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

# POLICIES
## AND
# POSITIONS

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# Introduction

Galway City Community Network (GCCN) is the Public Participation Network[1] for Galway City and acts as the main network and link through which community, voluntary and environmental organisations, and groups active in Galway City connect with Galway City Council and state agencies in the city.

## GCCN Vision

The GCCN vision for Galway City is '*A creative and inclusive city that respects and values its people and communities, their wellbeing and quality of life. A city with a vibrant, sustainable, economy and environment where the voices of all residents, in particular those experiencing the highest levels of poverty, marginalisation and inequality are heard in the decision-making bodies and processes that affect their lives*.'

## GCCN Values and Policy Principles

GCCN's work is guided by the following 12 values and policy principles:

- Anti Racism
- Equality, Diversity and Anti-discrimination
- Social justice, Social Inclusion and Economic Equality
- Sustainable Development
- Human Rights
- Culture
- Community Empowerment
- Collectivity
- Good Governance and Accountability
- Universal Accessibility
- Future Proofing
- Participation

For further details on GCCNs understanding of these values and principles see Appendix 1.

## Community Development – Our Core Approach

GCCN has adopted community development as an underpinning approach to all its work. Community development is widely recognised nationally and internationally as:

'A developmental activity comprised of both a task and a process. The task is social change to achieve equality, social justice and human rights, and the process is the application of principles of participation, empowerment and collective decision making in a structured and co-ordinated way.'[2]

## Participation and Collaboration

GCCN is particularly concerned with the promotion of meaningful and effective participation of communities in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. GCCN is deeply committed to the principles of participation, representation, and consultation as we believe that:

- It is the right of people to participate in decisions and policies that affect them and their communities.
- The participation of people and communities benefit and improve decision-making and policy development.

GCCN opposes tokenistic forms of participation, representation and consultation and advocates for true collaboration between policy makers, decision makers and those who are impacted by the decisions being taken. True collaboration has the potential to mobilise ideas, resources, and support for jointly created solutions, in a way that does not marginalise issues within more traditional social dialogue processes favouring economically powerful actors. As such, its relevance as a vehicle to address issues such as poverty, inequality, homelessness, climate change, and social exclusion is clear.[3]

## GCCN Purpose

The twin objectives that GCCN pursues are to:

- Ensure that the core values of GCCN are embedded in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government, and civil society.
- Ensure the meaningful representation, participation, and involvement of GCCN members in the development of policy and programmes in Galway City.

## GCCN Role

The role of Galway City Community Network is to:

- **Facilitate representation** of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors on relevant local government, local development bodies and any local, regional, national or international structures deemed appropriate by GCCN.
- **Act as a platform** for the community, voluntary and environmental sectors to develop policy and positions on issues of common concern and to advocate for these policies and positions to be implemented.
- **Strengthen capacity** of the community, voluntary and environmental sectors, including to represent Galway City Community Network on all relevant structures.
- **Provide information** relevant to the environmental, social inclusion and voluntary sectors and act as a hub around which information is received and disseminated.

## The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

GCCN works to ensure implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty by public sector bodies in the city.

GCCN advocates for Galway City Council and all public bodies in the city to fully realise the obligations imposed on them by the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity and treatment for its staff and service users.
- Protect the human rights of its members, staff and people who use its services.

All public bodies in Galway City should:

1. **Assess**
   Set out in their Statement of Strategy an assessment of the human rights and equality issues relevant to their functions and purpose, in a manner that is accessible to the public.

2. **Address**
   Set out the policies, plans and actions in place or proposed to be put in place to address those issues, in a manner that is accessible to the public.

3. **Report**
   Report on developments and achievements in its annual report, in a manner that is accessible to the public.

## GCCN Statement of Wellbeing for This and Future Generations in Galway City

*"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."*

As identified by the Collective Intelligence approach, the statement sets out a range of objectives in relation to inclusiveness, business and employment, community, physical and mental health, governance, perspective, environment, lifespan wellbeing, education, and sustainability. See more details at https://galwaycitycommunitynetwork.ie/statement-of-wellbeing-for-this-and-future-generations/

## Membership & Representation

There are now considerably over 150 member organisations of GCCN. There are three Electoral Colleges in the PPN - social inclusion, environment and community/voluntary - and each member must opt for membership of one.

Members represent GCCN on the following local committees:

- Local Community Development Committee
- Housing and Social Inclusion - Strategic Policiy Committee 1
- Planning - Strategic Policy Committee 2
- Economic, Community and Cultural Development - Strategic Policy Committee 3
- Transportation - Strategic Policy Committee 4
- Climate Action, Environment, Recreation & Amenity - Strategic Policy Committee 5
- Joint Policing Committee
- Alcohol Forum
- Comhairle na nÓg
- Galway Age Friendly
- Galway Childcare Committee
- Galway City Partnership
- Galway Sports Partnership
- Healthy Galway City Steering Committee
- LCDC Social Inclusion Subgroup
- LECP Advisory Committee
- Western Regional Drugs and Alcohol Taskforce
- Civic Engagement Forum - NUI Galway

## GCCN Plenary & Secretariat

GCCN holds four Plenary (full-membership) meetings a year, one of which includes the Annual General Meeting. The Plenary meetings are of central importance for GCCN because our members have responsibility for agreeing all decisions taken by the network.

The Plenary meetings provide an opportunity to discuss and debate issues of importance and to agree our policies and positions.

The GCCN Secretariat is elected at the Annual General Meeting and is responsible for the management of GCCN activities.

## Linkage Groups

Linkage Groups are subgroups of Galway City Community Network which are formed to cover themes or issues that GCCN is working on.

The Linkage Groups discuss and develop GCCN policy, support the GCCN representatives on relevant committees and POLICY provide the platform for electing replacement representatives when needed.

**Graphic: GCCN Structure**

# Development of GCCN Policy Positions

The GCCN policy and positions paper sets our core agreed values and policies to guide the network and acts as a support mechanism and a tool for GCCN representatives on the committees and bodies listed above.

As the key representative forum for communities in the city, GCCN has an important responsibility to strive to ensure that policies and programmes that affect the lives of those living in the city, particularly those who are most marginalised are designed to meet their needs. GCCN is committed to being an independent voice representative and inclusive of the diverse communities in Galway City, of working to build consensus amongst member groups and of maintaining a constructive voice in all that we do.

The establishment of Public Participation Networks (PPNs) in each local authority area to facilitate participation and representation of the community, voluntary, social inclusion and environmental sectors represents an important attempt by Government to ensure that local authorities consult with and promote effective participation of local communities in local government.

It is imperative therefore that GCCN not only develops clear policy positions in relation to core areas of importance, but that these policies are continually developed in a way that ensures maximum input and meaningful participation of communities in the city, thereby strengthening the mandate and capacity of GCCN to effectively represent the concerns of a wide range of interests.

The Local Government Reform Act 2014[4] envisages the development of a 'coherent and integrated approach to local and community development'. Key mechanisms for providing such coherence are set out in the Act and include the establishment by all Local Authorities of a Local Community Development Committee and the development of Local Economic and Community Plans.

The aim, according to Government, is to bring greater co-ordination on an area-basis to publicly-funded programmes and to oversee administration efficiencies across the local development landscape, while drawing on the capacity of local government and the experience, perspective, and expertise of local and community actors in the relevant local authority area in programme delivery.

PPNs such as Galway City Community Network are seen as key networks to be consulted and fully involved in these processes.

## How we developed this paper

This Policies and Positions Paper has been reviewed and updated from the initial GCCN Policies and Positions paper developed by GCCN members. The process involved:

- Meetings of the GCCN Steering Group to discuss and agree process and approach.
- The appointment of an external facilitator to review and update the Paper.
- Participatory workshops and opportunities for written feedback from GCCN members.
- Drafting and re-drafting of the paper based on comments invited from all GCCN members.
- Final review by the GCCN representatives.
- Presentation of, and agreement on all policy positions at a GCCN Plenary Meeting.

As with all policy development processes, these policies will continue to be reviewed and amended as appropriate on an ongoing basis.

# Policy Areas

## Social Inclusion, Community Development and Equality

### Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a city of equality in its development and re-development. A city that responds to the needs of its communities especially those who are most marginalised. A city where there is meaningful participation of all communities in the decisions that affect their lives that goes beyond consultation and is without tokenism. An anti-racist city that actively promotes inclusion and that recognises, celebrates, promotes and values diversity. A safe city with 24/7 crisis intervention for those with mental health difficulties. A city that is universally accessible and user friendly where we plan by design.

This planning should draw on the experiential knowledge of all our people including seldom heard groups, such as young people, older residents, new and minority communities, disabled people and those groups who find themselves marginalised by society.

## Policy Proposals

### Human Rights, Equality, Migrants, Travellers, and Roma

GCCN proposes that:

- All local state agencies and public bodies Implement the Public Sector Positive Duty across all services and provide training on the Positive Duty, equality, and diversity for staff in line with their obligations under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014[5].
- The Galway City Civil Society Panel is recognised and resourced as a key stakeholder in supporting the implementation of the duty amongst public bodies in the city.
- Public sector bodies in the city receive human rights education and training.
- A calendar of annual human rights days and events be produced and supported by Galway City Council.
- International Human Rights Treaties are recognised and endorsed locally such as CERD[6], CEDAW[7], UNCRC[8] and CRPD[9].
- Equality proofing processes are developed and implemented in relation to all public services and local policy.
- Staff employed to promote social inclusion within state agencies and or public bodies have a background in and commitment to social inclusion and equality and undertake intercultural training.
- Galway Communities against Racism and Discrimination is recognised, resourced, and supported.
- A Social Inclusion Officer be appointed to Galway City Council.
- Inclusive facilities are developed including gender neutral facilities to support the engagement of minority communities, and those with accessibility needs in sports, recreation, and public life.
- The system of direct provision for asylum seekers and enforced deportations be ended as set out in the White Paper on ending Direct Provision in recognition of the severe impact it has on inclusion, access to education, employment, and wellbeing of those in that system.
- Regular inspections of direct provision and accommodation centres for people seeking asylum and for those with refugee status are undertaken to ensure adherence to standards  and health and safety for residents.
- A system of supports be established for those transitioning from direct provision to the community.[10]
- Supports and structures are established to ensure that the voices of Travellers, migrants, refugees, and those from minority ethnic communities are central to the development of responses to realise their rights.
- An autonomous Galway City Refugee and Migrant Project is established and funded to advance the rights of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees in the city.
- The Galway Traveller Accommodation Plan is implemented.
- Full and adequate resources for frontline services for women experiencing violence are provided.
- Additional resources allocated for gender-based violence services are mainstreamed.
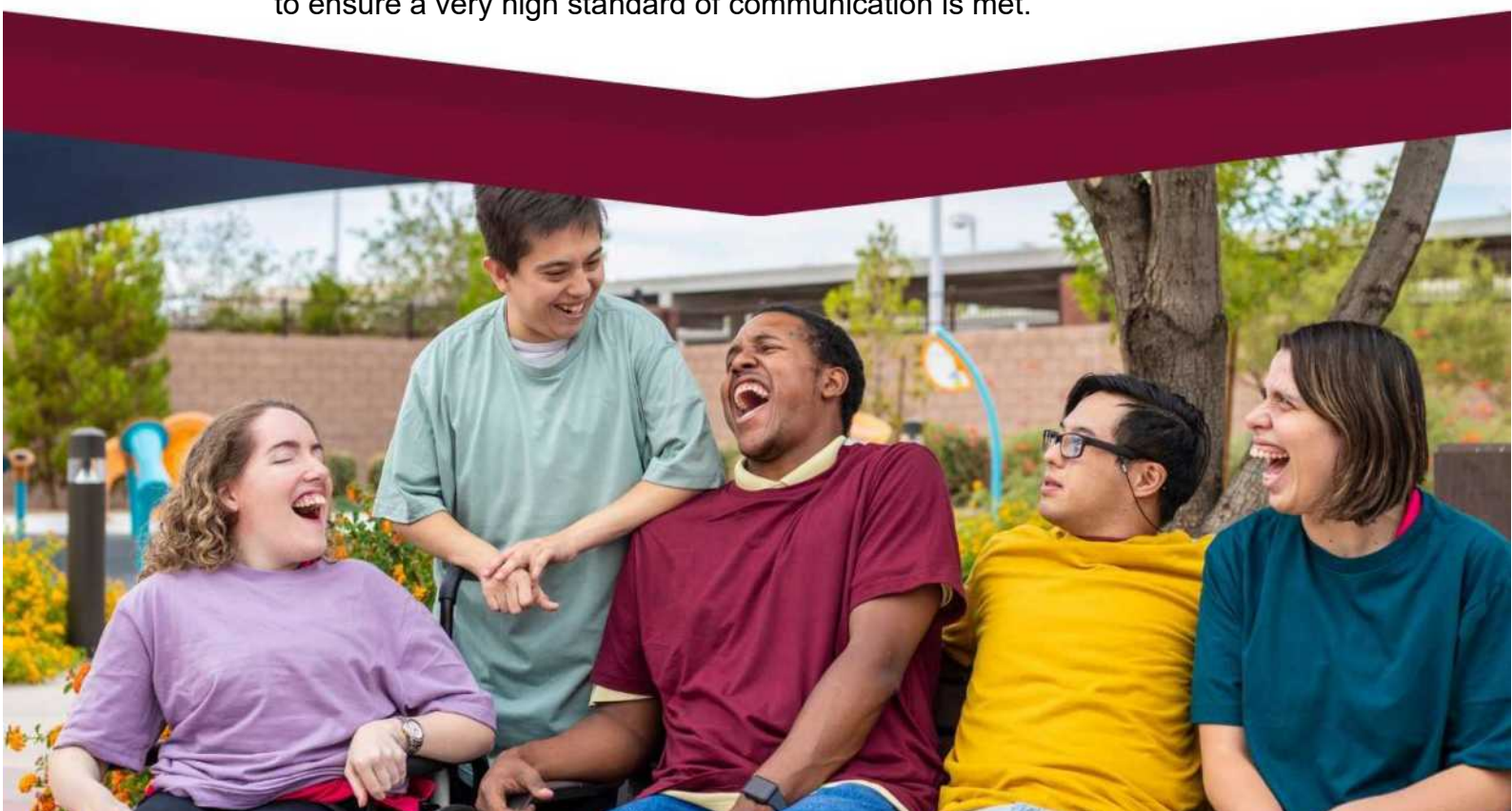
## Children and Young People

GCCN proposes that:

- Community-based after school projects in the most disadvantaged and marginalised areas of the city are established. In Galway, a model was developed that focused on after school as a model for educational intervention and GCCN urges that support is made explicit for this model.
- Associated 'lunch-clubs' be established providing a key opportunity to use locally grown food produce from school / community gardens, as a healthy alternative to commercial imported over-processed / over-packaged foods.
- The youth work infrastructure (physical and organisational) in the city be expanded and fully resourced with a strong focus on young people from marginalised communities including minority cultures, disabled young people and LGBTI young people as well as a specific focus on 18–25-year-olds.
- Positive,  innovative and creative ways of addressing the difficulties facing young people in the city are designed and implemented, increasing youth participation, and centring the voice of young people in city planning and development.
- Measures are taken to ensure equality of access for all young people to the public realm paying particular regard to access by disabled children and young people.
- The Planet Youth Initiative be developed and expanded.
- Community based healthy relationships and consent programmes are supported and resourced for young people throughout the city.
- Fully accessible youth arts and culture hubs are established in the city centre and in disadvantaged areas including Galway Community Circus in Shantala/Westside and their planned expansion to Doughiska supported by the Rethink Ireland Social Enterprise Development programme. (GCCN believes that the proposed centre in St Annes will not address area-based need or cater for the most marginalised young people in the city).
- The CAMHS service is available to all young people who need it allowing for early intervention and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of young people in the city.
- The rights of young people are embedded within all public service provision and in particular in relation to homelessness, direct provision, and emergency accommodation.

## Disability

GCCN proposes that:

- Galway City Council build on its commitments to the Barcelona Declaration and mainstream policy that encompasses the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan and the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.
- The cost of living with disability is recognised and measures put in place to ensure that those with disability can live a life free from poverty.
- Supported accommodation is provided in a way that recognises the rights of people to choose where they live, to live with dignity and to live inter-dependently in a safe and secure environment with community supports.
- The rights of people with intellectual disability and all disabled people to make decisions in accordance with the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015[11] are recognised and supported.
- An integrated decision-making structure within Galway City Council (The DISC Model) is established with a role in bringing decision-makers from various departments within local government together to ensure that the intersectional impact of decision-making across various domains on access to social, cultural, and economic life can be taken into consideration.
- Disability equality and human rights training that acknowledges the existence of hidden disabilities and the rights of disabled people as set out in the UN Convention on People with Disabilities is provided to all public service personnel including with regard to issues of respect, understanding and dignity.
- All planning in Galway City is based on universal access and design and framed within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- A positive attitude and respect for the human rights of disabled people, and other marginalised people, should be an absolute priority within public services. This should include the simplification of language and listening skills to ensure a very high standard of communication is met.

## Older People

GCCN proposes that:

- The built and social environment in Galway is developed to enable people of all ages, but particularly the older members of our community, to be engaged and to feel and be safe both at home and out and about.
- A pilot programme to free up underoccupied properties be developed encompassing a model of planning which enables people to downsize without having to leave their community (European models could be examined in this regard).
- Services are put in place to ensure that, as far as possible, older people can get to where they need to go, when they need to do so.
- All members of the community are facilitated to live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.
- An awareness raising campaign on Home Adaptation Grants be undertaken and the application process streamlined.
- An initiative be developed to address the digital divide.
- Measures are taken to address the isolation and fears of older LGBTI people particularly in relation to accessing health and other public services.
- Participation for all members of the community in social, economic, cultural, and public life are promoted.
- A partnership is developed between the Age Friendly Alliance and NUI Galway, and, particularly the University's two most relevant (to this strategy) centres, Project Lifecourse, and the Community Knowledge Initiative. This partnership will help to promote the concept of an age-friendly society and an age-friendly University, and thereby make Galway a flagship for the integration of practice and research in the areas of ageing and the family.
- The concept and practice of inter-generational activities is promoted and nurtured throughout our community and across the generations.
- All statutory and relevant organisations establish relationships and work with the Older Persons Council, and other groups representing the older members of the community, by engaging in a two-way process of communication which will enhance progress in relation to the other strategic priorities. Through this process we will also ensure that older adults have the information they need to live full lives.
- Initiatives which will enable people to live healthier and active lives for longer are supported and promoted.

## Health & Well-Being

GCCN proposes that:

- A health and well-being statement is incorporated into the strategies of all local public bodies and state agencies which specifically names and addresses health inequalities.
  A Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach to public policies is taken across sectors in Galway City that systematically takes into account health inequalities and the health and health systems implications of decisions, that seeks synergies and avoids harmful health impacts, in order to improve population health and health equity[12].
- An early intervention programme be established in primary schools.
- Community based services are provided including adequate provision of mental health counsellors and nurses.
- The Galway Community Café is further resourced to expand its peer led out-of-hours adult mental health service.
- The HSE Office of Mental Health Engagement and Recovery engages with relevant local organisations to develop an all ages 24-hour crisis intervention service and a drop-in centre for on-going support.
- Support be provided for a Mental Health Consumer Panel and a peer support programme for those with mental health difficulties.
- Mental health be given parity with physical health involving parity of support, awareness, and resourcing.
- The crisis in mental health in Galway City is addressed as a matter of urgency with community development mental health hubs developed across the city.
- Galway becomes a trauma informed city in all areas of planning and provision that relates to social disadvantage, health, housing, policing, and community development and which addresses the impact of prolonged stress and exposure across multiple domains, and promotes early intervention, and relational approaches.
- Awareness and sensitivity training for officials in the Department of Social Protection is provided.
- Traveller accommodation and Direct Provision are regarded as public health issues which require immediate action.
- Measures are put in place to address the severe lack of available health care for Trans people.
- A Services Coordination Strategy be developed between the HSE, Department of Social Protection and Galway City Council, including a particular focus on housing for those with mental health concerns.

## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

GCCN proposes that:

- The LGBTQI resource centre is fully resourced and supported;
- Additional supports are provided to the LGBTQI community in Galway City particularly for young people.

## Inclusive Community Planning

GCCN Proposes that:

- Participatory methods in architecture and planning processes that meaningfully engage communities should be established particularly in relation to infrastructure that facilitates cultural diversity.
- The built environment should have a focus on community facilities including for example, fully accessible gyms and community pools.
- All public documents should be user friendly, accessible and contain glossaries of terms.

# Environment

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a clean, pollution free, post carbon city, with preserved, enhanced, and protected biodiversity, where our waterways are protected, there is wise sustainable use of resources with a well implemented Zero Waste Policy and widespread public and schools based environmental education. A city where the climate emergency is given the priority it deserves and where climate justice and a just transition is paramount.

## Policy Proposals

### Sustainable use of resources, post carbon Galway and climate proofing

GCCN endorses the Transition 2030 Galway vision that seeks, a radical transformation of Ireland's energy system to meet climate policy objectives[13].

Our vision of a low carbon energy system means that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the energy sector will be reduced by between 80% and 95%, compared to 1990 levels, by 2050, and will fall to zero or below by 2100.

GCCN proposes that:

- The climate emergency is named and recognised in all city planning including economic development planning.
- Environmental planning in the city is undertaken within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ensuring a just transition that recognises the potential impact of transitioning to a carbon neutral future on groups experiencing poverty and marginalisation.
- The circular economy[14] is embedded in all climate strategies and policies.
- Galway City commits to being a carbon neutral city by 2030.
- Local communities in particular marginalised communities in collaboration with a broad range of sectors and stakeholders are involved in collaborative efforts to address all climate, environmental and ecological planning and decision making. This requires a commitment on the part of state agencies to participative democracy and just transition.
- The rights and needs of city and non-city dwellers are taken into consideration in the planning process in particular in relation of the development of public transport.

- An early participative process for review of the Galway Transport Strategy be undertaken.
- A Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Compost waste management system that will lead to a Zero Waste programme for Galway City is developed and implemented.
- KEEP IT LOCAL the localisation movement be supported as a matter of public policy, including in relation to food security, (supporting Grow Your Own and Grow It Yourself initiatives) with ethical sourcing principles including in relation to procurement processes.
- A Resource Recovery Park for Galway is established.
- Production of compost for public use from the waste of the municipal brown bins is supported and resourced.
- A refundable levy on all beverage cans and bottles be introduced.
- Plans in relation to outdoor dining be examined post covid to ensure that the needs of all members of the community are taken into consideration in particular disabled people.
- A strategy to make Galway a fossil fuel free city by 2025 is developed and implemented.
- Initiatives for local, sustainable generation of electricity are supported.
- Local Authority housing is developed as passive housing, using district heating and the highest standards of insulation.
- Use of solar energy is supported leading to reduced capital costs.
- Water quality is prioritised ensuring that it is of the highest international standard and that an effective monitoring process exists for such a purpose.
- Air quality is of the highest international standard and an effective monitoring process established for such a purpose.
- Information and education on fuel sources and their impact on air and environmental quality is provided.
- Information and education on the impact of consumerism on biodiversity is provided.
- A commitment to ensuring Galway is an Oil Free City by 2030 is established and an action plan developed to ensure the achievement of this goal.
- Low traffic zones are identified in various locations throughout the city.
- Galway Energy Agency is reconstituted to promote and monitor an increase in renewable and clean energies.
- Public information is provided via Galway Energy Agency on the agency's work and on energy data relating to Galway City. Information could include any reports, improvements, audit information and challenges to improving Galway's energy efficiency.
- Acknowledging the urgency of the situation, all facilities, programmes, grants, and residencies, funded by Galway City Council, should be sustainability proofed, addressing climate change, to meet national and international targets for local and national emissions reductions.
- A review of the public realm strategy and timeline for implementation be undertaken.

## Ecology, Waterways, and Protected Biodiversity

GCCN proposes that:

- Existing bóithríns and greenways in the city and its environs are protected and connected where possible and further routes developed with the twin aims of promoting ecological corridors for wildlife and active travel routes for humans - recent attempts by GMIT to annex laneway and seashore at Murrough (behind Galway Crystal) illustrates the need for this.
- Galway is established as a Biocide Free Zone ceasing the spraying, for example, of verges, roundabouts, and trees.
- A project to monitor and protect the health of key sites such as Lough Corrib, Merlin Woods and Barna Woods is established as part of the sustainable management of all designated and sensitive ecological sites in and surrounding the city.
- Greater green space areas are included in social housing builds.
- Local communities and educational institutions are involved as key stakeholders in the management of green spaces.
- Ecological or wildlife corridors are developed recognising the importance of hedgerows as part of this ecological network.
- Forests and woodlands are promoted and developed as carbon sinks.
- The vital importance of maintaining the integrity of and restoring forests, woodlands, wetlands, bogs and the floodplains of lakes and rivers as sustainable natural flood defences be recognised and a map of the floodplains of Galway City and its environs for public viewing compiled.
- A policy of hydro-power units along the Corrib and canals giving due cognisance to protecting biodiversity and areas of natural heritage importance is developed;
- The old Waterworks building on the Dyke Road is restored as a public complex with toilets, café, crafts shops, bike hire, waterways and forestry and an interpretative centre for the benefit of the Terryland Forest Park, River Corrib, and neighbouring canals.
- A greenway from the Plots/wetlands on the Dyke Road into the lands of the Terryland Forest Park leading towards the Quincentennial Bridge entrance is developed.
- Sensor technologies as part of a Smart City strategy are introduced, in order to improve the environment and the quality of life of people of Galway City.
- Merlin River is restored to its former natural state.
- Forests and woodlands are promoted and developed as Outdoor Classrooms.

- A system for ecological foot-printing for all state institutions and business in the city is established. Recent indiscriminate dredging of the sandy river by the OPW illustrates the need for this.
- An annual community native tree planting programme be established.
- Recreational use of canals incorporating a strong wildlife protection element are promoted.

- An ecological policy on festivals, incorporated as a condition of funding is established and implemented.
- A 'Cleanest Festival Award' is developed.
- A strategy is developed that recognises the crucial role of public green spaces such as parks, forests, meadows, seashores, rivers, and wetlands in the area of personal and community health.
- An inventory database of habitats, fauna and flora using the Galway City Habitats Inventory 2006 as a baseline is established monitored and regularly updated with the addition of a status/risk assessment element.

# Planning, Transport, and Infrastructure

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a city where all policies, plans and processes are future proofed, inclusive, and participatory with good urban land use planning and well-connected regional development which balances priorities between those who live here and those who commute in and out of the city. A city of universal accessibility where all people can access services and facilities. A city with a pedestrian-friendly, cycling friendly, disability friendly and child friendly infrastructure. A city where healthy choices are easy to make.

GCCN policy on transport is based on a Hierarchy of Road Users in the following order: 1. pedestrians and people with disabilities, 2. cyclists, 3. public transport and 4. private motor transport.

GCCN notes that the current system of one-way streets and the current operation of the pedestrian zone has cut-off cycling access to and through the city core, particularly from the east, and requires solutions if any cycle network proposals are to be credible.

GCCN endorses the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights and the Road Danger Reduction Charter. GCCN recognises that following a car-centred approach based on prioritising 'flow' for motor vehicles results in roads designs and roads management practices that are hostile for vulnerable roads users and have the net effect of increasing motor traffic.

GCCN notes that documents such as the National Cycle Policy Framework, the Design Manual for Urban Roads, and Streets and the NTA Permeability Best Practice Guide seek to address inappropriate and unsuitable roads management and town planning practices. The network endorses the overall approach advocated in these documents.

## Policy Proposals

### Transport, sustainable regional development, and future proofing

GCCN proposes that:

- Research be undertaken decarbonisation of the city including a focus on the provision of  and provide more energy efficient public transport and an early participative process for review of the Galway Transport Strategy be undertaken.
- An exploration of the development of a Light Rail Network be undertaken, including minibus feeders and park and ride facilities, that will serve the people of Galway now and into the future;
- Speed limits of 30km/h or lower are the default option for all non-arterial roads in the city.
- Road Traffic legislation be amended to allow local councils to operate their own traffic enforcement and speed cameras.
- Galway City has an articulated vision as a pedestrian first city with associated plans for implementation which should include widespread immediate delivery of additional pedestrian crossings throughout the city.
- A Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Management Strategy is developed with a view to restricting HGV movement to designated roads at designated times.
- Roundabouts be replaced with signalised crossings and in the short term raised table zebra crossings be established on all entries and exits recognising that the challenges and risks that current roundabout designs impose on vulnerable users are a barrier to pedestrian and cyclist mobility.
- Data collection and analysis are improved to highlight the car-dominated state of Galway transport and to identify key areas for the promotion of sustainable alternatives.
- Extensive rollout of fully functioning accessible bus shelters is prioritised.
- Age friendly parking spaces are allocated throughout the city.
- An upgrade of the existing Merlin Park Hospital entrance is undertaken as opposed to the development of a new entrance.
- The potential for induced traffic in the construction of new highways through and around the city is recognised.
- Green belts to prevent further urban sprawl is developed.
- The Galway-to-Dublin Cycle Greenway and the Galway City-to-Clifden Greenway are developed.
- The presently informal Seven Galway Castles Heritage Cycle routes are developed with an extension to provide a safe route to Annaghdown as a safe cycling and walking trail.

## Universal accessibility and land use planning

GCCN proposes that:

- Galway City Council changes its approach to planning from developer led to community led participatory planning.
- All land use planning is accessibility and equality proofed.
- Future development is mixed-use and orientated to public transport and other key facilities especially schools and workplaces.
- Mechanisms and approaches for incentivising people to live in the city are established.
- Higher density residential development is concentrated in the city and surrounding towns, rather than in the form of one-off housing and urban sprawl.
- Heritage in the city is protected and promoted.
- All new streets and buildings are designed at the human scale and allow for safe and comfortable access for all people, including those with visual, mobility and other impairments.
- Existing streets and buildings are adequately maintained and retrofitted where necessary to ensure safe and comfortable access for all people.

**GCCN also proposes that all public participation structures and processes designed to facilitate and enable community participation and the outcomes from such structures and processes are reviewed and evaluated.**

# Sports Recreation and Amenity

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a city where everyone has access to local, accessible, and inclusive recreational facilities and amenities, enhancing the lives of those who use them and contributing to the physical and mental health of all in the community.

A city where facilities are developed in full consultation with all in the local area, especially those who are often excluded.

## Policy Proposals

### Inclusion

GCCN proposes that:

- Recreation grounds, community centres and amenities are accessible, affordable, and available for use by all members of the community particularly those who are socio-economically, culturally, and otherwise marginalised.
- Community facilities are not privatised but supported as sustainable social enterprises[15].

### Minority Sports

GCCN proposes that:

- A special programme of supports for minority/ non-mainstream sports including archery, judo, martial arts, cricket, gymnastics, and hockey is established and that Galway City Council facilitate a process of bringing together non-mainstream sports groups and clubs led by Galway City Sports Partnership.

## Developing Sports Amenities

GCCN proposes that:

- Galway City Council undertake and publish an audit of City Council owned land in the City and a policy for the development of sports facilities with targets and strategies set out.

- Green areas for sport be developed.
- Galway City Council outlines its plans for areas such as land in Renmore (near Dawn Dairies), the Swamp and Woodquay.
- Galway City Council develops a comprehensive plan for green spaces in the city with widespread consultation and participation of all communities throughout.
- A fully accessible municipal community owned sports area catering for different sports including minority/non-mainstream sports is developed.
- Galway City Council explores the possibility of accessing a Community Support Project for the operation of sports facilities.

## Horse Projects

GCCN proposes that:

- A Galway Horse Project similar to those developed by Traveller organisations and community groups in other parts of the country is established, enabling Travellers and urban horse owners to continue to engage with horses in a safe area.

## Playgrounds

GCCN proposes that:

- Fully accessible playgrounds for all children are provided throughout the city.

- Playground facilities are provided for older children (10-18 years) that would include:

    - playground equipment - swings, multi- play, aerial runways

    - skateboarding and roller-blading parks

    - full size tennis and basketball courts in local areas.

## Safe Travel and Home Zones

GCCN proposes that:

- Safe travelling routes to amenities and recreational grounds are provided including for example, walking, and cycling routes away from traffic, pedestrian crossings that match desire lines, traffic calming systems, lowering of speed limits, and addressing 'rat- runs'.
- Safe areas are established in residential areas which; favour pedestrians and children's play areas over traffic, have speed limits of walking speed and separate roads with access limited to pedestrians, bicycles, and buses, separate from those open to motor vehicles.

## Maintenance

GCCN proposes that:

- Recreational facilities and amenities are well-maintained involving, regular grass-cutting by City Council, regular inspection and maintenance of playgrounds, provision of bins in public areas, exploring the potential for possible partnerships between City Council and local groups to support and enhance maintenance.

## Easier Access to Facilities for Groups

GCCN proposes that:

- To promote easy access to facilities, groups are provided with information on, who to contact to book a facility, reasonable rates of insurance, where to access training, sources of funding.

## Libraries

GCCN proposes that:

- Library services be extended to reach those unable to access library buildings including isolated older people and people with disabilities, possibly through the use of mobile libraries.

## Consultation

GCCN proposes that:

- Full consultation take place, especially with users, including children, in the development of all sports and recreation amenities in the city.

# Arts, Culture and Heritage

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a vibrant, inclusive, dynamic, intercultural, international, colourful city. A city which supports and strengthens creative communities and participation by all in the arts. A city where participation in the arts is recognised as a right where all communities can participate in and have equal access. A city where public community arts spaces are funded and cherished. A city that values artistic freedom and promotes transparency, accountability, affordability, and excellence. A city where arts and those involved in the arts sector can afford to live and thrive. A city where Traveller culture and that of other minority ethnic groups in the city are promoted and valued. A city where the arts and cultural life are seen as vital for the well-being and quality of life of those who live here.

## Policy Proposals

### Spaces and Facilities

GCCN proposes that:

- An audit of empty spaces in the city is undertaken to ascertain where spaces may be available for artistic projects, events and initiatives including, community/socially engaged art, visual arts, music, dance, and circus.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is one of the criteria for Galway City Council arts funding decisions and all arts organisations funded by Galway City Council report on their EDI outcomes as part of the application process.
- An Arts Space and Facilities Masterplan be developed addressing the needs of all art forms with arts spaces outside the city centre and major developments in the city.
- Incentives and supports are provided to arts groups to assist in accessing spaces.
- Open public outside spaces are created and developed for people to gather and events to take place.
- A community space is available immediately as a priority to house the many arts and cultural groups currently active in the city who have no facilities or spaces.

## Planning and Development

GCCN proposes that:

- Galway City Council recognise the rights of all those with an interest in arts and culture in Galway City to be represented on governance structures and participate in policy development and implementation in the area of arts and culture.
- Data is collected in relation to groups who are least likely to participate in arts activities in the city.
- There is greater meaningful participation of communities and representatives of the arts and culture sector in the city, in planning for cultural and artistic development, including the proposed Cultural Council, with greater transparency and accountability.
- Target groups who experience particular forms of marginalisation are named in all arts planning and development activities. Groups/communities who experience poverty, social exclusion and inequality need to be able to see themselves in plans being developed.
- A review and evaluation of existing plans and strategies is undertaken and used as a basis for future planning.
- An arts management infrastructure is developed with sustained positions and a strong focus on equality and accessibility.
- The Galway City Arts Plan includes a focus on culture.
- All arts and culture infrastructure is community proofed so that accessibility for all sectors of the community, particularly those that are socially excluded, marginalised and disadvantaged, is proactively encouraged. Outreach work will be key to this approach.
- Urban design and integrated arts and culture infrastructure is extended to local communities. GCCN calls for the development of Creative Hubs in each of the suburbs which are accessible, located on public transport routes and affordable, prioritising the most disadvantaged communities.
- Further supports are provided for the Cultural Rights Charter and associated activities.
- A strong focus on the arts is included in all social and economic planning for the city and supports for the arts is considered in the context of the social economy.

## Support for existing and new projects

GCCN proposes that:

- The vibrant and active arts and cultural sector in Galway City is supported and resourced on an ongoing basis.
- A bursary scheme 'Human Rights and Equality in the Arts' be introduced by Galway City Arts Office.
- Other models of good practice are resourced, developed, and piloted especially artist and Community led models and social, collaborative, and participatory arts practices.
- Opportunities for progression in the arts are developed using a life-long learning model.
- The Per Cent for Art Scheme is maximised, and all investment ensures physical, social, and economic accessibility with community engagement in the commissioning processes.

## Promotion and Support for Community Arts

GCCN proposes that:

- A focussed and coordinated strategy for community arts including voluntary, amateur and collaborative arts is developed as a powerful tool in tackling social exclusion, supporting personal and social development, and achieving greater access to and participation in the arts for the wider community. Special emphasis should be given to celebration of the diversity of cultures now present in Galway and to support integration, cross cultural events, and synergies.
- The Community Arts Strategy should; facilitate partnership building, sharing of skills and resources and access to new sources of funding; include a plan for specific communities including youth groups, education and health organisations, people with disabilities, older people, and minorities. GCCN calls for the appointment of a dedicated fully resourced Community Arts Officer, to support community arts, socially engaged and long-term residency programmes;
- All facilities, programmes, grants, and residencies, funded by Galway City Council, are community-proofed to promote access and participation including education and outreach and promote shared use of resources for meetings, administration, and performance.
- A school of music be considered for establishment in the city.

# Community Wealth Building and Enterprise

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development and implementation of a new model of meaningful, engagement with the community by Galway City Council, reviewing Local Authority culture with a view to enhanced participation, inclusion and transparency in community wealth building, economic planning and development.

The goal is of Galway as the leading city for social enterprise in Ireland[16] with implementation and mainstreaming of good models of social enterprise which place social justice and participatory democracy at their core. A city where there is planning by design to protect the city, with integrated, sustainable, and universally accessible social development and community wealth building leaving no one behind. A city that recognises and builds existing potential in a broad range of sectors and prioritises indigenous, local enterprise that builds local resilience, sustainability, and the circular economy towards the development of a 15-minute city.

## Policy Proposals

### Integration and Rights

GCCN proposes that:

- There is sustainable inclusive and integrated socio-economic development and employment in the city incorporating the Public Sector Duty.
- This involves ensuring that the local population benefits from economic development through positive targeting, outreach, education and training, quality employment opportunities, social benefit, public sector duty compliance and positive action measures including equality proofing and gender proofing.
- Entrepreneurship potential amongst ethnic minorities is stimulated and supported as recommended by the small-business forum (2006). This should include setting of targets to improve the rate of business start-up activity, and routine collection of information by enterprise agencies on the take-up of their services by members of minority ethnic communities including Travellers.

## Social Enterprise

GCCN adopts the European Commission's definition and analysis of social enterprise which places a specific emphasis on democratic or participatory principles of social enterprises and their focus on social justice.

GCCN proposes that:

- Proactive support for investment in social enterprise from all relevant public agencies be prioritised with a strong focus on social enterprise in the implementation of the Galway City Local, Economic and Community Plan.
- Such investment should include a focus on the development of social enterprise units and industrial spaces including use of existing un-used buildings and facilities.
- The Galway City and County Local Enterprise Office has a specific remit in relation to supporting the social economy in the city and county.
- The LECP include specific provision for support mechanisms for social enterprises that are developed by Travellers and Traveller organisations, and existing and new social enterprises in the city be supported.
- Proactive engagement with and support for social enterprise development with a range of diverse communities who are furthest from the labour market, including for example migrant communities and disabled people be prioritised.

## Young People

GCCN proposes that:

- Concrete plans for mitigating youth unemployment are developed emphasising the need for institutional collaboration and coordination among government, educational institutions, and employers with the aim of bridging the experience gap. In order to address the education-employment nexus, the potential for internships and apprenticeship with local private business and voluntary and statutory agencies should be explored. The following goals could be used for targeted output-based youth employment schemes:

  - Skills – increase the number of apprenticeship niches for young people

  - Education – increase opportunities for young people not in full time education or employment by expanding non-formal education, and vocational skills training with the aim of promoting the technical and professional knowledge of young people as this enhances their career mobility and quality of life.

- The provision of affordable, sustainable homes for young people in the city is recognised as a pre-requisite for the ability of young people to move to or remain living and working in the city and urgent action is taken to address the housing crisis for young people in the city.

## Planning

GCCN proposes that:

- All planning, especially Master Planning, protect and promote the life of the whole city by design. This should involve city neighbourhood planning towards the development of a 15-minute city, and the Integration of physical, economic, and social planning.
- Master planning for areas such as Liosbán and the Dyke Rd. should be carried out as part of the neighbourhood planning process.
- Galway is developed as a city of innovation with inclusive and affordable spaces for social and economic innovation based on locally identified needs, creativity, ideas generation, and cross sectoral intergenerational co-operation and mentoring.
- Economic planning and development are city wide and locally based with sustainable and decent employment opportunities for people throughout the city and in local neighbourhood areas as opposed to being focused in one or two parts of the city.
- The public realm throughout the entire city including suburbs and outlying areas is improved providing a healthier and happier environment for people to live and work.
- A plan for the night time economy is developed with the aim of increasing the diversity of events, increasing cultural opportunities for families and other age-groups into the evening and looking at new ways of encouraging innovation and creativity in the Night-Time Economy. [17]
- Planning for the arts is considered in the realm of economic development as well as the cultural and social development of the city including the development of artistic infrastructure and quality employment for artists and those employed in the sector.
- The importance of affordable sustainable homes for all is recognised in all city social and economic planning and the community land trust model is given serious consideration, as a form of permanent affordability.[18]
- Galway City Council plans and leads support for small businesses in the city especially in the context of the Docks regeneration and plans for the Headford Road and Sandy Road.

## Support for Local Enterprise and Employment

GCCN proposes that:

- Support for local enterprise in a broad range of sectors is provided.
- Public bodies and agencies in the city explore the potential for Public Social Partnerships in developing initiatives to respond to social need while providing opportunities for small indigenous businesses.
- Local employment and social clauses are introduced in all Public Partnerships.
- Recognition of and support for the establishment of small local enterprises is prioritised recognising the cultural contribution as well as the economic contribution they make to the characteristics of the city and area.
- Local markets and farmers markets are encouraged, developed, and supported around the city and spaces allocated specifically for market trading in local areas and areas planned for development such as Ardán.
- Under-utilised and derelict buildings in the city centre are used to enable local enterprise activities. These should be affordable and accessible for community use including physical spaces, hubs and mini hubs, workshop spaces, and spaces for social activities.
- The campaign for insurance reform be supported.
- Action is taken to protect and support the traditional structural characteristics of the Traveller economy and Travellers' participation in specific activities including market trading, recycling, and the horse trade.

# Housing and Accommodation

## Goal

The GCCN goal is the development of Galway as a city without poverty without homelessness and with an adequate, affordable, sustainable supply of universally accessible, quality housing with security of tenure and appropriate accommodation for Travellers. A city where older people, young people, and those most vulnerable to homelessness are supported and empowered. A city where there is mixed use transport-oriented developments with planning based on the current and future needs of the population and where all housing is used to its full potential.

## Policy Proposals

### Supply

GCCN proposes that:

- Social and affordable housing delivery is addressed as a matter of the highest priority.
- Proofing of supply is undertaken including in relation to the level and profile of need, poverty/social inclusion/wellbeing/ access, and culturally appropriate provision.
- The new National Housing Strategy, Housing for All, is a platform for ensuring investment in housing in Galway City, particularly in the area of social and affordable housing.
- Positive collaborations are developed, including with the Land Development Agency, to maximise the potential of publicly owned landbanks for the delivery of public housing.
- Blocks in the delivery of social and affordable housing are dealt with as a matter of urgency – including the resourcing of Local Authorities to deliver and manage housing.

- Targets are set and monitored, and positive action is taken to address vacancy and bring vacant housing back into active use.
- Similarly, voids to be addressed and brought into active use in the shortest time possible, with targets set and monitored.
- The local authority ensures that regulations in relation to short-term letting are enforced.

- There is greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders for the acquisition of land for integrated development.
- The potential afforded by large-scale mixed-use developments comprised of private, affordable, and public housing be realised.
- New models of supply be explored and piloted in close collaboration with the Government Departments who are working on modern homes technology, and with networks and groups in the city with an interest in housing and accommodation issues.
- The two-year review of the Housing Strategy (Policy 3.1 Housing Strategy, Action 22) should be carried out at two-year intervals by a panel with relevant expertise utilising key data sets compared with the baseline data, and recommendations in relation to revising policy, delivery targets etc should be developed if appropriate.
- Where private rented tenancies are being terminated, more proactive coordinated response is taken by the local authority to prevent families and individuals from falling into homelessness.
- The local authority assumes greater responsibility for protecting the rights of those on the housing list who are in private rented accommodation.

## Standards
GCCN proposes that:

- New housing developments meet standards[19] that minimise carbon footprint.
- Retrofit programmes be resourced and rolled out across existing social housing stock to improve energy efficiency and help to address fuel poverty.
- The local authority require that social and private rented housing meet the minimum standard regulations.

