

Galway City COVID-19 Community Response Forum

The COVID-19 Community Response Forum, co-ordinated by Galway City Council held its last meeting during October 2021 and the focus of this meeting was to review the effectiveness of the structure, processes and participation. This review focused on the experiences of members involved in the Community Response Forum, framed around a number of key questions which included their comment on the overall structure and its purpose, their participation and engagement, information sharing, adaptability and flexibility, listening to the voice of the marginalised and vulnerable amongst others. Lessons learned and future actions were also gathered as part of this review, noting that members felt at this point the Forum has run its natural course and will not set to meet again at this stage. Given the most recent Government decisions in relation to the reopening of the economy and society, as well as the fall in demand for the services provided under the Community Call initiative, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have advised local authorities that there is no longer a need to continue the operation of the Community Response Forum, issued on the basis and understanding that

- Any calls to helplines are re-routed through normal local authority services and managed accordingly, and
- Community Response Fora can be quickly re-initiated at local authority level should they be required, based on public health advice.

Galway City COVID-19 Community Call Helpline

The Galway City COVID-19 Community Call Helpline, which is being led and coordinated by Galway City Council continues to provide a dedicated community response helpline to ensure that all vulnerable members of our community are appropriately supported as we continue to move through the response to COVID-19. The Helpline is operational from 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday by Freephone 1800 400 150 and email to covidsupport@galwaycity.ie. Outside of normal working hours, including weekend's calls / requests will automatically route to our out of hours call service and are dealt with accordingly. A key purpose of the Helpline is to ensure that older people and those who are vulnerable in our community have access to very practical supports such as groceries, meals on wheels, medication collection and social supports / engagement.



Galway City Council Community Call

We're here if you need practical support or someone to talk to.

We can help with:

- Delivery of food, medication, fuel or other household items
- Someone to talk to or keep in touch with
- Other practical supports
- Signposting and referral to reliable information and services

1800 400 150
covidsupport@galwaycity.ie

KEEP WELL
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

 **Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe**
Galway City Council

 **Rialtas na hÉireann**
Government of Ireland

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The vaccination programme continues to be rolled out nationwide. Over 90% of people aged 16+ are fully vaccinated, and over 90% of people aged 12+ have received at least 1 dose. Registrations and vaccinations are ongoing. For updates and information on each of the vaccine allocation groups, and when and where they'll be invited for their vaccine, please visit www.hse.ie/rollout.

Vaccines are making a difference

Every COVID-19 vaccine makes a difference, helping to reduce the amount of severe illness caused by COVID-19. We thank everyone who has already had their COVID-19 vaccine. If you haven't registered yet, or someone in your network has yet to do so, they can:

- Check hse.ie for answers they can trust about the COVID-19 vaccines
- Talk to a pharmacist or GP – many are giving mRNA vaccines
- Call HSElive on 1800 700 700 or
- Register online to get a COVID-19 vaccine

If you cannot register online, you can call the COVID-19 helpline at Freephone: 1800 700 700 to register by phone.

Additional COVID-19 vaccination dose for those who are immunocompromised

Having a weak immune system puts you at higher risk of serious illness if you get COVID-19. Getting vaccinated will give you some protection against this. If you have a weak immune system, you may be offered another COVID-19 vaccine dose to give you better protection.

You can find information on who may need an additional COVID-19 vaccine dose here. [Weak immune system and COVID-19 vaccines - additional dose - HSE.ie](#). Hospitals will identify the people who need an additional dose. You do not need to register or contact anyone. People who need an additional dose will receive a text message with an appointment for their vaccine. These additional doses will be given through HSE vaccination centre near you, or your hospital if you're an inpatient. GPs may also vaccinate some people.

The HSE has begun registering fully vaccinated asymptomatic close contacts for antigen tests

All close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 will get a text message with a link to an online system where they can provide information that will be used to determine whether they need a PCR test if unvaccinated, or if they have symptoms; or antigen tests if fully vaccinated and asymptomatic. For those that need a PCR test, they will get details of their test appointment in a further text message. For those that require antigen tests, the HSE will arrange that they are delivered by An Post.

The SMS contains a link to the HSE website where there is further information and advice about what close contacts need to do.

Close contacts who fall into the category for antigen testing will receive a box of 5 antigen tests and will be asked to do 3 tests – the first test on the day they receive their test kit, the second test two days later and the third test two days after that.

If any of the antigen tests are positive we are requesting close contacts to self-isolate and book a PCR test – as part of that booking process they will be asked to tick that they had a positive antigen result. If a close contact develops symptoms while they are in the process of doing

antigen testing, they need to self-isolate and book a PCR test. Those whose antigen tests are negative are also asked to report their negative results via the HSE website.

Close contacts in complex settings such as Special Education Needs classes or schools will receive a telephone call from the contact tracing team, who will arrange COVID 19 testing for them if it is necessary.

