavy that they cause light branches to visibly droop.

Witches' brooms tend not to affect the overall health and vigour of the tree.

They can also act as natural mini 'insect hotels', where the dense tangle of twigs offers a place for insects and their larvae to rest, feed and develop.

These in turn can attract birds who will search through the mass of twigs in search of something tasty.

Old fashioned sweeping brooms were once formed using bundles of twigs tied to the end of a long handle made from a light branch of a tree.

Also, in the past, as witches were presumed to be the cause of anything unusual, the strange tangles of twigs that appeared like magic in trees became known as witches' brooms.



TWIGS: The dense tangles of twigs offer places for insects to hide away in wintertime



THRIVING: Oblate Basketball Club members Michelle, Gerry, Shane and Ciaran with Fr Pat

Fr Pat has m impact in the

Parish priest was arrested along si

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

"PAUL Hill gave my name that I was the one who supplied the bombs."

Building a hall from the ground, being arrested alongside the Guildford Four and providing spaces to help people get back on their feet are some of Father Pat Carolan's talents.

Fr Pat Carolan spent over a decade as parish priest of Inchicore and Bluebell and over two as the manager of the basketball hall in Inchicore.

Fr Carolan returned to Ireland in 1997 and rebuilt the basketball hall after it burned down, with it establishing Oblates Basketball Club and adding a creche, a drug rehabilitation project and scouts to the hall's facilities, which reopened in 2001.

All those facilities are alive and well, and Oblates Basketball is thriving, with over 20 teams to its name and three senior sides.

Fr Carolan said: "It was burned down by an electrical fault, and I took on responsibility to rebuild it on a different model…

"…We'd Bertie Ahern up to open that on November 12, 2001, and we're going very well.

"We have 21 basketball teams, most of them underage. We have 100 children in the creche with 19 staff and 160 in the scouts. There's 50 recovering from drug addiction upstairs."

Turas, the drug rehabilitation programme available in the Oblates Hall was set up by the cleric to help those in need.

The priest is also a patron of Circle Voluntary Housing Association and his work in housing dates back across the Irish Sea.

Fr Carolan was a director at Conway House in London, a hostel and accommodation centre for Irish migrants.

He housed two of the Guildford Four – Paul Hill and Gerry Conlon – and was arrested and brought to Guildford with them for questioning.

"The night the bomb went off in Guildford, Gerry Conlon was in our television room and he got all excited when the bomb went off and he was put out of the room…

"Paul Hill was down in Southampton with his girlfriend Sarah Clark and he only found out about the bomb going off when he went out to buy the paper the following morning."

However, the local community worker has had to take a step back from his projects recently.

Pat has been receiving treatment for two forms of cancer – prostate cancer and bone cancer.

"The specialists tell me I'm cured now, hopefully."

However, he told *The Echo* that he's feeling "great" and that he was even able to visit relations in Cavan at the weekend and catch up on "months and months and months" of news.



nade a huge e community

de Guildford Four for questioning



PRESENTATION: Fr Pat Carolan with former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern

Pat plans to use the coming months to write a book on events that have taken place in his life and his time as a priest in the Oblate Hall.

"I'm trying to write something around all that and my involvement – what is my role as a priest and why am I there?"

Ask a member of the plethora of facilities within the Oblates Hall and they'll be sure to give you a few good reasons.

One such person, Caroline Creaner, supervisor of the Oblate Community Employment Project based in the hall, noted Fr Pat's importance to the area.

Caroline said: "He's a huge impact on the community, he's so community orientated. Any funding that can be got, he's on it – he's kind of like a dog with a bone when he sees funding out there. He helps so many different groups.

"…Every day he's there in the building and cheering on the kids and the matches and the basketball teams and stuff like that.

"He's very much involved. He's a doer."

See more photos on page 44

Proposals to upgrade temporary benches to 'something that's more wheelchair accessible'

By **Ellen Gough**
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SEATING benches installed in Rathfarnham Village are a "first step" ahead of a longer-term enhancement scheme.

The wooden picnic-style benches that were installed in September last year in a former loading bay on the villages Main Street are "very much of a temporary nature" as there were problems with "getting the right seating", according to senior council engineer Gary Walsh.

Mr Walsh was responding to a motion from Cllr Lynn McCrave (FG) asking the council for a "plan and proposed installation timelines" for age-friendly parking and seating in Rathfarnham Village, at the Rathfarnham/Templeogue/Firhouse/Bohernabreena Area Committee meeting on January 13.

Speaking on her motion in the council chamber, Cllr McCrave thanked Mr Walsh and his department for the current seating but noted that they had previously said they "would only be doing historical seating" as had been discussed with Rathfarnham Tidy Towns and other groups.

"We are a historical village… a lot of people are very distraught, I know they are going to be changed, but it's very difficult to get in and out and it's not age-friendly," she said.

Cllr McCrave also queried whether the location of the seating, at 49-50 Main Street, was "really the right place" for permanent age-friendly seating, which was echoed by Cllr Yvonne Collins.

Cllr Collins also asked that "any solution does not further affect parking" for businesses in the village, as "the danger is" they will lose customers to Nutgrove and Rathfarnham Shopping Centres, with more accessible parking.

Responding to both councillors, Mr Walsh said that the intention is to upgrade the temporary wooden benches to "something that's more wheelchair accessible before the summer", as well as to fill the planters surrounding the space.

He also noted that the seating area itself was a temporary measure to try to get "people to actually look at the reuse of the village space" ahead of any wider village schemes.

"In Rathfarnham we want to do a proper wider village scheme," he said, adding that the temporary seating "was very much a first step in trying to get people to look at the reuse of the village space… and providing something that's not just parking and footpaths" for residents.

He said that any look at installing age-friendly parking would have to wait until that wider village scheme as it was "already controversial" and the provision of age friendly parking will require a reduction in the overall number of parking spaces.

"In relation to Rathfarnham Village, it would be preferable to defer the installation of further parking alterations until a full village scheme is being delivered when works can be done in the context of a wider Village Enhancement Scheme."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

Possibility of extending library opening hours

THE possibility of extending the opening hours of Palmerstown Library will be considered after requests were made to councillors, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

Requests have been made to extend the opening hours of Palmerstown Library in Palmerstown Centre due to its growing popularity in the area.

The library hub currently operates for four days a week from Wednesday to Saturday with closing times ranging between 4:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays to 8pm on Thursdays.

Councillor Madeleine Johansson said that the local library is being used a lot more in recent times, with students taking to it for its quality as a quiet study space.

Cllr Johansson said: "I got contacted by constituents who are very happy about the library hub and think it's a great facility and people are using it, students are using it as a study space and stuff like that as well, which is how we want our library to be used…

"…If this is being looked at, I would probably guess that around afternoon time, particularly for students to be able to use the space for study and so on, would probably be the best thing.

"So, I would think Monday and Tuesday afternoon time [would be ideal]."

The library hub in Palmerstown was only in operation for two days back in 2023 before the council decided to extend its hours and increase the operating from two days a week to four.

Councillor Niamh Fennell noted that it was "fantastic" that young people were asking for the extension of the operating hours.

Cllr Fennell added that it felt important to work towards this as teens have been vocal to councillors in the area about their desire for it, and to recognise the range that the space in Palmerstown Library offers them.

The Palmerstown/Fonthill councillor said: "If young people are coming out and lobbying us, I think we absolutely should try and get something for them.

"A number of young people have said to me that they're using it as a social space as well, which I think is really, really positive because they are using a space that is safe, that is welcoming and is accessible for all young people as well…

"…To have a safe space near home to go and study in the evenings, I think it would be fantastic for the community."

SDCC libraries stated that they are happy to explore options to extend hours further with consideration given to community demand and operational feasibility.

SDCC Senior Executive Librarian Rosena Hand acknowledged that the library in Palmerstown "is going very, very well" and said that the libraries division has had discussions about extending its hours.

Hand stated: "It's dependent on staffing, I suppose would be one of the things and we need to engage with customers ourselves as well to get their take on it as to what hours and things they would like.

"But it is something that would hopefully be in the pipeline."

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.

€1.5 million allocated towards road works at 24 locations in Clondalkin

OVER €1.5 million is set to go towards planned road works in Clondalkin throughout 2026, as part of a €10 million package for all of South Dublin, *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

€1.685m will go towards the council's planned works in Clondalkin throughout 2026, almost one fifth of the total package of €10.35m for South Dublin this year.

The seven-figure allocation is expected to go towards 24 works in the village and its surrounding areas, 16 per cent of all schemes in the local authority's remit.

147 works will be undertaken across South Dublin over the next 12 months.

Two different types of works will take up over half of the budget for Clondalkin, with just under €1.25m set aside for road resurfacing and footpath repairs in the local electoral area.

€640k will go towards the resurfacing nine roads including the Green Isle Road, the Fonthill Road and the Baldonnell Road, among others.

A further €605k will be invested into the repairs of 12 footpaths located across Clondalkin – mainly across estates such as Kilcronan and Coolamber.

The footpath on Newcastle's Main Street is also earmarked for repair this year.

Both types of works stand out compared to the rest on the local authority's list - €7.2m is set aside for the road and footpath repair program in the county in 2026.

€110k will go towards pavement improvements in two social housing estates – the Melrose and Oldchurch estates in Clondalkin will benefit from this six-figure promise.

The budget to improve the pavements in Melrose and Oldchurch is over a third of the total South Dublin 300k allocation for this scheme.

€30k will be put into the maintenance of a section of the cycle track on the Outer Ring Road.

In addition to schemes listed for works by South Dublin County Council's Road Maintenance team, €250k of Clondalkin's road budget will go towards some unforeseeable circumstances, such as pothole repairs.

The maintenance works that will be carried out on potholes this year has a budget of €100k, while €150k is stored for other forms of routine maintenance works and €50k is in the budget to cover overheads and other costs.

Additional works undertaken during the year by Road Maintenance include grass cutting, road marking renewals, and drainage and signage works.

€550k of the countywide budget will go towards accessibility funding, with the intention to use it for kerb dishings and other "small/medium level interventions", not for the likes of zebra crossings.

However, no allocation has been provided for any location as of yet, with recommendations and requests welcome.

To check ongoing and scheduled road works across South Dublin, visit the SDCC Live Roadworks page on the council's website.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.



RESURFACING: Green Isle Road

'Frustrating' for residents with 'really old' drainage system

Water seeping into back gardens after damage to drainage system building football pitch

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

"IT'S very frustrating, because I can't deal with it on my property."

A resident of Fairgreens in Saggart expecting a child with his wife has spoken out about the drainage issues he has had to live with since he moved in two years ago.

Residents in Fairgreens, Saggart have had to live with water seeping into their back gardens for several years after damage to the local drainage system.

Alexander Hornburg detailed his problems as a resident of the estate and noted that when he moved in with his wife in late 2023, residents were already dealing with drainage issues.

Now, as his wife nears a due date at the end of February, the drainage problems in Fairgreens are evident in their back yard.

"We're building a family here, we like our house, we like Dublin. Even the area and the neighbours here, we love it here.

"It's just that this issue is kind of causing headaches."

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 developer involved in the works behind the estate, Tetrarch, dug a trench to attempt to bring and end to the situation, but issues remained and a second attempt was made in October.

Mr Hornburg stated that his neighbours had issues more often than him before the second attempt made his house a point of concern.

He said: "In October, when they basically redid the trench, it was meant to be a better, improved trench.

"Basically, things got worse again. And this time, instead of coming out from the spring behind my neighbours, it's coming out from our patio underneath.


ISSUES: Drainage issues at Fairegreens in Saggart

"Just like little fountains of water seeping out through the cracks."

Alexander added that the drains that have been causing the issue appear "really old" and has been frustrated with both the developer and the council for large parts of the process.

An official involved with the council came out to view the situation at Alexander's home on Friday, which he was grateful for, but noted that the council had distanced itself from the problem originally.

Work started on a 'deep drain' in November to protect houses in the estate from any repeats of the situation in the future.

However, Alexander noted his worries that the effects of the problem will be felt for a long time, with cracked concrete displaying signs that it may cave in.

"We only really found out how bad it was when we lifted the tiles and dug up. But what has happened is, because there's so much water flowing underneath the patio and underneath the concrete passes beside my house, there are cracks in the concrete path.

"There are signs that the water's flowing there constantly, and basically, it's causing subsidence, like it's the early signs of subsidence, because it's so close to the house…

"…I can't let this go on a long time - I need a solution quickly."

Contractor aims to complete village works within six weeks

Prolonged delays on enhancement scheme have led to frustration from the public

By **James Roulston Mooney**
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DELAYS: Works ongoing in Lucan Village

"IT LOOKS far harder in design than I had thought."

Concerns were raised about the Lucan Village works after the contractor stated the project is set to be completed by mid-March.

The contractor working on Lucan Village has provided an update as they near their target deadline of mid-March, six months later than initially expected.

However, councillors raised concerns about the aesthetic of the Village Green, which they hoped would be greener.

Bretland Construction Ltd has given an update on the outstanding significant works to be completed as they aim to complete the village's enhancements in the next six weeks.

Construction is nearing an end in Lucan, 18 months after it began, with several areas set to have a new face.

Prolonged delays on the project have led to frustration from the Lucan public, as the works were intended to be completed in September 2025 initially.

The council noted that they feel the contractor has "somewhat underperformed" in their delivery of the enhancement scheme's plans and said that they will be "closely watching" to ensure the final weeks of work flow as expected.

However, the 12-month window has grown several times throughout the construction process.

Councillor Liona O'Toole noted the frustration of members of the public and the effect delays have had on the commentary about the project.

Cllr O'Toole said: "Those delays happening, they make it increasingly difficult for me as a local representative to respond to those residents when these timelines continue to shift and timelines are extended."

> **"Those delays happening, they make it increasingly difficult for me as a local representative to respond to those residents when these timelines continue to shift and timelines are extended...**

The Lucan councillor noted the importance of the village in the local St Patrick's Day parade, also set for mid-March.

The surface paving and landscape planting at the Village Green are outstanding, and macadam paving of the Lucan Road south of the Green is set to be carried out over four nights from Monday, February 9.

The bandstand and riverside parapet wall are also yet to be finished at the location.

The entrance to the Liffey Promenade at Watery Lane and the Steps from the Lucan Bridge towards the promenade will be completed over the next six weeks.

The in-wall seating at the Demesne Park entrance, one of the highlighted parts of the plans, will be delivered in the next month and a half as well.

Councillor Joanna Tuffy stated her concerns about the look of the finished enhancements.

Cllr Tuffy said: "Certainly the drawings from the designer looked a lot softer than what it looks like now. It didn't have that grey concrete look in the original concept.

"The five local councillors are in the firing line on this…if anything can be done to make it look much, much softer in the end will be appreciated."

Bretland has also confirmed that additional supervisory staff have been assigned to the site to coordinate the remaining elements of the project.

This batch of additional staff will also work to prepare for the handover process set to take place upon completion.

South Dublin County Council stated: "We are confident that these [deadline] dates will be complied with."

Funded by the Lcoal Democracy Reporting Scheme.

Council to take in charge Paddocks estate and calls for stronger permeability link

"IT IS quite a short link. So, it should not be a great deal of money to sort it out", *reports James Roulston Mooney.*

The Paddocks in Lucan is expected to be taken in charge and councillors have called for a stronger permeability link between Hillcrest and the new council estate.

The Paddocks in Lucan is expected to be taken in charge by the council in the next month, and calls have been made to improve the connection between the estate and its neighbouring neighbourhood Hillcrest.

South Dublin County Council expect to have charge of The Paddocks in the next month following the next full council meeting and local representatives made the case for a new permeability link to be established between the estates.

The current connection between them was described as a "health and safety issue" by Councillor Niamh Fennell and that improvements are necessary for accessibility.

Cllr Fennell said: "It's a place that's been used time and time again given the development in Lucan west as well and, I suppose, we cannot be allowing people to use a really slippery, mucky gap, particularly those who are using prams and buggies, and wheelchair users."

The granted planning from the taking in charge process does not have a permeable link between the Paddocks estate and Hillcrest.

SDCC had previously advised that the unofficial opening between the Paddocks and Hillcrest be closed with a metal railing, but this has not been completed yet despite several attempts from the developer.

The local authority stated that, upon completion of the TIC process, they would be able to conduct a public consultation on having an official pedestrian link opened between the Paddocks and Hillcrest.

Councillor Caroline Brady noted that the creation of a new route may not involve a lot of work.

Cllr Brady said: "I don't think there's a lot of work really involved in it. It's a very simple cut-through and I think that with hopefully a little bit of work and not too much cost, we should be able to put in something that is usable by the residents."

If a permeability link was agreed by the residents of both estates, then funding could be sourced from existing SDCC budgets to complete a proper footpath link at the agreed location.

The council noted that, in order to progress this link, all the necessary lands must be either taken in charge or the local authority must have express permission from all the landowners to make the necessary footpath link.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme.


TAKEN IN CHARGE: The Paddocks

Traditional St Brigid's Well in Rathcoole

ST BRIGID'S Well at Tay Lane, Rathcoole is a long-venerated holy well traditionally associated with St Brigid of Kildare, *reports Mervyn Ennis.*.

Local tradition holds that the saint rested at this spring on her return journey from Dublin to Kildare, and that the early settlement of Rathcoole developed around it. This article examines the well's religious, social, and historical significance from early Christian times through the Penal era, its incorporation into the grounds of the Mary Mercer Charter School in the eighteenth century, and contemporary efforts to restore the site following its burial beneath tarmac in the late twentieth century.

Origins and Local Tradition

According to long-standing local tradition, St Brigid of Kildare paused to rest and pray at a spring along what is now Tay Lane while travelling from Dublin to Kildare. The water was thereafter regarded as blessed, and over time a settlement grew up nearby. Rathcoole's development is thus closely bound to this sacred spring, which functioned as both a devotional site and a focal point for community life.

During the Great Famine (1845–1849) the well once again became a place of charity. In keeping with Brigid's reputation as the almsgiver, soup and tea were distributed to the poor of the locality. It is widely believed that Tay Lane derives its name from this charitable practice, preserving in local memory an act of compassion carried out at a time of great suffering.

Holy Wells and Continuity of Devotion

The veneration of holy wells in Ireland is a practice that long predates Christianity. Sacred springs were revered in pre-Christian belief as sources of healing and renewal. With the coming of Christianity, these sites were re-dedicated to saints, and the older reverence for water was absorbed into Christian devotional practice.

The popularity of visiting holy wells remained constant over the centuries and increased significantly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly following the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII and the later enforcement of the Penal Laws. As religious houses were dissolved, abandoned, or annexed, and Catholic worship was increasingly restricted, holy wells became places to which people returned repeatedly at different stages of their lives, seeking guidance, consolation, healing, and hope when other supports were denied to them.

Patrick Logan, in The Holy Wells of Ireland, records at least fifteen wells dedicated specifically to St Brigid in eleven counties, though he notes that many more were likely never documented. The persistence of these sites reflects the belief that a saint's holiness lingered around their well, and that prayers offered there were heard with particular favour.

Conclusion

St Brigid's Well at Tay Lane is more than a buried spring; it is a repository of collective memory, faith, and resilience. From early Christian devotion through Penal-era suppression, from charitable refuge during the Famine to its incorporation into the Mary Mercer School grounds, the well has continually adapted to changing social and political realities.

The current restoration campaign seeks not merely to uncover stone and water, but to restore continuity—between past and present, landscape and community, and between St Brigid's ancient legacy and its modern expression. In doing so, Rathcoole honours both its local heritage and one of Ireland's greatest saints.



LEGACY: Celebrating St Brigid's Day in Rathcoole were Meryvn Ennis and Mayor Pamela Kearns



FESTIVITIES: Entertaining the gathering during the service at St Brigid's well. See more photos on pages 48 & 49

Celebrating the arr Spring on St Brigid

Lá Fhéile Bhríde activities was a great success with h

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

CLONDALKIN'S St Brigid's Day Festival, or Lá Fhéile Bhríde Clondalkin, was a hit once more this year as hundreds enjoyed the festivities on Monday.

A walk from the city centre to St Brigid's Well, a poem celebrating the arrival of spring and workshops creating handcrafted pieces like St Brigid's crosses were among the highlights of the day.

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 organiser Eoin Ó Broin exclaimed that Monday's activities were a "great" success and that hundreds attended throughout the day with the rain absent.

Mr Ó Broin stated: "There were probably over 100 people by the time they got to the well! The rain stayed away. It flowed like the river, as one person said."

The 16-kilometre pilgrimage to St Brigid's Well on Boot Road in Clondalkin began at The Sanctuary in Dublin 7 and through Kilmainham, down the canal to Woodford, into Knockmeenagh and Newlands then to its destination.



SUCCESS: Geraldine, Elizah and Aisling making St Brigid's crosses in Áras Chrónáin

The day before, on St Brigid's Day, a special St Brigid's Cross was unveiled at the well, made by a Clondalkin-born artist based in America, Paul Nixon.

Nixon noted that Tom Keogh of Clondalkin Men's Shed reached out after being friends online for years and invited him to send a piece over for the festival.

The Clondalkin-born artist made the decision to deliver his St Brigid's Cross in-person at an event at the well that avoided the showers of the last week.

Nixon said: "I thought this an exciting thing for me, having lived here in Clondalkin for about 29 years before I took that leap of faith that it would be a small way of giving back."

90 people gathered at The Sanctuary on Monday morning and others joined along the



rival of l's Day

hundreds attending

way as the party made its way home, where a crowd awaited them and readings and speeches were made.

Lile Ní Hannracháin recited 'Anois Teacht an Earraigh' by Antoine Ó Raifteirí a poem which describes the coming of spring as depicted in the blind poet's rambles around the villages of Mayo.

Dr Karen Ward of Moon Mná had led the pilgrimage and carried out a fire and water ritual upon arrival at the well, and the Clondalkin Mummers performed clad in straw.

Attendees at the well then stepped through a hoop, signifying the end of the old year and walked into the realm of the new – based on the tradition of passing through a straw belt, or Crios Bríde.

Stepping through the circle into the future is also linked to a belief that it will protect those who died from illness for the coming year.

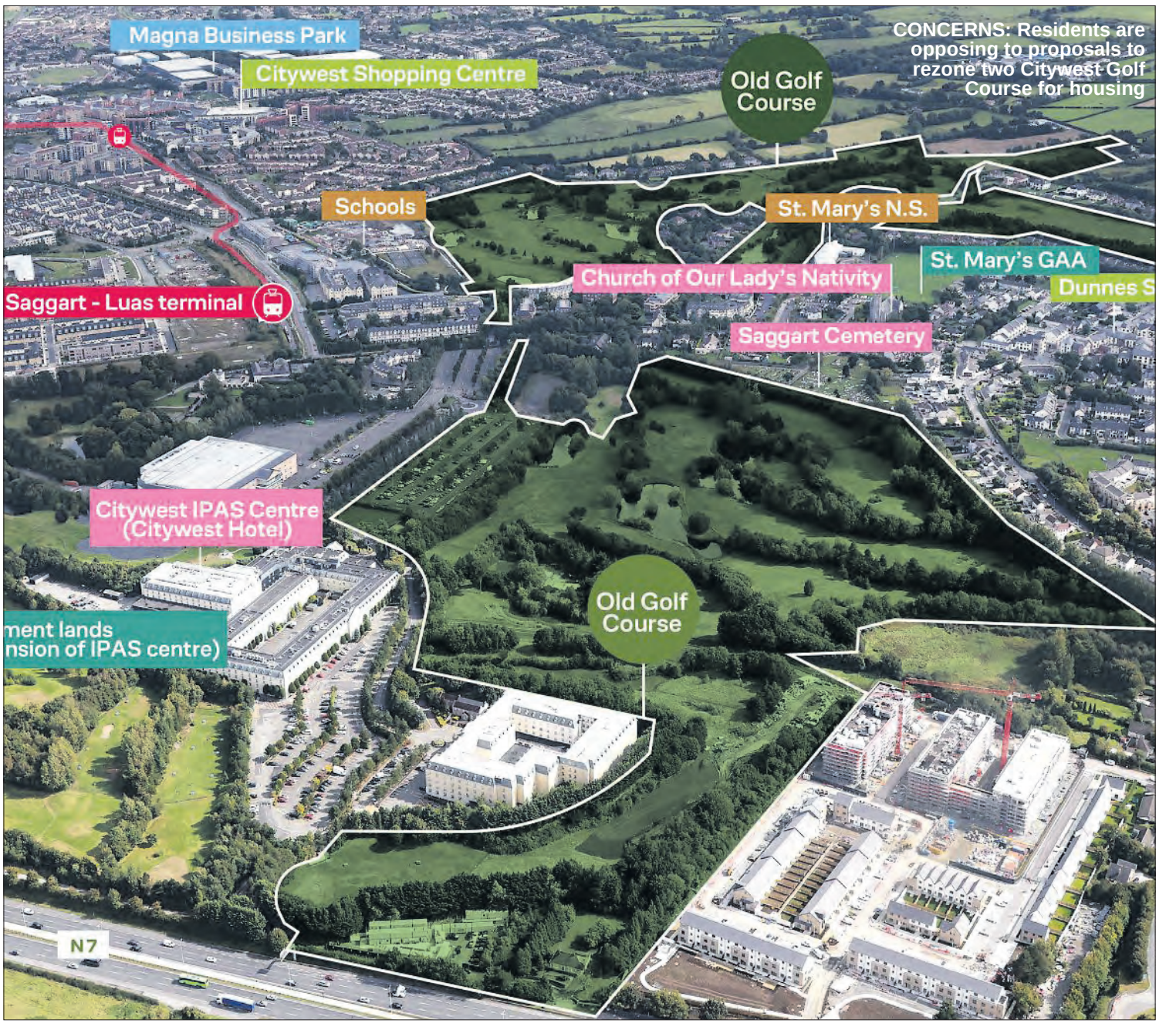
Then, festivities made their way to Áras Chrónáin, which was "a hive of activity" as three workshops got underway simultaneously.

"There was a steady enough flow of people from one o'clock. It got really busy when people came from the well between three and four, and we were there till five.

"Hundreds of people passed through the doors over the day, making Brigid's crosses, Brídeog dolls and Brat Bríde."

Eyes now are fixed on the year ahead and the fortune that the homage paid to St Brigid may bring.

Residents association to oppose rezoning of Citywest Golf Courses



Concerns raised over a potential 2,500 new units in the area

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

"ONCE rezoned and developed, this land will be lost to the community permanently."

A local community council has opposed the proposed rezoning of golf courses in Citywest as the county council seek to meet new housing targets.

The Citywest Community Council has made their opposition to the proposed rezoning of the former golf course lands in Citywest as part of a new housing push from the local authority.

The concerns of the CCC stem from Tetrarch's 'A New Era for Saggart' submission made to the county council that lists a potential for almost 2,500 new units in the area.

The 'Tetrarch Masterplan Presentation', as the submission document is labelled, lists potential for 2,453 homes in the lands of Sacra North and South in Citywest.

A statement from the community council reads: "We fully understand that South Dublin County Council is under significant pressure to supply homes to help alleviate the housing crisis.

"However, destroying Saggart village through major high-density and high-rise residential development with little to no supporting facilities is extremely short-sighted planning.

"It attempts to solve one crisis in the short-term, only to create another, more entrenched crisis for communities in the future."

The CCC noted that the areas of Citywest and Saggart are already unable to deal with the development that has taken place so far in the region.

Overcrowded schools, limited childcare places, overstretched GP services, traffic congestion and inadequate public transport capacity are examples of the struggles faced by the locality to keep up with population growth.

Public transport is cited as a strong positive by Tetrarch in their submission to South Dublin County Council and proximity to the Luas is mentioned several times, but CCC disputed this and stated that it "is not borne out by the lived reality of residents."

"It is well-documented that the Luas Red Line is already unfit for purpose for the current population of Saggart and Citywest.

"Trams are routinely over-capacity from before 7:00am each weekday morning, leaving commuters unable to board.

"In addition, Luas services do not run directly to Saggart, with passengers frequently required to disembark at Belgard to change trams.

"These changes are often unscheduled, as trams are regularly diverted from the Saggart route to serve Tallaght, causing further delays and uncertainty for commuters."

The local community council added that the suggestion that the public transport near the former golf course lands is adequate is "misleading."

CCC also noted opposition to the removal of a large green space in the local area and raised concerns regarding flood risk, drainage capacity and the track record of Tetrarch.

"Approving such rezoning without guaranteed, funded and delivered infrastructure would repeat the serious planning mistakes seen elsewhere, where housing was prioritised ahead of services, with long-term consequences for communities."

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 chairperson of the old Courthouse in Rathcoole, Sally Ryan-Graver.



TALENTED: Sally Ryan-Graver

The Echo – celebrating community for 45 years



DEDICATED: Sally Ryan-Graver

THIS week, we're honoured to feature Sally Ryan-Graver who is a fantastically talented Visual Media Artist based here in our own Rathcoole.

Sally is a lady dedicated to her art, so much so that we nearly didn't get to talk to her at all. What happened was, your humble correspondent called Sally on a recent Wednesday and we agreed to do the interview that Friday. So far so good. That Wednesday night though, was one of the nights when the spectacular Aurora Borealis made one of its rare visits to Irish skies. Sally, ever the opportunist, took herself up to the attic to get the best view possible of the aforementioned Northern Lights. What followed was an episode worthy of the Keystone Cops.

In her rush to get the perfect shot, Sally stuck her arm out of the skylight window and duly dropped her phone, sending it sliding down the roof and into the guttering. Sadly, like most of us, her phone is an absolutely essential part of her life so the rescue effort then began.

At first the thing couldn't be found and eventually, the ever resourceful citizens of Rathcoole got a crew together and through a combination of ladders, searchlights and I think at one stage even a helicopter, managed to retrieve it. Sally tells it better.

So we proceed, and when we finally got to talk I found out that Sally's early years weren't spent in the Rathcoole area.

"No, I'm originally from Montpelier Hill in Stoneybatter Dublin 7. We actually lived in quite a historic building, Cambridge House which was built for the 2nd Duke of Cambridge in the mid 1800s. By the time we moved in, it had been broken up into flats and I remember my mother being on the ball and as soon as one of our neighbours moved out, if they had a bigger flat, she'd speak to the Landlord and move us in."

One of eight children born to Larry and Molly Ryan, Sally went to Stanhope Street School and remembers it fondly, particularly one Sr Stanislaus and the plays she put on every year. It wasn't until she Married her husband Neville that she moved to Rathcoole and that was in 1982. Together they raised three boys - Alan, Conor and David in a place which was then really a very small country village.

"Rathcoole was very much a one horse town when we moved there, but it's always been a lovely place to live. We almost had the best of both worlds really, we were surrounded by nature but the Naas Road meant we had a direct connection to the city when we needed it."

Sally's working life began at ANCO, which was soon to become Fás and that's where her love affair with visual media really began.

"At Fás I did a one year traineeship in the Audio/Visual department and went on to become a curriculum officer involved in Audio/Visual work. This entailed taking photos and video of local initiatives in the area. I really enjoyed it and Fás was great for me in the sense that through them, I could always keep up with new developments and technology in the A/V world."

A few years in, Sally would be presented with an opportunity to expand on her skillset and qualifications.

"Fás started to get involved with University College Galway in distance learning and through them, I obtained a degree in Teaching and Training which I was delighted to receive. I've always believed in lifelong learning and the balance between my work and my studies at the time was perfect. I was still determined to expand and learn more and more. It felt like a great start, but I knew there was a lot more to learn and I was determined to learn it."

Sure enough, Sally then took evening classes at the National College of Art and Design on Thomas Street, soon emerging with a diploma in Art and Education.

"My family and all of the tutors at NCAD were really supportive of the idea of me following my artistic dreams so I went back and got my degree in Fine Art Media, which I got in 2016." Sally would be too modest to tell you that it was a first-class honours degree, luckily I'm not.

Just to put the icing on the cake, Sally then got her Masters in Fine Art, again from NCAD. Along the way to all of these achievements, Sally was participating in many prestigious exhibitions and having her work admired by hundreds upon hundreds of people.

Along with her passion for art, Sally is also very devoted to the natural world and the preservation of the world in the wider sense. So much so, that she embarked on an expedition to the Arctic Circle to document the damage done by climate change and upon her return, gave a presentation to the Physics Department at UCD on the subject.

When it came to applying her skills to her local area, it was actually her other half Neville who really got the ball rolling. "Well Neville had got involved with the Four Districts Woodland Group and he enlisted me to take some photos. I eventually got more involved and through the group, I get to contribute to the fine work of a great group of people. Everyone's very passionate about the ecology of our area and they all bring a different set of skills to the party. For my part, I record things with my camera and now I produce a calendar every year to raise funds for the group's efforts. We often get expert guest speakers in to talk about conservation and biodiversity. There are actually over 10,000 trees in our woodland so it's an important project for all of us."

Then there's the Rathcoole Camera Club which Sally set up in 2019 along with local like-minded people PJ Manning, Ian Campbell and Paul Roche. There's a story Sally can relate about a slightly disasterous trip the Camera Club took to the Saltee Islands off the Wexford coast involving a fishing trawler, a rubber dinghy and a very wet wade to the islands themselves. The club survived this though and is still going strong. They meet at the Community Centre in Rathcoole every fortnight.

Perhaps Sally's biggest passion currently is the revived Old Courthouse which is now a vibrant and growing arts centre for Rathcoole. Sally is the chairperson of the Old Courthouse Committee and she speaks enthusiastically about the various events and artists which have been hosted by the facility. There is plenty in the pipeline for the coming year at the Old Courthouse and you'll have to keep an eye on *The Echo* for updates as Sally can't really confirm anything yet.

Sally is an absolute dynamo and a truly dedicated member of the Rathcoole family. She loves the place and credits it with a lot of inspiration in her work, which is truly extraordinary. Don't just take my word for it, check it out for yourself on her website https://sallyryangraver.com

Thank God she found that phone.



HONOURS: Sally Ryan-Graver

Research points to a food desert area

Over 40% of people in D10 were battling food poverty issue

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

"THE research points to a food desert area."

A new cross-sector partnership has been launched to fight food poverty in Dublin 10 after research found over 40 per cent of people in D10 were battling the issue.

The group was formed after research published in June 2025 led by the Liffey Partnership showed 43.3 per cent of people in D10 were experiencing food poverty.

The new partnership has been set up to take action on that stark figure, which is nearly five times over the national average, and provide better services for areas like Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard.

The new coalition includes the Liffey Partnership, the HSE, Dublin City Council and local councillors, the Department of Social Protection, the Society of Saint Vincent De Paul, Familibase and Ballyfermot Family Resource Centre.

Liffey Partnership Community Food and Nutrition Worker Lauren Corbet stated that the new alliance is a way to combat the food insecurity highlighted by the research.

Corbet said: "We're just very keen that that wasn't research for research's sake and it doesn't just get parked on itself somewhere.

"So we're really like trying to move towards responding to the key findings in the research, and I suppose we have a lot of assets in the community in terms of food services and different supports and agencies.

"The alliance is about bringing the right players together."

Corbet noted that the problem of food poverty in D10 is a complex and systemic issue that warrants an interconnected approach.

The alliance will draw inspiration from progressive Scandinavian and European models will launch several "flagship" schemes aimed at improving food security and nutrition in the region.

An open community kitchen, as well as not-for-profit meal kits, collective advocacy, the coordination of local services and a cooperative community shop are the five planned flagship initiatives of the D10 Food Alliance.

The meal kit project is expected to be highlighted in the next month or two, according to Corbet, with space for 30 recipients in the initial rollout, and will consist of simple, easy recipes.

The research published last year also pointed to the high amount of takeaways present in Ballyfermot and the lack of grocery stores near Cherry Orchard.

"You can't make good choices without good options. It is fundamentally wrong that fresh, nutritious food is often considered a privilege in Ireland.

"We believe in the power of food to bring people together, so our mission is to fight for income inequality, build a healthful, dignified food environment and end the isolation of food poverty by creating warm, inclusive spaces, where everyone has a seat at the table."



PARTNERSHIP: Members of the new coalition

SDCC
Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL - PUBLICATION OF RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX ANNUAL DRAFT MAP FOR 2027 AND OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE REZONING REQUESTS ON FINAL MAP FOR 2026

An annual draft map, prepared in accordance with Section 653C, as modified by Section 653M of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997, has been published on the website maintained by South Dublin County Council and is available for inspection at its offices.

The annual draft map for 2027 has been prepared for the purposes of identifying land that satisfies the relevant criteria and is to be subject to the residential zoned land tax.

Residential properties, notwithstanding that they may be included on the annual draft map, shall not be chargeable to the residential zoned land tax.

Land which satisfies the relevant criteria is a reference to land that—

(a) is included in a development plan, in accordance with section 10(2) (a) of the Act of 2000 or section 43(6) of the Act of 2024, or local area plan, in accordance with section 19(2)(a) of the Act of 2000, zoned—
  (i) solely or primarily for residential use, or
  (ii) for a mixture of uses, including residential use,

(b) it is reasonable to consider may have access, or be connected, to public infrastructure and facilities, including roads and footpaths, public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply, necessary for dwellings to be developed and with sufficient service capacity available for such development, and

(c) it is reasonable to consider is not affected, in terms of its physical condition, by matters to a sufficient extent to preclude the provision of dwellings, including contamination or the presence of known archaeological or historic remains,

but which is not land—

(i) that is referred to in paragraph (a)(i) and, having regard only to development (within the meaning of the Act of 2000 or, on and from the commencement of Part 4 of the Act of 2024, within the meaning of the Act of 2024) which is not unauthorised development (within the meaning of the Act of 2000 or, on and from the commencement of Part 4 of the Act of 2024, within the meaning of the Act of 2024), is in use as premises, in which a trade or profession is being carried on, that is liable to commercial rates, that it is reasonable to consider is being used to provide services to residents of adjacent residential areas,

(ii) that is referred to in paragraph (a)(ii), unless it is reasonable to consider that the land is vacant or idle,

(iia) the development of which would not conform with—
  (I) in a case in which the land is zoned in a development plan under the Act of 2000, the phased basis in accordance with which development of land is to take place under the plan, as detailed in the core strategy included in that plan in accordance with section 10(2A)(d) of the Act of 2000, or
  (II) in a case in which the land is zoned in a local area plan, the objective, consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the development plan for the area in respect of which the local area plan is prepared, of development of land on a phased basis, included in the local area plan in accordance with section 19(2) of the Act of 2000, or
  (III) in a case in which the land is zoned in a development plan under the Act of 2024, the order of priority or phasing (where such order of priority or phasing is based on the timing of the provision of any public infrastructure and facilities, as referred to in paragraph (b)), if any, for development indicated in the development plan or an urban area plan, priority area plan or coordinated area plan (in each case within the meaning of the Act of 2024) for an area within which the land is situated.

  on the date on which satisfaction of the criteria in this section is being assessed,

(iii) that it is reasonable to consider is required for, or is integral to, occupation by—
  (I) social, community or governmental infrastructure and facilities, including infrastructure and facilities used for the purposes of public administration or the provision of education or healthcare,
  (II) transport facilities and infrastructure,
  (III) energy infrastructure and facilities,
  (IV) telecommunications infrastructure and facilities,
  (V) water and wastewater infrastructure and facilities,
  (VI) waste management and disposal infrastructure, or
  (VII) recreational infrastructure, including sports facilities and playgrounds,

(iv) that is subject to a statutory designation that may preclude development, or

(v) on which the derelict sites levy is payable in accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990.

Inclusion or Exclusion to the Annual Draft Map

Submissions on the annual draft map may be made (by one medium only)

- Online via the Council's Public Consultation Portal: http://consult.sdublincoco.ie

Or

- in writing to Senior Executive Officer, Forward Planning Section, Land Use Planning and Transportation Department, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 not later than 1 April 2026, regarding—
  (I) either the inclusion in or exclusion from the final map of specific sites, or
  (II) the date on which a site first satisfied the relevant criteria.

Submissions should include a name and address, reasons for inclusion or exclusion of lands, along with a map of scale 1:1,000 (urban area) or 1:2,500 (rural area) where the submission is made by a landowner, clearly identifying the area of land subject of the submission.

Any such written submissions received by 1 April 2026 other than such elements of a submission which may constitute personal data, shall be published on the Council's Public Consultation Portal – http://consult.sdublincoco.ie – within the relevant statutory period.

The proposed inclusions and proposed exclusions on the annual draft map are subject to submissions received. Any landowners who supports the exclusion of their land should make a submission in support of such exclusion.

Rezoning Requests

Where land is identified on the final map for 2026, published on 31 January 2026, as being subject to the residential zoned land tax, a person may, in respect of aforementioned land that such a person owns, make a submission to South Dublin County Council requesting a variation of the zoning of that land.

Submissions requesting a variation of the zoning may be made (by one medium only)

- Online via the Council's Public Consultation Portal: http://consult.sdublincoco.ie

Or

- in writing to Senior Executive Officer, Forward Planning Section, Land Use Planning and Transportation Department, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 not later than 1 April 2026.

Any such submission should include evidence of ownership, detailed reasons for any rezoning request, which may include continuation of an ongoing economic activity, along with a map to a scale of 1:1,000 (urban) or 1:2,500 (rural) clearly identifying the relevant plot of land.

Any such written rezoning requests received by 1 April 2026 other than such elements of a submission which may constitute personal data, shall be published on the Council's Public Consultation Portal – http://consult.sdublincoco.ie – within the relevant statutory period. A rezoning request acknowledgement letter containing details of the recent planning history of the land will be issued by 30 April 2026 from South Dublin County Council to the landowner. This acknowledgement letter can be used to support a claim to an exemption from the tax arising in respect of the land which is the subject of the request for 2026. This claim must be made in the 2026 annual residential zoned land tax return, which must be made to the Revenue Commissioners on or before 23 May 2026. Please see http://www.revenue.ie for details.

All rezoning requests made will be considered by South Dublin County Council having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

www.sdcc.ie

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February 5, 2026

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Local authority shortlisted for eight LAMA categories

Awards are a platform to showcase local initiatives and remarkable achievements

THE Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) have announced the shortlist for the 2026 LAMA All-Ireland Community & Council Awards.

These awards shine a spotlight on the incredible collaboration between communities and councils.

They provide a platform to showcase outstanding local initiatives, honour unsung heroes, and acknowledge the remarkable contributions that enrich and strengthen our communities with SDCC shortlisted in 8 of the 24 available categories.

South Dublin County Council has been recognised for the following eight projects - Council of The Year, Best Enterprise & Start-Up Hub: Work IQ,, Best Community Scale Enhancements: Grand Canal Greenway, Best Transformative Capital Projects: Corkagh Park Regeneration , Reimagining Public Places Award: Parthalán Place, Best Sustainable Infrastructure & Climate Action: Innovation Apartments, Community Wellbeing Initiative: Regeneration of West Tallaght Parks and Best CSR Project in a Community: Tesco Ireland Community Fund

Colm Ward, Chief Executive of SDCC, said: "We are delighted to be shortlisted in eight categories for the 2026 LAMA Awards including Council of the Year. This is significant recognition and endorsement of our ambition, innovation and commitment which highlights the impact of our work in delivering transformative projects that support sustainable urban development, climate action and thriving communities. I want to acknowledge and thank our elected members, our staff and our project teams, whose commitment, dedication and expertise continue to drive positive change and create lasting opportunities for everyone who lives, works and invests in South Dublin."



SHORTLISTED: Work IQ in Tallaght and (inset) Corkagh Park Cafe

Mayor Cllr Pamela Kearns, said: "This year's LAMA nominations are a strong endorsement of the vision, commitment and hard work that goes into delivering real outcomes for the people of South Dublin. To be shortlisted in eight categories is a significant achievement and reflects the strength of collaboration between our communities, elected members and council staff. These projects demonstrate how local government can lead positive change, enhance quality of life and build sustainable, vibrant places for current and future generations."

The 2026 Awards will take place at the Dublin Royal Convention Centre on February 28. This year celebrates three major milestones: the 20th anniversary of the Awards, 40 years of the LAMA Executive

Priory Market to welcome new businesses as vendors move on

THE new year is bringing some menu changes to Tallaght's Priory Market, as they are set to welcome three exciting new businesses soon, *reports Ellen Gough.*

Priory Market, which launched in June 2025, is home to 12 individual food stalls, with three of their original venders now moving "on to new adventures".

Mama's Boy, which offered a signature take on the Vietnamese street-food staple bánh mì, announced their departure from Priory on January 13.

"It's with great sadness that I have to announce Mama's Boy will be ceasing operations indefinitely," owner Rory Carron said, adding that Sunday, January 18 was to be their last day at the market.

"It's been an incredible journey over the last three years but I've decided it's time to move on to something else," he said, thanking his customers, suppliers and "the countless independent food producers that helped me along the way".

Latin-Irish fusion stall Flavouritos, owned by Venezuelan chef Marian Garcia Vivolo, announced their stall closure in December, while Zaira, which offered Lebanese cuisine with a Brazilian twist, also closed late last year.

Speaking to *The Echo*, Priory Market's Enterprise and Project Manager Amy Keatinge wished all three "every success in their next chapter", adding that "we loved having them at Priory Market and are grateful for the incredible flavours and experiences they brought to our customers".

She said Priory Market is a "catalyst for other start-ups and artisans", and aims to encourage "greater social and commercial life back to Tallaght village and contribute to a sense of pride of place and a thriving atmosphere".

"With that being said, we have no permanent 'lease' here – Priory Market offers a shared rental model which gives food entrepreneurs the space, flexibility and platform to connect with a vibrant community of food lovers."

One new offering now on the menu at Priory Market is Priory Potager, which launched on December 8, and serves up traditional Irish dishes such as stew and coddle, with two more new vendors to come, according to Amy.

"We're also thrilled to welcome three exciting new businesses soon and can't wait to share their culinary offerings with our customers," she said.

"Priory Market remains a vibrant launchpad for new ideas, cuisines, and local food businesses to shine."



START-UPS: Priory Market

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Plans for library and civic building in Adamstown

Proposed five-storey development will include an enterprise centre

A PLANNING application has been lodged for a long-awaited library and civic building in Adamstown, *reports Ellen Gough.*

The proposed development will include a five-storey civic building accommodating a new library for the Adamstown community and an enterprise centre uses as well as bicycle parking and adjustments to Adamstown Avenue for "provision of Active Travel infrastructure, including a bus stop, bus shelter and a loading bay on the south side of the road".

According to the design proposal submitted to South Dublin County Council by developers Clear Developments Infrastructure DAC, the main library will occupy the first three levels of the civic building, with primary library services and "dedicated areas for children's services and general collections" on the ground and first floor, and additional library space, "quiet study areas and multi-purpose rooms" on the second floor.

The enterprise centre, spread across the third and fourth floors, will offer "flexible office accommodation that can be configured to meet the specific requirements of future tenants".

In the SDCC capital programme 2026 to 2028, presented to elected members at the first full council meeting of the year on January 12, the council said they will be investing "€14,194,000 in delivering new library facilities at Adamstown and Citywest and enhancing the existing library in Clondalkin and fitting out Rathcoole Courthouse to provide a new library hub there."

The proposed civic building will, along with a proposed retail and residential development (subject to separate planning application) "comprise the final parcel of undeveloped land within the boundary of the Adamstown Town centre," the design proposal stated.

This application is being made in accordance with the Adamstown Planning Scheme 2014, as amended, and relates to a proposed development within the Adamstown Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme Area.

The plans for the Adamstown Civic Centre can be viewed on the SDCC planning portal and the final date for third party observations and submissions is Wednesday, February 25.

A decision is due from the planning authority by March 18, 2026.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



APPLICATION: An artist impression of the building planned for Adamstown

Harmful effect for EU of trade policy uncertainty

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

WITH the looming threat of additional US tariffs over Greenland and EU discussions on retaliatory actions, Chambers Ireland has said that new analysis underlines and quantifies the harmful effect of trade policy uncertainty on investment throughout the European Union.

The latest report by Chambers Ireland and Eurochambres – the association of European chambers of commerce - is based on data from 24 European countries, spanning the past 25 years.

The results show the impact of trade policy uncertainty, negatively effect a country like Ireland which is export-orientated.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Chambers Ireland Chief Executive Ian Talbot said that the turbulent international situation has specific and direct economic consequences for Ireland.



REAL THREAT: Ian Talbot, Chambers Ireland Chief Executive

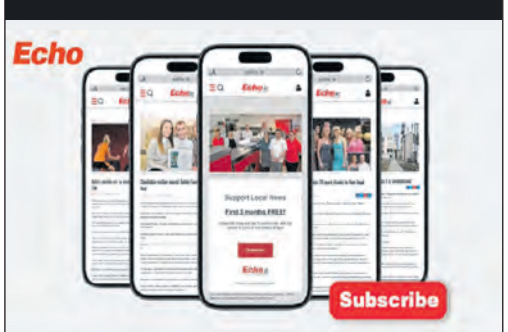
"As a small, export oriented economy, we cannot ignore the real threat that trade wars and rising protectionism pose to investment in Ireland. Without investment, we cannot hope for the growth, job creation and competitiveness that businesses need to prosper and maintain their socio-economic model.

Recent global trade developments clearly illustrate these effects. While the signing of the EU-Mercosur agreement last weekend raised hopes of more predictable international trading conditions, benefits will now not be realised until the Agreement undergoes referral to the European Court of Justice. Renewed tensions with the United States are also once again undermining business confidence.

At a time when uncertainty with one of our biggest markets looks set to continue, opposition to Free Trade Agreements like Mercosur must be reviewed by Government. We urge all parties to support efforts to widen our trade relationships to help secure our future."

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€100k to support groups and non-profit businesses

Microsoft funding will help projects focus on environmental and digital skilling

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

THE Microsoft Ireland Community Fund 2026 for south and west Dublin was launched this week with €100,000 to support individuals, community groups, schools and non-profits across the county.

The new fund will be managed by ChangeX to help community projects focused on environmental sustainability and digital skilling.

Minister of State Colm Brophy TD joined Microsoft at Áras Chrónáin in Clondalkin, to unveil the launch of the fund.

The event brought together 35 local groups, including schools, local sports clubs, NGOs, who received support from last year's fund to celebrate their achievements.

As part of this year's €100,000 fund, communities will be able to choose from a portfolio of ideas that have already had a positive impact in other communities around the world.

They include hands-on STEM workshops to enhance digital skills for students, an initiative to support the development of local biodiversity, a project to encourage sharing goods and resources across the community, and an educational programme to promote knowledge about renewable energy.

Last year's fund alone engaged more than 11,000 local people near Microsoft's data centre operations in Clondalkin.

In recent years, successive funds have supported 103 different community projects, focusing on the development of digital skills and empowering local sustainability, and benefitted nearly 30,000 local people.

Since 2008, Microsoft has invested €4.5m in projects supporting local communities near its data centre operations.

"At Microsoft, our mission is to empower every person to achieve more. As we invest in and operate data centres across Ireland and globally, we recognise that this comes with both responsibility and opportunity," said Lavinia Morris, general manager of Microsoft's EMEA data centre operations.



CELEBRATION: At the event is Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Pamela Kearns; Minister of State and Dublin South West TD Colm Brophy; Lavinia Morris, General Manager of Microsoft's EMEA Data Centre Operations; and local community changemakers Photo by Naoise Culhane

€3.5m in grants allocated for TU Dublin projects



FUNDING: TU Dublin have been allocated funding for projects

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

OVER 3.5 million in grants has been allocated to Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin).

TUD, an amalgamation of technical universities, which includes TUD Tallaght, will benefit from a financial boost of €3.5m.

The funds can be used to support a number of projects including small-scale building works, health and safety works, energy efficiency, access upgrades, refurbishment and equipment purchases or renewal.

The Devolved Capital Grant announcement for Dublin comes from an overall package of over €41 million for 19 higher institutions around the country including 12 universities, two Institutes of Technologies, and five smaller colleges.

The investment will "drive and deliver more sustainable campuses" and "ensure our campuses are upheld to highest possible standards", according to Fianna Fáil TD Tom Brabazon.

"This funding will not only help drive and deliver a more sustainable campus into the future but will ensure the campus will be upheld to the highest possible standards. I am delighted that these Higher Education Institutions and universities across Dublin can now move forward and future proof their campuses with this funding, providing them with any essential upgrades they need.

Brabazon believes the funds will allow the likes of TUD Tallaght to invest in works aligned with climate objectives.

"We understand the challenges that exist for our third level institutions in meeting climate targets, and this grant is there to support them."



property

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Credit Union appeal refused for office building



VISUAL: An artist impression of the plans for Lucan Credit Union

Plans to demolish disused bungalow on lands unoccupied for circa eight years

By **Ellen Gough**
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A COUNCIL decision to refuse permission for a new office building for Lucan District Credit Union has been upheld by An Coimisiún Pleanála, on the grounds it would "seriously injure the visual and residential amenities of the area".

The credit union had applied for permission in July 2025 to demolish a disused bungalow, The Laurels in Ballydowd, Lucan, which has been "unoccupied for circa eight years and in advanced disrepair" and to replace it with a three-story office building and cycle and car parking areas with EV charging points.

They lodged an appeal with An Coimisiún Pleanála after South Dublin County Council's planning department refused permission for the development in August, asking the commission to "review the architectural merits of the proposal afresh and assess the application de novo".

Permission was refused on the grounds that the design of the three-story office building "is at odds with the surrounding street context of Lucan Road… characterised by low rise single and two storey dwellings", and that it would overlook residential properties on either of the site.

The council also noted that no "sunlight and daylight and/or an overshadowing assessment" had been included in the application, and cited the many public objections and representations that revolved around the height of the proposed development, loss of built heritage and village character, light pollution and overshadowing, a dangerous precedent for commercial development in the area and poor engagement with immediate neighbours.

In their appeal, Lucan District Credit Union stated that because they are a not-for-profit enterprise, the proposed development is not commercial but rather a "bespoke, architect- designed facility for owner-occupiers to create a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, member-owned facility".

They also complained that eight of the submitted documents were not made available by SDCC on the online planning portal and were inaccessible during the consultation period and that this had caused "confusion" over the application.

According to the inspectors report to ACP, the council responded that while the files were "erroneously classed as private" on their planning portal and not made publicly visible, they were visible to all council staff involved in the planning process.

"I am satisfied that all relevant files were available to council officers to allow them to fully evaluate the application," the report said.

In their decision published on January 21, ACP upheld the council's decision to refuse permission as the "proposed demolition of a single store residential property and its replacement with a three storey financial services/office building would fail to integrate well into this established residential area" by virtue of the proposed use, height, scale and design.

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

NCT Centre to be converted into a 'drive thru centre' in Ballymount

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

PLANNING permission has been granted for an NCT centre in Walkinstown to be converted into a 'drive-thru' centre.

Oakway Test Centre on the Lower Ballymount Road was granted permission fo alterations to the building to "facilitate the conversion of the existing test centre into a drive-through test centre in line with incoming RSA/CVRT regulatory policy".

According to the planning application submitted to the council in November last year, the alterations will be "mostly internal, including the re-positioning of partitions and the vehicular test equipment to facilitate the proposed drive-through circulation route".

"Externally, there are alterations to the front facade including the removal of the glazed screen of the existing disused showroom and the insertion in that area of two new vehicular openings that will be similar to the one existing vehicular opening."

No submissions or objections were lodged against the conversion, and South Dulin County Council's planning department granted permission for the development on January 21.



GRANTED: Plans to convert an NCT Centre into a 'drive thru centre'

The application also included proposals for a new signage element but did not "fully detailed the proposed new sign, notably what the sign would display, lettering and ifany illumination is proposed", the report from the planning authority noted.

However, they said a condition of granting planning permission for the conversion would address this by including a condition that the sign would meet the "criteria for signage as outlined in the SDCC Development Plan 2022-2028 with regard to dimensions and illumination".

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme

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Appeals are lodged against plans for old Chadwicks site

‘Dramatic change of use’ with 588 residential apartments proposed at Walkinstown site

By **Ellen Gough**
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APPEALS have been lodged against a major mixed-use residential and commercial development at the former Chadwicks site in Walkinstown that would mean a “dramatic change to the use” of the site.

South Dublin County Council granted planning permission in December for a large-scale residential development (LRD) of 588 residential apartments (291 one-beds, 238 two-beds and 59 three-beds), a childcare facility and six commercial/retail units in four blocks ranging in height from 5 to 12 storeys.

The plans from Steeplefield Limited include the demolition of the former Chadwicks Builders Merchant development in Greenhills Industrial Estate.

However other businesses within the Greenhills estate have now lodged appeals with An Coimisiún Pleanála over the decision to locate such a significant residential development within such an industrial area.

An appeal lodged on behalf of KeyWaste Greenview Waste Facility, Greenhills Road, noted that the proposed “siting of a new residential block adjacent to a busy 24-hour waste facility could generate undue concerns regarding amenity impacts, potentially undermining the effective and uninterrupted operation of the facility”.

“The proposal would give rise to a significant risk of land-use conflict, with the potential to undermine the continued and lawful operation and commercial viability of the facility, which operates in accordance with its environmental permissions,” their appeal read.

They asked An Coimisiún Pleanála to reconsider the “appropriateness” of the LRD, and whether it “would prejudice the ongoing operation of the existing waste facility”.

An appeal was also lodged by Ravensburg Unlimited Company who own a site to the west of the development used as a “mobile concrete pump hire depot”.

They expressed concern that the LRD proposal “fails to achieve a reasonable level of integration between the appeal site and the Ravensburg site”.

“The proposed development by Steeplefield, given the proposed adjacent apartment buildings, will make it very difficult or impossible for Ravensburg's subsidiary company Concrete Pumping Ltd which operates a mobile concrete pump hire business from this premises to continue to operate as it has truck movements very early in the morning (e.g. 3am) and into late in the evenings with loading and unloading of equipment at those early and late times,” the appeal read.

They also stated redevelopment of the Chadwick’s site must also “protect and respect the existing industrial operation and the future development potential of the Ravensburg site”

Funded by the Local Democracy Reporting Scheme



APPEAL: An artist impression of the plans at the former Chadwicks site in Walkinstown

Citywest office facility on the market



A PRESTIGIOUS headquarters, logistics and office facility located in Citywest is now on the market for sale or for lease, r*eports Ellen Gough.*

34 Magna Avenue, Magna Business Park, Citywest is a prime logistics or industrial facility with superb staff amenities extending to approximately 149,665 sq ft and is available for immediate occupation.

The high bay logistics facility of steel portal frame construction, with a clear internal height of approximately 12 metres, incorporates 14 dock levellers and two level access doors, with 17 HGV parking spaces.

The quality three storey office and staff facilities building extends to 11,955 sq ft, finished to include suspended ceilings incorporating recessed light fittings, plastered and painted walls, perimeter trunking with power and data points

Magna Business Park is part of the wider Citywest development and benefits from 24/7 on-site security patrols, CCTV and high quality landscaping.

Citywest is an established location for warehouse occupiers within close proximity to Citywest Business Campus, Southwest Business Park and Magna Business Park

Just 9 minutes walk from 34 Magna Avenue, and with its own LUAS Stop, Citywest Shopping Centre provides a wealth of staff amenities unrivalled by other industrial & logistics developments.

The subject property is also a six-minute drive to the Naas Road N7 and the M50 linking the property to the wider Dublin area as well as Cork, Limerick and Waterford

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PEUGEOT

Toyota Yaris Cross Leads 261 sales for sixth January in a row


Toyota Yaris Cross

BUILDING on its success as Ireland's best-selling car brand in 2025, Toyota has once again led the market in January, outselling every other manufacturer to secure its position as the number one car brand for the sixth consecutive year, further reinforcing Toyota's status as Ireland's most trusted car brand*.

At the heart of this success is the Toyota Yaris Cross, now Ireland's best-selling car with its broad appeal as a compact, great-value hybrid that suits everyday driving, from urban commuting to weekend journeys. Its combination of hybrid efficiency, SUV-inspired styling and practicality has resonated strongly with Irish drivers,

This February, Irish drivers who choose Toyota can explore an extensive line-up of efficient, low-emission vehicles to suit every lifestyle, complemented by a range of attractive offers on new car purchases, including the all-new Aygo X Hybrid, Toyota's most affordable hybrid and the new all-electric Toyota bZ with a range of up to 567kms**, both available to test drive now.

With a passenger model range that is now over 99% electrified, Toyota's focus remains firmly on delivering innovative, accessible and practical electrified solutions that meet the needs of Irish drivers. The commitment to Irish drivers is supported by its 41 dealerships nationwide who are on hand to help any drivers looking to purchase a new car in 2026. The growing popularity of electric vehicles is evident from recent SIMI figures as Electric Car sales reached 5.1% an 2.89% growth compared to January 2025.

This year, Toyota strengthens its electrified lineup with the arrival of four new models in Ireland: the fully electric Toyota C-HR+, arriving in March, the all-new RAV4, available in Hybrid and Plug-in hybrid, which will take to Irish roads from March and June respectively, and the bZ Touring, with up to 600 litres of boot space, will be available from April.

Toyota is supporting buyers with a comprehensive range of February offers, available across its nationwide network. These offers are designed to help drivers make the move to more efficient vehicles more accessible, while providing flexibility and value across Toyota's most popular models.

Toyota models included in the February offers include:

- Aygo X Hybrid - €500 Trade-In Booster and APR of 6.5%
- Yaris Hybrid - €750 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Yaris Cross Hybrid – €750 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Corolla Hatchback Hybrid - €1,500 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Corolla Saloon Hybrid – €1,250 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Corolla Cross Hybrid – €1,000 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Toyota C-HR Hybrid – €1,500 Trade-In Booster and APR of 5.9%
- Toyota C-HR Plug-in Hybrid – €2,000 Trade-In Booster or APR of 3.9%
- Toyota C-HR+ - €2,000 Trade-In Booster or lower APR of 3.9%
- Toyota bZ – €2,000 Trade-In Booster or lower APR of 3.9%
- Prius – €2,500 Trade-In Booster or APR of 3.9%

Zoë Bradley, Head of Marketing Communications and Corporate Affairs at Toyota Ireland, said: "We are delighted to retain the number one position in Ireland and to continue supporting drivers as mobility keeps moving forward. More people are choosing cars that fit how they live today, from everyday commuting to spontaneous weekend trips, and it's a great start to the year to now have the Yaris Cross hybrid as the best-selling car in January.

With the support of our fantastic dealer network, Toyota is making the transition to hybrid, plug-in hybrid and fully electric simpler and more accessible for customers across the country. Our February offers help a new generation of Irish drivers lower emissions while enjoying great design, performance and the reassurance of choosing a car they can trust."

For information on Toyota's latest offers, please visit https://www.toyota.ie/ or contact your local Toyota dealership today.



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Sharon brings her new show 'Jukebox Donkey' to the Civic

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

SOMETIMES life feels like you're nothing more than a "jukebox donkey", constantly playing someone else's tune.

Sharon Mannion has been bursting to talk about her experience on Britain's Got Talent, and now that she finally can, she is ready to tell all.

In arguably the "lowest point in Anglo-Irish relations since the famine", Sharon Mannion was invited onto Britain's Got Talent only to find her "4 Yesses – Simon Cowell loving" performance on the cutting room floor.

She also found herself on a Ryanair flight home, "tail between her legs to the family she had envisaged being raised by nannies in a separate compartment of her private plane."

Following the runaway success of 'Sharondipity', Sharon is back with a brand new show.

In it, she will be spilling the "hilarious and sometimes heartbreaking beans on showbiz letdowns, the disappointment of meeting your heroes, parenting chaos and the absurd balancing act of chasing success only to find yourself serving tiny divas at home."

This week, *The Echo* sat down with Sharon to discuss 'Jukebox Donkey', which performs in the Civic Theatre on February 27 at 8pm.

Tickets are on sale now.

What can you tell us about 'Jukebox Donkey' without giving too much away?

There's lots in there, really. The germ of the idea was about my experience of being on Britain's Got Talent last year (and ending up on the cutting room floor!!), but that led on to other ideas about celebrity and failure and what it all means. It's basically the ramblings of a madwoman, with songs!! As well as talking about where I'm generally at in life, like everyone else, I'm just trying to keep things ticking over, get enough sleep, maintain a social life and raise a couple of kids in my spare time.

What has been your favourite part of working on this show, and why?

I had a lot of fun writing the songs. We got a piano (for free, off Twitter!) a couple of years ago, so I love to sit at it and pretend I'm Elton John. Somewhere in my future I'd like to make an album with a shit-hot producer. (I could totes be the next Taylor Swift if I put my mind to it, no bother….) I think I probably like writing songs because it just involves wandering around the house with a guitar and singing little ideas out loud with nobody in particular paying attention. It's quite freeing, even if it does drive my family mad.

What have been some of the biggest challenges involved with preparing for this show, and how have you navigated them?

There was a point in the summer where I had a three-month-long panic attack that I wouldn't have the show ready in time!! It's such a stressful experience to see tickets being sold for a show you haven't even written yet! By the time I debuted it at Galway Comedy Festival late last year, I was in a heap! Thankfully, it went great, and even though the show itself went by in a bit of a blur, I definitely remember enjoying myself and having the craic. The feedback has been lovely too; the kind of audience who come to my shows are a bunch of sounders.

You had a very successful and eventful couple of years with the Dublin Story Slam, 'Bad Sisters', 'Small Town Big Story', 'Sharondipity', Glastonbury, your debut short film 'Grand' and now 'Jukebox Donkey'; how do you feel looking back on everything you have been involved in in just over a year?

It's nice to be reminded of it, as this business can be all about moving on to the next thing; it can be really difficult to pause and take stock. I really enjoy all aspects of my work. Some days sitting in my PJs and writing all day is the BEST THING EVER, and some days, that very same thing makes me want to punch myself in the face. Ultimately, nothing beats the live shows. They're really where you get to let loose, and I really enjoy feeding off the energy in the room and having the craic with whoever has come to see me. I host a lot of gigs, and I genuinely love getting to know people in the room; I've tried to incorporate elements of that into this show. No one ever thinks they're interesting, but humans are endlessly fascinating to me.

What is next for you after this? Do you have any more gigs or shows in the pipeline this year, or will you be taking a well-deserved rest first?

I'd love to say I'll take a rest, but the reality is that I'm already thinking about writing my next show, so it never ends, really!! I'm starting a new podcast called Middle Rage with Jennifer Zamparelli and Norma Sheahan, so I'll be busy promoting that. Then there'll be the usual festivals in the summer, the kids go back to school in September, and sure, it's a hop, skip and a jump from there to Christmas, and we do it all again!

What are your hopes for this show, or just 2026 in general?

The hard part of putting a show together is writing it all on your lonesome and trying to decide if what you're doing is funny or if you're having a nervous breakdown of some kind. Now that it's up on its feet, it's a joy, so the hope and goal for this show is that I remember to enjoy it.



HILARIOUS: Sharon Mannion brings her show to the Civic

I always do, though, to be honest. You can be running around like a blue-arsed fly beforehand, but once I walk out onto the stage, there's nowhere else I'd rather be.

Who would you like to thank for helping you put 'Jukebox Donkey' together?

MYSELF! (and my husband Danny for talking me down from the ledge on more than one occasion) I should also thank my kids in case they read this someday, even though they were more of a distraction than anything else. A cute one, though. Most of the time ….



35th anniversary celebrations

FOR KILNAMANAGH TWIRLERS

Photos by **Leslie Evans**

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Georgia, Millie, Sophia and Laoise



Nichole and Sarah



Ann-Marie, Sue, Debbie, Catherine, Vanessa, Eleanor and Natasha



Members of Kilnamanagh Twirlers during the celebrations in Kilnamanagh Community Centre



Linda, Amy, Laura, Jade and Amanda



Sophie, Katie, Abigail, Emma, Caoimhe and Leah



Shenda, Gary, Melissa, Aria and Darla

‘A Little History of Neary’s’ sheds light on colourful story of pub

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"WE were approached by Dr Daryl Hendley Rooney, the author of a book about Neary’s pub in Dublin city." explains Aidan Hodson of the Crumlin and Walkinstown History Group.

The group presents a talk by Dr Daryl Hendley Rooney, a curator at the Little Museum of Dublin and a Crumlin native, about Neary's Bar and Lounge and its Crumlin connections.

Neary's Bar and Lounge is an iconic Dublin institution. For over 130 years, the pub has catered to thirsty Dubliners of all classes and castes, talents and tastes. A new book, 'A Little History of Neary's', sheds light on the colourful story of the pub, featuring archival treasures and never-before-seen photographs.

The book also features new stories about some of Dublin's great characters, from Brenda Fricker and Phil Lynott to William 'Bird' Flanagan and Maureen Potter.

Research for the book uncovered an unlikely Crumlin connection: the eponymous Neary family lived in Crumlin.

Join the book's author, Daryl Hendley Rooney, for a talk that explores the story behind Dublin's "greatest" theatre bar, including its Crumlin connections.

According to Aidan, this talk was brought about when Dr Rooney suggested that he could "give a talk to our group about Thomas Neary, his connection with Crumlin".

He will also be telling stories about the pub and its characters and its part in the life and times of Dublin over the years.

The group was pleased that Walkinstown Library was in a position to host this talk and that it has generated such interest among the public.

A major issue is normally finding a date that suits the speaker, the group and the venue. This has worked out, and the group are looking forward to the event and hope all goes well on the night.

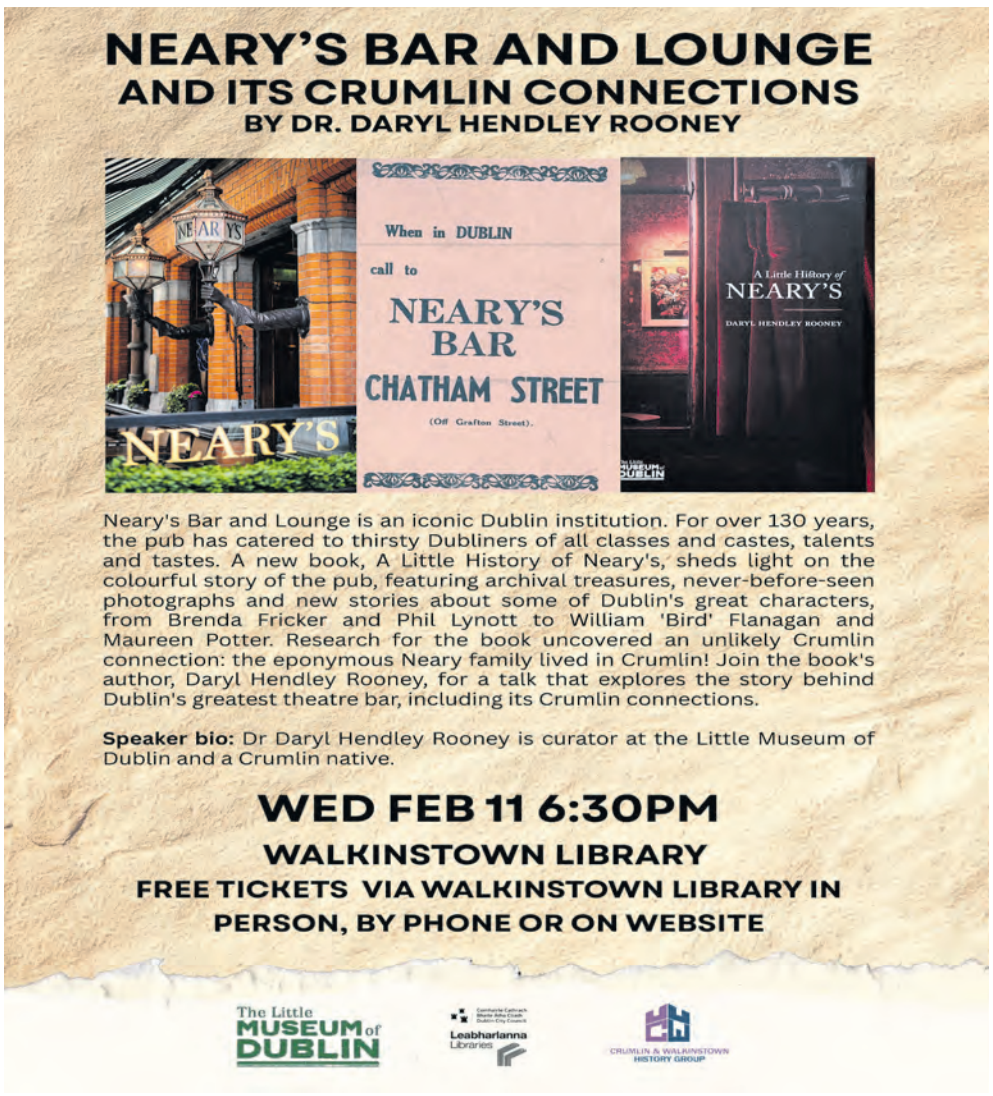
They are currently working on their programme for this year and plan to have a number of talks during the year.

After the talk in February by Dr Rooney, they are planning another talk for our March meeting, which will be on March 11 at 6.30pm.

This will be given by a member of the Crumlin and Walkinstown History Group and will tell the story of the Purcells, one of the big landowners in Crumlin in the past.

