



**Galway City Community Network**  
Líonra Pobail Chathair Na Gaillimhe

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# **Galway City Community Network**

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## **Annual Report 2017**

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## Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2017 annual report of Galway City Community Network. As you will see, 2017 was a very busy year for GCCN as it worked to achieve its twin objectives:

- Advance the values of sustainability, equality, culture, community, empowerment and inclusivity and embed these in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government and civil society;
- Develop and implement progressive models of and approaches to representation, participation and engagement for civil society in informing and shaping policy development and implementation.

During 2017, GCCN members gave a significant amount of time to ensure that the work of GCCN represents and reflects the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City. GCCN and Galway City are truly in your debt.

Thanks also to the GCCN representatives and to the members of the GCCN Secretariat for your commitment and dedication.

We look forward to another busy year in 2018 and look forward to working with you and new GCCN members.



Tommy Flaherty, on behalf of GCCN

thank  
you!

# Background

Established in 2014 and formally launched in 2015, Galway City Community Network (GCCN) is the Public Participation Network in Galway City. The GCCN work is motivated and guided by values of:

- Sustainability and a concern for preserving and protecting the natural environment.
- Equality and a concern for non-discrimination, valuing and respecting diversity, empowering people, and securing access to social and economic resources.
- Culture and a concern for empowering, and fostering the diversity of cultures in the city and enabling people to express their creativity.
- Community and a concern for the physical space, identity, and/or interests shared by a group, where people enjoy wellbeing and harmony, organise collectively, and engage in shared creativity.
- Empowerment and a concern for representation and participation in decision-making and democracy in the city.
- Inclusion and a concern for fostering and ensuring a sense of belonging to and opportunities to engage with one's community and the city.

## VISION

The GCCN vision for Galway City is:

Galway, a creative and inclusive city that respects and values its people and communities, their wellbeing and quality of life, that will develop a vibrant, sustainable, economy and environment and participative and transparent governance

## AIM

The aim of Galway City Community Network is to co-ordinate and support the representation of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City.

## GCCN OBJECTIVES

The twin objectives that GCCN pursues are to

- Advance the values of sustainability, equality, culture, community, empowerment and inclusivity and embed these in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government and civil society;
- Develop and implement progressive models of and approaches to representation, participation and engagement for civil society in informing and shaping policy development and implementation.

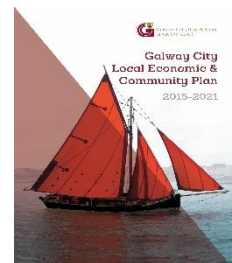
# 2017 WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR GALWAY CITY COMMUNITY NETWORK. THE FOLLOWING WERE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORK

Advance the values of sustainability, equality, culture, community, empowerment and inclusivity and embed these in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government and civil society

## Policy submissions

In 2017, GCCN made the following submissions:

- Submission on the LECP Implementation Plan;
- An initial submission to Ireland 2040 (led by the Environmental Linkage Group);
- A submission to Pobal as part of the review of SICAP;
- A submission to the (then) Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government consultation on LECP Implementation and Monitoring;
- Submission on the DPER review of the Open Government Partnership in collaboration with the National PPN Workers Network;
- Submission to the Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change;
- Ardaun Local Area Plan;
- Submissions on the Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan.
- Submission on the draft Ireland 2040 strategy.
- Submission on the review of Local Community Development Committees

