



Galway City Community Network
Líonra Pobail Chathair Na Gaillimhe

Galway City Community Network

Annual Report 2016

Foreword

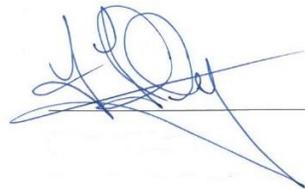
I am pleased to present the 2016 annual report of Galway City Community Network. As you will see, 2016 was a very busy year for GCCN as it worked to achieve its twin objectives:

- 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 2016, 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 2017 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.

2016 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 DEVELOPMENT

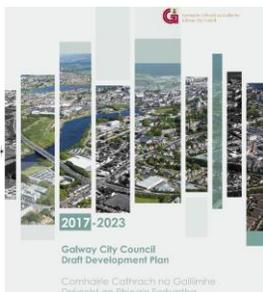


Significant investment was made by GCCN members in the development of GCCN policies. This work, facilitated by Rachel Doyle, undertook a collaborative approach to identify and develop policies in areas of interest to Galway City Community Network. The work culminated in the launch of the report in December by the Mayor of Galway.

POLICY SUBMISSIONS

GALWAY CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023

The biggest policy submission made by GCCN in 2016 was to the draft Galway City Development Plan 2017-2023. In order to inform the process, GCCN undertook the following:



- Communication to members about the importance of the plan and encouraging members to engage both from the perspective of their own groups/organisations/communities and from the collective perspective of the PPN;
- A Brief outlining the draft plan and including a hierarchy of planning in Ireland;
- An initial workshop for all members, organised under the joint auspices of the Linkage Groups;
- A meeting of the following Linkage Groups:
 - Social Inclusion Linkage Group;
 - Arts & Culture Linkage Group;
 - Transportation and Planning Linkage Group;
 - Environment, Recreation and Amenity Linkage Group
 - Housing and Accommodation Linkage Group
- Development of a draft that was circulated to all GCCN members for comment;
- A further joint Linkage Group meeting at which the outcomes of the workshops/meetings/consultations were discussed;

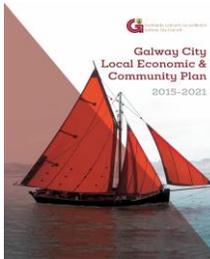
- Discussion by the GCCN Secretariat;
- Circulation of final draft to all GCCN members;
- Presentation, discussion and unanimous endorsement by the GCCN Plenary meeting on March 8th 2016.

In undertaking this process, GCCN sought to ensure that the submission reflected the experience, expertise and commitment of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City to achieving the vision for Galway City as a successful, sustainable, competitive, regional centre that creates prosperity, supports a high quality of life and maintains its distinctive identity and supports a rich cultural experience. A city that is environmentally responsible and resilient to challenge. A city that can attract and retain talent and skills and fosters innovation and creativity. An inclusive city where civic engagement is valued and a shared vision is pursued through good governance and leadership. A city that offers sustainable choices in housing, work, transport and lifestyle opportunities.

OTHER SUBMISSIONS

GCCN also made submissions on:

- The Galway City Transport Strategy;
- The draft Byelaws on Parks, Open Spaces and Beaches;
- The Open Government Partnership;
- Galway City Arts Plan in association with Blue Drum, Alà and the Community Knowledge Initiative, NUI Galway.



These submissions were led by the Linkage Groups in their areas and were all developed in a collaborative way.

LOCAL ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY PLAN

GCCN continued to advocate to Galway City Council that further work on the Local Economic & Community Plan was required. This work culminated in agreement to organise a facilitated interagency, cross-sectoral event to discuss the LECP action plan. GCCN were centrally involved in the organisation of the event and GCCN members facilitated the small group discussion. Prior to the event GCCN held a preparatory meeting for GCCN members to develop positions on the themes and these were represented at the event.

PARTICIPATION & COLLABORATION

GCCN participated in the following in 2016:



POST-CARBON GALWAY
GAILLIMH IAR-CHARBÓIN



- **Cultural Agenda 21** – a two-day event organised by Galway City Council as part of the pilot Culture 21 initiative. The report of the event can be found [here](#)
- **Flowers for Magdalenes** – GCCN was one of the organisers of the Flowers for the women and children of the Magdalene laundries event in Galway.
- **Post Carbon Galway** – GCCN participated in the emerging network of organisations and groups interested in working towards a Post Carbon Galway and gave a presentation at the launch and at the seminar held as part of the Convergence Festival.
- **Galway2020** – GCCN continued to engage with G2020;
- **National participation** - GCCN continued to participate at a national level with the Network of PPN Resource Workers and other for a such as the Environmental Pillar. GCCN was also present at the National Local and Community Development Forum, organised by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government to discuss an implementation plan for the National Framework on Local and Community Development;
- **Sustainable Development Goals** – A member of the GCCN Secretariat represented GCCN at a conference on the Sustainable Development Goals in Scotland.

GCCN Strategic Plan 2016-2019

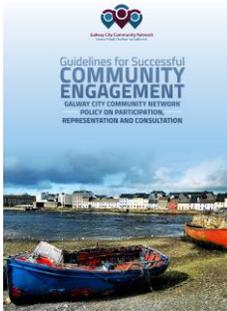
2016 saw the development of the new GCCN Strategic Plan 2016-2019. The development of the plan was facilitated by Niall Crowley and allowed GCCN to identify the values underpinning the work and the objectives for the period.