The Crumlin and Walkinstown History Group are also working on their annual History Festival, which will be held in June. They hope to have further talks later in the year.

Finally, the group will be announcing further details in the coming weeks on their website, www.crumlinwalkisntownhistory.i.e..



The Crumlin and Walkinstown History Group would like to thank Dr Rooney for agreeing to give the talk and Walkinstown Library for hosting the event, which takes place on February 11 from 6:30 to 8pm.

Free tickets can be booked via Walkinstown Library in person, by phone, or on the website; the event is fully booked as of writing, but there will be a waiting list in case vacancies arise.

The group may also hold the talk again at a future date based on demand.

‘Tenderfoot’ apprentice programme helping develop young voices


PROGRAMME: Some of the Transition Year students on the theatre programme

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"THE Civic is delighted to support the development of new theatrical voices and to work with so many young people across the county." remarks Niamh Honer, Audience Development and Marketing Manager at the Civic Theatre.

'Tenderfoot' is The Civic Theatre's apprentice theatre programme for transition year students.

Over the weekend of Thursday, January 22, to Saturday, January 24, 'Tenderfoot' students performed a programme of plays by 16-year-old playwrights, plays reflecting their lives and their world, and plays exploring their fears, their worries, and their joys.

It was performed and designed by a 70-strong ensemble of young people under the guidance of working theatre professionals.

'Tenderfoot' is a model of excellence of an arts in education programme which empowers creative expression in a vocational educational model. Apprenticeship is the mode of learning, as students learn by doing under the guidance of working theatre professionals.

This year's programme featured the following works: 'Salem Sisters' by Holly Murray of Lucan Community College, 'Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow', a short film of a script by Blaithín Seville, and 'Simon Says', devised by the cast and Esosa Ighodaro.

Other featured pieces included 'Don’t Be A Stranger' by Emily Pesak of Deansrath Community College, 'Names Not Worth Remembering' by Holly Raftery of Collinstown Park Community College, and 'I Love You Too, Mam' by Niamh Balfe of Lucan Community College.

"Expertly" guided by Programme Director Veronica Coburn, the Tenderfoot programme is "unique in providing a professional support system in which young people are empowered to create their own theatre", according to Niamh.

She continues by commenting that 'Tenderfoot' also offers a "valuable platform for this work to be shared with a peer audience".

Over 700 people attended the four performances.

For more information about 'Tenderfoot,' contact the Civic Theatre's Education Executive, Mary Sheehan, at mary@civictheatre.ie.

'Tenderfoot' is supported by South Dublin County Council and the Arts Council of Ireland.

Congratulations to all involved on a successful run of performances.

> I make lots of casseroles that have protein, veggies, carbs and good fats all together.
>
> *Tori Spelling*

Food with Passion



IRISH FARMHOUSE CHICKEN CASSEROLE HOTPOT

by **John Paul Kennedy** / jpkennedy.kennedy@gmail.com

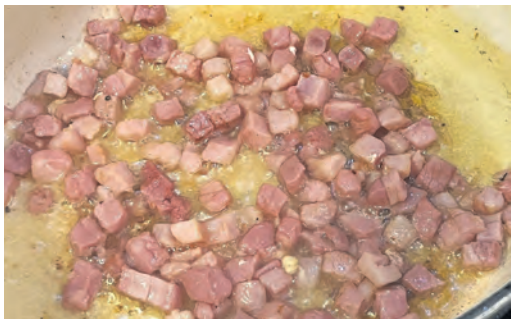
I have posted this recipe previously, a few years back but over the weekend as the weather was so dull, wet and grey I craved a comforting bowl of stew like goodness and I suddenly realised it had been sometime since I last made this delicious Chicken casserole. Full of earthy staple farmhouse vegetables, smoked bacon lardons and melt in the mouth tender chicken, served with champ mash this is the ultimate warming and comforting food for the soul, on days when all you need is a hug from a bowl at dinnertime. This is a one pot dinner, one of my favourite type to make (less washing up) that can be prepped in advance and then you bung it into the oven to slow cook for a few hours, so it takes care of itself. The smells as the casserole cooks are delicious, inviting and comforting and fill the whole house. What better way to welcome your guests when they arrive than with the smell of a delicious supper.

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.

Ingredients: (Serves 4)

4 chicken fillets (Skin on – your butcher will do this for you) or 8 chicken thighs. (I use fillets as none of my family like chicken with bones in)
500ml hot chicken stock
Two tablespoons of flour
2 large carrots diced
1 onion diced
1 parsnip diced
100g smoked bacon lardons
80g frozen garden peas
1 teaspoon of Dijon mustard
Drizzle of runny honey
Tablespoon of chopped fresh thyme
1 sprig of fresh rosemary chopped
Sea salt & cracked black pepper for seasoning
2 tablespoons of rapeseed oil
Two tablespoons of Chicken Gravy granules (if required & optional)
4-5 Large potatoes sliced
5- 6 Knobs of butter
Some fresh thyme leaves













Method:

1. Preheat your oven to 180 degrees / Gas Mark 4.
2. In a large casserole dish on a high heat up the oil and pop the chicken in (skin side down) and cook until seared and golden brown.
3. Remove and set aside on a plate and pop in the bacon lardons and cook until browned off.
4. Add the chopped and prepared carrots, parsnip, onions and fresh herbs, salt and pepper and cook for 7 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add the flour and cook off for two minutes then add the stock and allow to thicken for a minute or two.
6. Peel off the chicken skin, set aside and pop the chicken back into the casserole. Place the sliced potatoes in layers on the top of the casserole mix, the knobs of butter, fresh thyme an season with salt and pepper. , season, clamp a lid on and pop into the oven for one hour. Remove and add the peas, stir and pop back into the oven for between 15 – 30 minutes. All ovens vary but you are looking for the casserole to have thickened and the chicken to be tender and falling apart. Add the optional x 2 tablespoons of chicken gravy granules if needed at this point. With 8 minutes to go, pop the chicken skins onto a tray and pop into the oven to become golden and crisp – I serve these on top of the casserole as an extra treat.

Now sit back relax and enjoy. The flavours of this casserole are comforting, delicious and traditional and this dish is perfect to serve on those days when it is grey and wet outside, when you don't want or have to leave the house. This is my brother Barry's favourite dinner and of course he comes to visit from London for his first dinner he will always request this dish and, he always goes back for seconds – it's that good! I hope you are inspired to give this recipe a go, you won't regret it.

Contact JP on:
Twitter: @JPKCooking
Email: JPKCooking@gmail.com
Instagram: jpkennedy.kennedy

Strong relationship between Irish and American folk music



TRADITIONAL: Domhnaill Corrigan (Madra Caorach) performing at the Old Courthouse, Rathcoole

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

TWO years ago, Ralph McGarry approached "a number of arts and music organisations based in South Dublin County to form a committee that could come up with a Fringe programme", according to Martin Moran of Alternative Entertainments.

Tallaght-based Alternative Entertainments Arts Group ran a gig on the night of January 21 as part of the Tradfest South Dublin Fringe Programme for the 'Des Carty Sessions' series of events for 2026.

It was a sold-out gig in The Old Courthouse, Rathcoole, featuring Niall Toner, Andrea Booth and The Niall Toner Band with support from Domhnaill Corrigan (Madra Caorach).

Alternative Entertainments has a history stretching back to the mid-80s of programming arts events, with a particular focus on traditional arts, in this area. Over the years they have staged the Tallaght Traditional Irish Music Seminar, The Des Carty Sessions, and numerous standalone music concerts and workshops.

The Des Carty Music School has been operating in the area since 1997. For all of these reasons, they were approached to play a part in this committee.

Having arranged a session trail in 2025 for TradFest, they extended that trail for the 2026 festival.

They also added the bluegrass and folk concert in the Old Courthouse, Rathcoole, as an additional Fringe concert for the festival.

To organise this gig, Martin remarks that they "had a look" at the existing programme for this festival and decided to develop an event that was slightly different from the rest of the programme.

"We wanted to keep it traditional and decided to explore the musical traditions of American bluegrass, folk, and country genres."

Niall Toner has been a central figure in Irish bluegrass and roots music for over 50 years and has worked with AltEnts on many festivals and events since the 80s.

He felt like "the obvious choice for the kind of gig we had in mind", according to Martin.

Domhnaill Corrigan is a young musician in his early 20s who has been a part of the Alternative Entertainments Youth Music Collective SubSounds, first as a participant and more recently as a mentor.

Domhnaill is a multi-instrumentalist and composer who is adept at interpreting traditional music from Ireland and America.

His set on the night served to "underline the strong relationship between Irish and American folk music".

Martin reflects that they "enjoyed engaging with the local people in Rathcoole" when asked about his favourite part of the preparations, calling it "satisfying and engaging".

One of the main challenges of preparation was ensuring the vocals were audible above the instruments, but they decided to solve it by performing without a PA and doing a fully unplugged concert in the main room in the Old Courthouse.

Alternative Entertainments has a busy 2026 ahead, with the SubSounds Youth Music Collective currently recording 3 albums' worth of material that they have been writing since October 2025.

The first of these albums will be released in the Sugar Club on Leeson Street on April 11, and another album will be launched in Aras Chronain on May 23.

The Annual SubSounds Youth Music Festival, an outdoor one-day festival featuring performances from musicians all over Leinster, will take place in Tallaght on Saturday, July 11, and the Des Carty Sessions will continue throughout the year.

The gig was completely sold out, with 72 people in attendance.

Martin would like to thank the Old Courthouse Rathcoole and its committee, including Ita Keane and Sally Graver, Ralph McGarry, Mariead Murphy and Zaira from the South Dublin County Council events team, and the Niall Toner Band and Domhnail Corrigan for a successful performance.

Congratulations to all involved.

Data Protection for Business reputation and governance

By **Ryan Butler**
news@echo.ie

"IT'S been almost five years since I published my previous book on data protection, and there have been significant developments in the data privacy landscape since then."

Steven Roberts, Group Head of Marketing at Griffith College, remarks on the above in relation to his new book, 'Data Protection for Business: Compliance, Governance, Reputation and Trust', which will be published by Clarus Press in February of this year.

Marketing and data protection expert Steven was inspired to write this book by the "rapid adoption" of artificial intelligence technologies following the launch of ChatGPT and other large language models (LLMs).

These AI tools present a "range of data privacy risks", and there is also new guidance from supervisory authorities such as Ireland's Data Protection Commission.

There is also more clarity on the level of fines for GDPR breaches and a deeper understanding of what "best practice GDPR compliance" looks like.

Steven therefore felt it was timely to revisit the topic to take account of these changes and outline the practical steps business leaders and managers can take to ensure their "companies are compliant".

He points out a highlight of working on the book as putting thoughts and ideas on paper to give them a new clarity.

It has been particularly interesting examining the impact of new legislation in areas such as artificial intelligence and how that interacts with existing laws such as the GDPR and Irish Data Protection Acts.

One of the challenges of the book for Steven was assessing the interplay between the GDPR and various new EU laws, such as the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act.

He clarifies this by explaining that "both laws place a requirement on transparency, but the term has a subtly different meaning in each case."

Steven hopes that readers realise "the importance of training and getting the basics right" when it comes to data protection for businesses.

For the rest of 2026, he will work with Griffith College's data protection committee and as vice-chairperson of the Compliance Institute's Data Protection and Information Security Working Group.

They will work to keep up to date on the latest data privacy trends and how they apply in a practical way to businesses.

Steven also plans to write another book for a business and marketing audience, providing practical, clear-sighted guidance for organisations.

He would like to thank his publisher, David McCartney; his data protection colleagues in Griffith College; the Compliance Institute's working group; and his family for their support and help with the book.

The book is set to release in February; to find out more and pre-order a copy, visit the Clarus Press website.



DATA: Steven Roberts

Community honour Fr Pat

FOR YEARS OF SERVICE IN INCHICORE

Photos by **Paddy Barrett**

Photos taken for *The Echo* are available to purchase. Email **reception@echo.ie** or call 01-4685350.

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Pauline, Fr Pat, Kathleen



Fr Pat and Bertie Ahern



Emily, Cynthia, Ava, Fr Pat, Ava, Aoife (Inchicore Community Creche and Afterschool)



Michelle, Gerry, Fr Pat, Shane, Ciaran (Oblate Basketball Club)



Canal Communities Recovery Choir Peter, Kathleen, Sue, Divina and Pauline



Peter and Ken



Trevor, Caroline, Margaret, Fr Pat, Emily, Cynthia and Gerry (Committee)



Gerry, Trevor, Fr Pat and Bertie Ahern

"Earning a lot of money is not the key to prosperity. How you handle it is.

Dave Ramsey

Health & Fitness

YOUR FINANCIAL HEALTH: ADVICE FROM ACCOUNTANT ALISON FURNEY

by **Ursula Frawley** / info@moveitfitness.ie



I contacted local accountant Alison Furney to find out about how understanding your finances and getting your head around your numbers can decrease stress and improve your mental health.

Do you see any relationship between finances and mental health?

We often think of self-improvement in terms of exercise or meditation & then overlook our financial wellbeing. The truth is your financial health plays just as important a role in your peace of mind. When money feels chaotic or uncertain, it can quietly fuel stress, anxiety, and sleepless nights. However, when you understand your finances and feel in control of them, everything in life feels lighter. Just like caring for your body or your mindset, taking care of your financial health is an act of selfcare. It can strengthen your confidence, reduce worry, and support a more balanced, resilient life.

When you work with clients, how do you find they feel about their finances?

In my work as a local accountant supporting small business owners, I meet many people who find the financial side of their business overwhelming. For many, this stress doesn't stay in the office, and it spills into their personal lives too. Becoming comfortable with your numbers, both in business and at home, isn't a luxury. It's a core building block for long term stability and peace of mind.



Is financial freedom just about having more money?

True financial freedom goes deeper than a bank balance. It's the sense of stability or breathing room that comes from understanding your finances, knowing what's coming in and going out, and being able to make decisions without fear or guesswork. You want to be steering the ship rather than being tossed around by it.

Over the years, I've noticed that the habits holding people back are often small, subtle ones. Avoiding bank statements because they trigger anxiety. Leaning on credit cards to fill short-term gaps. Not setting aside time to check in with money until something goes wrong. These patterns develop easily, even for people earning a perfectly adequate income.

What are some steps if you're feeling overwhelmed?

The first step is simpler than you might think: look honestly at where you currently stand. Open the statements you've been avoiding. Write down your income and essential expenses. Awareness is empowering and it's the starting point for every improvement that follows. Often, when people finally review their spending, the changes needed can be very obvious.

Budgeting is another area that gets a bad reputation. Many see it as restrictive, but a good budget is simply a plan for your money. When it reflects your real needs, goals and non-negotiables, it becomes a tool that supports freedom rather than limiting it. It also helps you prepare for those unexpected expenses like a car repair/broken boiler!

Small changes can also make a huge difference: setting up a savings transfer on payday, cancelling unused subscriptions, cooking at home one extra night, or starting an emergency fund with even €10 a month.

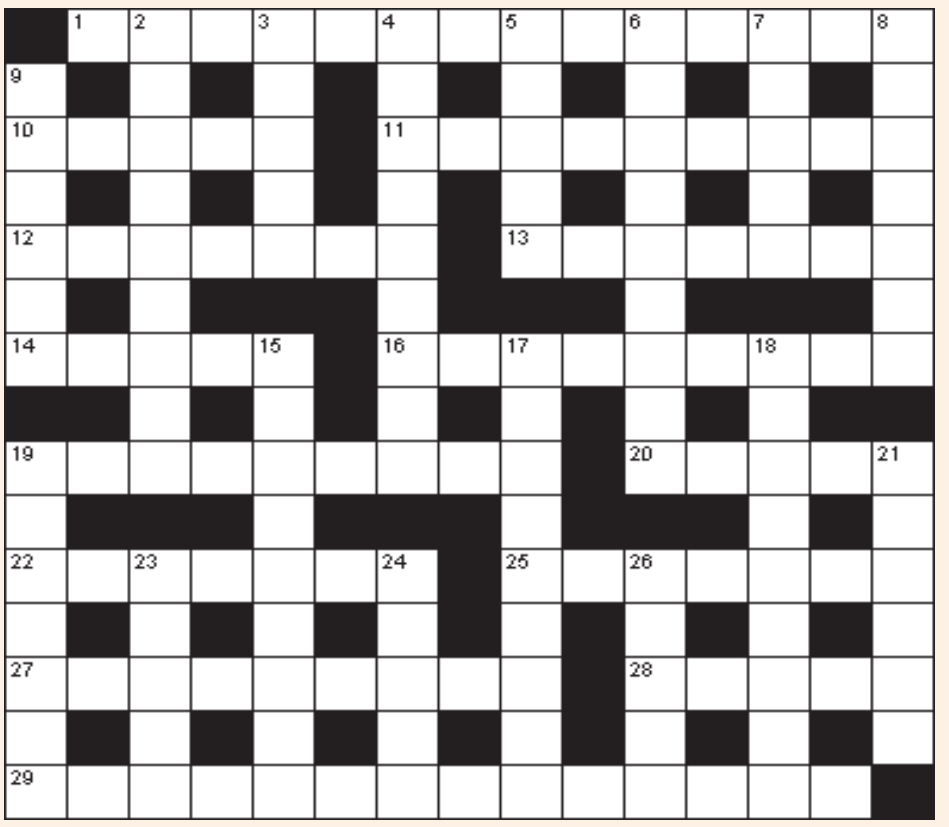
What is one message you would share with families to help get a hold of their finances?

If I could share one message with every household, it would be this: approach your numbers with curiosity & let them help you to make better decisions. Financial freedom isn't reserved for the wealthy. It's a journey anyone can begin today.

Alison can be found on www.adeptaccounting.ie or alison@adeptaccounting.ie and 01 910 6347

UrsUla FraWIEy IS A perSONAL TrAINer ANd OWNer OF MOve IT FITNeSS. Her ONLINe STreNgTH & FITNeSS cLASSeS, WHIcH ruN LIve 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 LIveS IN duBLIN 24 WITH Her HuSBANd ANd FOur cHILdreN. geT MOre INFOrMATION BY eMAILING Her AT INFO@MOveITFITNeSS.Ie
Or WWW.MOveITFITNeSS.Ie

echocrossquiz Q0502



ACROSS

1. Authentic (14)
10. Choral work (5)
11. A husband who cheats (9)
12. Relate (7)
13. Unpredictable (7)
14. Stalks (5)
16. An explanation of the fundamental reasons (9)
19. The Pilgrim ship (9)
20. Old photo color (5)
22. Danica Patrick drives one (7)
25. Stir up (7)
27. Indistinguishable (9)
28. Drugged (5)
29. Unconquerable (14)

DOWN

2. Infamy (9)
3. Far beyond the norm (5)
4. It frightens birds (9)
5. Become accustomed (to) (5)
6. Disreputable (9)
7. A cap with no brim or bill (5)
8. Otalgia (7)
9. Recompense (6)
15. A British lawyer (9)
17. Waterproofed canvas (9)
18. Assessment (9)
19. Cocktail (7)
21. Order of business (6)
23. Pepperwort (5)
24. Odd-numbered page (5)
26. Large Asian country (5)

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS 2901

G		A		A		R		O		T		K		S
A	N	T	I	Q	U	E		U	N	A	W	A	R	E
L		O		U		M		T		R		N		V
L	A	M	B	A	D	A		S	P	A	N	G	L	E
O		I				R		T		N		A		R
P	A	C	E	M	A	K	E	R		T	H	R	O	E
				A				I		E		O		L
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N		A		I		O				L				
W	A	H	O	O		V	I	O	L	A	T	I	O	N
A		O		N		E		M				P		E
R	E	G	R	E	S	S		E	X	C	R	E	T	E
D		A		T		I		L		L		C		D
L	U	N	A	T	I	C		E	D	U	C	A	T	E
Y		Y		E		K		T		E		C		D

CAN YOU BEAT THIS WEEK'S CROSSQUIZ?

SUDOKU 1

		5		7				3
			8		9	5		4
						9		
7	4			2				6
							3	
9		1			3			8
	2			4				
1		6						
			2	3			6	

SUDOKU 2

6	4						3	
	2				9		8	
9				4		2		
			8					
3		9						5
		6				7		3
			1		8	3	4	6
					4			
8	6					5		

ANSWERS

2	1	5	3	9	7	4	6	8
8	7	9	4	6	2	3	5	1
6	4	3	8	5	1	2	9	7
3	2	7	5	1	9	6	8	4
5	9	8	7	2	4	1	3	6
1	9	4	6	3	8	7	2	5
7	5	2	1	4	6	8	9	3
4	3	6	2	8	5	9	7	1

SUDOKU 2

1	9	8	5	3	2	6	7	4
2	5	4	7	8	9	6	3	1
9	7	3	1	4	6	8	2	5
8	4	2	3	7	1	6	5	9
5	3	7	4	1	9	2	8	6
6	9	1	2	8	5	3	4	7
7	8	9	6	5	3	4	1	2
4	6	5	9	2	8	1	7	3
3	1	6	2	7	4	5	9	8

SUDOKU 1

Echo on tour



Gerry Coughlan went on a tour of the Game of Thrones in Linen Mill Studios, in Banbridge Co. Down. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss are the creators, showrunners, and executive producers of Game of Thrones (2011–2019), considered one of the biggest, most-watched, and most critically acclaimed TV series in history. Under their tenure, Game of Thrones has become a global Home Box Office HBO phenomenon, with viewership rivalling major live sports events. The Game of Thrones saga has concluded, but its impact remains as powerful as the Iron Throne itself.

FLASH GORDON

FOR A YEAR, MY BODY HAS NOT BEEN MY OWN.

NOR HAVE MY THOUGHTS.

I HAVE BEEN CHANGED INTO SOMEONE ELSE. A SPY. A MURDERER. **HE** IS WHO I **AM** NOW.

I HAVE BECOME MY OWN SHADOW.

SURPRISING. THE ALIEN GIRL BREAKS MY **HOLD.**

LONG ENOUGH TO CALL **OUT**--

--TO BARIN'S **HOUND.**

I CAME HERE TO SLAY KING BARIN.

BUT THANKS TO DALE ARDEN, I BARELY MANAGE TO ESCAPE WITH MY LIFE.

I'M QUICKLY FOUND. I HAD THE AUTHORITY TO DISMISS THE KING'S **GUARDS,** AND NOW BEAR A TELLTALE MAULED **ARM.**

I AM **MAJOR LINGAN.**

OR I... WAS.

IN THE WAR, I WAS TAKEN BY **GENERAL TAHL**-- BROKEN AND REMADE AS A KIRAN SLEEPER AGENT.

CAPTURED AT LAST, I CRACK A FALSE TOOTH...

...INFUSED WITH AZURA'S **MEMORY POTION.** ALL HER SECRETS FADE AWAY...

...ALONG WITH WHAT'S LEFT...

...OF ME...

DAN SCHKADE 7·20·25

NEXT: CRUCIBLE LIVING

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THE PHANTOM™

CREATED BY LEE FALK

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE OUR FAMILY AGAIN!

...ALL MY AUNTIES, UNCLES, COUSINS!

BOUND FOR WAMBESI TRIBAL LANDS...

NIA, I WANT YOU TO BE THOUGHTFUL IN HOW YOU SPEAK TO YOUR COUSINS IF THEY ASK ABOUT OUR LIVES IN MAWITAAN.

THAT'S RIGHT! WE'RE NOT BETTER THAN ANYBODY BECAUSE WE LIVE IN THE CAPITAL.

OH, I WOULD *NEVER* MAKE ANYONE FEEL BAD ABOUT LIVING IN THE VILLAGE— I LOVE THE VILLAGE!

I LOVE THAT WE *COME HOME* FOR A VISIT EVERY YEAR...

I DON'T *EVER* WANT TO FORGET WHERE WE COME FROM.

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www.thephantomcomics.com

I WOULDN'T WANT TO *GO BACK* TO THE OLD WAYS, BUT I'LL NEVER LOOK DOWN ON THEM.

I TELL *EVERY KID* I KNOW IN MAWITAAN THE WAMBESI OF THE TRIBAL LANDS ARE *MY PEOPLE!*

Tony DePaul & Jeff Weigel 4-6-25

BEGINNING: *"THE UNGRAVED"*

POPEYE

THIMBLE THEATRE PRESENTS

BY RANDY MILHOLLAND

TELL YOUR MISERABLE SEA HAG I CHALLENGE HER TO A DUEL OF DARK ARTS! DOOM SHALL NOT BE POSTPONED!

SO SAYS BALOR!

ARE YOU GONNA ACTUALLY SHOW UP THIS TIME?

IT IS REASONABLE TO POSTPONE DOOM FOR TUMMYACHES! SO COMPLAINS BALOR!

SEA HAG, YOU HAD A CALL FROM SOMEONE CLAIMING TO BE YOUR NIECE, TASTY—

... Y'KNOW WHAT? I CAN COME BACK.

WHAT IS IT, LINDEN? YOU'RE BEING WEIRD.

UH, WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE CREEPY MANNEQUINS?

OH, THEM. I GOT STUCK WITH THEM AT A WHITE ELEPHANT PARTY.

SHOULD I BE WORRIED ABOUT THEM STEALING MY SOUL OR ANYTHING?

NAW, YOU'RE GOOD.

POOF!

popeye.com

AT LEAST THEY'RE NOT SOUL-STEALERS.

OH, NO. THEY ARE. THEY DEFINITELY ARE.

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THEN WHY WOULDN'T— WHAT HAPPENED TO MY SOUL, SEA HAG?

IT WAS A WHITE ELEPHANT PARTY! I HAD TO BRING SOMETHING AS A GIFT!

2-1

TASQ-ART

WWW.TASQART.COM



Liz, Martin, Tara, Troy and Jack



Bernardine and Edel



Geraldine, Elizah and Aisling



Sarah, Maisie, Beverley and Albie



Kelleigh and Teidí



Laura, Fiadh, and Jack



Dr Karen Ward



Jacqueline and Anita



Seamas and Fiona



Tanja and Kate



Teresa, Cuán, Shane, Diarmuid and Donnacha

La Fhéile Bríde

ST BRIGID'S DAY CELEBRATIONS IN CLONDALKIN

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***



Geraldine, Mary, Marie and Aileen



Nuala, Alex, Charlotte and Mary



Kitty, John, Vinny and Eoin



Noeleen, George, Peter, Paul and Tommy



Entertaining the gathering during St Brigid's Day celebrations



Michelle, Loraine and Monica

Hope you're all enjoying our



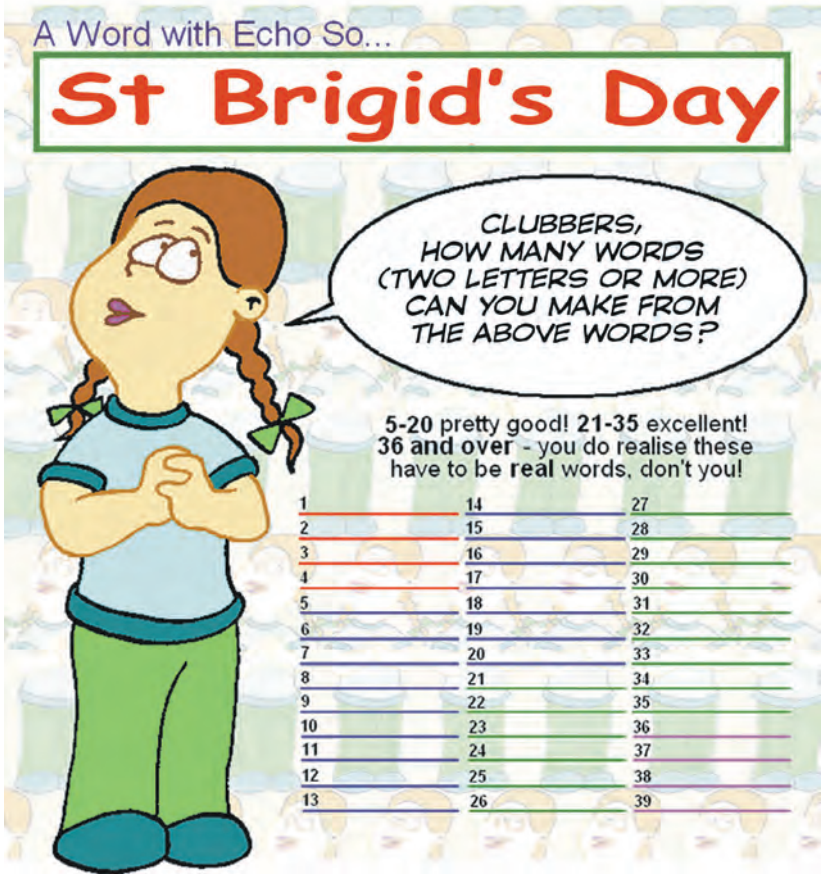
Colouring Competition 2026

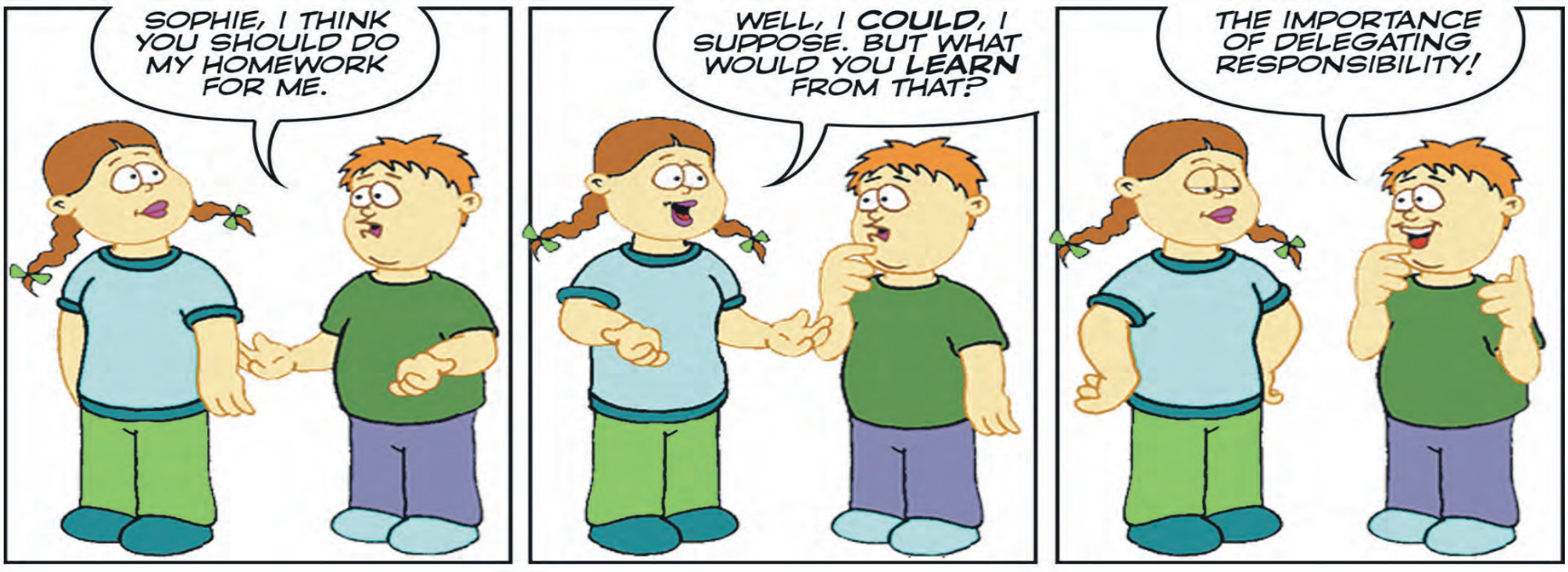
Colour in the Fishing picture on page 51, take a picture of it and **email it** to reception@echo.ie or **whatsapp it** to **083 0106275** and be in with a chance to win a **PRIZE.**

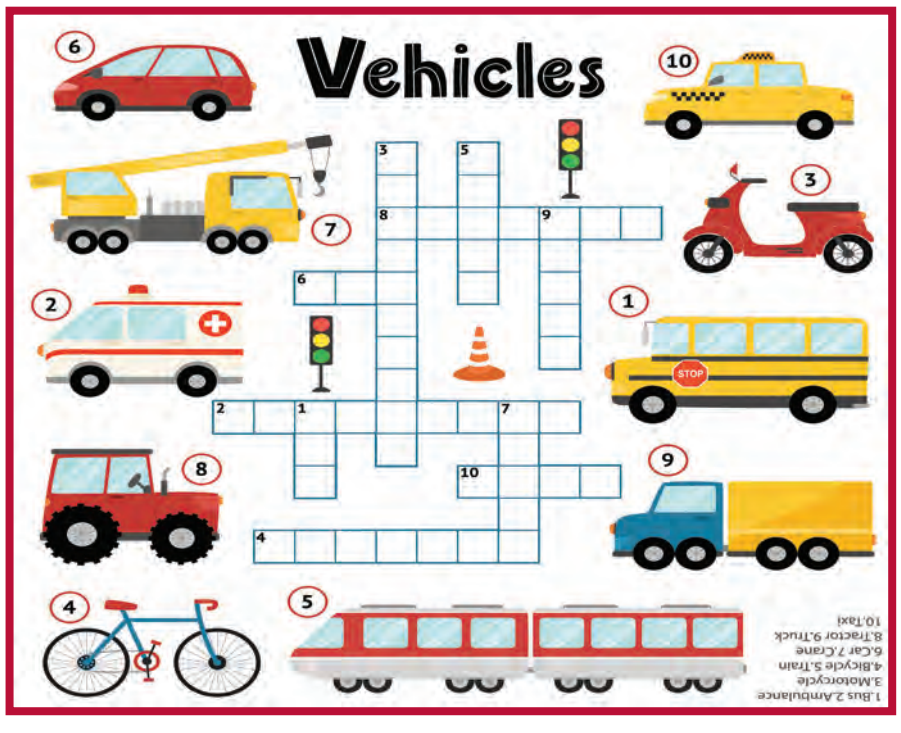


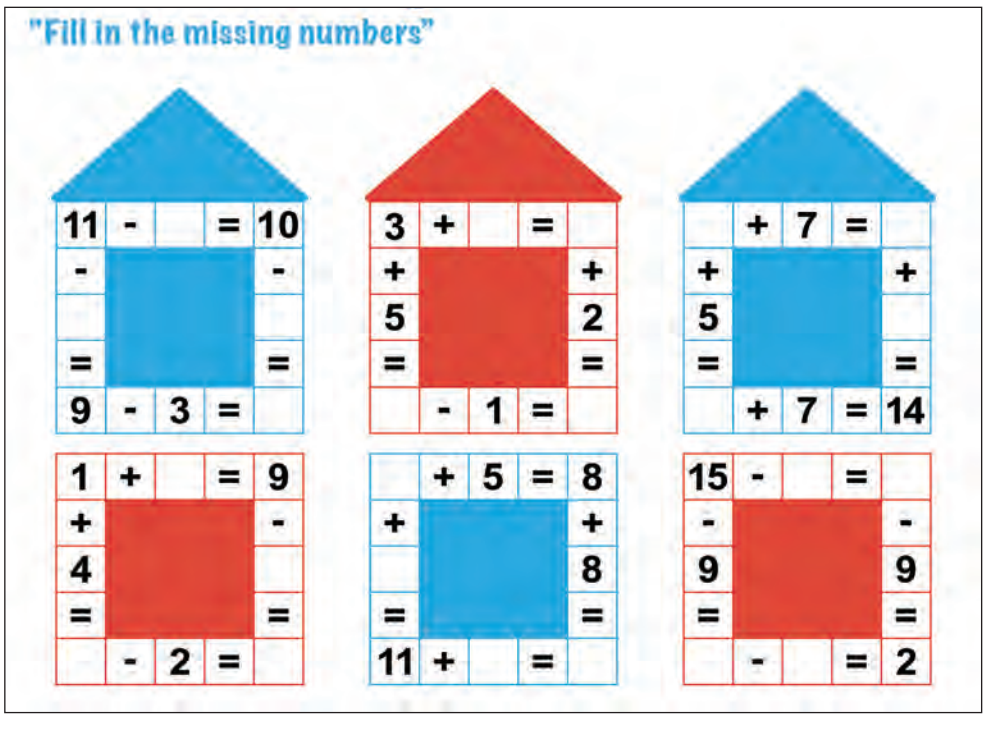
A Word with Echo So...

St Brigid's Day







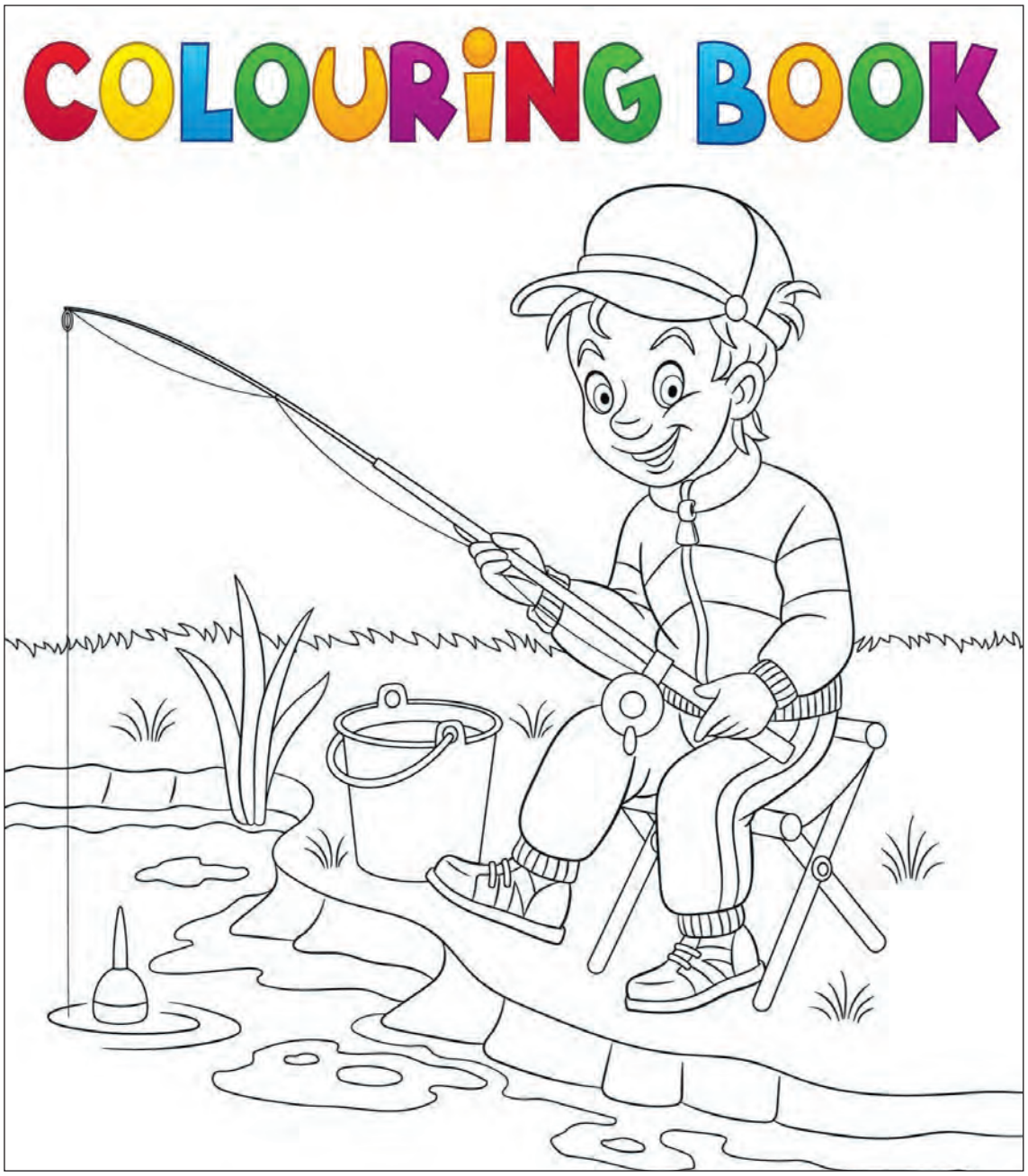


These 2 EchoJoe pages of Awesome, Amazon,

SPOT THE SIX DIFFERENCES!



COLOURING BOOK



LETTER LINK LOG-JAM

A MISSING LETTER ON EACH ROW FINISHES ONE WORD AND STARTS THE NEXT...

BUT WHAT ARE THE LETTERS?

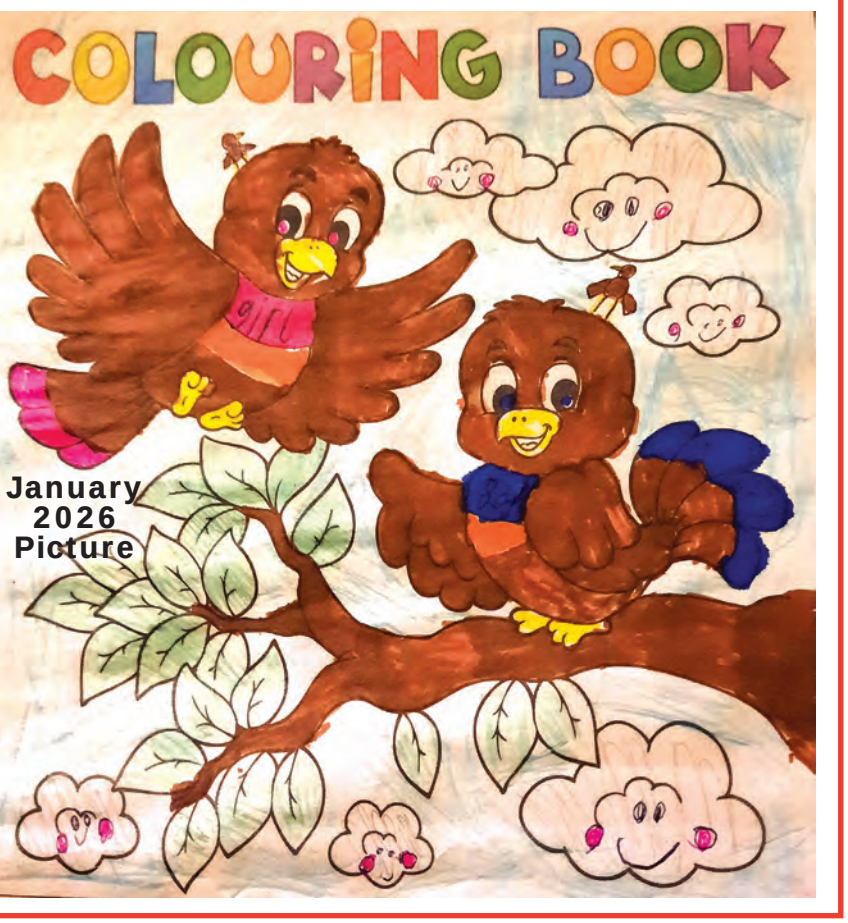
ACH		DDY
BEL		HUG
DAM		LUG
PLO		ANK
MON		NIT
FUN		ROP
HOL		XIT
LAN		RIP

the missing letters: E, T, P, T, K, D, E, D.

This week's winner!

Zach Burke, aged 8, is this week's winner of the Echo Joe colouring competition. Zach, 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!!



January 2026 Picture

Activities are kindly sponsored by amazon

THE Echo

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Great prizes in our big colouring competition on page 56, enter now!

Submarine sinks with 40 jobs lost

Staff in shock as landmark Crumlin bar shuts


CLOSED: Submarine Bar at Crumlin Cross

THE Submarine bar in Crumlin has gone into receivership and closed with the loss of more than 40 jobs.

Grant Thornton was appointed as receiver and informed staff yesterday that it they were closing the premises, along with the adjoining pub Rory O'Connor's and off licence.

Staff at the well-known sports bar at Crumlin Cross had no idea about the closure and were shocked to discover it on Tuesday morning.

One member of staff told *The Echo* that while they were preparing to open up that morning, they were completely unaware that the receivers were upstairs informing management of the situation.

By David Kearns
davidk@echo.ie

"We only found out when they came down the stairs and asked us how many new locks would be needed for the doors. That was it, that's all they said to us," the staff member said.

"It was awful. That morning we all had jobs, an hour later we were being locked out of the building we'd worked so hard to kept afloat.

"Even the general manager had no clue about what was happening – he's been there for 26 years, so you can imagine how devastating the news was to him."

The struggling bar had been working hard to turn around its business. A major investment had been made to upgrade its sound system to cater to better live music and the return of its main function room had seen an influx of bookings.

"I really can't understand why the bank moved in the way it has. The only area that we had serious issues with was the lounge – it was rarely, if ever, full so it was decided to only open it for specific occasions. Everything seemed to be performing well, or at least we thought it was," the staff member said.

Grant Thornton could not be reached for comment regarding the closure.

Family's relief as teen son's killer is jailed for life

THE heartbroken father of murdered teenager David Byrne Hayes has said his family got what they wanted this week after his killer was jailed for life for murder, *reports Lynda Ó'Donoghue.*


STABBED: David

An emotional David Hayes spoke to *The Echo* from his home on Wednesday after 19-year-old Marcus Kirwan was found guilty of the murder and jailed for life.

Kirwan, of Cooley Road in Drimnagh, had denied stabbing and murdering Mr Byrne Hayes in an incident at Emmet Court in Inchicore in March 2011.

The court heard that the 19-year-old lured the victim into a trap by texting him and pretending to be a girl.

Mr Hayes told *The Echo*: "We got what we wanted – we are very happy with the outcome of the whole lot. I'd say Dave is happy now.

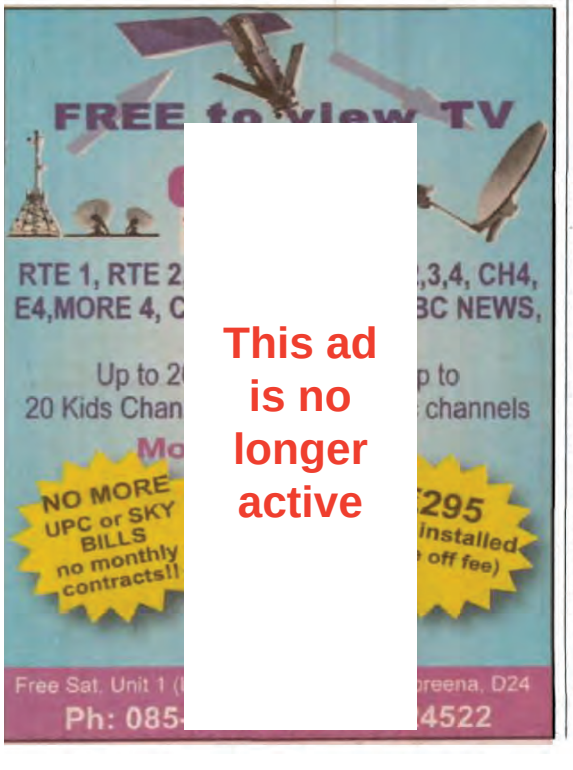
"Unfortunately now that young lad [Kirwan] has to spend the rest of his life in prison but at least he can breathe and live and do what he wants, my young fella can't."

Mr Hayes also revealed that he thought he would "crumble" under the pressure from the trial and the devastation of losing his young son but family and friends have helped him to pull through.

He said: "Over the last three weeks I have gotten great comfort from Dave – he has given me the strength to cope. I am getting great relief from everyone around, they are all talking about him and it is all positive and I am happy about that."

He also revealed that a file from the centre in which his son volunteered before his death, including details about the work Mr Byrne Hayes was doing with disabled people, the course he was working through and his aspirations for the future, has helped him tremendously.

He said: "Unfortunately Dave won't be able to do any of that now but it has helped to see that he wanted to do those things. From the word go the Gardai in Kilmainham were very good with the investigation. As I say, it has been a hard three weeks, the last two years waiting, and finally on Monday we got the justice for him – I want it closed now."



This ad is no longer active

Bin firms battle heats up

WASTE management companies Greyhound and The City Bin Co. show no sign of letting up on their intense rivalry in 2013 with both companies making recent moves into each other's 'home' territory, *reports Maurice Garvey.*

Greyhound announced its expansion into Galway city with the creation of 10 local jobs and promises of 50 per cent savings on household bin costs whilst City Bin Co have expanded their operations into Drimnagh and Crumlin.

The move into the west by Clondalkin-based Greyhound is seen as a retaliation for the Galway-based City Bin's move into the Dublin market some months ago – sparking intense competition between the two companies.

In December, Greyhound circulated a memo to employees saying it is "at war" with rival firm the City Bin Co, claiming that its entry into the Dublin City market has put "all our jobs at risk".

Greyhound's expansion follows their market research which they state found that City Bin customers in Galway wanted a fairer deal after learning that they pay double what the company charges its Dublin customers to collect their bins.

"We were surprised to find that Galway householders were paying double what City Bin Co. customers in Dublin pay," said Michael Buckley, Joint CEO of Greyhound.

"That is what led to our market research and the findings convinced us that Galway was the perfect location to expand our business. We are delighted to provide Galway customers with the same value as our Dublin customers, which is 50 per cent cheaper than what they are currently paying the City Bin Co."

Meanwhile, this week the City Bin Co announced its expansion into the Crumlin and Drimnagh areas of the Dublin City Council DCC market.

The City Bin Co entered the Dublin City Council market in November with the launch of its 'See Red' campaign, aimed at offering people an alternative to their current waste collection provider.

City Bin have been operating in the South Dublin County Council area since 2007 and have customers in Tallaght, Rathfarnham and Knocklyon but are not believed to be operating as of yet in Clondalkin.

Greyhound's headquarters is based on Crag Avenue in Clondalkin Industrial Estate.

Gene Browne, co-founder and CEO of the City Bin Co, said that he has been thrilled by the level of support in Dublin.

He said: "The people of Dublin have spoken. We are delighted to be able to bring our award winning service to Drimnagh and Crumlin and we look forward to interacting with our new customers.

"Since we launched into the DCC market, we have calls every day asking if we were coming to Crumlin and Drimnagh so it's a logical step for us to expand our reach and offer an unrivalled customer service experience to the people of Dublin."

City Bin is offering the first 10,000 Dublin City Council area customers who sign up to their service a flat rate, no strings attached offer of €99 for bin collections in 2013.

Greyhound is presenting householders across Galway city with an equivalent price offer including an all-in monthly €15 charge for all three bins, and a monthly standing charge of €6.25.

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

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRNACE



Fennell, Darren
50th Birthday Remembrance occurred 4th February.

Fifty years ago you came to be,
A gift of love, our greatest joy,
Though heaven called you far too soon,
You'll always be our precious boy.
We mark this day with tears and love,
With memories time can never erase,
Forever young within our hearts,
Until we meet in heaven's grace.
Happy 50th Birthday, our son,
Forever loved, forever near,
Not gone from us, just gone ahead,
Until that day we meet you there.
Love Mam and Dad.

Fifty candles light the sky,
Not on a cake, but way up high,
A birthday wish we send your way,
Wrapped in love on this special day.
Though heaven holds you close and tight,
You live in our hearts, our thoughts, our light,
Happy 50th, dear brother, rest above,
Forever wrapped in endless love.
Love sister Leona, brother Gerard and sister-in-law Michelle.

ANNIVERSARY



Woods, Margaret
16th Anniversary. Died February 4th 2010.

They say that times a healer,
But as the time goes on,
I seem to find it just as hard,
To face the fact you've gone.
And today is the 16th anniversary,
Of the day that you went away,
And I'm standing by your graveside,
And believe me when I say.
You'll never be forgotten,
And each year I'll shed a tear,
But it's only because I love you,
And wish you were still here.
Sadly missed and loved always by your loving husband Derek and children Orlagh and Liam. xxx

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE



Fennell, Darren
Birthday Remembrance occurred 4th February.
Happy Birthday Dad and Happy Birthday Granda.

Dad
Happy Birthday in Heaven
Your birthday brings back memories,
Of laughter and of tears,
Of all the celebrations held,
Throughout your precious years.
As you're now watching over us,
We hope that you can see,
How much those memories we made,
Will always mean to us.
We'll always cherish times we had,
And smile just at the thought,
We hope you know the magnitude,
Of joy your life here brought.
On holidays and birthdays,
It's so hard to be apart,
Like every day that falls between,
Your memory fills our hearts.
You're with us now where e're we go,
You're part of all we do,
We'll celebrate your special day,
And the gift of knowing you.
From his loving children Carla, Darren and Laylaigh.

Happy Birthday Grandad
Today always meant so much to us,
Now it only brings us tears,
We wish that God could have spared you,
For just a few more years.
We're thinking of you today grandad,
We know that's nothing new,
You were our thoughts of yesterday,
And you'll be in tomorrows too.
The memories we'll cherish forever,
They always make us smile,
We just wish we could hold you close again,
If only for a while.
But until the day that we unite,
We'll no longer be apart,
But until that day remember grandad,
You're always in our hearts.
From his adored grandchildren Craoi, Frankie, Priya and Harley.

ANNIVERSARY/ BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE



O'Toole, Daniel
22nd Anniversary occurs 6th February & 41st Birthday occurs 10th February. Late of Glenshane Grove, Tallaght.

Something will remind me,
I never know just when,
It might be something someone says,
And it all comes back again.
The times we spent together,
The happiness, the fun,
Once again I feel the pain,
Of life without my son.
It's said that times a healer,
I'm not sure this is true,
There's not a day goes by son,
That I don't cry for you.
We will always love you Daniel xxx From your Ma and Da.

Daniel
Deep are my memories,
Precious they stay,
No passing of time,
Can take them away.
Love forever, Jennifer and Ayse. xxxx

Daniel
This message comes with love for my brother,
From here on earth to the heaven above,
I miss you more than words can say,
In my heart you will always stay.
Love from your sis Karen, Dan and nephews Nathan and Arlo & Hannah.

Daniel
I'm thinking of you today,
But that is nothing new,
I thought about you yesterday,
And the day before that too.
Although I cannot see you,
You are with me every day,
And all the love I have for you,
Will never fade away.
Love from your brother John, Katie, niece Amber and nephew Daniel, & Emilie Mae.

Daniel
Like fallen leaves the years roll by,
With deep and sad regret,
The hearts that love you dearly,
Are the hearts that won't forget.
May the winds of love blow softly,
And whisper for you to hear,
Happy birthday Daniel,
As it dawns another year.
Love you always, aunty Ann and William. xxx

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. **F.O.N.**

ANNIVERSARY



Wade, Jason
1st Anniversary occurs 5th February.

Dad
There is no one else on earth,
As special as you were to me,
I hold you forever, my precious Dad,
In my heart and memory.
You made me laugh every day,
You really were the best,
And even though you're not here,
The time we had was blessed.
I wish I had just one more chance,
To see that tender smile,
To laugh with you again, my Dad,
Just for a little while.
So, this is not goodbye,
And this is not goodnight,
Because you're still here by my side,
Holding onto me so tight.
Your loving daughter Savannah. x

Jason
Death leaves a heartache,
No one can heal,
Love leaves a memory,
No one can steal.
Those we love,
Never truly leave us.
There are things that death cannot touch.
Always loved, never forgotten, love Dad, Brothers, Sister, Nieces and Nephews, Brother-in-Law, Sisters-in-Law, Family and Friends.

ANNIVERSARY



Thompson, Claire
12th Anniversary away from home occurs 8th February. Late of Kilnamanagh. In memory of a wonderful and loving Wife, Mam and Nanny. So sadly missed.

It's been twelve years since we saw your face,
Yet your presence still fills every space.
In the way we smile, in the words we choose,
In the quiet strength we never lose.
You are the laughter in our mind,
The gentle voice that's always kind.
Though life has changed and years have flown,
The love you gave has only grown.
All of our love, Johnny, Gordon, Jennifer and Pamela and grandchildren Ella & Sofia. Forever in our hearts.

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.**

ANNIVERSARY



Finn, Patrick
3rd Anniversary occurs 9th February.

Your name is often spoken,
We talk about you still,
You haven't been forgotten,
You know you never will,
No words or verse could ever say,
How much we miss you every day,
Deep in our hearts your memory is kept,
We love you too dearly to ever forget.
Sadly missed by his wife Noeleen, children Rita, Ann, Patrick, Martin, Linda, Noel and Desmond, Grandchildren, Great-Grandchildren, extended Family and Friends.

NOVENA

Novena to St. Jude
Most Holy Apostle, St. Jude, faithful servant and friend of Jesus, the Church honours and invokes you universally, as the patron of hopeless cases, of things almost despaired of. Pray for me, I am so helpless and alone. Make use I implore, you, of that particular privilege given to you, to bring visible and speedy help where help is almost despaired of. Come to my assistance in this great need, that I may receive the consolation and help of Heaven in all my necessities, tribulations and sufferings, particularly, (here make your request) and that I may praise God with you and all the elect forever, I promise O Blessed St. Jude, to be ever mindful of this great you as my special and powerful patron, and to gratefully encourage devotion to you.
F.O.N.

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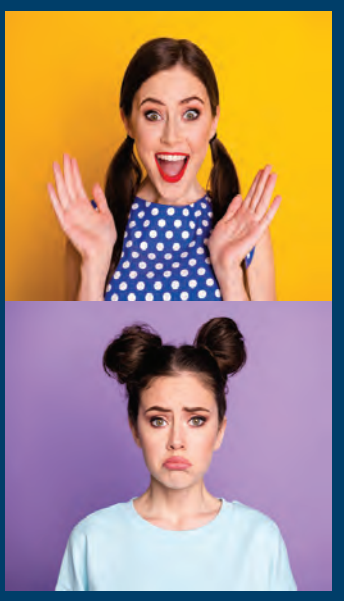
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planning notices

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Dublin City Council

We Tate Europe wish to apply to the above authority for Planning Permission for (i) a standalone single storey modular building containing office and associated staff toilets, showers, changing rooms and staff canteen (450sq.m), (ii) provision of 12 No. covered long-term cycle parking spaces and 12 No. short-term cycle parking spaces, (iii) 3 No. standard car parking spaces and 1 No. accessible car parking space, (iv) SUDs features and drainage connections, along with all associated site works at Kylemore Park South, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, D10 CD36 (former Dublin City Council Water Works Depot). The planning application may be inspected or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Dublin City Council, Planning Department, Block 4, Ground Floor, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, during its public opening hours (9.00am – 4.30pm). A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the Planning Authority on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the Authority of the planning application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the Planning Authority in making a decision on the application. The Planning Authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions or may refuse to grant permission.

South Dublin County Council

I Eoin Ryan am applying for planning permission for Demolition of existing ground floor front porch, side extension and partial area of side boundary wall. Construction of ground floor front porch & ground floor side/partial rear extension with flat roof over. Ground & First floor internal alterations. Alteration to first floor front window changed to 2No. windows. Attic conversion with dormer roof window on rear slope of roof at attic level at 4 Bolbrook Avenue, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24W02E. The planning 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 (9am-4pm, Mon-Fri) and a submission or observation in relation to the application can be made in writing to South Dublin County Council on payment of the prescribed fee (20 Euro) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by South Dublin County Council of the application.

Dublin City Council

We Tate Europe wish to apply to the above authority for Retention of standalone 2 storey modular building containing changing rooms and offices along with all associated site works at Tate Europe, Unit 2, Kylemore Park West, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, D10 KH30. The planning application may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at the offices of Dublin City Council, Planning Department, Block 4, Ground Floor, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, during its public opening hours (9.00am – 4.30pm). A submission or observation in relation to the application may be made to the Planning Authority on payment of the prescribed fee (€20.00) within the period of 5 weeks beginning on the date of receipt by the Authority of the planning application, and such submissions or observations will be considered by the Planning Authority in making a decision on the application. The Planning Authority may grant permission subject to or without conditions, or may refuse to grant permission.

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) ACTS 1963 - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT) REGULATIONS 1977 TO 1994

PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED WEEK ENDING JANUARY 23, 2026

SD25A/0261W 20 Jan 2026 Permission and Retention Additional Information
Applicant: Ballyfermot Sport Complex Ltd
Location: Gurteen Road, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10, D10 H394
Description: Permission sought for two storey entrance and single storey extension to existing building incorporating a new Sports & Wellness Communal Space above existing single storey building. Retention is also sought for existing single storey pitched roof storage shed. New extensions and existing storage shed are located to the west/rear of existing Sports Complex.

SD26A/0013W 19 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Zaheer Uddin Mohammed
Location: 1, Cloonmore Drive, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Description: For the construction of a single two storey three bedroom detached dwelling to the side of the existing two storey dwelling along with new vehicular access and dishing of existing kerb on the western boundary and all other ancillary site development works.

SD26A/0014W 19 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Site Vault Ltd
Location: 11, Fernhill Road, Manor Estate, Terenure, D12 XH66
Description: 2 No. three-bedroom, Semi Detached houses (circa 118 Sq./M each) with habitable attic room, new vehicular entrance & pavement dish & all associated works

SD26A/0017 23 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: John Mc Grath
Location: Raheen, Brittas, Co. Dublin.
Description: Construction of bungalow, garage, on-site treatment unit, new entrance, well and all associated site works

SD26A/0018W 23 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Newlands Golf Club
Location: Newlands Golf Club, Newlands Cross, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, D22 R867
Description: Single storey toilet block with treatment plant and soil polishing filter with all associated site works.

SD26A/0019W 23 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Daifeng Yu
Location: No 3 College View ,Main Street, Tallaght Village, Dublin 24, D24 Y768
Description: 2 number signs (1 main fascia sign & 1 menu sign) to the front elevation of the oriental take away business

SD26B/0014W 17 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Sylvia Mo Wei Lu
Location: 242, Templeogue Road, Templeogue, Dublin, D6 WKH50
Description: Amendment to granted planning permission of SD24B/0325W, consisting of: alteration of the hipped roof to pitched roof for the rear single storey extension, with two pitched roof rear dormers and roof lights, the omission of the west side dormer and the modification of the proposed east side flat roof dormer; window modifications to all the elevations, internal alteration and all associated works.

SD26B/0016 19 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Damien Jackson
Location: 86, Rathfarnham Wood, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14
Description: Single storey flat roof extension to the side and rear and all associated site works to existing dwelling house

SD26B/0017 19 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Shane Connell & Pamela Stagg
Location: 29, Lucan Heights, Lucan, Dublin
Description: The development will consist of the construction of a single-storey extension to the rear of the existing dwelling to provide kitchen, dining and living accommodation, the conversion of the existing garage to the side of the dwelling to provide a playroom, the construction of a single storey extension to the front of dwelling to provide a new porch, the construction pf a first - Floor extension to the side of dwelling to provide a new bedroom, together with internal alterations and all associated site works.

SD26B/0019W 20 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Hugh & Anna Smith
Location: 134, Ballyroan Road, Templeogue, Dublin 16, D16 P8R6
Description: Planning permission for demolition of existing shed and construction of universal accessible garden room and all associated site works to rear of existing dwelling.

SD26B/0020W 21 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Evan Flanagan & Laura Cunningham
Location: 60, Butterfield Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, D14 Y165.
Description: An attic conversion including a change of roof profile from hipped roof to a half-hipped gable-ended profile, a rear dormer roof extension, a new window to the gable wall, 2No. rooflights to the front elevation, 1No. rooflight to the rear elevation and new internal access stairs, plus all associated site works.

SD26B/0021W 21 Jan 2026 Retention New Application
Applicant: Denise Kinsella
Location: 34, Foxdene Green, Lucan, Dublin, K78 AK15
Description: The development will consist of works comprising of Retention of Permission for a second floor - 27.6msq attic conversion with bedroom, comprising of internal stairs, dormer structure and dormer window to the East and West side and rear South facing elevations and associated works. Internal and external -8.5msq front porch to front facing North elevation with overhead hipped roof structure External roofed storage area 12.9msq with polycarbonate roof to side facing West elevation Single storey flat roof Rear Garden shed - 10.6msq And all associated site works.

SD26B/0022W 21 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Ejaz Ahmad
Location: 38 Liffey Park, Lucan, Co Dublin
Description: Single storey kitchen extension to rear of house, single storey home office / games room to rear garden and all associated site works.

SD26B/0023W 22 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Site Vault Ltd
Location: 11, Fernhill Road, Manor Estate, Terenure, D12 XH66
Description: Raise the side gable wall to facilitate an attic conversion with dormer window to front, along with a ground floor porch extension at the front, demolition of greenhouse to side & removal of store room & part kitchen to the side/rear & all associated works.

SD26B/0024W 22 Jan 2026 Permission New Application
Applicant: Anne Richardson
Location: 55 Hermitage Park, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin, D16 HX29
Description: New raised roof structure to provide habitable accommodation at second floor level. Connection to all public services. All necessary ancillary works to facilitate this development.

Contact *The Echo* to have a planning notification published

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Echo Sport

Deputy Sports Editor: William O'Connor

Thursday, February 5, 2026

'I'm looking forward to seeing what this year holds' - Ellen

Templeogue Swim Club star is named Active South Dublin Sports Star of the Year

ELLEN Walshe won the sports star of the year award for a third time at the Active South Dublin Sports Awards in association with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council, *reports Michael Howley.*

The Templeogue swimmer won the award thanks to amazing performances throughout 2025.

She set 17 Irish National Records and achieved sizable medal hauls in the European Aquatics Championship, World Swimming Aquatics World Cup as well as reaching five finals at the World Short Course Championships in Hungary.

An Olympian at Paris 2024, Walshe has continued to grow and improve in each competition she enters and has shown on numerous occasions throughout the year that she is more than capable of competing with the very best athletes in the world.

It is this continued excellence and consistently hitting such a high standard in her discipline which sees her as a constant winner of the overall sports star of the year award.

Walshe spoke on her achievements in 2025.

"I've had a great year. I think it's hard to think back about all the particular moments because I've had so many. I'm looking forward to seeing what this year holds as well."

"That [European Championships in Poland] was super special, there was a race just after it as well so I was slightly distracted but I'm so glad I took the moment at the end to celebrate it. I guess you don't really get those moments to enjoy what you have achieved too often."

"I've been at Templeogue since the start, thanks to all of them for coming. I think it shows that it's a community behind us all. When I race it is individual but there is a massive team behind us that goes all the way down to the tiny tots that we have in the club."

Walshe also revealed her upcoming plans for the rest of 2026.

"I'll head to Dubai next week to race so I'm looking forward to that and then we'll head into Paris for the summer hopefully for the European Long Course Championships."



WELL DONE: Ellen Walshe receives the Active South Dublin Sports Star of the Year Award from Mayor Pamela Kearns. With them are Edel Clancy, Community and Sports Development, Senior Executive Officer, SDCC, Colm Ward, CEO of South Dublin County Council and Lorna Maxwell, Director of Community, SDCC

Adam makes flying visit to sports awards

ADAM Olaniyan made an appearance at the Active South Dublin Sports Awards on the same evening he was set to jet out to Liverpool to begin his journey as a pro boxer, *reports Michael Howley.*

A Jobstown native, Olaniyan is a World Youth Heavyweight champion and an extremely accomplished amateur fighter who is now set to make his debut in a couple of months time.

Olaniyan gave a speech at the beginning of the Awards Ceremony touching on his journey up until now as he prepares to take the next steps in his career.

"Very exciting times ahead. I just felt like it was the right time, I've done a lot in the amateurs and the dream was always to be undisputed so I just thought I would try to do it now."

"We're trying to get out as much as possible this year, it's going to be a very busy year. I'm starting it off on the 14th of March in the 3arena so that's going to be the kickoff to my pro career."

Olaniyan also spoke on the importance of Jobstown Boxing Club.

"Jobstown Boxing Club has been the backbone of my whole boxing career, without Jobstown Boxing Club I wouldn't be here today. Winning the World Championships wouldn't have been possible without them so I just want to say a big thanks to them and everyone in the club for all the endless hours of work, not just the training but being by my side through the rough patches, the ups and the downs."

"I have to give thanks to all of them, obviously also to SDCC, Active South Dublin and especially *The Echo* for documenting everything. It's been a great journey so far."



Adam Olaniyan with members of Jobstown Boxing Club

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Ballyboden St Enda's senior football team receive the Active South Dublin Team of the Year Award from Mayor Pamela Kearns, Emma Kennedy, MD, *The Echo*, Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin and Colm Ward, CEO of South Dublin County Council



Team *Echo* enjoying the Active South Dublin Awards



Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin, Mayor Pamela Kearns, Colm Ward, CEO of South Dublin County Council and William O'Connor, News Editor, *The Echo* with Adam Olaniyan from Jobstown Boxing Club who recently turned professional

***The* 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards, in association with**

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Ballyboden St Enda's senior footballers proud to win Team of the Year Award

BALLYBODEN St Enda's senior footballers have been named Team of the Year at the Active South Dublin awards following their performance in both the county and provincial championships this year, *reports Michael Howley.*

The side won Division One of the league before embarking on a championship run that saw them defeat Na Fianna in the county final and Athy in Croke Park to claim a provincial crown.

They would then reach the semi final of the all Ireland where they were eliminated by eventual all Ireland champions Dingle.

Manager Eamon O'Reilly performed admirably for his first season in charge. He spoke on the achievement

"We're very proud of the team and what they achieved in 2025. When you get to the big games you want to get over the line, it's fine margins as everyone knows. We had that against Cuala and unfortunately against Dingle we probably felt we left it behind us a little. This is sport though, this is why we love it."

O'Reilly also spoke on the importance of the sports awards and how it inspires young people in the area.

"If I tell my daughter tonight that I was in the room with Ellen Walshe she'd be very jealous. They look up to these people that we have in the room tonight and I think it's important that all of you who are athletes realise how big of an impact you have on the ones who are coming behind you."

"The way we looked at the year, to be honest was that Dublin was so difficult, you're literally looking at the next game and that's all we have ever done and it's all we will ever do. The teams are so good and are so well prepared. Even in our own area of South Dublin we have so many teams that we can't look past one game. We've got unbelievable backing in the club, all the people behind us we are just so happy and proud to be a part of Ballyboden St Endas."



Ballyboden St Enda's senior football manager Eamon O'Reilly with Active South Dublin Sport Star of the Year Ellen Walshe



Hillary Nets receives the Active South Dublin Coach of the Year prize from Mayor Pamela Kearns, Emma Kennedy, MD, *The Echo,* Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin and Bryan Malone, Sales and Marketing Manager, The Plaza Hotel

Hillary Nets claims Club Coach of the Year prize

HILLARY Nets was named the Active South Dublin Coach of the Year in association with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council in the Plaza Hotel last Thursday, *reports Michael Howley.*

Now a coach of FloMax Liffey Celtics, Nets has impressed as a coach for a number of teams over the past year.

Nets led the Eanna U18s side to success in the Billy Coffey National Cup where they decisively defeated Galway Titans 92-72.

Also coaching the Colaiste Eanna school team, Nets was involved in the side that won the U19A All Ireland League who defeated St Marys Portlaoise a few short months later.

Held in the National Basketball Arena in Tallaght, it was a thrilling game which saw Colaiste Eanna just get over the line with a 61-58 scoreline.

This was the fourth year in a row that the school had won the title.

Net's achievement's with the school did not end there however as they won gold in the World School Championships which were held in Valencia.

Net's guided them to a first place finish after defeating St Vincent's Castleknock College in the final.

Nets has also impressed since leaving his role with Eanna as under 18 coach and joining as coaching head coach of Flomax Liffey Celtics.

Appointed head coach in June he guided them to reach the Women's Super League National Final earlier on this month.

Nets spoke on the achievement of winning the World Championships in November.

"Massive achievement for the lads, we've been working for the last six years now to get into that. We were invited to the world championships just before covid but obviously we weren't able to go. We got the opportunity this year to go to Valencia and the world championships this year which was a great opportunity for the lads to see all the facilities they have over there but was also a great reward for all the hard work they've put in over the years."

Nets spoke of the growth of basketball and the contributions of volunteers in the space.