## Preventing and Addressing Homelessness

GCCN proposes that:

- Galway City works to Eradicate Homelessness by 2030, in line with the National Strategy Housing For All and the Lisbon Declaration which Ireland has signed up to.

- That the new Regional Homeless Action Plan, from 2023, be aligned to Pathway 2 of Housing for All and that if and as appropriate a specific Action Plan be developed for the city.
- That National Strategies under the umbrella of Housing for All be fully implemented in Galway and that targets under the Strategies be challenged and increased where necessary. Implementation of the strategies to be fully resourced. These include:
    - The second Housing First[20] Implementation Plan which supports rough sleepers and others who experience entrenched homelessness (published Dec 2021)
    - In parallel with Housing First programme, Housing Led tenancies – with intensive supports provided by homeless services[21] – must also be supported.
    - The National Homeless Action Committee (NHAC) is working on Homelessness Prevention measures which will minimise to the greatest extent possible new entries into homelessness.
    - The National Youth Homelessness Strategy (published November 2022)
    - The National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027 (published May 2022)
- That while working towards the Eradication of Homelessness, the focus is on prevention and longer-term solutions in secure and affordable accommodation; and that Emergency Accommodation is a last resort and for the shortest possible timeframe.
- That Prevention Services be prioritised and resourced. Where NTQs are issued and private rented tenancies are being terminated, a proactive coordinated response is taken by the local authority and voluntary organisations to prevent families and individuals from falling into homelessness.
- Security of tenure in the private rented sector is improved as a critical homelessness intervention and prevention strategy.
- Tenancy Sustainment Supports for those who move out of homelessness to stay out of homelessness be provided.
- That trauma informed approaches are promoted across agencies, with appropriate training and supports provided for those who support people experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

## Traveller Accommodation

GCCN proposes that:

- Plans and targets in the Traveller Accommodation Plan are met as a matter of urgency.
- Traveller ethnicity is recognised in the development of culturally appropriate Traveller accommodation allowing and planning for the cultural needs of the Traveller community.
- Meaningful consultation with Travellers be undertaken, giving Travellers greater say and power in decision making.
- Greater cooperation between the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee and the Housing SPC is required. A commitment is needed to realising equality outcomes for the Traveller community in relation to their accommodation needs.
- An independent National Traveller Accommodation Agency be established.

## Independence and Accessibility for All

GCCN proposes that:

- Greater supports for older people to remain at home and in their communities be provided.
- All local authority/social housing are universally accessible in their design.
- All social housing developments are planned and built with the aim of building supportive age and disability appropriate accommodation.
- Sheltered schemes be considered within larger developments, facilitating integration.

## Supporting 18-25 Year Olds

GCCN proposes that:

- The new National Youth Homelessness Strategy to address homelessness amongst this age cohort be rolled out in Galway, in collaboration with voluntary agencies.
- That the focus be on prevention, transitional and longer-term housing solutions, with wraparound and tenancy supports tailored to the needs of this cohort provided as needed and that any use of Emergency Accommodation be a last resort and for the shortest possible timeframe.
- The specific difficulties of this age cohort are recognised in housing planning and provision and their particular vulnerabilities to homelessness addressed.
- The needs of young people coming out of care, and other young people who may have been known to Túsla but did not formally enter the care system, are assessed, and catered for in a holistic way.

### Student Accommodation

GCCN proposes that:

- There is positive collaboration with the Universities with the aim of developing higher levels of affordable student accommodation.

### Needs based planning

GCCN proposes that:

- A Public Architectural Database concerning all aspects of Galway City Development and its urban structure: history, archaeology, morphology, and housing typology be established.
- All housing and accommodation provision and planning be future proofed.
- Life cycle planning is placed at the core of housing planning recognising different accommodation needs and requirements of the population at different stages of their lives.
- Adequate levels of one and two bed dwellings are planned for, to provide appropriate housing for smaller households.
- Two-bed houses for single person households be permitted and developed.
- Greater supply of 4-5 bed accommodation for larger families be provided.

### Use of schemes

GCCN proposes that:

- CAS and CALF Schemes are kept under review and updated as appropriate, as important vehicles for the financing and delivery of social and affordable housing.
- As HAP is a social housing support all local authorities should be responsible for recruiting landlords to the scheme and be responsible for providing alternative accommodation for a tenant in the event that a HAP tenancy is terminated.
- A scheme to incentivise those in local authority housing to downsize while remaining in their communities be explored following a scoping exercise.

### Partnership

GCCN proposes that:

- Local Authority coordination of and support for fora and structures for community and voluntary participation be fully supported including the Housing SPC, GCCN, Homeless Steering Committee, LTACC, Housing and Disability Steering Group.
- Collaborative working with and investment in voluntary housing bodies be continued as a means to increase the local social housing supply.
- Galway City Council continue to develop a proactive approach towards building partnership and engagement with private landlords.
- Sustainable citizen initiatives such as Housing Cooperatives, Community Land Trusts, CoHousing, and off-grid developments are supported.
- Greater coordination between City and County Council housing lists is required.

# References

## Appendix 1

GCCN 12 Values and Principles

### 1.    Anti Racism

GCCN is committed to anti-racism and to anti-racist practices and policies. GCCN recognises racism to be, 'Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life'[22].

GCCN understands that racism occurs on a number of levels, including individual, cultural, and institutional. GCCN understands institutional racism to be 'the network of institutional structures, policies and practices that create advantages and benefits for the majority ethnic group and creates discrimination, oppression and disadvantage for people from targeted racialised groups and minority ethnic groups'[23].

GCCN recognises the dangers of increased racism linked to crises and conflicts throughout the world. GCCN calls on Government and state agencies locally to put in place a strategy for inclusion and interculturalism[24] including a focus on addressing racism, islamophobia, xenophobia, and intolerance.

GCCN recognises Irish Travellers as an indigenous minority ethnic group who have been a part of Irish society for centuries. GCCN recognises the specificity of racism against the Irish Traveller community and the historical and institutional discrimination experienced by them contributing to the high levels of poverty, poor living conditions, poor health status (including mental health), high levels of unemployment and extremely low levels of educational attainment experienced by Travellers in Ireland.

We are committed to combatting and challenging racism in all its forms while supporting initiatives that promote anti racism, interculturalism and respect for diversity.

## 2. Equality, Diversity and Anti-discrimination

GCCN believes that all human beings have equal worth and importance and therefore are equally worthy of dignity, respect, and human rights. GCCN is committed to challenging oppression, stereotyping and prejudice in all its forms, promoting the rights of marginalised groups including Travellers, Roma, minority ethnic groups, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, LGBTQI people, older people, children and young people and people with disability. GCCN recognises the inequalities experienced by women in society and particularly the multiple forms of inequality and oppression experienced by specific groups of women for example women from minority ethnic communities including Travellers, women with disability and older women.

GCCN is committed to promoting the rights of women in all their diversity, including addressing violence against women as a violation of women's human rights and the under-representation of women in decision making. GCCN supports gender proofing of all policies and programmes as a means of assessing the potentially differential impact which they may have on women and on men.

GCCN rejects the discrimination and oppression of the LGBTQI community and will seek in our work to stand in solidarity with and highlight issues and human rights violations of the LGBTQI community; GCCN also acknowledges the intersectional nature of discrimination and oppression and that certain groups in society experience multiple forms of oppression which require specific responses. GCCN believes that society is enriched and enhanced by diversity and that diversity should be celebrated, valued, and supported.

## 3. Social justice, Social Inclusion and Economic Equality

GCCN believes in the right of all people, to be included and to fully participate in social, economic, political, and cultural life free from poverty and exploitation. GCCN recognises that poverty[25] and inequality are interconnected, and that the unequal distribution of wealth causes social and economic instability[26] and a widening gap between rich and poor. GCCN supports the view that spending should be prioritised on adequate income and quality and affordable public services for all, particularly people on low income.

Reflecting the UN Declaration on Human Rights GCCN recognises that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of him/herself and of his/her family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his/her control'[27].

## 4.    Sustainable Development

GCCN is committed to working towards a sustainable environment and a society where consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources are sustainable. A society where sustained and inclusive economic activity, social development, environmental protection, the eradication of poverty and promotion of food security are prioritised. GCCN is committed to environmental justice. Environmental justice occurs when all people equally:

a.    Have access to a safe and clean environment and environmental protection (substantive justice).

b.    Share the burden of environmental hazards[28] and the benefits of a good quality environment, including access to green spaces and healthy food (distributive justice).

c.    Are included in environmental policy decision- making processes (procedural justice).

## 5.    Human Rights

GCCN supports rights-based approaches to planning and decision making and is working towards a society where human rights and equality are recognised and realised and discrimination and oppression are rejected.

## 6.    Culture

GCCN believes in valuing, empowering and fostering the diversity of cultures in the city and enabling all people to express their creativity.

## 7.    Community empowerment

GCCN calls for approaches to planning and decision making that lead people and communities to be resilient, organised, included and influential.

## 8.    Collectivity

GCCN adopts and supports approaches to planning and decision making which focus on the benefits for communities from actions and policies as opposed to focusing on individual benefits only.

## 9.    Good Governance and Accountability

GCCN believes in the importance of good governance, accountability, and transparency.

GCCN believes that all policy, state, and government structures at local, national, and international levels should strive for the highest standards of governance and uphold the highest levels of accountability and transparency.

As a network GCCN acknowledges and balances its own accountability to the community, funders, and the legal system.

### 10.    Universal accessibility

GCCN believes that all projects, initiatives, policies, programmes, and services in Galway City should be universally accessible enabling the full and equal participation of all people, regardless of disability, age, literacy, or linguistic considerations.

GCCN supports a social model of disability which focuses on the inadequacies of social, environmental, political, and economic factors in society that restrict the full participation of people who have disabilities thereby failing to accommodate their needs.

### 11.    Future proofing

GCCN believes in the value and necessity of future proofing as an approach to planning and development. GCCN envisages a city where all planning looks to the future ensuring that the decisions, we take today do not compromise but rather will have lasting benefit for future generations.

GCCN is of the view that although it is not easy, it is important that all those who live, work, and invest in cities come together and shape solutions for their future'[29].

White paper

### 12.    Participation.

GCCN believes in meaningful and direct participation in the structures and decision-making procedures that directly affect the communities that GCCN members represent.  Ensuring meaningful participation involves the self- identification of needs and interests by communities and the formulation of responses by those communities to ensure the realisation of their rights.

# Notes

[1] http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/1/enacted/en/html

[2] All Ireland Standards for Community Work 2016 – produced by Community Work Ireland for the All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training: http:// communityworkireland.ie/product/all-ireland- standards-for-community-work/

[3] https://communityplatform.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Towards-a-Progressive-Model-of-Collaborative-Governance-A-Community-Platform-Discussion-Paper.pdf

[4] http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/1/enacted/en/html

[5] https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/25/enacted/en/html

[6] International Convention on the Elimination of all Form of Racial Discrimination http://www2. ohchr.org/english/bodies/cerd/

[7] UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women http://www. un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

[8] Convention on the Rights of the Child http:// www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ CRC.aspx

[9] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities http://www.un.org/disabilities/ convention/conventionfull.shtml

[10] These supports should include:

a) Information provision (upon receipt of status, people should be provided with clear written information on what is needed to make the transition out of the direct provision system).

b) Assistance with accommodation and proof of address (Once granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or leave to remain, people should be provided with a realistic timeframe of at least 3 months for exiting DP hostels, especially given the current housing shortages. DP hostels addresses should be accepted, for those with refugee status, subsidiary protection or leave to remain, so that they can obtain social welfare payments and rent supplement and so that they can open bank accounts).

c) Financial Support (including Timely Payment of rent supplement. entitlement to normal social welfare allowances on receipt of papers instead of the DP payment

and an adequate resettlement grant support for people in acquiring acceptable forms of identification).

[11] http://www.inclusionireland.ie/capacity

[12] http://www.healthpromotion2013.org/health- promotion/health-in-all-policies

[13] White Paper - Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 http://www. dcenr.gov.ie/energy/en-ie/Energy-Initiatives/ Pages/White-Paper-on-Energy-Policy-in- Ireland-.aspx

[14] 'The transition to a more circular economy, where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste minimised, is an essential contribution to the EU's efforts to develop a sustainable, low carbon, resource efficient and competitive economy. Such transition is the opportunity to transform our economy and generate new and sustainable competitive advantages for Europe' - Closing the loop - An EU action plan for the Circular Economy European Commission Feb 2015 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ TXT/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0614

[15] A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, particularly, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities. http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/ social-economy/enterprises/

[16] see https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/publication-files/forf%C3%A1s/social-enterprise-in-ireland-sectoral-opportunities-and-policy-issues.pdf

[17] https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/34e09-the-night-time-economy-support-scheme-ntess-2022-guidelines/

[18] https://soa.ie/shicc/

[19] Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2008; Housing (Standards for Rented Houses)(Amendment) Regulations 2009

[20] Housing first is a model for tackling homelessness that originates with Dr Sam Tsemberis and the Pathways to Housing organisation in New York. The model has been widely used in the USA and has, in more recent years, been adopted by homeless agencies in Australia, Canada, EU and Japan. The housing first model focuses on the immediate provision of long term/permanent accommodation for the homeless with supports and services subsequently built around the needs of each individual. https://www.pmvtrust.ie/our-services/housing-with-support-service/housing- first/

[21] The housing first model differs significantly from the treatment first or staircase model. The staircase model works on the basis that a homeless person must deal

with issues that gave rise to their homelessness, or have arisen as a result of homelessness, (e.g. drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues, etc) before they are ready for long term accommodation. https://www.pmvtrust.ie/our-services/housing- with-support-service/housing-first/

[22] International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination http://www. ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx

[23] European Network against Racism Ireland http://enarireland.org/racism/

[24] Interculturalism suggests the acceptance not only of the principles of equality of rights, values, and abilities but also the development of policies to promote interaction, collaboration, and exchange with people of different cultures, ethnicity or religion living in the same territory. Furthermore, interculturalism is an approach that sees difference as something positive that can enrich a society and recognises racism as an issue that needs to be tackled in order to create a more inclusive society. The concept of interculturalism has replaced earlier concepts of assimilation and multiculturalism. National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism Guidelines on Anti-Racism and Intercultural Training- 2001 http://www. integration.ie/website/omi/omiwebv6.nsf/ page/AXBN-7STKX61616578-en/$File/ Guidelines%20on%20Anti-Racism%20and%20 Intercultural%20Training.pdf

[25] People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society – National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016. https://www. welfare.ie/en/downloads/National-Action-Plan- for-Social-Inclusion-2007-2016.pdf

[26] http://www.eapn.ie/eapn/training/poverty-and- inequality

[27] UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights, 1948 Article 25

[28] Environmental hazards refer to the presence of toxins or pollutants, natural disasters, lack of access to water and healthy foods, and other situations or activities that create an unsafe natural environment. Climate change is a global environmental hazard, but its effects are felt more acutely by the Global South and by marginalised and disadvantaged groups (Adapted from Nesmith and Smyth, 2015).

[29] David Tonkin – CEO UK, Atkins http://www. futureproofingcities.com/about_future_ proofing_cities.html

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