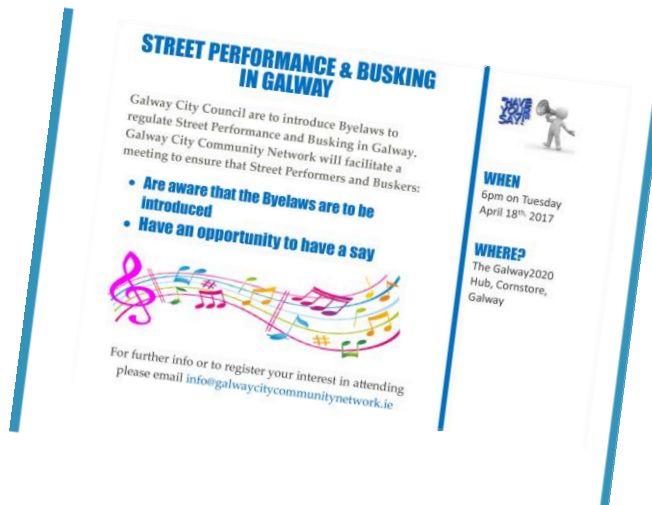


**PARTICIPATION  
MATTERS!**



**THE GCCN SUBMISSIONS WERE  
UNDERPINNED BY PARTICIPATORY  
PROCESS. EXAMPLES INCLUDE:**

- GCCN initiated a process to inform members of the busking and street performance community that Galway City Council were discussing Byelaws that would have a direct impact on their work. We leafleted (thanks Eleanor Hough) buskers for a number of weeks and then hosted a meeting for them to discuss the draft Byelaws.
- GCCN organised a preparatory workshop for members to support them to contribute to the workshop on Local Economic and Community Plan planning;
- GCCN organised a special meeting to discuss the submission to the Ardaun Local Area Plan;
- ....and another to discuss the GCCN submission to Ireland 2040



## PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION

GCCN actively seeks to collaborate with a range of organisations. We co-hosted/co-organised/participated in a number during 2017, including:



- Workshop on the **Sustainable Development Goals** – co-organised with the Junior Chamber of Commerce;
- **Conference on Climate Change and Health** co-hosted with the Irish Forum for Global Health, DSA Ireland, Irish Aid, NUI Galway, Trócaire;
- **Convergence Sustainability Festival** – co-organised with Cultivate and local organisations;
- **European Green Leaf** – GCCN presented to the European Commission representatives with Galway City Council;
- **Galway Sustainable Food Policy initiative** – with the HSE, Galway County Council and others;
- Healthy Ireland – GCCN worked closely with Galway City Council and the HSE locally to develop the **Galway Healthy City initiative** - GCCN supported the LCDC's successful application to the Healthy Ireland fund that secured €100,000 projects agreed by LCDC until April 2018. GCCN led the process to develop the strategy and application. GCCN is on the Steering Committee for Galway Healthy City.
- GCCN is active in the **Social Inclusion Subgroup of the LCDC** and is represented on the **LECP Advisory Group**.
- GCCN co-organises the **Flowers for Magdalenes** event in Galway City annually.
- GCCN collaborated with Galway City Partnership to organise training for GCCN members and others from the **Charities Regulator** and on **data protection**
- **National participation** - GCCN continued to participate at a national level with the Network of PPN Resource Workers.
- **Galway2020** – GCCN continued to engage with G2020;



# DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PROGRESSIVE MODELS OF AND APPROACHES TO REPRESENTATION, PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN INFORMING AND SHAPING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.

## GCCN MEMBERSHIP

GCCN continued to build its membership in 2017. At the end of 2017, there were 131 members of GCCN.

Members	December 2016	December 2018
<b>Registered</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>131</b>
Social Inclusion	48	52
Environment	10	12
Voluntary	59	67

## GCCN REPRESENTATIVES

GCCN representatives sit on the following structures:



- Local Community Development Committee
  - Social Inclusion Subgroup
  - Healthy Galway City Steering Committee
- Local Economic and Community Plan Advisory Committee
- Housing Strategic Policy Committee
- Planning Strategic Policy Committee
- Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture Strategic Policy Committee
- Transportation Strategic Policy Committee
- Environment, Recreation & Amenity Strategic Policy Committee
- Galway Sports Partnership
- Joint Policing Committee
- Galway City Partnership
- The Galway City and County Childcare Committee
- Comhairle na nÓg
- The Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Taskforce
- European Region of Gastronomy
- Galway Healthy Cities



## GCCN REPS' CHARTER

In 2017, GCCN developed and launched a Representatives' Charter. The Charter sets out the criteria for representation, the role and the support available to representatives. It was launched in December 2017 by the Deputy Mayor of Galway, Councillor Mike Cubbard.

## LINKAGE GROUPS

Linkage Groups are crucial to the way GCCN organises support for representatives and accountability back to membership. GCCN continues to support the following Linkage Groups:

- Environment Linkage Group;
- Housing and Accommodation Linkage Group;
- Arts & Culture Linkage Group;
- Social Inclusion, Community Development & Equality Linkage Group;
- Sports & Recreation Linkage Group.
- Economic Development, Enterprise Support Linkage Group (in development);

The Linkage Groups meet regularly and are always open to new members!



## GCCN MEMBERS TRAINING

In 2017, GCCN worked with Galway City Partnership to provide training in Provided training in:

- Charities Regulation
- Data Protection

We also provided training to representatives and potential representatives in negotiation skills.



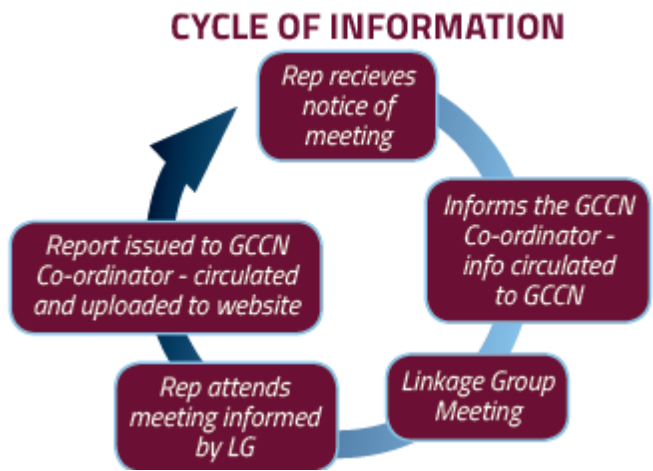


# COMMUNICATION

Communication and information sharing is a critical area of work for Galway City Community Network. During the year, 109 emails were sent to members in 2017. We are very conscious of the need to ensure the flow of information but equally conscious of over-contact. In 2017, we established a regular newsletter, GCCN Community News. This is a combination of information on GCCN events, calls for submissions, GCCN members' events and information from other sources.



GCCN also circulates reports from representatives on a regular basis – thanks to all for sending us the information so we can keep it circulating.



By the end of 2017, GCCN use of social media had increased significantly. Our Facebook followers have grown 1/3 in 2017 to over 600. Our Tweets now regularly reach over 500 people & up to 2,500 people... adding up to 35,600 in last 3 months of the year alone.

## GOVERNANCE, OFFICE & ADMIN

At the end of 2017, the hosting arrangement with Galway City Partnership came to an end and GCCN now operates completely independently. We would like to thank Galway City Partnership and particularly Martina Deehan for all her support.

## SECRETARIAT

The members of the Secretariat for 2017 were:

1. Tommy Flaherty
2. Nichola Tierney
3. Derrick Hambleton
4. Margaret Ó Riada
5. Garry Lohan
6. Marian Maloney
7. Terence McDonough
8. Imelda Gormally
9. Shane Foran
10. James Coyne
11. John Rabbitte
12. Joe Loughnane

The Secretariat met on 11 occasions in 2017.

## GOVERNANCE

- Candor were selected as the GCCN auditors after a tendering process.
- GCCN fulfilled all its obligations under the Lobbying legislation.
- All reports were sent to the Galway City Council and the Department of Rural and Community Development as appropriate.

**Thank you to all GCCN members and representatives – your commitment and contribution makes Galway City a better place.**