COVID-19 vaccine booster

If you're aged 60 or over, or a frontline healthcare worker, you will soon be offered a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose. This is because cases are starting to increase again and older adults and people in health facilities are vulnerable to severe COVID-19 disease. This booster dose is being recommended to give the best possible protection against serious illness from COVID-19. There is a partner pack with detail, images and messages available to download at the bottom of this message. You can find more [information about the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose here](#).

Flu vaccine

It's flu season so if you're 65 or over, it's time to get your annual flu vaccine. While anyone can catch the flu, people aged 65 or older are more at risk of getting seriously ill or needing hospital treatment. So make an appointment with your GP or pharmacist today. You can find more information at [Flu Vaccination - HSE.ie](#)

Free nasal spray flu vaccine for children - new video

From 18th October 2021, the HSE began its annual information campaign for parents and guardians about the children's flu vaccine. Children are twice as likely as adults to catch the flu, which can sometimes cause serious illness. That's why all children aged 2 to 17 can now get their free, nasal spray flu vaccine. It's a safe and effective way to protect them, and the rest of the family too. Please [share our new video](#) to let parents and guardians know they can now make an appointment with their GP or Pharmacist. Visit <https://www.hse.ie/flu> for more information.

Where to find COVID-19 Vaccination Information

We encourage everyone to read about the COVID-19 vaccine and to get their information from a factual, trusted source – here are the links to the pages with information on the vaccine:

- Check [COVID-19 vaccines - HSE.ie](#) for information about the vaccine, information on this page is updated regularly
- Find the vaccine information materials at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/covid-19-resources-and-translations/covid-19-vaccine-materials/>
- Details on COVID-19 vaccines administered are available [Vaccinations | Ireland's COVID19 Data Hub \(arcgis.com\)](#)
- Read the full COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Strategy [gov.ie - Provisional Vaccine Allocation Groups \(www.gov.ie\)](#)
- COVID-19 vaccine information for health professionals [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Health Professionals - HSE.ie](#)
- Information in Irish Sign Language: information resources on the COVID-19 vaccines in Irish Sign Language are available [COVID-19 Vaccine Irish Sign Language resources - HSE.ie](#)

- COVID-19 vaccines easy read and accessible information formats are available [COVID-19 vaccine easy read and accessible information - HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/19/covid19/easyread/)

Public Health Measures

You can find information here about the public health measures in place gov.ie - Public health measures in place right now (www.gov.ie)

Updated Guidance - Day Care Services for Older People

The updated public health guidance on provision of day services for older people is now live on www.hpsc.ie at the link below.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/az/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/infectionpreventionandcontrolguidance/residentialcarefacilities/Guidance%20on%20the%20reopening%20of%20day%20services.pdf>.

Free online Stress Control Programme

HSE Health and Wellbeing are offering the next free online Stress Control programme from Monday November 29th that teaches practical skills to deal with stress. The six sessions are 90 minutes each and cover different topics. Participants are encouraged to watch all sessions, but participants can join at any stage for one or more sessions. To register visit www.stresscontrol.ie

TAKE CONTROL WITH STRESS CONTROL
DECEMBER 2021: Commencing Monday 29th November

EACH SESSION WILL BE AVAILABLE TO VIEW DURING THE FOLLOWING TIMES:

What is Stress?	9am, Monday 29th November (available until 11pm Wednesday 1st Dec)
Controlling your Body	9am, Thursday 2nd December (available until 11pm Sunday 5th)
Controlling your Thoughts	9am, Monday 6th December (available until 11pm Wednesday 8th)
Controlling your Actions	9am, Thursday 9th December (available until 11pm Sunday 12th)
Controlling Panicky Feelings and Getting a Good Night's Sleep	9am, Monday 13th December (available until 11pm Wednesday 15th)
Controlling your Future	9am, Thursday 16th December (available until 11pm Sunday 19th)

www.stresscontrol.ie

Free online Minding Your Wellbeing Programme

HSE Health & Wellbeing have a free, online mental health and wellbeing programme called Minding Your Wellbeing. This consists of a series of 5 video sessions of 20 minutes – click here or www.yourmentalhealth.ie

Minding Your Wellbeing
Take a positive approach to your mental health

You will learn about:

- 01 practicing self-care
- 02 understanding our thoughts
- 03 exploring emotions
- 04 building positive relationships
- 05 improving your resilience

Exercise for Wellbeing Videos (Beginners Yoga and Pilates, Chair Yoga for Beginners)

HSE Health and Wellbeing have developed a free series of exercise videos. This includes beginner's videos for both Yoga and Pilates, (8 x 30 minute videos on each) and Chair Yoga for Beginners (4 short videos from 7-11 minutes each). These are available on the HSE Health and Wellbeing YouTube channel.

Healthy Galway City - Healthy Galway City Co-ordinator

Aisling Colreavy started as the new Healthy Galway City Co-ordinator in early November 2021 and can be contacted as follows: Aisling Colreavy, Healthy Galway City Coordinator, Galway City Partnership, Phone 085 8217547 and email to healthygalway@gcp.ie. Under Healthy Ireland Round 3, this post was initially approved until the end of December 2021. Pobal have since confirmed a further extension to the timeframe for delivery of activities under Healthy Ireland Fund Round 3/Community Mental Health Fund (CMHF) from 31st December 2021 to 31st March 2022. The purpose of this 3 month extension is to provide additional time for the delivery of approved actions/activities and the achievement of full spend under HIF Round 3, and to facilitate planning for Healthy Ireland Round 4.

Planning for the next HIF Programme

The Department of Health has recently asked Pobal to assist with the design of a successor programme to HIF Round 3. This work will take place in Q4 2021, and there will be engagement with CYPSC and HI Co-ordinators to get input on the design of a new Round. Local planning to facilitate the introduction of the next programme is anticipated in Q1 2022. Once the design is complete, there will be further engagement with LCDCs and CYPSCs to facilitate the introduction of the next programme during 2022.

Action 1: Healthy Eating in the Community

- Two online Healthy Food Made Easy programmes began on 2nd November 2021, one morning and one evening session. Now in its 4th week of a six-week programme and 24 participants in total are involved.
- Foróige Knocknacarra Family Cooking Programme ran October – November 2021 over 4 weeks; 10 young people and families participated.
- The Melting Potluck cooking project is now complete with residents from the Great Western and the Eglinton centre.
- Contact made with organisers of previous projects (Foróige Ballinfoile, Foróige Ballybane, City East Family Services and Foróige Doughiska)

Action 2: Addressing Barriers to Physical Activity

- Several physical activity programmes have been completed or are currently running with a range of groups and organisations, including Westside Resource Centre, Ballybane Community Resource Centre, COPE, Croí na Gaillimhe, Foróige Ballinfoile, Westside Youth Project and Galway Traveller Movement.
- Completed: Ballybane & Doughiska Come & Try Sports for children, Bridge Project Cricket for men in direct provision, IWA Chair Yoga for People with Disabilities, Access for All Access Yoga for People with Disabilities, Siel Bleu Online Exercise for Older People
- Started: Westside Resource Centre Tai Chi, Foróige Ballinfoile soccer for young girls, Ballinfoile Castlegar Neighbourhood Centre bowls for older people, Croi na Gaillimhe Yoga for Failte Isteach New Communities, IWA / BOC Chair Aerobics for people with

disabilities, Youth Work Ireland yoga & relaxation for young people, Westside Resource Centre Chair Yoga for older people.

- Community Walking Initiatives in Ballybane & Doughiska; three large maps and flyers of routes currently being printed. Will be displayed at key points on walking trails and there is a plan to offer physical activity programme incorporating walking trails.
- Healthy Ireland partnering with Galway Sports Partnership to deliver beginners Pilates programmes for the deaf community
- Galway Traveller Movement have delivered swimming lessons for women and girls, and men's physical fitness group.

Action 3: Towards a Tobacco Free Galway City

- Not Around Us signage displayed on bus shelters in a number of locations across the city during the last two weeks in October to create awareness of the initiative.
- Signage has been distributed and displayed in organisations and schools in city and county.
- Healthy Galway and CYPSC to coordinate further promotion and delivery of signage in the coming weeks.

Action 4: Community Sexual Health Education Programme

- Sexual Health West proposed several changes to their programme including:
 - Face to face delivery of community programmes in Q4 of 2021 and into Q1 of 2022
 - Sessions planned with Amach LGBT+ are planned for Q4 of 2022 & Q1 of 2022
 - Bespoke marketing campaign, including 4 posters for target groups to be completed by Q4 2021
- POBAL approved these changes 22nd November 2021 and Sexual Health West has been made aware of approval.

Action 5: Towards a Healthy LGBT+ Community

- Warm welcome to Grace O'Shea, who has started as the AMACH Coordinator on 18th October
- AMACH are currently offering several physical activity programmes and crafting programmes to the LGBT+ community
 - Meditation
 - Soccer
 - Fitness Classes
 - Yoga
 - Arts & Crafts
 - Nutrition talks

Community Mental Health Fund Action

- 10-week Nature for Health programme is currently running in Merlin Woods
- Community Health & Wellbeing Boards; over 125 expressions of interest received from schools, organisations, club houses etc.
 - 30 Community Health & Wellbeing boards to be displayed by Galway City Council in city playgrounds
 - Connacht Rugby club house will be displaying Community Health & Wellbeing boards

- Galway Traveller Movement Equality & Diversity Training (in partnership with AMACH & The Bridge Project)
 - Development of training and the mentoring work for the trainers
 - GTM, Amach+ and the Bridge project met and worked with The Traveller Mental Health Services and the School of Nursing, HSE to organise the participants for the training
 - School of Psychiatry accredited the training
 - 18 participants attended training
 - Awaiting training manual and toolkit and final report

Community Engagement

- Wellbeing Art Initiative for the Ballinfolie Area started 18th November; an outdoor festive themed art programme for people living in the area.
- Westside Resource Centre Community Cookery Demonstrations postponed until Q1 2022.

Healthy Ireland and Sport Ireland - Let's Get Back Campaign

'Let's Get Back', is a national awareness campaign encouraging the Irish public to get back involved in the sport and exercise that they love. 'Let's Get Back' has been created by Sport Ireland in partnership with Healthy Ireland to encourage members of the Irish public who are anxious or unsure about returning to sport and physical activity following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. The campaign intends to reassure people that it is possible to do so in a safe and secure manner. The campaign will be supported by the National Governing Bodies of Sport in Ireland and the network of Local Sport Partnerships. Members of the public can get information on how to return to sport and activities in a safe way by visiting <https://www.sportireland.ie/letsgetback>.

The campaign message is tailored to ensure that it reaches those most in need of support and encouragement and it is hoped that this campaign can touch the hearts and minds of every age, ethnicity, demographic, ability and more.

- You will find all campaign assets at this link: <https://departmentofhealth.sharefile.eu/d-s82020e99a8174fcbbe52946dbf601881>
- Keep an eye on Sport Ireland and Healthy Ireland's channels also.
- Here is a quick link to the 60-sec TV advert - <https://youtu.be/EqaDwAcLjb0>

#LetsGetSet Campaign

In Ireland today, almost 20 months on from when Covid-19 first came to our shores, we are now potentially more health conscious as a nation than ever before. Conversely during this most difficult time we have become more unhealthy; treating ourselves to more unhealthy food, drinking more alcohol, have had our previous active healthy habits curtailed and have gained more weight. Our awareness campaign from 2019 - which was postponed due to Covid-19 - has been renewed for this campaign. This campaign encourages us all to set a healthier routine over coming months and amidst the Covid journey, and to avail of simple easy steps to keep up or to create a new healthy habit, whether that is eating better, getting more physically active, or learning how to take care of our mental wellbeing. To view the leaflet for the #LetsGetSet campaign, click here. [Healthy-Ireland-Lets-Get-Set-Leaflet.pdf \(agefriendlyireland.ie\)](#). You can find a full summary of the campaign and videos here. gov.ie - [Healthy Ireland - get off the couch \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

Galway City Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The next meeting of the Galway City LCDC is taking place on Wednesday 15th December 2021 starting at 3.00pm via MS Teams, in line with the schedule of meetings agreed. Items to be discussed at this meeting include the ongoing implementation plan for the Galway City LECP 2020-2021. Members will also receive updates on the Local Economic and Community Plan Guidelines 2021 that issued mid November 2021, in addition to receiving an update on The Community Activities Fund, Healthy Galway City and SICAP Annual Plan 2022.

Ministers Humphreys and O'Brien launch Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021

- Updated guidelines focus on sustainable development and increased collaboration with communities

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, have launched new guidelines on the development of Local and Economic Community Plans. Local and Economic Community Plans (LECPs) detail how local authorities will support economic and community development in their areas over the next six years. The new guidelines will assist with the development of the plans for local areas, with a key focus on sustainability, consultation and engagement with local communities and businesses. The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by the local authority directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. As the framework for the economic and community development of the local authority area, the LECP is also the primary mechanism at local level to bring forward relevant actions arising from national and regional strategies and policies that have a local remit.

The guidelines will require local authorities to consider housing needs when formulating both the economic and community elements of their LECPs in accordance with the commitment in Housing for All, the Government's national plan for housing to 2030. With the current Local and Economic Community Plans coming to an end of their current terms in 2021/2022, these new revised guidelines build on the lessons learned from the current LECP cycle, as well as reflecting the needs of communities as we emerge from the Pandemic.

The new approach to the process will ensure LECPs are more agile and allow for emerging needs. Government will continue to support the development of the LECPs through a series of events over the coming months, including an online Introductory Event on the 9th December 2021. Coinciding with the launch of the guidelines, the Department of Rural and Community Development have today launched a Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) supports page on the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) Sharepoint site, which is a dedicated portal to engage fully with LCDC members.

The revised LECP Guidelines for the second cycle will provide support to local authorities and relevant local partners to develop and implement comprehensive and flexible 6-year plans that will support the sustainable development of their areas over the lifetime of the LECP. The Local Economic and Community Plans will provide a key framework through which climate action interventions can be delivered at local level.

The Department of Rural and Community Development working in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage convened a high-level inter-agency advisory group to oversee drafting of the revised LECP Guidelines. This advisory group included representation from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Local Authorities and the Regional Assemblies, with opportunities for other Departments to engage in the process to ensure relevant cross-Government policies were reflected. Please see below link for a press release on the launch: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/59c83-ministers-humphreys-and-obrien-launch-local-economic-and-community-plans-guidelines-2021/>

Community Activities Fund

- Fund to provide small grants for community groups impacted by the pandemic
- Facilities such as community centres, men's and women's sheds, parish halls and youth centres to be supported
- Supporting community groups a key focus of 'Our Rural Future'

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD, have announced a €9 million fund to support community groups impacted by COVID-19. The Community Activities Fund will support groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas, with their running costs such as utility or insurance bills, as well as with improvements to their facilities. The allocation to Galway City under this new fund is €246,910 with funding administered locally by the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC). Groups will also be able to use the funding to carry out necessary repairs and to purchase equipment such as tables and chairs, tools and signage, laptops and printers, lawnmowers, canopies and training equipment.

In order to allow flexibility, the Department is not setting a national closing date, but will allow each LCDC to set its own, to best suit its area. The Department will require that all closing dates are no later than 28 February 2022. Similar to the Community Enhancement Programme the funding has been allocated to each local authority area using a methodology that takes into account the deprivation and population levels in each area, and a base amount of funding to each area.

The Community Activities Fund (CAF) is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Please see the following link for a press release on the launch of the CAF at national level by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, and the Minister of State with responsibility for Community Development and Charities, Joe O'Brien TD: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/c53a9-ministers-humphreys-and-obrien-announce-9-million-community-activities-fund/>

AONTAS STAR Awards 2022

The AONTAS STAR Awards recognise outstanding work in adult learning and are open to all groups/ organisations across the island of Ireland. The STAR Awards give initiatives the opportunity to spotlight their excellent work and bring national recognition to learners, staff and organising bodies. Winners will receive a specially crafted trophy, promotional video, sponsors prize and other opportunities with AONTAS. If you are part of, or know of an adult education initiative, that deserves to be highlighted please visit: <https://www.aontas.com/community/adult-learners-festival/aontas-star-awards>.

STAR Award Categories for 2022:

- Health and Wellbeing – *Mental Health Ireland*
- Third-level Access and Engagement – *The Teachers' Union of Ireland*
- Social Inclusion – *The Open University in Ireland*
- Sustainable Development through Education – *Concern Worldwide*
- Learner Voice – *Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)*

There will also be two special awards given in 2022. All nominees that are eligible for these special awards will be considered.

- Special Recognition for a European Social Fund (ESF) Initiative - *European Social Fund*
- Special Recognition for Mitigating Educational Disadvantage through Innovation (during COVID-19) - *Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCNNI)*

Invitation to the Access Europe Showcase – 13th December 3.30pm – 5pm – ONLINE

The Access Europe Showcase will take place online on 13th December 2021 from 3.30pm – 5pm. It will feature results and case studies from year 1 of the programme, and will launch our new Access Europe website, EU funding guide, and partnership database. This partnership database is an exciting new development for the sector and will enable them to present their organisations and EU funding goals to other organisations across Europe to support networking and partnership building for EU funded projects. Guest speakers on the day will include the Minister of State for European Affairs Thomas Byrne TD and Eamonn Mac Aodha, Director of the Parliament and Institutions Team at Ireland's Permanent Representation to the EU opening and closing the event respectively. Registration is free and easy via our website [Access Europe Showcase 2021 | The Wheel](#). Please also feel free to circulate to anyone who might be interested in knowing more about EU funding supports.

Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021

Galway City Council through the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) invited applications for funding from interested social enterprises within the Galway City administrative area under the Social Enterprise Capital Grants Scheme 2021. The scheme which is funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund is for social enterprises exclusively and will provide small capital grants for the purchase of equipment or the carrying out of repairs or refurbishments to enable social enterprises to improve their service delivery. Eligible social enterprises within the Galway City administrative area were invited to apply online the closing date for receipt of applications was 4pm Friday 15th October 2021. Successful applicants will have until mid-March 2022 to draw down the grant, based on evidence of completed purchases or works. The scheme is being administered by Galway City LCDC on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development, with the total funding allocated to Galway City under the scheme is €19,805. Grants are available to social enterprises under this scheme for the purchase of equipment or the carrying out of repairs or refurbishments to enable social enterprises to improve service delivery. Amounts approved will ultimately be subject to the total number of applications received and the overall budget available to Galway City. Following a review / assessment by the LCDC Subgroup a list of projects recommended for funding has been submitted to the DRCD as required, with final decisions on approvals to be made by the Minister for Rural and Community Development.

Galway City Comhairle na nÓg

The committee are continuing to work on the topic of mental health and invisible disabilities. The Co-ordinator attended a workshop on mapping Galway City and how accessible it is for people with disabilities (both physical and invisible) with Access for All. From September to

date the committee have been meeting in person and it is hoped that this can continue subject to public health guidelines. 4 members of the current committee will be stepping back due to Leaving Cert exams taking place in 2022 and Ruby will be stepping down from her role as National Executive representative in line with her two-year term. The new representative will be chosen at the committee meeting on Monday 30th November 2021. The Comhairle na nÓg AM took place online on Thursday 11th November 2021 with representatives from all secondary schools in Galway City participating this year. The topic voted for the committee to focus on is Accessible Youth Spaces.

The committee are also participating in CVA (Citizen Voice Action) workshops with the SAUTI Youth Project in October and will participate in activities that relate to the topic around accessibility. As part of the development fund to engage stakeholders, the committee had planned an in-person event for November, but this has been postponed to 2022. The committee presented on the work of Galway City Comhairle na nÓg to the CYPSC on the 19th November 2021. Finally the Comhairle na nÓg Annual Report for 2021 and the funding request for 2022 has been issued with completion in early January 2022 as required.

Comhairle na nÓg National Executive

Last week, three members of the Steering Committee were invited for an informal round-table discussion on the Climate Action in Dublin Castle with An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste and Minister Eamon Ryan. This was on foot of their work on Sustainable Transport and the recent success with the introduction of the Youth Travel Card. I'm attaching some pics, and you can watch the short promo version of the vid here on our YouTube - <https://youtu.be/1A6nGJwVi24>. The vid is up on the DECC Twitter account https://twitter.com/Dept_ECC and I've put it up on the Comhairle account so feel free to share, retweet or write your own posts.

Long version of the vid <https://youtu.be/l1dwsNg-t2g>

Such a great success story for them after two tough years of working online

Dáil na nÓg

Dáil na nÓg is being postponed until March next year. This will be the 20th anniversary of Dáil na nÓg and we have a responsibility to ensure that it will be a special one for the participating young people, and for Comhairlí nationwide. In order to facilitate the traditional large, in-person event, and to ensure the safety of all young people attending in the current unprecedented circumstances, this has been agreed as the best option by senior officials in DCEDIY and by the Minister.

Creative Technologies Training November/December 2021

Kinia have a range of sponsored training opportunities available in November and December in the Creative Technologies project sponsored by Creative Ireland. The training will be running online in 2 two-hour sessions over two weeks. There are 4 different training types with the dates listed below. All participants will receive a kit with equipment for use in their work with young people based on the training that they complete. The training is available to staff and volunteers working with young people in out of classroom settings (e.g. youth work organisations, school completion programmes, family resource centres, etc.). To apply please use the form below or apply directly to paulamond@kinia.ie or by phone on 086 1535787.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc56yZwlKESpyG_lwpKTgSJBbwYCyy61nM9JQuL_bpEEWZL6OQ/viewform

Christmas Volunteer Roles

The Christmas season is round the corner and Galway Volunteer Centre are reminding organisations and community groups to send in their Christmas opportunities well ahead of time. This is to enable us publicize the opportunity as well as attract people who are interested in seasonal roles and give ample time to prospective volunteers to apply. If you have not thought of your Christmas opportunities, this is the time to start scripting it and sending it to us. And if you already have your roles thought of and scripted, the best time to send it to us is now. If you need us to meet with you, let us know and we will contact you. We look forward to hearing from you. [Register a Volunteer Role - Galway Volunteer Centre \(volunteergalway.ie\)](https://volunteergalway.ie)

Over the last 6 months, a small team of dedicated volunteers in the Galway Volunteer Centre have developed an IT Triage service and they are ready and willing to advise you on any IT challenges you might have. They have already supported 9 groups and are keen to help where we can. Check out the short video above for more info and if you need some advice or support click below to complete a very short survey to tell us how we might be able to help you and your organisation. [GetFeedback](#)



Active Play Campaign - Message No 2. Let's Move and Play Everyday

HSE Health Promotion & Improvement in partnership with Galway CYPSC Early Years Committee and a range of stakeholders are working together on a campaign over the next few months to support children 0-1 years to meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. Please see details below on Message 2. Let's Move and Play Everyday - I don't need fancy toys. My favourite thing to do is play with you – video clip, information and resources. As a parent, you are your child's first and favourite playmate. From the earliest weeks and months, spending time playing with them sends an important message to your baby: you are loved, important and fun to be around. Floor based play is a great way to play with your baby and enables them to be active several times a day. For more ideas and information to support active play for babies please see Active Play Every Day Leaflet & Cards <https://bit.ly/3ASrddD> and visit www.mychild.ie. We would appreciate if you could support this campaign by:

- Sharing information below through your networks via email and other channels
- Posting the content below on your social media platforms e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. using the hashtag #LetsMoveandPlayEveryday



Light up your Life – A message from the NTA

With the mornings and evenings getting darker as we head into the winter, it's important to make sure that cyclists are always visible on their bikes, with front and rear bike lights, and wearing high visibility clothing. To coincide with the clocks going back, the Smarter Travel Team is inviting our Partners to brighten things up with our annual 'Light Up Your Life' campaign. As part of this campaign, the NTA will be giving out bike lights to AFI for us to distribute to our Older People's Council. Partners wishing to participate can download the campaign posters and social media images to promote the campaign within their workplace or campus by clicking [here](https://www.smartertravelworkplaces.ie) or more information please contact info@smartertravelworkplaces.ie



EU Alcohol Awareness Week

EU Alcohol Awareness Week took place during November 2021 and was an opportunity to look at our relationship with alcohol, understand the risks and the effects alcohol is having on our body and mind.



The HSE Alcohol Programme hosted a webinar on Thursday 18th November at 3pm. The webinar focused on Alcohol's impact on the immune system and brain. Learn about how alcohol can suppress your immune system, reducing your ability to fight off infections, and how alcohol has a profound impact on the brain, with new large-scale evidence using MRI scans showing the impact of even low alcohol use. You will learn about the latest evidence from the following experts:

- Prof Cliona O'Farrelly, Professor of Comparative Immunology, Trinity College Dublin
- Dr Dara Cannon, Senior Lecturer, Neuroanatomy Director, Clinical Neuroimaging Laboratory, National University of Ireland Galway
- Dr Helen McMonagle, Alcohol-Related Brain Injury Rehabilitation Coordinator, Alcohol Forum Ireland

The Irish Community Action on Alcohol Network (ICAA) also hosted a webinar on 15th November at 12pm titled Empowering Young People: Resisting the lure of the alcohol industry. You will hear from Global expert, Prof David Jernigan, from Boston University School of Public Health who is keynote speaker. Best known for his action research on alcohol advertising, marketing, and promotion and its impact on young people, David's work is policy-relevant and scientifically rigorous. He testifies regularly at US city, state, and national levels around alcohol advertising and youth, alcohol availability, and taxation. He also trains advocates around the world using the best evidence.

Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm Training

Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm training was delivered to relevant staff in Galway City Council on 30th November 2021. This course was attended by 26 participants, aims to further equip participants with essential knowledge and skills to maximise the age friendliness of their environment, and to ensure effective planning for older people is adequately considered and addressed in housing policy formulation and implementation. This training is currently very relevant given the vision of an Age Friendly Ireland in the Programme for Government 2020 and more significantly the signalled investment in Housing for All. The training was delivered by the Age Friendly Ireland's Principal Advisor on Housing and Public Realm, Tadhg McDonnell supported by Age Friendly Ireland.

Age Friendly Ireland Announces International Webinar Series



Age Friendly Ireland
announces **International
Webinar Series**

streaming Live from the **Solstice Arts Centre**

2 nd Nov 2021	Housing
14 th Dec 2021	Community Support and Health Services
11 th Jan 2022	Social Participation
8 th Feb 2022	Respect & Social Inclusion
8 th Mar 2022	Communication & Information
12 th Apr 2022	Transportation
10 th May 2022	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
14 th June 2022	Civic Participation and Employment



A Spotlight on Age Friendly Ireland – Policy to Practice – Webinar 1 AGE FRIENDLY HOUSING
Just in case you missed it 'Age Friendly Housing' - Webinar 1 of the International Webinar Series is now available to watch back here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_QVa-sc-A&t=1s

JAM Card Campaign launched on Monday 15th November 2021

Transport for Ireland along with Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus, Go-Ahead Ireland, Iarnród Éireann, TFI Local Link and Luas are continuing our journey to become JAM Card friendly. The Jam Card will assist customers using the public transport system and make their experience as stress-free as possible. JAM Card allows people with a communication barrier tell others they need 'Just A Minute' discreetly and easily. The JAM Card© was created by NOW Group, a social enterprise that supports people with learning difficulties and autism into jobs with a future and their service users told them that they would like a way to relay to people that they need a little extra time or patience. Find out more about NOW Group at www.nowgroup.org and JAM Card© at www.jamcard.org.



There are 3 message options to choose from:

- 1) Please be patient, I have autism

- 2) Please be patient, I have a learning disability/difficulty
- 3) Please be patient, I have a condition

For those with a learning difficulty, autism or any condition where there can be a communication barrier, the JAM Card allows users to relay to others that they may need a little extra time in a simple, effective non-verbal manner. The JAM Card is useful when on public transport, in a retail or any other customer facing environment. JAM Cards are available for collection from a number of stations included Ceannt Station, Galway and you can also request one directly from NOW Group by visiting the JAM Card website and filling out the request form.

Galway Public Libraries announce the introduction of JAM Cards in all branches throughout the City and County. All staff from Galway Libraries are trained on JAM Card and the initiative was facilitated with Dormant Accounts Funding. JAM Card is now available for free as a plastic card from any of the twenty-nine Galway Public Libraries, the Mobile Library and Library Headquarters in Island House, or if you would prefer not to use the physical card, there is a JAM Card app available for Android and iOS. The app allows you to choose your message option, leave reviews and find other JAM friendly businesses.

NTA to Establish Transport User Advisory Group

The National Transport Authority is now accepting applications from suitably qualified individuals for a newly established Transport Users Advisory Group (TUAG). The Group is to be made up of regular users of public transport who interact with the various modes including train, tram, bus and taxi services as well as those engaged in active travel including cyclists and pedestrians. It is envisaged that those involved would bring a breadth of knowledge and experience, and provide the Authority with valuable insights that can feed into future policy development and programme implementation. Fifteen places are available on the Transport Users Advisory Group and membership will be drawn from the following sectoral areas:

- Four people representing the various modes of transport nationwide,
- A person who is part of a group who represents the interests of cyclists,
- A person who is part of a group who represent the interests of pedestrians,
- Three people from organisations representing the interests of persons with disabilities,
- A person from an organisation representing the interests of older persons,
- A person who represents the interests of business,
- A person who represents the interests of tourism,
- A person who represents the interests of students,
- A person, who is a regular user of Small Public Service Vehicles (taxis, hackneys, limousines),
- A person, who has an expertise in matters relating to Local Link

A two year term is proposed for members of this group. Candidates will be chosen following a selection process conducted by the NTA. The deadline for receipt of applications is Friday 17th December with a first meeting of this group planned for early 2022. For more information on the recruitment process, visit: <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/transport-user-advisory-group/>

Minister O'Brien publishes the Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2022

Joe O'Brien T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development, announced funding of €55.5 million from the Dormant Accounts Fund to address disadvantage right across the country. Money in the Dormant Accounts Fund can be used to fund measures that address economic, social, or educational disadvantage and to support people with a disability. The 2022 Action Plan allocates funding of €55.5 million to 42 measures to be delivered across 10 Government Departments. In total, 42 different measures, to the value of €55.5 million will be supported under the 2022 Action Plan. Many measures have been funded in previous Action Plans and have now been approved for continued funding in 2022 to enable the measures to operate again next year. The majority of approved measures will progress in 2022, with each Government Department responsible for delivery of their own measures. Some examples of measures approved for funding include:

- €12 million for investment and actions aimed at improving participation in sports in disadvantage communities and for persons with disabilities.
- €2.5 million for Traveller initiatives and services across 5 departments.
- €5 million for youth and community justice services aimed at countering the influence and impacts of crime on young people and in communities.
- €2.3 million to support social enterprises to address social and economic disadvantage
- €4.5 million for a youth and family initiatives to provide young people with the soft skills needed to improve employability.

This Action Plan builds on previous plans and ensures continued support for individuals and organisations right across the country. Funding under the 2022 Action Plan has increased to €55.5 million from €51 million. This builds further on a strong growth in spend in recent years, based on the resources in the fund, and compares to €28.5 million approved in the 2016 Action Plan. The Dormant Accounts Action Plan is available from gov.ie - [Dormant Accounts Fund: Annual Action Plans and Reports \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

2021 & 2022 Dormant Accounts Funding for LGBTI organisations - Galway City AMACH! LGBT

Following an application for funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) during August 2021 on behalf of AMACH! LGBT, Galway City Council were pleased with the recent funding approved for 2021 and 2022 in an amount of €21,650 to be spent in line with the following action, outlined in the National LGBTI Strategy *Action 6.3 - Take measures to ensure that existing community infrastructure is inclusive and welcoming to LGBTI+ people and consider the provision of pop-up LGBTI+ services*. Galway City Council will liaise with AMACH! LGBT to agree a work plan for this funding.

Minister Feighan publishes Mid-term Review of National Drugs Strategy and Strategic Priorities for 2021-2025

Frank Feighan TD, Minister of State for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy has published the mid-term review of the national drugs strategy Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery. The strategic action plan contains 50 actions covering the initial four period (2017-2020) of Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery. The strategy provides for a mid-term review to ensure that the aims and direction continue to be appropriate. He also announced the six strategic priorities for the remaining four years of the strategy, 2021-2025:

- strengthen the prevention of drug and alcohol use among children and young people;
- enhance access and delivery of drug and alcohol services in the community,
- develop harm reduction responses and integrated care pathways for high-risk drug users,

- address the social determinants and consequences of drugs use in disadvantaged communities;
- promote alternatives to coercive sanctions for drug-related offences: and
- strengthen evidence-informed and outcomes-focused practice, services, policies and strategy implementation.

Minister Feighan said: “I am announcing six strategic priorities for the remaining years of the strategy until 2025. These will strengthen the health-led approach to drug use, as agreed in the Programme for Government, and align with the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan. The first priority is to strengthen the prevention of drug use and its associated harms among children and young people. A second priority is to enhance access and delivery of drug and alcohol services in the community, in line with the Sláintecare population health model of ‘right care, right place, right time’. To support the implementation of the strategic priorities, Minister Feighan has provided additional funding of €6m for new health measures in Budget 2022.

Disability Participation and Awareness Fund 2021

The Disability Participation and Awareness Fund is a new funding scheme of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. In 2021, this Fund will be available to Local Authorities for their use and/or disbursal. The purpose of the fund is to provide funding for local authorities across Ireland to support the participation of people with disabilities in local activities, to help remove barriers to community involvement and to support the promotion and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in communities. A total of €2.5m will be made available in 2021 to local authorities to carry out projects in their local area. Grants under the Fund will be to a maximum of €80,000. This funding can be used for both once-off initiatives and short to medium term projects. Projects and initiatives should promote the rights of people with disabilities by removing barriers to the participation of people with disabilities in their local communities, raising awareness of the UNCRPD, and increasing accessibility.