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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2016, GCCN published its *Guidelines for Community Engagement*. This document reflected best practice in relation to participation, consultation and representation and made suggestions for how this can be facilitated.



GCCN MEMBERSHIP

GCCN continued to build its membership in 2016. At the end of 2016, there were 117 members of GCCN.

Members	March	June	September	December
Registered	106	113	116	117
Social Inclusion	42	46	48	48
Environment	10	10	10	10
Voluntary	54	57	58	59

GCCN REPRESENTATIVES

GCCN representatives sit on the following structures:

- Local Community Development Committee
- Housing SPC
- Planning SPC
- Economic Development, Enterprise Support and Culture SPC
- Transportation SPC
- Environment, Recreation & Amenity SPC
- The Galway City and County Childcare Committee
- Comhairle na nÓg
- The Western Regional Drugs & Alcohol Taskforce
- Joint Policing Committee
- Galway Sports Partnership
- European Region of Gastronomy

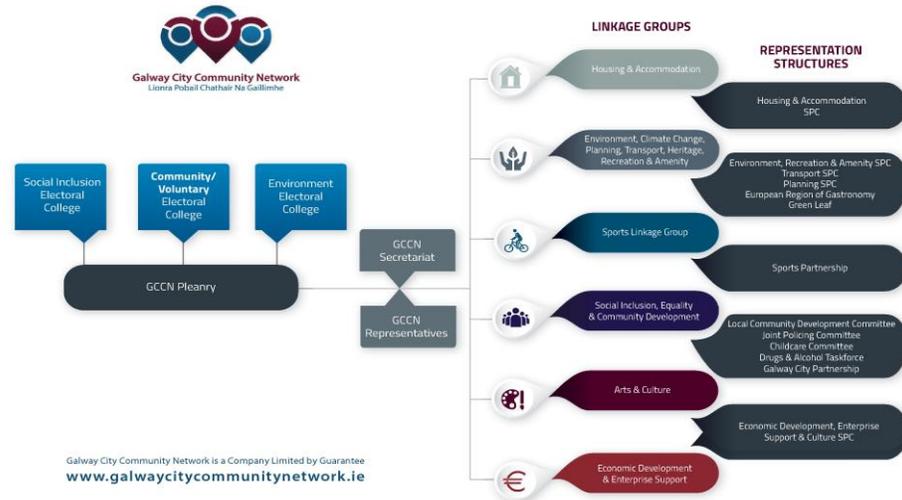


The GCCN representatives met a number of times in 2016. In response to reports from representatives, GCCN carried out a survey to explore representatives' experience of participating in the structures associated with Galway City Council. These include the

LCDC, the SPCs and the Joint Policing Committee. It is intended that this will be presented to the Galway City CEO and the Corporate Policy Group.

REPRESENTATION

In 2016, GCCN worked to consolidate the Linkage Groups and to ensure that the links to representative structures are clear. There are now four active Linkage groups with a further two in development. These are:



ACTIVE LINKAGE GROUPS

- Arts & Culture Linkage Group;
- Environment Linkage Group;
- Housing and Accommodation Linkage Group;
- Social Inclusion, Community Development & Equality Linkage Group.

DEVELOPING LINKAGE GROUPS

- Economic Development, Enterprise Support Linkage Group;
- Sports & Recreation Linkage Group.

The active Linkage Groups met on a number of occasions in 2016, initially focusing on the submission to the draft Galway City Development plan and subsequently on the development of the GCCN policies and Positions document. They also:

- Supported the representatives;
- Discussed agenda and current issues;
- Developed a mandate for representatives;
- Provided an accountability structure for the reps to report to.



GCCN MEMBERS TRAINING

In 2016, GCCN undertook a survey of members to identify training and support needs. Based on that, GCCN developed a training programme. During the year, GCCN organised training with the Equality Rights Alliance on the new Public Sector Duty and training in trade agreements. GCCN is working with Galway City Partnership, Volunteer Galway, the ETB and NUI Galway to explore different training options.

GOVERNANCE, OFFICE & ADMIN

In 2016, GCCN opened its new office in the Westside Resource Centre. Thanks to James and all the team for making us feel so welcome.

GCCN incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 2016. The Directors of the new company are:

1. Tommy Flaherty
2. Nichola Tierney
3. Derrick Hambleton
4. Margaret Ó Riada
5. Garry Lohan
6. Marian Maloney
7. Terence McDonough

SECRETARIAT

During 2016, the GCCN Secretariat members 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. Eleanor Hough
11. James Coyne
12. Paul O'Donnell (retired)
13. Donncha Foley (retired)

While the company remains dormant, the Secretariat met on 11 occasions in 2016.

GCCN fulfilled all its obligations under the Lobbying legislation.

GCCN accounts were prepared and audited as part of Galway City Partnership's annual accounts.

COMMUNICATION

GCCN continued to work on communication with members. We sent 123 substantial emails to members (some would say too many) and the website is frequently updated. We now have 520 followers on Facebook and we started to work on Twitter in 2016.



Thanks to Galway City Partnership for continuing to host Galway City Community Network and to Martina Deehan for admin support