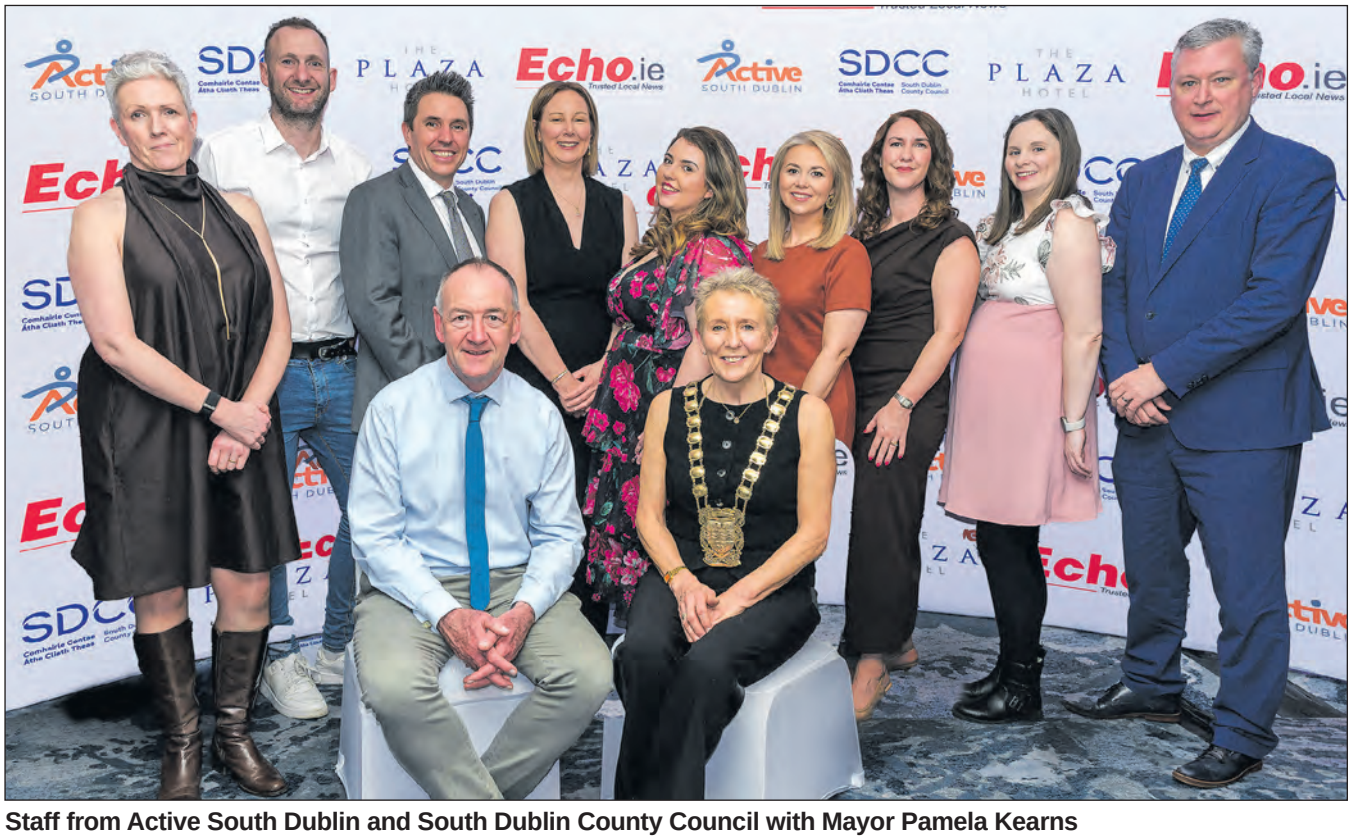
"To echo what the lads were saying and what Patsy [Kelleher] was saying, it's all the volunteers. They go into the primary schools and clubs and bring basketball to them. The kids have that opportunity to train with professionals and be coached by capable volunteers."



Hillary Nets proudly shows of his Active South Dublin Coach of the Year prize



William O'Connor, News Editor, *The Echo* speaks with Hillary Nets after he was announced the Coach of the Year



Staff from Active South Dublin and South Dublin County Council with Mayor Pamela Kearns



Colm Ward, CEO of South Dublin County Council with David Kennedy, editor *The Echo.*

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Esker Boxing Club received the Club Development Award from Mayor Pamela Kearns. The award is presented to Esker members Ed Griffin, Mick Kelly and Brian Brady. With them are William O'Connor, News Editor, *The Echo*, Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin and Bryan Malone, Sales and Marketing Manager, The Plaza Hotel



Lucan Sarsfields GAA Club minor ladies football team with their Team of the Month Award



Clondalkin rugby club senior men's team with their Team of the Month Award

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards, in association with

Esker boxing clever with Club Development recognition

Lucan club have over 150 members and moved into new premises

ESKER Amateur Boxing Club were rewarded for their hard work throughout 2025 by being awarded the Club Development of the Year Award at the Active South Dublin Sports Star Awards in association with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council in the Plaza Hotel, *reports Michael Howley.*

For the first time in their 13 year history the club has found a permanent home after moving into the new Lucan Leisure centre in September.

With over 150 members the Club was in need of permanent residence after hopping from place to place over the years.

The club has also seen their first ever Elite Champion with Nathan Ojo winning the Cruiserweight title at the beginning of this year.

Ed Griffin spoke on the achievements of the club.

"We were floating around for the last 13 years and it was a big struggle for the last two years. Our friends over in Jobstown and WhiteChurch Boxing Clubs were hosting us for the last couple of years. It was very difficult, you'd be leaving work bringing people all around getting ready for championships."

Griffin also spoke about a Five Year Plan that the club had put in place.

"We came up with a five year plan and said look this is where we want to be. Loads of clubs do that when they are starting out and they just aren't strong enough to survive but thankfully we were."

The club has also found success in the ring with the aforementioned Nathan Ojo winning the National Elite Championships.

"The club had a massive achievement with Nathan Ojo being our first ever Elite Champion. That's a huge thing for our club."

Griffin also thanked South Dublin County Council for all the work that they had put in helping the club to where it is.

"We wouldn't be where we are now without Colm Ward and South Dublin County Council. Colm has done so much for us. We were on our knees for a long time and they said that they would sort us out. They've done it with Jobstown and all of the sports clubs around the area.

"You don't realise how much sport matters to regular people. We have 157 members, they get a positive experience out of it and going forward they will be good positive individuals to have in society. Apart from sporting achievements that's what you are trying to introduce in sports clubs around the county."

"Three of our lads went professional last year, like Adam [Olaniyan] . We have known Adam since he was a kid. It's such a tight community, the sports community. I've been dealing with Active South Dublin now for a long time and they have been so helpful to us. We used to go to war with the council for years but the investment in sports in the county is unbelievable at the moment."



Members of Kilnamanagh Football Club with the Team of the Month Award which the U15 girls team won after they won the SFAI All-Ireland title for the first time

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Patsy Kelleher from Dublin Lions Basketball Club receives the Active South Dublin Volunteer of the Year Award from Mayor Pamela Kearns, Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin, Bryan Malone, Sales and Marketing Manager, The Plaza Hotel and Michael Howley, *The Echo*

Dublin Lions' Patsy honoured with volunteer award

PATSY Kelleher of Dublin Lions has been named as the Active South Dublin volunteer of the year at the Active South Dublin Sports Awards in association with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council, *reports Michael Howley.*

Kelleher is a team manager for five teams in Dublin Lions, including the U18 side that won the National Cup just last month.

Kelleher joined the club after her son began playing for the team 12 years ago, while he no longer plays she remains involved with the club and has become a pivotal part of Dublin Lions behind the scenes.

Not only in the sports scene, Kelleher works in Tallaght Hospital and was starting a midnight shift in the hospital immediately after the awards ceremony held in The Plaza last Thursday evening.

"My son started playing when he was 8 or 9 and I got involved with the club. When he started first we just had an academy and a few teams, mainly out of Moyle Park in Clondalkin. Since then we now have 21 teams right across from U10s up to U18s in the boys and U16s in the girls"

"We started rebuilding our girls side in the club about five years ago and since then we've had runners up and all Irelands at U14s level with five of the U16 girls in the national team panel at the minute. We've built the girls up and the boys have always been strong and we hope they continue. The club has grown a lot."

"A lot of what I do is fundraising for the club. You saw in the piece recently in *The Echo* that we paid €115,000 in halls fees in just 2025 alone. A lot of our work as a community and as volunteers is just fundraising, trying to get enough money so that we can keep the fees down for our members and continue to grow, give our coaches time to coach so our players have the best development possible."

Hard work pays off on and off the pitch for Lucan United

LUCAN United have been named club of the year at the Active South Dublin Sports Awards with *The Echo* and South Dublin County Council for their work both on and off the pitch throughout 2025, *reports Michael Howley.*

At underage level the U14s Girls won the All-Ireland National Cup Final with a 2-1 win over Knocknacarra.

The club also made the necessary arrangements to ensure the return of their senior women's team in the 2026 season.

The club has also been involved in various community initiatives such as installing bike racks in an effort to get more members to cycle to and from the club as well as receiving a grant to install a walking track around the club worth €25,000 aimed at promoting the health and well being of members and people from the community as a whole.

On the pitch the club also was announced as a member of the upcoming National League third year.

Set for its first season in 2026 the competition will aim to build a bridge between amateur and professional football in Ireland and Lucan United are one of the founding members of the division.

Vinny Slevin spoke on all the work that the club is doing behind the scenes as well as on the pitch.

Also alongside him accepting the award was disability advocate and coach in the club James Casserly.

"We've had so much success on the pitch so we are trying to see if we can have success off the pitch. We've decided to focus on some things and the council has been great at helping us with. We've been awarded the €25,000 from Healthy Ireland to build a walking track around the area where the club house is. The idea behind that is that it will bring community to the clubhouse and a safe place for people to walk and also an accessibility part of it as well."

"We were at a match and James got stuck in the grass because it was wet. When we say we can build a walking track we're thinking that this now opens up grassroots football for people with accessibility issues. We're working with the council on other grants such as applying for the sports development grant, braille signs and a sustainability grant. We're also trying to make our club house zero neutral, all these type of things to match our ambitions off the pitch to what we have on the pitch."



Lucan United Football Club were named the Active South Dublin Club of the Year winners.



Damien Power from Kilnamanagh Football Club with the Team of the Month Award



Derek Tohill with his Sport Star of the Month award with Teresa McNicholas, Emma Tohill and Elaine Tohill

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Award Person Nominees



JANUARY WINNER: Jessica Molloy, on behalf of her sister Abbey receives the January Sport Star from Bernard Robinson and Brenda Mockler



FEBRUARY WINNER: Lucan Harriers AC Eileen O'Brien receives her award from Bernard Robinson and Brenda Mockler

***The* 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards, in association with**



MAY WINNER: Adam Charles from Coláiste Éanna receives his award from Liz Dunne, Active South Dublin and Michael Howley, *The Echo*



MARCH and OCTOBER WINNER: Ellen Walshe receives her two monthly awards from Siobhan Gallier, Inclusion Officer Active South Dublin and Brenda Mockler, *The Echo*



JUNE WINNER: Liz Dunne and Michael Howley present Tiffany Spencer from Jobstown Boxing Club with her award



JULY WINNER: Ann Dixon accepts the monthly award on behalf of her son Cormac from Darragh Conway and David Kennedy



AUGUST WINNER: Gabrielle Mongan from Jobstown Boxing Club receives her award from Darragh Conway, Active Cities Officer and David Kennedy, *editor, The Echo*



SEPTEMBER WINNER: Anne Braiden and David Kennedy present National Rallycross champion Derek Tohill with his award in the Plaza Hotel



NOVEMBER WINNER: Stephen Jones from Tallaght Martial Arts receives his award from Helen Dwyer, Sports Development Officer and William O'Connor

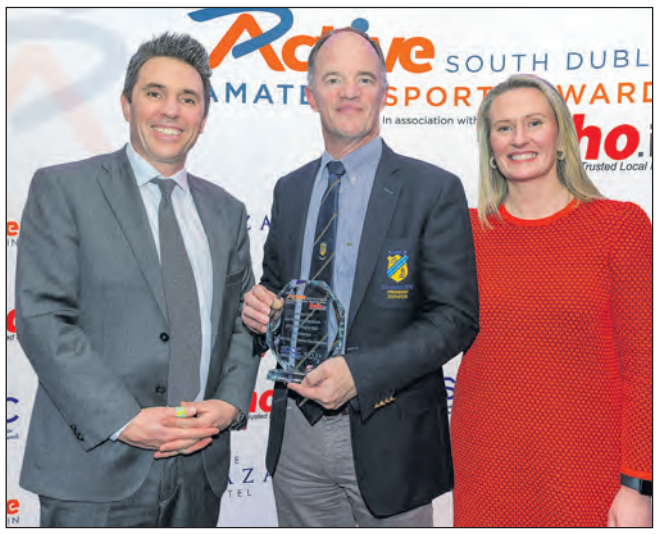


DECEMBER WINNER: Sasha and James Talbot accept the award on behalf of their sister Jessica Talbot of Lucan Boxing Club from Helen Dwyer and William O'Connor, *The Echo*

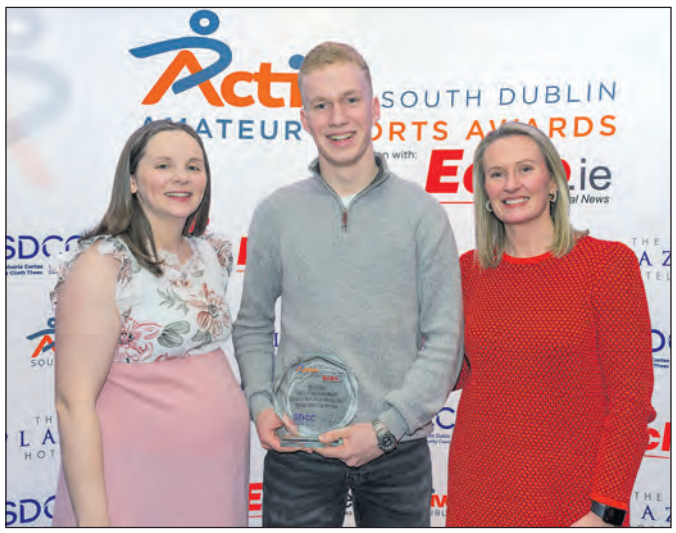
The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Award Team Nominees



JANUARY WINNER: Bernard Robinson with Patrick Walsh from Colaiste Éanna and Brenda Mockler



FEBRUARY WINNER: Gareth Steed from Clondalkin Rugby Club with Bernard Robinson and Brenda Mockler



MARCH WINNER: Riagen Dunne from Glenanne Hockey Club with Siobhan Gallier and Brenda Mockler



APRIL WINNER: Ann Marie from Loreto Hockey with Siobhan Gallier and Michael Howley



MAY WINNER: Kilnamanagh's Bernadette Ennis, Damien Power, Elaine McGovern with Liz Dunne and Michael Howley, *The Echo*



JUNE WINNER: Laura O'Reilly from Lucan Sarsfields minor football ladies with Liz Dunne and Michael Howley



JULY WINNER: Darragh Conway with Evan Nugent from Ballyboden St Enda's and David Kennedy



AUGUST WINNER: Stephen Smith, Kaitlyn Smith and Emma Ballesty from St Francis senior women's team with Darragh Conway and David Kennedy, *The Echo*



SEPTEMBER WINNER: Shamrock Rovers U14s Robert Morgan and Thomas O'Reilly with Anne Braiden and David Kennedy, *The Echo*



OCTOBER WINNER: Commercials' Ferida Ó Nualláin with Anne Braiden and William O'Connor, *The Echo*



NOVEMBER WINNER: Finian Moran and Conor Chambers from Coláiste Éanna with Helen Dwyer and William O'Connor



DECEMBER WINNER: Evan Flynn and Mark Byrne from Lucan Sarsfields minor hurlers with Helen Dwyer and William O'Connor, *The Echo*

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Wally, Ron and Ann



Derek, Mark and Evan from Lucan Sarsfields



Mark and Lauren from Lucan Sarsfields

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards, in association with

Active South Dublin

Echo.ie Trusted Local News

The Plaza Hotel

SDCC Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas South Dublin County Council



Emma, Stephen and Kaitlyn



Ann, Colm and Marie



Fiona, Aoibhe, Eileen, Aisling and Mark



Ann and Jason, Glenanne Hockey Club



Tallaght Martial Arts Stephen Jones and Family



Ann Marie and Noreen, Loreto Hockey Club



Bernard Robinson, Darragh Conway and Thos McDermott from Active South Dublin

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Ed, Caroline, Brian and Michael from Esker Boxing Club.



Jobstown boxer, Adam Olaniyan with William O'Connor and David Kennedy from *The Echo*



Michael and Emily from *The Echo*



Members of Coláiste Éanna bastketball team



Members of Templeogue Swim Club with coach Brian Sweeney



Templeogue Swim Club member Ellen Walshe receives the Active South Dublin Sports Star of the Year from Mayor Pamela Kearns, Thos McDermott, Head of Active South Dublin, Colm Ward, CEO of South Dublin County Council and William O'Connor, News Editor, *The Echo*

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards



Members of Colaiste Éanna basketball team with manager Karen Hogan



Ellen Walshe, the Active South Dublin Sports Star of the Year with coach Brian Sweeney and her team mates from Templeogue Swim Club in the Plaza Hotel



Members of Shamrock Rovers U14 team with their Team of the Month Award

The 2025 Active South Dublin Amateur Sports Awards, in association with



Volunteer of the Year Patsy Kelleher from Dublin Lions with Mayor Pamela Kearns



Glenanne Hockey Club members Pamela Bastable, Riagen Dunne, Paul Bastable and Fiona Hanaphy with their monthly award.



Liz, Siobhan, Helen and Anne

GAA

First victory for county hurlers



Lucan Sarsfields Chris Crummey in action for Dublin in Parnell Park
Photo by Eamon O'Callaghan

DUBLIN picked up their first win of the Allianz National Hurling league after defeating Kildare in a Division 1B clash in Parnell Park on Saturday evening with the Dubs running out decisive winners with a 2-19 to 0-11 scoreline, *reports Michael Howley.*

Dublin had impressed in their previous match of the league, narrowly losing out to 2024 All Ireland Champions Clare by two points.

Dublin asserted their dominance early on in the fixture with Ronan Hayes causing a green flag to be raised.

Kildare were offered the opportunity to get a goal of their own in the immediate aftermath however Lucan Sarsfield's man John Bellew was on hand to clear the shot off the line after keeper Eddie Gibbons had been beaten.

This miss would prove to be a crucial moment for Kildare as Dublin went straight up the other end of the pitch with Ronan Hayes scoring his second goal of the game.

Dublin found themselves up by nine points at the start of the second quarter however they did not deliver their best performance and consistently hit wides for the remainder of the half with their last score coming in the 27th minute.

Neither side impressed during the second half with Dublin keeping their large lead in relative comfort with Kildare being unable to get the ball between the posts.

Donal Burke was like a metronome for Dublin with his free taking providing a consistent scoring outlet for the home side.

He would be supplemented by the likes of Commercials' player Diarmaid O Dulaing and Lucan Sarsfield's Cathal Kennedy who was brought on as a substitute.

Manager Niall O Cellachain spoke on the win.

"Great to get the win, we started well and got the early lead which was really positive. After that I thought it was a patchy performance, we had a lot that we needed to be better at. The win we will take the two points but there's a hell of a lot to work on."

"It was a great start to get but the test is whether you can stick to that and drive on. The things that caused them problems I thought we strayed away from that for a while so we have a lot to learn from that side of things. There were periods of the game where very little seemed to happen and we needed to make more happen. Great to get the win but there are a lot of elements from our performance to be better." They [Kildare] had nearly the same amount of shots from us and were lacking in their score efficiency, if that had been better then the result could have been very different."

Dublin find themselves now with a short delay as their next game will not take place until February 21st when they host Wexford at Croke Park.

'We are learning the whole time' Dubs boss



Templeogue Synge Street's Niall Scully in action for Dublin against Mayo
Photo by Joseph Barrett

DUBLIN Footballers were beaten in their second league game of Division 1 as they lost out to Mayo by six points in Castlebar on Sunday afternoon, *reports Michael Howley.*

There were a couple of changes in the side that had played Donegal the week previous. Lorcan O'Dell of Templeogue Synge Street found himself relegated to the bench while clubmate Niall Scully kept his place in the starting XV.

Dublin had started very well with Luke Breathnach of Ballinteer St John's scoring a goal in the opening two minutes of the game, impressing once again following his excellent showing against Donegal the week prior.

Mayo of course did not take this lying down and fought their way back into the game.

The first half would be extremely tight with just two points separating the sides at half time, with Mayo being the ones with their noses in front with a 0-10 to 1-05 scoreline.

Dublin would find themselves immediately on the backfoot at the start of the second half with full back Sean MacMahon being shown a red card just five minutes after the resumption of the game.

Cormac Costello was also denied the opportunity to score as his shot hit the woodwork while Evan Comerford was called into action on several occasions to keep out Jamie Carr from getting a green flag raised.

Despite being a man down an excellent goal from Paddy Small in the final quarter offered some glimmer of hope though Mayo squashed any ambitions of this, scoring four of the last five points in the game.

Manager Ger Brennan spoke on the result.

"Disappointed, there were some positives in the first half as we created a few good opportunities. Going in at halftime it was obvious to us on the sideline just a couple of tactical tweaks that needed to be made. We came out and should've scored a goal and the first two points but unfortunately we didn't score anything. Mayo got a point and we found ourselves down to 14 men which meant it was always going to be an uphill battle from then."

"In the end, I guess it could've been worse. As a new group it is a new beginning where we are looking to unearth and develop a couple of new players. It's not easy to get that blend the whole time but we have to do it. We are learning the whole time."

"We are looking at the bigger picture with the Leinster Championship and the All Ireland series in mind further down the track."

Dublin will have to wait another week before they afforded the opportunity to get their first league win of the campaign.

They are set to take on Monaghan on February 14th in Croke Park.

Royals too good for Jackies

IN A rematch of the 2025 All-Ireland Ladies Football Final, Dublin found themselves taking on Meath last Monday with the venue being St Patrick's GAA club grounds in Stamullen as opposed to Croke Park on this occasion, *reports Michael Howley.*

Unlike the final last summer, Dublin found themselves well beaten on this occasion as they succumbed to a hefty 2-14 to 1-04 scoreline.

In terms of local talent, Lucan Sarsfield's Sophie McIntyre came into the starting line up though she took the place of St Jude's player Orla Keighran.

Ballyboden St Enda's Kate Donaghy would also make an appearance in the starting XV before making way for her clubmate Charlie Murphy in the second half.

Dublin had the chance to open the scoring for the game but hit a wide which allowed Meath to break the deadlock courtesy of Emma Duggan.

The Royals would remain on top of the action during the opening period of the game and actually managed to create two goal scoring opportunities early on, thankfully missing both.

Despite the misses they continued to dominate the possession and had opened up a five point lead by the time the 17th minute rolled around.

Just a minute later they would extend that lead by three more points with Duggan once again being on target as she scored the first goal of the game.

Dublin would finally get their first score on the board in the 23rd minute of the match with Ballyboden St Enda's Kate Donaghy getting their first of the day on the board.

Jodi Egan would add to the tally with two points shortly after to leave the score 1-06 to 0-03 in Meath's favour after the break.

Meath continued to impress in the second half of the game and found themselves 11 points clear after the 35th minute.

Ciara Smyth would add to their lead getting the final goal of the game in the 58th minute which would put 14 points between the teams and Meath would run out as decisive victors.

The Girls in Blue find themselves back in action this weekend however as they travel south to play Waterford this Saturday with a 4:45 throw in expected.



Ciara Smyth of Meath in action against Ellen Gribben of Dublin during the Lidl Ladies National Football League and (inset): Dublin manager Derek Murray
Photos by Sportsfile

Basketball

Dublins Lions do enough to overcome Templeogue

THERE was a local derby clash in Basketball Ireland Men's Division 1 at the weekend as Templeogue took on Dublin Lions in Coláiste Bríde this past Saturday with Dublin Lions running out winners on the day 79-56, *reports Michael Howley*.

Dublin Lions had several standout performers on the day. Russ Marr perhaps being the most notable of the bunch with the American managing a very impressive tally of 27 points and five assists.

Nacho Folgueiras also played a big role for Dublin Lions with the player managing 11 rebounds.

Templeogue would be defeated on the Saturday but would return to action just a day later, this time at home as they hosted Ulster University and managed to pick up a big win with the final score being 78-65 in their favour.

Jake Mullins had a fantastic game as he scored 17 points, eight rebounds and provided four steals.

Hector Parras was another integral member of the team with 15 points, 11 rebounds and two steals.

Evan Cook was a true creative force for the side with 11 points, five rebounds and a huge seven assists while Wilfried Omorusi also provided 10 points, four rebounds and two blocks.

The performances at the weekend see Dublin Lions still content for the top spot in the table as they are just three points behind Drogheda Wolves on 39 points, though they are joined on 36 points by the SPK Utility Trust Lakers.

Templeogue sit in 13th position though the win against Ulster University was massive given that they sit 5 places above Templeogue in the table.

They now are on 12 points and are looking to create more distance between the teams below them and themselves with a possible push up the table on the cards should they go on a run of form and catch Tipperary Talons.

Templeogue face off against Maree this coming weekend while Dublin Lions take on Maigh Cuilinn.

Saturday's fixture in the Super League between Griffith College Éanna and Energywise Ireland Neptune was halted at 22-4 in the first quarter, due to an injury to Cian Heaphy, with the game to be rescheduled.

Eanna would find themselves in action again on Monday night however as they took on Sligo All Stars in a winning effort wiith the scoreline reading 88-78 points.

Notable performers on the day included Stefan Desnica, Cathal O'Sullivan and Jim Gormley who chipped in with 25,18 and 12 points respectively.

Hockey

Three wins in four days as Glens march into semis

GLENANNE 3's completed a stunning three game winning streak in just four days to reach the cup semi final as well as strengthen their promotion push, *reports Michael Howley.*

The demanding run began on Saturday with a fiercely contested and at times ugly Junior Cup quarter final against Pembroke.

Glenanne showed more composure under the intense, aggressive pressure of the opposition and took a deserved 2-1 victory thanks to goals from Tadgh Murphy and Ryan McGauley.

The performance underlined the maturity of the team which has seamlessly blended youth and experience in its ranks.

Liam Raeside delivered a standout performance to earn player of the match.

This game was notable for the five green cards handed out to Pembroke players with the referee seeing plenty of action throughout the contest.

The win sends Glenanen into the cup semi final where they will play YMCA in late February.

Less than 24 hours later the squad made the trip to the Northside where they took on Suttonians in a crucial league fixture.

Fatigue from the cup game was inevitable but Glenanne's younger players were able to deliver the pace and intensity needed to secure a superb 4-2 win away from home with an excellent performance from player of the match Adam Lynch.

Liam Raeside got his name on the score sheet along with Dave Shaw, Cathal Donohoe and a memorable first senior goal for the club from Nollaig Tolan.

Finally on Tuesday evening, through the torrential conditions of Storm Chandra, the 3s played a critical away game to Railway Union. Despite heavy legs and swelling winds the team dug deep to secure a 2-1 win to complete their streak.

Both goals came from in form player Tadgh Murphy who scored three times in four days.

Railway were kept in the game until the last minute thanks to a magnificent performance from their young goalkeeper, it would be Glen's keeper Colin O'Brien who stole the show however keeping out a short corner right at the death of the game to maintain the winning run.



Glenanne have reached the cup semi-final after a three game winning streak

Veteran midfielder Dave Shaw claimed player of the match after an assured performance at the heart of the Glens defence.

The three wins leave Glenanne in a Junior Cup Semi final as well as in an excellent position to push for promotion as the team has built some serious momentum at this crucial stage of the season.

Athletics

More success for Tallaght athletes

TALLAGHT juvenile athletes tasted more indoor medal success at days 2&3 of the Dublin Juvenile Indoor Championships that were held in the National Indoor Arena in Abbottstown last weekend, *reports Michael Howley.*

Thalia O'Reilly Quinn who travelled over from the Emirates for the Championships won the U17 400m with a time of 58.93 while Leonard Deering won silver in his U17 400m race with a time of 53.92. He would also win silver in the 800m with a time of 2:05.46.

Madison McKewon and Kym Flanagan won silver and bronze in the U12 girls 60m final with times of 9.08 and 9.13 respectively.

In the U13 girls 60m final, Arianna Adeyamo Concannon won silver with a time of 8.72 with Eva Halpin finishing 7th in a time of 9.03.

Lily Cowap won silver in the U16 high jump with a clearance of 1.58m and she added bronze in the 60m with a time of 8.21 qualifying for the final after winning her previous heat with an even better time of 8.12.

Divine Olorunleke won silver in the U17 60m with a time of 8.07 and Beautuy Ikpefua did likewise in the U18 girls final with a time of 8.06.

Abdullahi Adeleke won the U18 60m title with a new personal best time of 7.1 seconds while Mukeet Goodluck just missed out on the podium with a fourth place finish in 7.44.

Matild Porcu would also manage a fourth place finish in her U19 final where she finished with a time of 8.14.

In the boys U19 60m final, Franklin Onwuzulumba and Brendan Solarin finished fourth and sixth with a time of 7.28 and 7.60 respectively while Daniel Thomas finished sixth in the U18 400m with a time of 56.87 after qualifying through the heats with a time of 55.71.

Others who competed over the course of the weekend included, Harlan Hallows with a time of 2:50.54 in his heat for the U14 800m, Hugh Lopez Gallego with a time of 5:09.19 in the U16 1500m and 2:35.53 in his 800m heat. Mason Mitchell was another competing with a time of 7.77 for fifth place in the U16 boys 60m final while Jola Pearse recorded a time of 8.52 in her U17 60m heat.

In the U15 60m girls contests, Ursa Lawal recorded a time of 8.69 in her heat and progressed to the semi final where she finished seventh with a time of 8.68.

Olivia McDermott and Mia O'Keeffe recorded times of 8.77 and 8.89 in their heats of the same category.

In the U14 60m heats, Darcy Barry recorded a time of 9.51, Eve McQuade 9.51, Emma O'Connor 9.92 and Jenna Byrne recorded a time of 10.41.

Jude Byrne recorded a time of 11.26 in her U12 60m heat and in the shot put contests Darcy Barry threw 4.4m with Jack Niland managing 7.38m. NIland would also jump 2.45 in the U14 Long Jump while Eve McQuade would manage an impressive 2.92m in her own long jump.

Elsewhere several athletes competed for the club at the National Indoor League in Athlone.

Gloria Oigbochie, Uche Disu and Joanna Shodipo recorded times of 7.63, 7.80 and 7.99 respectively in series 1 of the 60m and in series 2 Disu would record a time of 7.68.

Series 1 of the men's 60m saw Joseph Finnegam Murphy clock in an impressive time of 7.18.

Gloria Oigbouchie later recorded a time of 25 seconds flat in the 200m while Uche Disu was hot on her heels coming in at 25.1



Members of Tallaght AC with their medals

Basketball

Templeogue edged out by Limerick by a single basket

TEMPLEOGUE were extremely unfortunate to be defeated last weekend with the women being just a single basket short against Limerick Celtics on Friday night to a final score of 71-69, *reports Michael Howley.*

The game was extremely close with the sides going basket for basket in the last few minutes of the contest.

Sofia Paska was again an extremely important attacking player for Templeogue being their chief scorer with 21 points and managing a massive 16 rebounds as well as providing two assists.

Aoife O'Connell was another standout performer on the day as she made 13 points, a steal as well as two assists.

Hannah Murphy impressed as usual, highlighting her skills with an all around display putting up 13 points on the board, 10 rebounds as well as creating two assists.

The result leaves Templeogue in fourth place in the league on 24 points while now both Limerick Celtics and Limerick Sports Huskies have left them behind with each team being on 27 points while Cleveland Rockets sit on top of the table with a big tally of 30 points.

Templeogue will look to reignite their challenge towards the top of the table as they take on Swords Thunder this weekend.

Dublin Lions suffered a tough loss on the road as they were defeated by nine points in Kilkenny last Friday night in a match that saw them lose 76-67.

Despite the loss there were a number of big performers for the side, particularly Makenzie Helms who dominated the scoring charts with a tally of 23 points and six rebounds. Sinead Keane also provided an assist on the day.

The loss sees them at the foot of the table on nine points, a position which they share with Dublin Raiders.

With the Galway Mystics just three points ahead of them, if Dublin Lions can find themselves in a decent run of form sooner rather than later they could hope to start climbing up the league table and potentially salvage the season.

Hockey

Loreto women held in league but remain top of table

LORETO were held to a draw in the EYHL Division 1 as they took on Catholic Institute over the weekend, *reports Michael Howley.*

The side initially went 1-0 up in the first minute of the game after a goal from Mollie Lennon but would later find themselves on the back foot thanks to a brace from Naomi Carroll which left Loreto down by 2-1.

The home team would battle back however and Yasmin Pratt would get the equaliser in the 57th minute to bring the final score to 2-2.

Of course draws in the EYHL then go for a shootout to decide who wins the bonus point and Loreto would come up short on this occasion with Catholic Institute winning the shootout 3-2 and claiming the bonus point in the process.

Still Loreto will not be too worried as they still have a nice gap between themselves and their nearest competition Railway Union who are six points behind them on 24 points in the table.

Three Rovers did not play over the weekend with the only men's fixture taking place being Avoca against Cookstown.

Three Rock still find themselves as the best of the rest in the table as the top three of Banbridge, Lisnagarvey and Monkstown all sit on 26,24 and 22 points respectively while Three Rock are in fourth place on 16.

Soccer

Firhouse back on track after win over Lourdes

A CONVINCING second half display finally got Firhouse United back on track for the runner-up position in the UCFL Division 3C section, after they finally saw off the challenge of Lourdes/Pearse in Sacred Heart last Saturday, *reports John Mooney.*

The title is heading to Ronanstown FC who have a 100% record in this Division and only a complete collapse will deny them, so the race for second is well and truly on.

Saturday saw United move up to that position after their win, although they have played more games that the sides below them, but at least they have the points on the board.

This was a real rusty type of game in the opening half as both sides were a little off the pace due to the inactivity over the past few weekends, but there were plenty of chances for both to break the deadlock but neither could take advantage.

Ben Singleton of Firhouse was the first to try his luck but was denied by keeper Kian Zambra, who was quick to spot the danger and clear his lines.

Lourdes replied with a good effort from Joey Prendergast and a golden opportunity from Sean Brophy, but he rushed his shot and fired well over the bar when a bit of composure might have done the trick.

The home sides Sunil Jain and Michael Brady linked up to creat a chance that saw Brady hit the side netting, and with nothing more to shout about the sides went into the break at 0-0.

However, in the second half Firhouse finally got to grips and ran out comfortable 3-0 winners, as Kian Donnelly opened their account in the 59th minute, when he ran on to a Jack Ryan pass and slotted home cooly beyond Zambra in the Lourdes goal.

It was just what they needed and 14 minutes later they added number two through Mark Grant, after Donnelly set him up, to give the visitors a bit of a mountain to climb.

And as they began to throw players forward they were caught cold by Donnelly for a second time, when Ryan provided his second assist in the 83rd minute to wrap things up.

All in all a good afternoon for Firhouse who can now turn their attention to plotting a way past Ronanstown in the Sidney Bedlow Cup this weekend.


Lourdes/Pearse went down 3-0 to Firhouse United


Firhouse United saw off Lourdes/Pearse to stay in the hunt for second place in the league

FIRHOUSE UNITED: Jack Mulhern, Kian Molloy, Lucas Kelly Corrigan, Charlie Weacott, Kevin Downes, Michael Brady, Sunil Jain, Devin Brady, Mark Grant, Ben Singleton, Ryan Mbam, Kian Donnelly, Hareef Sarumi, Jack Ryan, Leon Ancoh, Larsson Kinghorne, Joe Gomez.

LOURDES/PEARSE: Kian Zambra, Reece O'Connell, Vinicius Fernandes, Declan Hamilton, James Kane, Joey Prendergast, Craig Maguire, Andrew Grant-French, Jamie Barry, Ryan Dwyer, Sean Brophy, John Roe-Dwyer, Adam Roe-Dwyer, Ruggero Recine, Brandon Lee-Behan, Mark Windrum, Adam O'Donnell, William O'Connor.

Holy Family into All-Ireland

HOLY Family in Rathcoole have advanced to the final of the All-Ireland Senior Girls Championship after a close 3-2 victory against Scoil Mhuire Greenhills from Carrick on Suir, *reports Michael Howley.*

Holy Family qualified for the competition after they had won the Leinster Cup just a week earlier with a victory against Rathoath in a game that they would also score three goals in, the final score being 3-1.

Sophie Flannery would grab two goals in that game and the niece of Robbie Keane, Sadie would also get her name on the scoresheet as the school won the Leinster Championship for the first time in their history.

Sadie Keane found herself again on the scoresheet as she bagged a hattrick in the semi final also scoring all three of Holy Family's goals.

Naoise Coughlan, Michelle Muddiman, Ali McCusker, Ruby Curtis and Sophie Flannery all had excellent games however the entire squad has been brilliant throughout the campaign so far with each player being involved with taking the school to levels they have never reached before.

"Rathcoole FC have given us massive help with training pitches and facilities. I suppose we did expect them to have a good go this year and make a run at it but they have just gone beyond expectation now reaching an All Ireland final. Every single one of the kids' parents were at the matches, we had a big crowd down at the Leinster final and hopefully we will get the same down for the All-Ireland final."

Managed by Ines Quinlan and Liam O Sullivan the school will contest the final of the competition on February 11 as they come up against Ursuline College Sligo who beat Loreto 4-0 in the other semi final.


Holy Family in Rathcoole are through to the final of the All-Ireland Senior Girls Championship

Soccer

Brennan joins Rovers from UCD

ADAM Brennan signed for Shamrock Rovers from UCD last week and looks to be a replacement for Josh Honohan for the upcoming 2026 season, *reports Michael Howley.*

Impressing in his time in the First Division last year, 18 year old Brennan was the focus of much interest both at home and abroad with Championship sides Hull City and Barnsley also thought to have been interested in his signature.

Playing in a variety of positions for UCD throughout the year, primarily out wide, Brennan managed an impressive nine goals and 12 assists in 28 appearances last year.

Notably his teammate last season for UCD is now the current director of football at Shamrock Rovers, Ronan Finn and it is thought that the previous connection between the two played a part in the deal being made.

Hoops boss Stephen Bradley spoke on the signing and its importance.

"He has been for some time. When Ronan Finn left here, we obviously kept in touch and I mentioned Adam to him some time back. Ronan laughed and said he's the next one. So we've monitored Adam very closely and we really like the type he is. He's really aggressive in the final third, commits people, wants to beat players, wants to make things happen. We knew Josh Honohan was going to leave for some time and Adam was one of our targets for that position. So we're delighted to get him in. He has turned down Championship clubs to come here, which says everything about his commitment to us, we believe he has a really high ceiling and we're looking forward to seeing him in the team."

"He's fearless in the final third. He dribbles really strongly with the ball, makes things happen, can go right or left, he's two footed. I believe we can make him better, add goals to his game and he's a very exciting player. "

Five-star performance from Kilnamanagh boys

DESPITE adverse weather conditions the Leinster Senior League saw an action packed weekend with several high profile contests taking place over the bank holiday, *reports Michael Howley.*

John O'Donoghue was the man of the hour for Kilnamanagh with the player managing a hattrick as well as two assists in an absolute 5-2 thumping against Arklow in the Senior One Division.

O'Donoghue opened up the scoring in the 25th minute before doubling the lead in the 33rd, Darragh Deegan would add on further to give Kilnamanagh a 3-0 lead going into half time.

Arklow would pull one back in the 53rd minute with a goal from Marcel Kasparek however Karl Chambers would make the score 4-1 just 15 minutes later.

O'Donoghue would get his final goal of the day in the 75th minute to seal the deal and while Arklow did net again through Oscar Malcolmson, the result was confirmed.

The win sees Kilnamanagh now in fourth place in Senior Division 1 as they make a push to challenge the top three of Crumlin, Montpelier and Glebe North.

Sacred Heart picked up a valuable three points against bottom placed Liffey Wanderers after a hard fought 2-1 victory at home on Friday night.

Lee McEvoy put Sacred Heart 1-0 up in the 37th minute with an excellent header, getting on the end of a cross from Joey Reynolds.

Liffey would come back with pressure however and would eventually break the Sacred Heart defence in the second half with a goal from Sean McMahon in the 65th minute.

In torrential conditions and in a game that seemed destined to be a draw, McEvoy would pop up once again to score his second of the game in the 94th minute to seal the deal for Sacred Heart and pick up a huge win.

The win sees them now in tenth position in the table as they look to get themselves away from those who are languishing at the bottom of the division.



Kilnamanagh had a huge 5-2 victory over Arklow in the Leinster Senior League. Photos by Leslie Evans

In the Senior Sunday division Inchicore Athletic continued their good run of form picking up a 2-1 victory as they hosted UCD AFC on Friday evening.

It was a great start for Inchicore as they found themselves 1-0 up following a Darragh Dunne penalty in the 16th minute of the game.

Just before the halftime whistle sounded however they would have the wind knocked from their sails as midfielder Sean Quinn received his second yellow card of the fixture leaving them down to 10 men in horrendous conditions.

Despite being a man down the side did not falter and performed admirably throughout the second half, doubling their lead in the 76th minute through Craig Walsh.

UCD would finally make use of their man advantage in the 92nd minute with Darragh Corcoran scoring but it would be too little too late as Inchicore snapped up all three points.

The win has them in ninth place however they have created a substantial gap between themselves and those lower than them in the table and they now sit just five points behind fourth place side Tolka Rovers, a gap which only highlights how competitive the division is as a whole.

Another game which went ahead on Friday night was between St Francis FC and the aforementioned Tolka Rovers with Francis picking up a big 3-2 win thanks to a Sean O'Mahony-King hattrick.

A brace in the first half followed by another goal in the second saw Francis get the job done. The win sees them in sixth place on 24 points, though notably they have one of the lower numbers of total games played in the league which works in their favour.

John O'Donoghue scored a hattrick for Kilnamanagh



Crumlin progress to quarters

CRUMLIN United advanced to the quarter-final of the Metropolitan Cup following a 2-0 win against Hartstown Huntstown FC in terrible conditions last Friday evening, *reports Michael Howley.*

The sides had met a week previously in the league at Crumlin's home turf and had battled it out to a 1-1 draw following a dramatic last gasp equaliser for Hartstown.

This game saw Crumlin travel out to D15 for the first of the Metropolitan Cup quarter finals with the rest of the round of fixtures set to be played this weekend.

It would be their prowess in the first half that saw Crumlin get the win over their opposition, specifically a brief period just before the half hour mark of the game when Sam Conway and Reece Kavanagh both scored within two minutes of each other.

Darragh Noone would be the creative outlet for the team with the player assisting both of his side's goals.

The second half saw a whole host of changes for both sides made throughout the game with neither side able to add to the scoreline.

The other seven Metropolitan Cup round of 16 games are set to take place this coming weekend with several local clubs involved.

Lucan United are set to host Tolka Rovers while St Francis and Inchicore Athletic will face off again after having only met recently in the league. A game in which Inchicore managed a 3-0 win.

Jobstown Celtic find themselves up against Blackrock Celtic with both teams battling at the top end of their respective leagues.

Kilnamanagh will also find themselves in action as they host Collinstown FC.

Other games included Ayrfield United vs Kilbarrack, UCD AFC vs St Mochtas and Enniskerry vs Greystones United.



Crumlin United are through to the quarter-final of the Metropolitan Cup

Soccer

United earn important win over St Paul's

TEMPLEOGUE United earned themselves a valuable win in the Leinster Senior 1A division over St Pauls Artane last weekend as they won 2-1 in Raheny, *reports Michael Howley.*

Marcus Keane would put them 2-0 ahead in the first half, one in the sixth minute and one in the 43rd.

While St Pauls would strike back upon the resumption of the game in the second half through Evan Fennel Burke.

That is what the score would remain at throughout the game and Templeogue would pick up the three points.

The win sees them in fourth place in the division as they sit on 23 points and while they will have their sights set on teams above such as Ballyfermot, Blackrock and Leixlip they will have to watch out for teams looking at them such as Newbridge and St Pauls who both sit just three points behind them in the table.

Ballyfermot were another team in action over the weekend as they made the trek to Whitehall to take on St Kevins FC.

The two teams would be forced to share points as the game would end 2-2.

The game was a frustrating one for Ballyfermot who will be disappointed that they did not pick up the victory after they had gone 2-0 up in the first half following goals from Darryl Henderson and Paul McLoughlin.

Kevins pulled one back just before halftime through Dylan Kelly and then just as the second half began in the 50th minute with Karl Bruton.

The draw sees them miss an opportunity to go top of the table as they now sit on 27 points alongside Blackrock and Lexilip United, though admittedly Blackrock have several less games played than both.

Cherry Orchard hosted Baldoyle United at home in the Senior 1B division.

Baldoyle would take the lead early on in the game however Cherry Orchard would battle back and equalise just before halftime.

Jobstown Celtic played Mount Merrion in another game that ended as a draw.

Mount Merrion would go ahead in the match with a goal in the 34th minute and would double their lead in the 50th minute .

Jobstown worked their way back into the game and equalised just six minutes later from Glen McCauley and would snatch a hugely valuable point through Ryan Shields with an equaliser in the 93rd minute of the game.

The result sees them in second position in the league just two points behind Raheny United in first.

Rovers look for a winning start to league campaign

SHAMROCK Rovers are set to take on Dundalk in Tallaght Stadium this Friday evening in their opening game of the 2026 League of Ireland season, *reports Michael Howley.*

The squad will be hoping to get their league campaign off to a winning start after their preseason concluded with a defeat to Derry City in Tallaght last weekend in the President's Cup. Rovers losing out 1-0 on the day courtesy of a Darragh Markey goal.

It has been an interesting pre-season for the club which have seen several players come and go.

Some of the more notable outgoings include Josh Honohan who was pivotal for the club last season as well as Aaron McEneff, Darragh Nugent and Sean Kavanagh who has joined the club as a member of coaching staff.

The club has seen some incomings also including former St Pats winger Jake Mulraney, UCD wideman Adam Brennan as well as Ireland international Enda Stevens.

One of the players whose future was up in the air for much of the window was Michael Noonan who was the subject of interest from a host of clubs during the window including Bundesliga side TSG Hoffenheim who made a bid of over €1 million.

Stephen Bradley spoke on the prospect of having Noonan for the foreseeable future.

"He's so mature in dealing with things. Sometimes you see his vulnerability in terms of his age. But he's so mature in general.

"It's a lot of attention. There's a lot of interest. He knows. And we've been very open with everybody that's come in.

"Him and his mam have been kept in the loop at every step. And it's great we have the relationship that we can speak honestly and openly and talk.

"I was up in the house last week and we had a really good chat. He's in a good place, Michael.

"He's not the type to allow anything like that to distract him, to get on top of him. He just wants to play."



Shamrock Rovers manager Stephen Bradley, left, and Lee Grace during the SSE Airtricity League launch Photo Sportsfile

One of the many opinions that made their voice known on Noonan's ability was former Rovers and Dundalk midfielder Richie Towell who touted the youngsters talents ahead of upcoming season.

"I think if Michael Noonan stays in the league and plays every week, I think he could be the top scorer,"

"He's a natural goal scorer. No matter what age group he's playing for, he's scored goals, underage, he's always scored goals.

"Anytime he's played for Rovers, he's done really well and scored goals. I think he has consistency in playing every game."

"The question is, does Stephen want to put that much pressure on someone so young? I don't know, that's probably why he has the likes of Rory Gaffney and [John] McGovern there to share the load.

"I think if he played every game, he would be top scorer and I don't think he would be the way it's been the last couple of years, where it's been 14 goals that have won it. I think he could be the one that gets 20 goals."

Pat's all set for Aviva encounter

ST PATRICK'S Athletic will travel to the Aviva this Sunday for their opening fixture of the 2026 League of Ireland campaign as they take on Bohemians FC, *repors Michael Howley.*

Pats will be hoping for a more fruitful year than last year's season as they finished in a fairly mediocre fifth place position missing out on European football.

They have had a total squad switch up losing their star goalscorer Mason Melia who managed to net 14 times last season.

As a replacement they have brought in Max Mata and while the New Zealander may be motivated to replicate his form at Sligo Rovers due to the upcoming World Cup it remains to be seen whether or not he and Aidan Keena will be able to achieve the desired output to be an adequate replacement for Melia.

Darragh Nugent is another well known name who will be plying his trade in Richmond Park after being involved in a swap deal which saw Jake Mulraney head the opposite way.

The other high profile player that Pats brought in would be full back Ronan Boyce who arrives from Derry City. The 24 year old is already one of the more experienced fullbacks in the league with well over 100 appearances to his name.

Other players brought in by Pats include Ryan Edmondson from Australian side Central Coast, Jordan Garrick from Forest Green, Glory Nzingo from Swansea, Daniel Chukwu from Longford Town and Darren Robinson from Derby County.

Brandon Kavanagh is another who has left the club with the attacking midfielder heading to Derry City while Jake Mulraney has made the short switch to Tallaght Stadium after a rocky 2025 at Richmond Park.

The Saints will be coming up against a Bohemian's side which has seen a shift of its own over the Christmas period.

Longtime skipper Keith Buckley has made the switch to Dundalk while key man up front James Clarke has swapped Phibsborough for Derry as he will be playing in red and white for the upcoming season.

The side has brought in several additions however including the likes of former Galway United powerhouse Pat Hickey who will provide some needed physicality to the team.

It remains to be seen how each side will line up on Sunday in the Aviva however both sides know that the result will be crucial with three points possibly being the difference maker between the two at the end of the year with both eying a finish in the European spots.



St Patrick's Athletic manager Stephen Kenny and Joe Redmond, both from Tallaght at the launch of the 2026 league Photo by Sportsfile

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