

# Galway needs a masterplan to thrive as sustainable green city

BY CATHERINE CONNOLLY, TD

To have represented the people of Galway West/South Mayo in Dáil Éireann since my election in February 2016 has been a privilege and one that I have greatly respected.

I am proudly standing again as an Independent Candidate in this election and asking for your Number 1 Vote based on my proven track record over the last four years and, prior to that, my seventeen years as a hard-working City Councillor.

My experience to date has confirmed the importance of having strong, independent voices in Dáil Éireann to hold the government to account and to articulate an alternative vision for the country.

This vision includes the provision of housing as a basic human right, a public health system for all, balanced regional and rural development, an integrated and sustainable public transport system, and meaningful and immediate action on climate change.

## Masterplan

In this regard, I have consistently advocated for the roll-out of a masterplan that will enable Galway to thrive as a sustainable green City. This plan must include immediate and long-term solutions to our traffic congestion crisis, underpinned by climate mitigation measures. An integral part of that solution includes the provision of: Park and Ride Facilities on the east and west side of the city, a comprehensive

and flexible school bus service for the City and County, the roll out of the long-promised Greenways along with proper facilities for cycling generally and significant increases in the frequency and connectivity of both buses and trains. I also believe that investment in a light rail system is inevitable if we are to comply with our Climate Change obligations. Indeed, 23,000 people supported and signed my petition calling on the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport to undertake a feasibility study for the project.

Given that Galway is one of five cities earmarked in the National Planning Framework for further significant growth, the absence of a Masterplan is of the most serious concern to me and is facilitating unsustainable development. Indeed, this issue has come up repeatedly on my door-to-door canvass throughout this election campaign.

Since the people of Galway elected me to Dáil Éireann in 2016, I have taken every opportunity to work with like-minded, independent TDs in the Dáil to offer sustainable solutions to the challenges facing us as a society.

This cooperative approach has led to the enactment of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Act, the initiation of sustainable policies for the islands and the seaweed industry for the benefit of all, along with proposed legislation to strengthen the Cooperative Sector.

Moreover, and on an ongoing basis, I and my colleagues have challenged the



Catherine Connolly TD

government's housing policy which essentially relies on the market to provide homes for our people. This policy has utterly failed and led to a housing emergency with over 10,000 people homeless and almost €1 billion this year in Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) going to private landlords. I have continuously fought for public housing on public lands and the provision of cost rental accommodation. In my opinion, the government must have a central role in the provision of homes for our people, sending a clear message to the market and vulture funds that a home is not a commodity.

## Highlighting the hospital

I have also seized every speaking opportunity in the Dáil to draw attention to the inadequacy of the University Hospital and to highlight the necessity for a new public hospital on the grounds of Merlin Park where there are 180 acres of land. In this regard, I welcome the completion of the options appraisal on behalf of the Saolta Group which

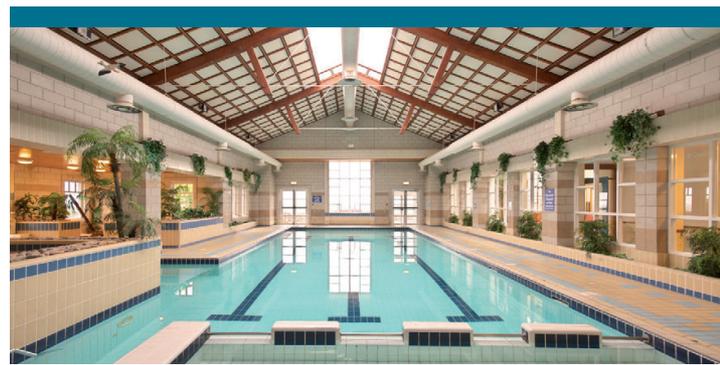
endorses this view.

Bhí sé de phribhléid agam a bheith mar Chathaoirleach ar Choiste na Gaeilge, na Gaeltachta agus na nOileán. Rinne mé cinneadh ón tús taisteal chuig gach Gaeltacht sa tír agus éisteacht leis na daoine ar an talamh maidir leis na dúshláin atá ann do mhuintir na Gaeltachta. Mar thoradh ar an bpróiseas sin, tá tuiscint i bhfad níos doimhne agam agus ag baill an Choiste maidir leis na dúshláin seo agus feacht níos mó ar staid phobail na Gaeltachta ar fud na tíre. Mar Chathaoirleach d'fhoilsigh mé deich dtuarascáil le moltaípraiticiúla iontu le tuarascáil ar Bhille na dTeangacha Oifigiúla san áireamh.

In conclusion, I believe there is a golden opportunity to promote and develop Galway as a thriving green city situated within a park. What is needed is a masterplan and enough voices to ensure it happens. With your Number 1, I will use my voice and work with like-minded TDs to make Galway a place that works for everyone.



Residents and community leaders were out in force on Saturday for a clean up around the Ballybane area. Pictured were some of the volunteers (l-r) Donal Lynch, Matthew Drohan, Edward Conlon, Pastor Larry Ovie, Cllr Alan Cheevers, Louis Flaherty, Lyubov Omokua and Ahmed Nur. Photo: Mike Shaughnessy



## COAST CLUB LEISURE CENTRE MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE FITNESS ASSESSMENTS, ONE-TO-ONE PERSONAL TRAINING AND DIETARY ASSISTANCE

ADULT MEMBERSHIP FROM

# €199

FOR 3 MONTHS  
GOLDEN YEAR FROM €149 FOR 3 MONTHS

- 18.5 metre pool
- Fitness Classes including Hydro Spin
- Jacuzzi
- Outdoor Hot Tub
- Fully Equipped Gym
- Sauna & Steam Room

Call 091 503904 or email [coastclub@connemara.coast.ie](mailto:coastclub@connemara.coast.ie)

CONNEMARA COAST  
HOTEL

#EVG #EqualityVotesGalway

## Equality: At the Heart of Representation Equality: A Priority For Galway Communities

A range of local organisations developed a Manifesto for the General Election calling for a Government that values:

**DECENCY: progressing decent work, decent accommodation, decent transportation and decent services for all in a healthy environment.**

**COMMUNITY: supporting community, responding to diversity, combating inequality, discrimination and racism and fostering creativity.**

**PARTICIPATION: making decisions with the meaningful involvement of and for the benefit of people who experience inequality and poverty.**

For info on #EVG manifesto and the candidates who signed it: [www.galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie](http://www.galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie)